Breakthrough Performance:

Ten Emerging Practices of Leading Intermediaries

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

In February of 2008, eleven leading intermediaries gathered in the nation's capital for the Intermediary Summit to share practices that have led to breakthroughs in performance. This guidebook is the result of their efforts to deconstruct each practice and examine the elements that make it effective. During two days of discussions, several themes emerged as participants gained insight into the common threads that run throughout their practices. Participating intermediaries create opportunities for replicating successes—whether it is a program design, a multi-sector solution, or a set of professional standards. They are experienced collaborators, working with partners to achieve shared goals, as well as strengthening and managing collaborative networks. They have exceptional skills in organizational assessment, community assessment, and performance management. They have strong public relations skills to engage influential champions and stakeholders, attract community and media attention, and promote their solutions for wider adoption. These are the qualities that all of the intermediaries share, and they embed these qualities in their practices to achieve breakthroughs in scale and effectiveness.

We trust that established and developing intermediaries will use the guidebook to explore and implement practices that are relevant to their mission and community needs. We also intend that funders will use this guidebook to enhance existing intermediary partnerships, or create new ones. For funders considering using intermediaries, the practices described in this guidebook show the model's value and flexibility. We hope intermediaries across the country will be better equipped to support grassroots faith-based and community organizations that play a vital role in helping our most vulnerable neighbors.

We want to thank each of the Summit participants and the organizations they represent. We deeply appreciate their expertise and support in advancing the field. We would also like to thank Dare Mighty Things for helping us to identify the practices and facilitate the Summit.

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INTRODUCTION

A growing body of research and practice demonstrates the effectiveness of the intermediary model as a mechanism to fund and support faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) that provide critical social services to individuals and families in need. By funding and building the capacity of tens of thousands of FBCOs, intermediaries are equipping America's grassroots social service providers with the tools they need to tackle society's toughest problems. As part of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI), the Administration for Children and Families' Compassion Capital Fund (CCF) gives grants to intermediary organizations that provide capacity-building assistance to FBCOs. Since its creation in 2002, the CCF Demonstration Program has made 112 grants to intermediary organizations that, in turn, have provided subawards and training and technical assistance to more than 4,100 grassroots social service providers in 47 states and the District of Columbia (The White House, 2008, p. 55).

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Other federal grant programs have used the intermediary model, including the U.S. Departments of Justice (DOJ), Labor (DOL), and Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Under the FBCI, DOJ's Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Program recruited domestic violence organizations to provide subgrants, training, and technical assistance to new FBCOs that provide domestic violence services in rural areas (The White House, 2008, p. 73). With its Workforce Investment Board Grants, DOL funds intermediaries with established working relationships to grassroots organizations that can connect people to the One-Stop service delivery system. HUD's Office of Single Family Housing funds national housing counseling intermediaries to provide technical assistance to more than 700 HUD-approved community-based housing counseling agencies to prevent evictions and foreclosures, as well as counseling to first-time homebuyers.

Numerous researchers have studied the effect of intermediary organizations. In 2002, Dr. Amy L. Sherman completed a year-long study of faith-based intermediaries to learn "what they do, why it matters, and how it could be improved." Sherman concluded that:

> Intermediary organizations currently make enormous contributions to the scope, scale, and effectiveness of grassroots, faith-based social service agencies, and often do so at low cost. The study uncovered substantial, measurable evidence of the 'value-added' provided by intermediaries to these frontline groups. Intermediary organizations have assisted grassroots [FBCOs] in obtaining millions of dollars of funding they most likely otherwise would not have secured. Intermediaries have connected frontline groups to new sources of volunteers and in-kind donations. Intermediaries have provided grassroots leaders with relevant, accessible training and technical assistance they otherwise would not have gained. And intermediaries have increased the public exposure of grassroots groups' work, winning them public recognition, endorsements, and media coverage. (Sherman, 2002, p. 7)

Another study provides models and practices for intermediary and funder consideration, replication, and implementation. Researchers examined ten exemplary intermediary organizations, more than half of which were funded by the Compassion Capital Fund (CCF) Demonstration Program. The remaining intermediary organizations have a track record of serving FBCOs. The researchers concluded that:

> Intermediaries provide an efficient means for the federal government to work with faith- and community-based organizations. Through CCF, HHS has invested in intermediaries to work with [FBCOs] more efficiently than it could work with them directly. This study found that intermediaries successfully recruited a range of grassroots organizations at different levels of capacity, from some that were barely even formal organizations, to others that were sophisticated and experienced….HHS should continue to recruit both faith-based and secular intermediaries. Both types demonstrate strength in building relationships with constituent organizations and providing quality services. Faith-based and secular intermediaries in this study represented effective vehicles for government support of grassroots organizations. (Fink & Branch, 2005, p. v, p. 42)

An assessment of the CCF program clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the intermediary model. According to their retrospective study of the CCF Demonstration Program (for intermediary services performed in 2003 and 2004), beneficiary organizations attributed the following results to intermediary services: 74% were able to serve more clients, 90% reported an improvement in the level or quality of social services, 88% reported improved outcomes for participants, 50% started new programs, 42% hired more staff, 67% reported an increased capacity to seek and diversify funding sources, and 79% improved financial stability (Abt Associates & Branch Associates, 2006).

Research has clearly demonstrated the value of the intermediary model in practice, and HHS' excellent results from its work with intermediaries has encouraged another step: reaching out to the leading intermediary organizations in the country to identify, discuss, describe, and disseminate their most effective strategies. The HHS Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives contracted with Dare Mighty Things, a social services consulting firm with experience working with intermediaries, to identify exemplary intermediaries and their emerging practices. The practices are considered emerging because they have demonstrated success when implemented by one or more intermediaries, but have yet to be validated by rigorous best practice research. (For more information about the methodology used to develop the list of practices, see Appendix B, "Methodology.") Representatives from each intermediary discussed the practices at the Intermediary Summit, held in Washington, DC, February 19 and 20, 2008. For two days, participants presented their practices and implementation elements, discussed their impact, received feedback, and offered insights to each other.

This guidebook provides practical guidance for implementing the practices presented at the Summit. The first part of the guidebook provides an overview of intermediary organizations: what they are, what services they provide, how they function effectively, and the benefits they bring to funders and community organizations. The second part describes each of the emerging practices, including a

case study of an intermediary who has successfully implemented the practice, the elements required to implement the practice, and its risks and benefits. The third section of the guidebook contains a number of implementation tools intended to facilitate the implementation of the practices. Finally, several appendixes contain the resources used in the creation of the guidebook, the methodology used to select the practices, contact information for the Summit participants, and a list of references.

| If your organization is…	This guidebook provides…
An intermediary	Ten emerging practices that can strengthen your organization
Considering becoming an intermediary	An understanding of effective intermediaries
A funder working with intermediaries	Ideas and steps to help strengthen your intermediary partnerships
A funder considering intermediaries	Guidance in selecting intermediary partners

INTERMEDIARY ORGANIZATIONS

The term *intermediary* has most commonly been associated with the field of financial services, where it is used to describe an institution that facilitates the exchange of funds between lenders and borrowers: lenders give funds to an intermediary institution (such as a bank), and the intermediary provides those funds to borrowers in the form of loans. Similarly, a *social service intermediary* can connect organizations that have funds with organizations that need them. Social service intermediaries are organizations "whose primary role is to build the capacity of frontline social service providers" (Sherman, 2004, p. 74). In the context of social services, intermediaries can be defined as "nonprofit organizations that distribute funding they receive from other sources, as well as providing technical assistance to support services offered by nonprofits" (Backer, Bleeg, & Groves, 2004, p. 11). For the purposes of this guidebook, an intermediary is an organization that is positioned between a funding entity (which may be an individual, a government agency, a foundation, or a corporation) and a beneficiary organization (most often a faith-based or secular community organization that provides direct social services). It provides the beneficiary organization with assistance to help fulfill the strategic goals of the funder. The forms of assistance intermediaries most frequently provide are training, technical assistance, and frequently—but not always—the regranting of funds.

At times, the terms *intermediary* and *management support organization* (MSO) are used interchangeably, but there are differences between these two types of organizations and the services they provide. Traditional MSOs provide back-office services to nonprofit organizations (such as human-resource, technology, and financial-management services). MSOs help nonprofits maximize program-related services by providing them with non-programmatic functions. An MSO often charges a fee for its services, whereas intermediaries have an outside funder that covers the cost of services. When an MSO obtains an outside funding source, it is taking on an intermediary role. When an intermediary begins to supply management services, it is taking on an MSO role. Many organizations do both, and it is a matter of perspective how the organization defines itself.
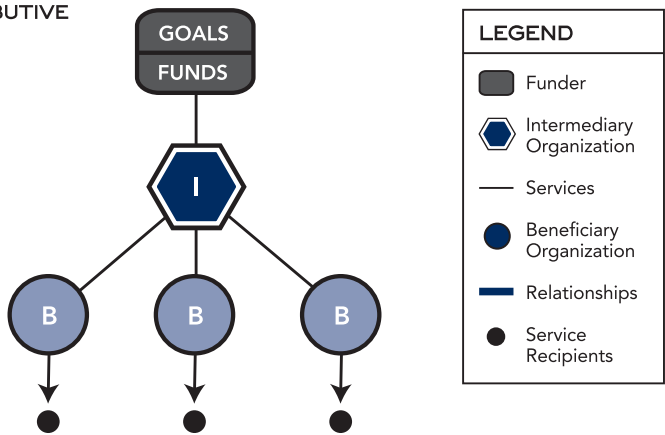

The objective of all intermediaries is to help beneficiary organizations increase their scale and effectiveness. A *distributive intermediary* receives monies from a public or private funder and provides some or all of those funds, as well as services, to beneficiary organizations.

New Detroit is a distributive intermediary. It receives $500,000 from the Federal government in the form of a CCF Demonstration Grant. Forty percent of the grant is distributed to FBCOs. New Detroit monitors these organizations to ensure that the funds are used appropriately, and reports information about fund usage and program outcomes to the funder. The remainder of the grant is used to provide training and technical assistance to the subgrantees (see *http://www.newdetroit.org*).

A *convening intermediary,* in addition to providing funds and services to beneficiary organizations, has the goal of bringing beneficiary organizations together to form a network to strengthen the collective ability of the organizations to provide social services.
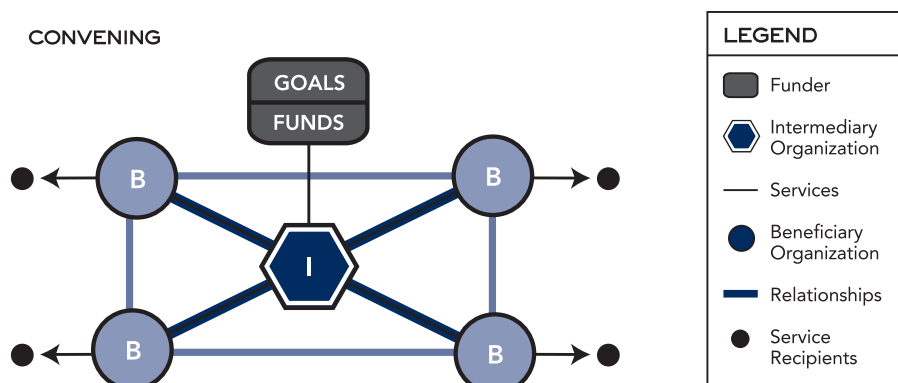
The Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston (BMA) is a convening intermediary. In addition to regranting funds and providing training and technical assistance to youth-serving FBCOs through its Boston Capacity Tank (the Tank), BMA formed the Boston High-Risk Youth Network. Through the network, youth-serving providers meet each month to share information, receive training, and implement strategic plans to strengthen the delivery of social services to high-risk youth in Boston: "While the Tank's primary goal is to strengthen organizations and programs which serve youth, if all the members of the network come together to strengthen the connections between existing programs, those programs will provide better services for youth and will better help them achieve lasting results in their lives" (see *http://www.bostonyouthnet.org*).

Some organizations may provide direct services in addition to providing intermediary services. The Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC) is an intermediary organization that is also a direct service provider. GMCC is the largest council of churches in the nation, and the largest direct-service volunteer organization in the state of Minnesota. GMCC's role as an intermediary informs its activities as a service provider; its work as an intermediary has provided it with a comprehensive view of community needs. Its work as a service provider strengthens its role as an intermediary by helping it identify the needs of other service providers; it has faced and solved many of the same problems. In 2003, GMCC was awarded a grant from the Compassion Capital Fund, which it used to build the capacity of beneficiary organizations in Minnesota (see *http://www.gmcc.org*).

Services of Intermediaries

Although intermediary organizations may differ in structure and emphasis, they share the common goal of enhancing the performance of grassroots service providers. Intermediaries identify and build on the assets of beneficiary organizations as well as identifying areas of need. They work to strengthen frontline providers through an array of services. These services may include:

- **Training:** Providing group learning experiences (such as workshops and seminars) on topics such as leadership development, grant management, fund development, and organizational development.

- **Technical assistance:** Addressing specific needs of FBCOs by offering consulting or guidance in one-to-one or small-group settings. Targeted technical assistance may include long-term planning, leadership coaching, financial management, and staff development.

- **Regranting of funds:** Distributing competitive or non-competitive awards to beneficiary organizations. This also requires the intermediary to conduct appropriate oversight of those funds on behalf of the funding agency.

- **Organizational assessment:** Analyzing and evaluating an organization's assets and needs, and determining the kinds of support and services required to assist the organization.

- **Knowledge sharing:** Linking FBCOs to relevant research and studies on promising and effective practices that meet their needs and interests.

- **Networking:** Connecting community organizations and their representatives with one another for the purpose of addressing a shared community issue or problem, identifying potential collaborative opportunities, sharing information, and learning promising or effective practices.

The following diagram shows the relationship between the funder and an intermediary organization, along with their respective activities.
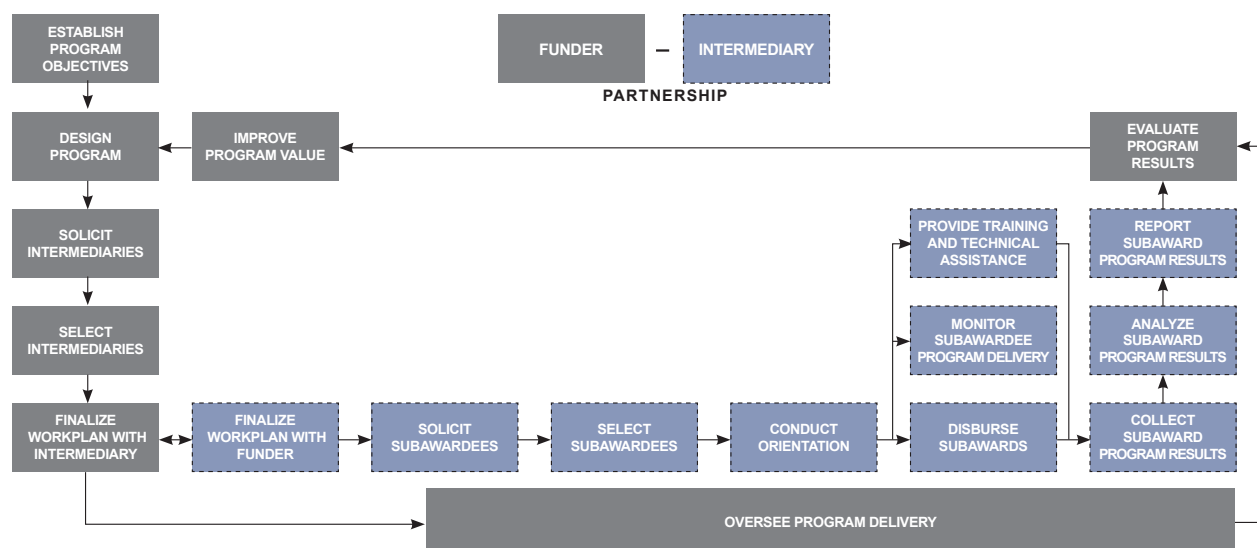
Benefits to Funders

As both public and private funders seek to build the capacity of the social service delivery sector, and distribute social service funds to small grassroots organizations while at the same time making the most of limited resources, intermediaries function as strategic partners in achieving these goals. "Strategic benefits for foundations employing IOs [intermediary organizations] include the ability to strengthen grantees… [and] leave a field-building resource in place after grant-making programs end" (Szanton, 2003, p. 7). Benefits of intermediary organizations to funders include:

- **Extend the reach:** Most effective intermediaries have extensive, well-developed geographic and programmatic connections with grassroots organizations. Intermediaries can use their networks to extend a funder's reach to those small, grassroots FBCOs that may not be identified through traditional outreach methods.

- **Bridge the credibility gap:** Many grassroots organizations, particularly faith-based organizations, may be wary of seeking government funding or even private grant funding on their own. When an intermediary intercedes by receiving monies from a funder and regranting them to small FBCOs, those grassroots organizations can maintain "an arms-length, indirect relationship (to the funder) that feels safer" (Sherman, 2004, p. 77).

- **Build faith-based and community organization capacity:** Intermediaries play roles in strengthening FBCOs so they can achieve organizational and grant-specific goals. A Hudson Institute study found that "intermediary organizations currently make enormous contributions to the scope, scale, and effectiveness of grassroots, faith-based social service agencies, and often do so at low cost" (Sherman, 2002, p. 7).

- **Increase efficiency:** Intermediaries can increase the efficiency of grant programs because they can work closely with the beneficiary organizations. In some cases, funders can use intermediaries to provide smaller grant amounts to more grassroots organizations and still maintain the appropriate levels of oversight required for the disbursement of regranted funds.

- **Leverage experience and expertise:** Many intermediaries are located in the communities they serve and have experience addressing a particular type of need. Because of their proximity and expertise, intermediaries often are better equipped than many government, private foundation, and corporate funders to build ongoing relationships with grassroots leaders.

- **Increase effectiveness:** Intermediaries can help funders achieve program results and demonstrate the value of their programs by helping community organizations improve their service delivery and measure their results. Intermediaries can improve their effectiveness by sharing best and promising practices and model programs, and by providing technical assistance to improve program design and service delivery.

Benefits to Community Organizations

Intermediaries also perform a number of valuable functions for grassroots organizations. The Hudson Institute study "uncovered substantial, measurable evidence of the 'value-added' provided by intermediaries to these frontline groups" (Sherman, 2002, p. 7). Benefits of intermediary organizations to community organizations include:

- **Connecting with resources:** Intermediaries assist FBCOs by identifying and connecting grassroots organizations to new financial, in-kind, and human resources. Intermediaries themselves may be a source of funds through subawards. Regranting helps prepare FBCOs for other grant opportunities. Intermediaries help these grassroots organizations understand the benefits of forming a partnership with government and private funders, and deal with any issues that may arise.

- **Improving organizational sustainability and capacity:** With increasing demand for social services, few FBCOs are able to grow and develop their organizational ability to meet the needs of their communities. Intermediaries can provide essential skill-building training and technical assistance, as well as access to consultants, to help community organizations build capacity and sustainability.

- **Enhancing service delivery:** Intermediary assistance can strengthen both the quality and quantity of service delivery, resulting in the provision of more and higher quality services to those in need. Intermediaries can improve program design and service delivery. The Hudson Institute "uncovered significant evidence suggesting that, because of intermediaries' help, frontline faith-based organizations across the nation are serving more people, more effectively" (Sherman, 2004, p. 1).

- **Distributing best practices:** Intermediaries identify, gather, and disseminate relevant information, lessons learned, promising practices, replicable models, and innovations from other practitioners. They also serve as a conduit for ideas drawn from sources outside the immediate circle of grassroots organizations, such as academics, policymakers, and advocacy groups. In essence, intermediaries serve as the research and development arm for the grassroots organizations they serve.

- **Publicizing successes:** Intermediaries serve grassroots organizations by publicizing the efforts of community organizations. Intermediaries also are well-positioned to capture the impact and results of the program, which may lead to new support or partnerships for participating community organizations.

- **Connecting to provider networks:** Intermediaries can connect beneficiary organizations to provider networks by introducing them to other providers. This can strengthen programs and improve service delivery.

Effective Intermediaries

As funders use intermediaries, and intermediary organizations become more experienced and strengthen their capacity, characteristics that make intermediaries effective and attractive to funders can be identified. Along with each characteristic listed below, indicators are included to assist funders in evaluating potential intermediaries and to assist intermediaries in identifying benchmarks for their organization.

- **Align with communities they serve.** Effective intermediary organizations rise out of the communities they serve. The intermediary organization and its leaders are well-known by other community leaders and respected for their substantive support of FBCOs that serve high risk populations. Their mission and programs are aligned with the organizations they serve. The organization is culturally competent and reflects the values of the community it serves.

  - The Board of Directors includes leaders of organizations that provide social services to at-risk populations.

  - The intermediary has existed for at least five years and is known and respected by community leaders.

  - Intermediary leadership and staff come from the community.

- **Offer a variety of replicable services.** Effective intermediaries offer an array of services for a range of FBCOs. They have a systematic approach that links technical and financial assistance to rigorous organizational assessments. These organizations are able to identify and package their best practices for replication in other communities or with other populations.

  - The organization demonstrates core competencies in a wide range of capacity-building skills.

  - The organization has replicated its programs with a diverse group of organizations.

  - The organization is widely viewed by the community as the place to go for assistance.

- **Commit for the long haul.** Effective intermediaries understand that organizational growth does not occur as the result of a one-day workshop. They are committed to their mission and to the services they provide to their communities. They employ strategic processes that involve long-term training, support, and monitoring to ensure the impact and durability of their training and services.

  - The organization has existed for at least five years and has demonstrated commitment to its mission.

  - The organization has been involved in intermediary work for at least two years, and capacity building is part of the organization's strategic plan.

  - The organization employs a stable staff with the capacity to achieve the organization's long-term goals.

As funders use intermediaries, and intermediary organizations become more experienced and strengthen their capacity, characteristics that make intermediaries effective and attractive to funders can be identified.

- **Attract the best.** Effective intermediaries attract high-quality staff with capacity-building, consulting, and training expertise. The intermediary ensures that the staff is equipped with the support they need to succeed. These organizations also take initiative to identify areas in which they lack internal capacity and to secure outside resources of high quality to support them.

  - The organization's staff has a high level of training or higher education in their field.

  - Experts support the organization and make public note of its leadership or staff as exemplary.

  - The organization's staff has published materials or developed training or curricula.

- **Focus on outcomes.** Effective intermediary organizations are not content with providing training and technical assistance. They collaborate with each FBCO they serve to ensure that the funding or services provided result in improved performance. They evaluate their training and technical assistance to improve it.

  - The organization employs a logic model that includes inputs, activities, outputs, indicators, and outcomes.

  - The organization ensures that all of its outcomes are aligned with its goals and with the goals of the funder.

  - The organization collects, analyzes, and reports its outcome data, and uses the data to improve services.

- **Maintain high standards.** Effective intermediaries know that they will be evaluated for fiscal and organizational performance, including the proper use of any public funds. These organizations create and adhere to organizational and fiscal plans, and they maintain excellent records.

  - The organization uses a budget and financial tracking system to allocate all expenses.

  - The organization has a record of securing and properly managing public and private grants.

  - The organization complies with laws regulating the public funding of religious organizations, and ensures that public funds are only used for non-religious activities.

Manage effective regranting programs. Effective intermediaries have the capacity to execute regranting programs using public and private funds. They have a rigorous and fair process for soliciting applications, reviewing and selecting subgrantees, distributing and monitoring awards, and reporting on their subgrants.

- The organization has a plan and schedule for its regranting program along with grantee selection criteria.

- The organization has implemented an outreach plan that ensures fair and open competition.

- The organization employs an objective grant review process and an independent review committee.

- The organization has a system to monitor grantee progress, outcomes, and expenditures.

Sustain new initiatives. Effective intermediaries have a track record of starting new initiatives and maintaining them beyond the period of initial funding. They develop realistic plans to sustain new initiatives and use various funding methods to support projects before the end of the grant period. These organizations possess the creative vision and entrepreneurship to launch and fund new initiatives.

- The organization has a track record of both attracting and maintaining new initiatives.

- The organization develops sustainability plans for new initiatives.

- The organization can draw from diverse revenue sources to maintain an initiative.

Build powerful partnerships. Effective intermediaries have a track record and culture of collaboration and partnership. They understand the value of strong, effective provider networks, as well as strong organizations. They know how to form and sustain partnerships to achieve shared goals.

- The organization has active partnerships of at least two years' duration.

- The organization has partnership goals and has achieved outcomes.

- The organization collaborates with partners in other sectors.

- The organization actively participates in community task forces, coalitions, planning groups, and so on.

TEN EMERGING PRACTICES

This section describes each of the emerging practices, including in each instance a case study of an intermediary who has successfully implemented the practice, the elements required to implement the practice, and its risks and benefits. The practices include:

Practice 1: Designing Replicable Programs
The intermediary can use this practice to design a program model that can be widely replicated, increasing the scale of an effective program.

Practice 2: Building University Partnerships
Intermediary organizations can help nonprofits to attract high caliber staff and advance the professionalism of the field by developing educational opportunities and standards for nonprofit professionals.

Practice 3: Developing Standards
This practice involves research, design, documentation, and dissemination of standards, as well as certifying that an organization adheres to the standards.

Practice 4: Aligning an Organization
This practice consists of addressing the organization's strategic objectives by developing departmental and employee work plans that support the achievement of strategic objectives.

Practice 5: Creating Multi-Sector Solutions
The roots of community problems are complex and interdependent, and solving them requires changing perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors using a combination of government, nonprofit, and business sector partnerships. This practice allows an intermediary to create, enable, and manage multi-sector partnerships to achieve social outcomes.

Practice 6: Managing Network Performance
This practice allows an intermediary to manage administrative activities for a network of social service providers, thereby relieving smaller organizations of a significant burden, freeing their capacity to provide direct services.

Practice 7: Providing Cluster Grants

This is the practice of giving grants to a network of organizations with a lead agency, usually a mature organization with the capacity to manage a sizeable grant, to lead a change effort, and to manage a network.

Practice 8: Incubating Service Providers

This practice provides community members with the tools they need to launch new grassroots organizations.

Practice 9: Assessing Readiness for Change

While the practice of conducting organizational assessments is not new, it has taken a significant step forward to incorporate an emerging practice adapted from for-profit management consulting and the related disciplines of change management and organizational development. This practice gives the intermediary a powerful tool for gaining insight into whether an organization is ready to benefit from a sustained change effort.

Practice 10: Supplying Capacity to Nontraditional Social Service Providers

In addition to building the capacity of traditional social service providers, intermediaries can help by engaging nontraditional providers, extending the reach of a diverse social services network to hard-to-serve populations that only nontraditional providers can reach.

PRACTICE 1: DESIGNING REPLICABLE PROGRAMS

Whether an intermediary is regranting funds or delivering programmatic consulting services (such as training and technical assistance), the effective intermediary can develop replicable systems and repeatable practices that enable it to assist beneficiary organizations in achieving programmatic outcomes. *Designing and Developing Replicable Programs* will improve an intermediary's ability to achieve programmatic results.

A *program model* embodies a set of parameters for program design, staffing, budgeting, evaluation, and other areas of program management. An affordable, research-validated program model can consistently produce desirable outcomes. It also generates a growing body of research that lends credibility to the model in the eyes of potential funders. It provides guidance, while allowing an organization to customize methods of implementation. Several implementations can lead to the development of best practices. The program developer often maintains a technical assistance, knowledge management, or training program to promote and reinforce these best practices. At the same time, the program model's developer seeks opportunities to innovate and extend the reach of the program by increasing the number of possible implementations.

> A program model provides guidance, while allowing an organization to customize methods of implementation.

Case Study

The After School Corporation (TASC) is an intermediary that has achieved breakthrough results with its widely replicated after-school program model. Its efforts have significantly increased both the scale and effectiveness of programming and in many cases created programs where no programs had previously existed. TASC identified a need for enhanced developmental opportunities for children who were being left on their own after school. TASC designed and developed a research-based program model for school-based after-school programming. The processes TASC used to move its program from concept to widely replicated model can be performed by any intermediary. Many other human service programs such as substance abuse centers, mentoring programs, employment counseling, and arts programs could be possible candidates.

Since 1998, TASC has pursued its mission of building public support for quality after-school programs in New York. The first nonprofit in the nation to build a citywide K-12 after-school system, TASC monitors, evaluates, supports, and obtains funding for after-school programs in New York City public schools. TASC's efforts have made sustainable, quality after-school programs available for tens of thousands of young people. TASC achieved this outcome through collaboration with community-based organizations that manage the after-school programs. Principals, teachers, and staff support the programs in the schools. City, state, and federal agencies have provided public resources. Generous corporations, foundations, and individuals have donated time and resources. To date, TASC supports more than 322 programs reaching more than 350,000 children and their families.

TASC began as a convening intermediary, building bridges between schools and communities, funders and program operators, service providers, and specialists in program and staff development.

Its role was to strengthen not only relationships among these groups, but also to build each organization's capacity. TASC used a grant to support activities directly and to leverage additional funds from other public and private sources. TASC then regranted the funds to community-based organizations to operate programs in public schools. To date, TASC has:

- Raised $490 million in private and public funds to support after-school programs, after an initial investment of $125 million

- Conceived and worked to enact New York State's first dedicated after-school funding resource, Advantage After-School

- Created the model that is the basis for the nation's largest citywide after-school system, the New York City Out-of-School Time (OST) Program

- Directly supported 322 after-school programs that served more than 300,000 youth in New York City, and helped establish programs for an additional 50,000 children in the state

- Achieved sustainability with an 80% program survival rate

- Improved math scores, school attendance, and literacy skills for participating children

- Accomplished all of its goals at a cost of approximately $1,700 per child per year

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for intermediaries with the capacity to not only design a program, but promote its replication. Summit participants considered the following elements essential to successfully implement this practice.

Conduct a needs analysis. To confirm that the program is needed, and that the program model meets the identified need with a discrete service, a thorough needs analysis must be performed. The intermediary must create an assessment plan that addresses the following questions:

- Application: What is the purpose of the assessment?

- Stakeholders: Who are the key organizations and individuals who care about the population's needs?

- Research questions: What do you need to know about the target population?

- Methodology: How will you collect the information?

- Roles: Who will collect the information?

- Timing: How long will the assessment take?

- Dissemination: With whom will you share the findings?

Identify champions. A champion could be a funder, an elected official, board member, or the leader of a large constituency that can help secure funding. Champions are responsible for maintaining momentum and garnering support for the effort. A champion must be influential, and have a strong motive for engagement (self interest, community interest, or both).

Design the program. As a result of the needs analysis, an intermediary will know how to design a model program targeted to the specific needs and interests that have been identified.

- Outcomes: Determine desired outcomes and how they will be measured. Keep them simple for the beneficiary organizations that will implement the program model. The aim of a program is its *goal*; the changes in a target population are *outcomes*, and proof of an outcome is an *indicator*.

- Resources: Once a design team decides on a desired outcome, they must determine what internal and external resources the organization can use to help design and launch the program.

- Strategies: The bulk of a program's time is taken up with implementing *strategies*, which are combinations of organized, coherent activities designed to produce an outcome (as measured by indicators). If a design team does not have a well-thought-out hypothesis about why the proposed activities work together to produce the desired outcomes, then the program model does not have strategies, it only has activities. Since there is a large body of literature on best and promising practices in many social service areas, a design team should first conduct a benchmarking study in which best practices are identified for the program. The term *best practice* means that a practice has been proven to work in an experimental setting and in many contexts. *Promising practices* show positive results in some practice settings, but need further study before they are validated. A design team could also field test a pilot program before implementing the model program. One option might be to consider implementing a smaller scale version of the program as a demonstration project. The value of a demonstration project is that designers have the opportunity to modify the program before spending more money on a wider launch. The design team should also identify what parts of the program can be customized, allowing service providers to modify the program for delivery in different settings.

- Cost: Model program design teams will want to maximize outcomes while minimizing costs. A cost-effective model is more likely to be attractive to funders and replicable for service providers. For a program model to enjoy stable funding, design teams carefully choose strategies they consider essential to the model.

Develop the program materials. To ensure that programs are consistently implemented in different contexts, the intermediary must develop a complete set of materials for use in planning, launching, and sustaining the program. These will include such materials as:

- Memoranda of understanding (MOUs)

- Sample agreements with other partners

- Organizational charts

- Job descriptions

- Job requirements (including required or recommended education, skills, and experience)

- Program participation forms (enrollment, service action planning, referral, confidentiality, and so on)

- Instructional materials, curriculum

- Guidebooks

- Templates, tools, and checklists

- Sample activities

- Access to a knowledge-sharing website for practice updates and peer learning

- Project management software

- Data collection and reporting tools (including performance measures and indicators)

Develop a cost model. A *cost model* consists of a set of budgetary parameters for the program's implementation. It communicates to the service provider what it can expect to spend, while also setting limits on costs. The cost model must include:

- Management and staffing plan

- Work breakdown structure (WBS) that estimates levels of effort for each staff person by project task

- Cost estimates for the program's non-labor-related costs, which can be used to render the cost of the program in terms of the cost per client

Engage social service providers. To replicate a cost-effective model, an intermediary must identify a willing pool of service providers. They must be in a position to serve the identified population, and committed to and enthusiastic about the program. The providers selected as early adopters (the first to implement the model) must be efficient enough to create the expected results in terms of number of clients served, and effective enough to attain the program's desired outcomes.

> A communications strategy is essential to reaching out to the pool of potential service providers. To roll out and replicate a program model, an intermediary must either have or obtain marketing know-how.

A communications strategy is essential to reaching out to the pool of potential service providers. To roll out and replicate a program model, an intermediary must either have or obtain marketing know-how. A local university may be a source of free marketing advice and planning. Graduate students in

business, public policy, or other related disciplines may welcome the opportunity to develop a marketing plan. A plan to market your program must identify:

- Purpose: To promote interest in, support for, and participation in implementing the program model.

- Desired outcomes: The number of providers the intermediary expects to enroll.

- Target audiences: Service provider pool, other stakeholders.

- Messages: The benefits for a target population a provider can expect from the program.

- Messengers: Champions, staff, volunteers, other stakeholders.

- Methods, mechanisms, and sources: Public service announcements, print publications, mailing list servers, websites, phone calls, community meetings, newsletters, and so on.

- Schedule: Dates for milestones.

Evaluate results. As with any program design, begin with the end in mind. An intermediary should ask itself what it intends the program to achieve, and design the program and evaluation at the same time. The term *evaluation* covers a range of activities, including studies in which the steps undertaken can show that the results the program achieves are attributable to it, and not to other factors. *Outcome measurement* documents what your program provides, what its intended impacts are, and whether or not it achieves them.

A rigorous evaluation process addresses both program outcomes and internal performance. When evaluation questions and performance measures are established at the beginning of the design process, reporting tools can be created that collect the necessary data. It is difficult, but not impossible, to retrofit evaluating criteria to an existing program. An intermediary can ensure the validity and usefulness of data when evaluation criteria are applied equally to each implementation. With training and follow-up technical assistance, creating or following an outcome measurement plan is usually within the reach of small service providers. In creating an outcome measurement plan for its model program, an intermediary should consider whether the outcomes are:

- Meaningfully related to the program's objectives

- Within the program's control to influence

- Realistic and attainable within the funding and reporting periods

- Written as change statements (will things increase, decrease, or stay the same?)

- Sequenced logically from short-term, to intermediate, to long-term outcomes

Benefits and Risks

If a program model is well-designed, it will produce predictable outcomes each time it is implemented. Any implementation that varies from expected performance can be quickly identified and assessed. An intermediary can provide assistance to bring an organization's performance in line with expectations, or study exceptional results to determine how they were obtained.

The research base of a replicated program model grows with each implementation, and it becomes easier to isolate and study the differences between programs. A standardized program is also more efficient to replicate. Furthermore, by developing one body of training and technical assistance knowledge that can be delivered repeatedly, the intermediary can increase effectiveness without increasing cost. Finally, if the program achieves its intended results, it becomes more attractive to policymakers and other government stakeholders, helping to ensure its growth.

The greatest risk of developing a program model is getting the model wrong. An intermediary must balance research, field testing, and variances in evaluation criteria with its desire to codify a program into a model.

Another risk in developing a program model is associated with replication. Because a model program is designed for a target population, the intermediary must ensure that each community service provider is serving the same type of population (with only minimal differences associated with such factors as locale). If the target populations are too different from the model's targeted population, each implementation will produce different results.

PRACTICE 2: BUILDING UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Intermediary organizations can help nonprofits attract high caliber professionals and advance the professionalism of the field by *Building University Partnerships* that develop educational opportunities and standards for nonprofit professionals. While opportunities for nonprofit staff members to develop themselves professionally are often available, the nonprofit organizations in which they work often cannot afford the cost of professional development, nor can many employees earning a nonprofit salary afford the cost of an advanced degree program. One effective practice for developing quality training and educational programs for nonprofit leaders and employees is for intermediaries to establish partnerships with local universities and other adult learning institutions. This practice strengthens the learning institution's relations with the community by pairing educational opportunities with the local nonprofit professionals' experience and expertise. As in all effective and sustainable partnerships, the interests of all parties must be addressed. Each partner has something of value to offer in exchange for something of value from the other partners.

> One effective practice for developing quality training and educational programs for nonprofit leaders and employees is for intermediaries to establish partnerships with local universities and other adult learning institutions.

In this practice, nonprofit professionals receive scholarships or steep discounts on educational programs. In return, universities gain access to experienced practitioners who contribute to the learning environment through class participation and as guest lecturers. University programs also benefit from strengthened ties to the local community, resulting in opportunities for internships and consulting engagements. Intermediaries benefit by bringing educational services to nonprofit community organizations.

Case Study
The Center for Nonprofit Management (CNM) has developed educational opportunities and standards for nonprofit professionals through its many partnerships with universities and learning institutions. CNM was formed in 1986 by the Frist Foundation and the United Way of Metropolitan Nashville to improve the impact of and appreciation for the nonprofit sector by building the skills of nonprofit leaders and employees. It provides a full set of training, consulting, and evaluation programs, so that nonprofit board members, executives, and staff members can enhance their services and increase their impact. CNM has formed the following partnerships with local universities and learning institutions:

- Vanderbilt University provides an $80,000 annual scholarship to a nonprofit executive to attend its two-year Executive MBA program

- Lipscomb University provides a $36,000 annual scholarship for one nonprofit executive to attend its two-year Master's degree in Conflict Management program

- Belmont University and CNM jointly developed a Master's degree in Nonprofit Leadership degree program

- The Tennessee Foreign Language Institute offers discounts for staff of member agencies to increase and improve bilingual services
- Vanderbilt University hosted and sponsored CNM's 2008 nonprofit conference

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for intermediaries with a strong track record of developing partnerships, and a large network of nonprofit professionals interested in pursuing courses and credentials in the nonprofit field. Summit participants considered the following elements essential to successfully implement this practice.

Conduct an asset-mapping exercise. The intermediary should gather its leadership, employees, and stakeholders into small groups and identify each person's network of contacts, resources, and other assets. Document the intermediary's social network and compile a list of personal and professional contacts with connections to universities and other learning institutions. A list of media and public relations contacts may also prove useful, if the intermediary needs to enhance its public relations capacity.

Build relationships with contacts connected to the university. Invest time in developing relationships with the identified contacts from the intermediary's network. Respect their time and understand their self interests. Ask how can they be rewarded and recognized for their efforts.

Approach a university, incrementally if necessary. Engage the leadership of university programs that most closely align with the learning and development needs of nonprofit professionals. Intermediary contacts with connections at the university should facilitate introductions to departmental and university leadership. Offer to send an executive director with public speaking and training skills to serve as guest lecturer for a course in a related degree or certification program. The intermediary may offer small scholarships to encourage nonprofit professionals to enroll in existing certificate or degree program courses.

Demonstrate how the partnership can help the university achieve its objectives. As the relationship develops, the intermediary can point out that increased diversity in the classroom improves the university experience for all students, and that local nonprofit expertise can provide a concrete community perspective to classroom discussions. An intermediary/university partnership can achieve several objectives, including increased visibility and recognition for the university, opportunities for community engagement (for example, student internships and faculty research), enrollment from a previously underserved group of professionals, and access to expert practitioners to serve as guest presenters and adjunct faculty.

Ensure partners are in alignment. The nonprofit sector leadership, university faculty and department-level leadership, and the intermediary's board of directors must all agree on the initiative's objectives, preferably through memoranda of understanding (MOUs). These agreements should cover goals, objectives, desired outcomes, partners' roles, work plan, timeline, and so on. The nonprofit community must also be invested. Professionals from local nonprofits must want to enroll in the programs, and must be motivated to succeed.

Involve the offices of admissions or multicultural affairs. Contact the university's admissions office or the office that is focused on multicultural affairs to recommend the names of promising nonprofit professional candidates. Help the university reach out to potential candidates through a marketing campaign using the intermediary's mailing list of nonprofit professionals.

Cultivate relationships with faculty members. Because academic researchers are constantly searching for new research opportunities, the intermediary can contact faculty members in cooperative extension services, social work, public policy, business, education, and other disciplines to suggest ways in which their work connects with work performed by nonprofits.. If an intermediary can present faculty members with opportunities to explore the intersection of theory and practice, known as praxis, they will help the intermediary achieve its objectives.

Benefits and Risks

Educational partnerships can benefit communities and universities through cross-pollination. Universities can diversify their potential client base while the nonprofit practitioner provides a local perspective to each class in which he or she enrolls. The university can build trust and enhance its reputation in the community through partnerships, nonprofit curriculum development, and credentialing of nonprofit professionals, who acquire skills and competencies for their organizations. The intermediary can encourage the university to create credential programs for nonprofit professions. Intermediary/university partnerships can also encourage universities to create courses, and certificate and degree programs on nonprofit-related topics.

One risk is the natural tension between academic and experiential learning, which the intermediaries negotiating the partnership must balance in the curricula. Incorporating local expertise through guest lectures, working local community organization partnerships into class assignments, and finding other strategies to capitalize on community assets will help mitigate this risk. Another risk is navigating a university's bureaucracy and overcoming associated barriers. One strategy to mitigate this risk is to recruit university officials to join the intermediary's board of directors, thereby

> Educational partnerships can benefit communities and universities through cross-pollination.

creating a natural champion for a partnership initiative. Another strategy is to identify and collaborate with non-academic professionals with university contacts to open doors. Finally, a university may be unable or unwilling to provide training at a price that nonprofit professionals and their organizations can afford, so the intermediary must find outside funding while working to identify educational opportunities at the lowest cost.

PRACTICE 3: DEVELOPING STANDARDS

To help nonprofit organizations improve performance and withstand scrutiny, intermediaries can develop and promulgate performance standards for nonprofit governance and management in a particular social service sector or geographic area. Standards for nonprofit performance codify the level of competence necessary to succeed at the organization's declared endeavor. The practice of *Developing Standards for Nonprofit Organizations* involves research, documentation, and dissemination, as well as some means of certifying that an organization adheres to the standards to complete the process.

Developing and promoting standards can raise nonprofits' awareness about the organizations, programs, and resources that can help them learn and demonstrate competencies in a manner that funders will embrace.

For FBCOs to achieve long-term sustainability and growth in a competitive funding environment, these service providers must consistently inspire the confidence of public and private funders, venture philanthropists, and social entrepreneurs that their organizations are competent to receive and manage funding. Funders want assurances that their grantees can manage programs and internal systems, adhere to grant requirements, use funds appropriately and cost-effectively, track and report progress, and measure and report performance results. Developing and promoting standards can raise nonprofits' awareness about the organizations, programs, and resources that can help them learn and demonstrate competencies in a manner that funders will embrace. Intermediaries can help develop standards and the associated credentials that enables a nonprofit to demonstrate its professionalism, and overcome the perception of poor management.

Case Study

The Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations (MD Nonprofits) is a national leader in the development of standards for nonprofit governance, ethics, and accountability. Its mission is to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations by strengthening the ethics and accountability practices of nonprofits, while bolstering public support for the nonprofit sector. After two years of research and development by a team of expert volunteers, MD Nonprofits launched the Standards for Excellence program in 1998.

The program attracted the notice of state and national organizations interested in adopting the Standards for Excellence. MD Nonprofits developed a replication program that would enable state nonprofit associations, national organizations, and associations to become providers of the Standards for Excellence program. MD Nonprofits launched the Standards for Excellence Institute, which manages expansion efforts, and enlists new partners to deliver the program to nonprofits nationwide. The program is offered through MD Nonprofits and through replication partners in Colorado, Idaho, Louisiana, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, as well as through the National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management. A licensed consultant program has sixteen consultants in fourteen states. An intermediary organization interested in becoming a replication partner can follow the process established by MD Nonprofits, or it can customize another standards program.

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for intermediaries with a mature organizational culture, an understanding of the nonprofit field, and a capacity to benchmark best practices. Summit participants considered the following elements essential to successfully implement this practice.

Assess the maturity of your organizational culture. Successful standardization requires a mature organizational culture that is flexible enough to change its current business or program practices. The organization must be simultaneously introspective and forward-thinking. Continual process improvement must be part of its learning culture, and its staff must understand how to lead internal and external change efforts. Also, these organizations must be able to acknowledge their underlying similarities to other organizations.

Assess your organization's understanding of the nonprofit field. Any standards initiative requires a substantial understanding of the nonprofit field. You must be able to identify the best practices for a number of different organizational functions, and to develop new best practices for areas where none exist.

Assess your organization's ability to benchmark best practices. *Benchmarking* is the process of learning and adapting the best practices of leading organizations. Benchmarking requires the careful, thorough, and systematic discovery of proven strategies that are replicable, sustainable, and cost-effective. It is essential to identify exemplary organizations willing to share their practices.

Recruit a work team to develop any standards program. The work team should reflect the diversity of the field and your region, and include external nonprofit partners as well as internal staff, so different voices may be heard. Dedicate at least one full-time staff member as team leader for the project to ensure project execution and continuity of institutional knowledge. Other roles include evaluators, practitioners, coordinators, and writers.

Research other standards. Before starting a new standards program, research existing general standards. Extending an existing set of standards may make more sense than developing a completely new set. Save time and cut costs by minimizing the number of new standards that must be created. The degree to which the effort will succeed is determined in part by thoroughness of the research.

Assess your organization's ability to attract financial resources. A funder that is willing to pay for a standards movement will likely be willing to champion the program as well. A leadership group among the stakeholders, including funders and the organizations that the standards will be applied to, must be identified. This group will keep stakeholders engaged in the process. Promote awareness of organizational effectiveness, accountability, and performance standards among the stakeholders at events they are likely to attend. MD Nonprofits estimates the cost of creating a new standards program at $150,000 to $200,000.

Develop a means of certifying organizations. Certification is a significant reward that validates participants and ensures credibility. An external auditor will bring accountability to the process and ensure that there is no actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Publicize the standards. Crediting the contributors gives them an incentive to publicize your project and extend its reach.

Develop a training and technical assistance plan. Develop a training curriculum that will equip organizations to implement the standards. The curriculum should be developed in modules so it can be delivered in a variety of forums, such as in-person and virtual workshops, on-demand toolkits, or onsite technical assistance visits.

Establish a schedule for periodic review. The standards should be reviewed periodically, annually at a minimum, to ensure their continuing adequacy, accuracy, and relevance. When candidate organizations review the standards, a recent publication date may help them choose to proceed.

Benefits and Risks

A nonprofit's certification and adherence to agreed-upon standards can remove barriers to market entry. A nonprofit organization may be able to compete for grant funds that it would have been otherwise unable to access. Adhering to a credible, high standard can be a competitive advantage. Following established standards helps the internal organizational assessment process because progress can be measured using objective criteria. Because certification indicates effective business processes and practices, a positive correlation between adherence to standards and running an effective nonprofit organization may develop. Nonprofits with a standards certification may be seen as more healthy and reliable.

Given MD Nonprofits' estimated cost of $15,000 to $200,000 for a new standards initiative in a defined statewide community, many intermediaries will be targeting a smaller geographic area containing fewer nonprofits and using existing standards to reduce costs. In any case, a rigorous cost/benefit analysis must be performed to ensure that the standards development and implementation initiative is scaled to an appropriate level to deliver a sufficient return on investment.

The success of any standards initiative is inextricably linked to the commitment of participating organizations. They must view the standards as necessary to their viability and sustainability. Significant marketing, communications, and follow-up will be required to identify and effectively engage each organization's self-interest.

PRACTICE 4: ALIGNING AN ORGANIZATION

The best intermediaries continually try to improve their services, but much of this effort is directed outward toward service delivery, and an inward focus is frequently lacking. Strategic planning for an organization is usually performed by the executive leadership. Staff members often do not participate, with the result that the strategic plan has little meaning for them. Organizational alignment brings the strategic planning process to life for everyone. The practice of *Aligning an Organization* consists of addressing the organization's strategic objectives by developing departmental and employee work plans that support the achievement of strategic objectives. An organization is in alignment when each staff member has a stake in the organization's strategic goals, and knows his or her role in achieving strategic objectives.

Case Study

The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), founded in 1991, works with community partners across the country to prevent and end homelessness by creating permanent, affordable homes where people receive support services in a stable environment. CSH operates in sixteen states and in Washington, DC, and provides targeted technical assistance in urban, suburban, and rural communities around the country. CSH promotes the understanding and acceptance of supportive housing as an easily developed and effective response to homelessness. CSH provides advocacy, expertise, leadership, and financial resources to decrease the social costs of homelessness, and to advance supportive housing for people struggling with disabling health conditions.

> This practice consists of addressing the organization's strategic objectives by developing departmental and employee work plans that support the achievement of strategic objectives.

CSH designed, launched, and successfully implemented an organizational alignment process that enables CSH to focus on only those activities that help the intermediary achieve its goals. Each individual in the organization knows exactly how his or her individual performance affects the overall organization's progress.

CSH will reach its ten-year strategic goal of helping communities create 150,000 new supportive housing units by 2012. To date, CSH has leveraged over $1 billion and provided nearly $125 million in loans and grants, which led to the successful development of more than 18,000 homes for over 23,000 people, with another 11,000 supportive housing units forthcoming. CSH also helped secure funding for an additional 70,000 homes.

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for an intermediary that thrives on continuous improvement. An intermediary implementing this practice must be willing to dedicate the overhead time (that is, time not related to a project) necessary to execute each phase of the practice. Summit participants considered the following elements essential to successfully implement this practice.

Assess readiness. The organization's board must be ready to accept measurable goals as the foundation of the intermediary's programming. Some boards will not be interested, and their interest must be cultivated by linking their goals to performance data. Board training and recruitment strategies can be used to prepare the board. Unless an organization can measure its costs per client served, it is not ready to implement this practice. If your staff does not believe that their work can be measured in terms of outcomes, the capacity must be developed. Staff training, job redesign, and even changes in staffing may be necessary.

Develop a strategic plan. The strategic plan is an essential element of organizational alignment. It provides a unified vision for the intermediary's work and articulates clear, measurable goals. To ensure buy-in from teams and staff, the intermediary can use a collaborative planning process that draws in the expertise and perspectives of front-line staff and management. Involving front-line staff throughout the planning process helps ensure that they can see how they fit into the vision, mission, and work of the organization. They need to know that the goals are grounded in the reality of their work, and that the new ideas and opportunities they have identified are incorporated in the plan. Other stakeholders that can be involved include funders, donors, volunteers, clients, and community members.

Enumerating goals is important for demonstrating and tracking progress. The goals should be ambitious, but achievable and measurable. The goals must be translated to the work of teams and individual staff members. Most organizations develop a two- to four-year strategic plan, because the effort required to develop these plans is too great to perform annually. While many kinds of strategic planning processes work well in the different organizational cultures, the resulting strategic plan must contain measurable outcomes and should give individuals at every level of the organization the opportunity to provide input to the plan's development.

Translate the strategic plan into team plans. The strategic plan and its target outcome measures are presented to the team leaders or managers of organizational units. They review the goals and confirm whether or not the goals are achievable. Assuming that they are, the managers will work with their teams to develop team work plans for the upcoming year. The teams seek clarification of strategic goals, tie their efforts to one or more of these organizational goals, and determine the yearly workload. The teams and their managers share and review team work plans to ensure the entire organization understands the contributions of each team.

Translate the strategic plan and team plans into staff plans. After the team completes work plans, each staff member completes an individual annual work plan. The individual plan mirrors the team plan, but individuals do not circulate their work plans beyond their immediate supervisors. Individuals and supervisors determine the employee's outcomes and workload is distributed accordingly. Supervisors conduct performance reviews at regular intervals (monthly, quarterly,

biannually, or annually). During these reviews, supervisors and employees should have accurate and up-to-date individual and team performance data so that they can discuss the staff member's progress toward performance outcomes.

Build a budget. Budget planning should follow work planning so the budget supports the goals and activities articulated in the strategic plan and work plans. Having a clear sense of what the organization intends to do will determine what money must be spent. Planning what must be done in each organizational unit allows funds to be effectively allocated. Each manager submits a budget to support the team work plan. The leadership reviews the team budgets with an understanding of the financial and programmatic risks, trade-offs, and opportunities associated with budgetary decisions. The budget helps identify fund development needs and is a key input to the fund development plan for the upcoming year. The leadership team presents this budget to the board of directors who can then assess progress against the measurable goals.

Track progress against the goals, priorities, and objectives in the strategic and annual work plans. An intermediary should dedicate resources to designing and developing a project tracking system that uses data from a variety of sources to demonstrate organizational and team progress against the goals, priorities, and objectives in the strategic plan. The system should have the capacity to track outcomes, activities, costs, and other data essential to measuring success. Managers should review reports showing year-to-date performance each month, and the board should review them each quarter. Reports should be readily available to all staff members through an intranet or other knowledge-sharing system. Managers should be encouraged to discuss the results with their staff.

Benefits and Risks

Organizations that implement this practice will be able to measure the performance of the organization, its work units, and individual staff members. The organization will reduce the risk of mission drift and stay aligned with its goals. Organizational alignment helps employees and teams eliminate pointless activities and focus on activities that support strategic goals. This practice also facilitates productive conversations about performance. Staff members can make informed decisions about how they spend their time, which should lead to actions that produce program results. The performance improvements resulting from this practice will make the organization more attractive to funders, partners, and clients. In addition, modeling this practice enables an intermediary to help smaller organizations with their planning and performance measurement.

While it is clear that return on investment is high, an intermediary attempting to develop and execute this practice should be aware that it requires a significant investment of time and other resources, especially the first time it is attempted. The practice must become an organic part of the organizational culture. A heavy-handed approach, from the top down, will fail to gain support among staff and managers. Executive leadership must actively listen to employee and management concerns, incorporate their feedback, and keep them in the loop as plans are developed.

The largest obstacle an organization may face in implementing this practice is the identification of performance measures. The data collection processes should be as simple as possible at first, with levels of complexity added as the organization matures.

PRACTICE 5: CREATING MULTI-SECTOR SOLUTIONS

Today's communities are economically, socially, and politically complex. The problems facing these communities are similarly complex; they reflect the interdependencies of institutions, systems, and stakeholder groups that have both competing and shared goals, values, beliefs, and behaviors. The roots of these complex problems are also interdependent, cutting across public, business, and nonprofit sectors, and solving them involves changing perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors. These kinds of community challenges require multi-sector interventions involving government, nonprofit, and business sector partnerships. *Creating Multi-Sector Solutions* is a practice that creates, enables, and manages multi-sector partnerships to achieve social outcomes. This practice engages all the sectors to create a tailored local solution.

The process of examining a complex problem from diverse perspectives and of crafting a multi-sector solution can shed light on policy and economic barriers.

An intermediary using the multi-sector approach to solving complex problems shepherds an initiative from idea to implementation, engaging public, business, and nonprofit sectors to create and enact a solution that benefits partners in all sectors, while providing a needed community service. Self-interest brings partners to the table to develop a solution that benefits each partner, as well as provides a community solution that can be replicated. The process of examining a complex problem from diverse perspectives and of crafting a multi-sector solution can shed light on policy and economic barriers. Changing policies to eliminate these barriers can become a study in systems change. The solution can then be exported and adapted in other geographic areas.

Case Study

Enterprise Community Partners (Enterprise), founded in 1982 by Jim and Patty Rouse, has mastered the multi-sector approach to complex problems. Its founders realized they could impact the lives of thousands by combining public, business, nonprofit, and policy strategies to achieve housing goals. Enterprise encourages the leaders in each sector to collaborate, understand each other's self-interests, and build trust. Because each sector has a unique role to play in tackling a piece of the complex problem, Enterprise helps partners access each others' assets, strengths, and influence. Enterprise has the expertise and credibility to reach out to lenders, investors, community organizations, elected officials and administrators at all levels of government, for-profit and nonprofit housing developers, and other community stakeholders. The partnerships clarify problems, identify barriers, and customize local solutions. By finding solutions and expertise in the business sector and creating models for adoption through the nonprofit sector, Enterprise can advocate for policies that foster wide adoption through the public sector. The process they have used has several steps:

- Working with local stakeholders in several sectors to identify problems, barriers, and possible solutions

- Implementing locally-tailored solutions

- Promoting and helping to enact policy changes that reinforce and replicate these solutions

Enterprise disseminates its practices and lessons learned through:

• Publishing materials, including more than 90 self-produced publications on its website

• Maintaining a library of over 800 documents on a variety of community development topics

• Providing technical assistance to help boards, partners, staff, and administration

• Developing and delivering training and hosting national conferences

• Providing online tutorials

Enterprise's efforts have created and preserved 23,000 units of affordable housing. Its technical assistance and policy teams have created new financing mechanisms for community development, involved government and business in the creation of housing trust funds and loan pools, advocated for local inclusionary zoning, helped states incorporate the Green Communities Criteria into the awarding of tax credits, and provided technical assistance resulting in successful large-scale mixed-income housing developments.

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for intermediaries with experience managing collaborative partnerships and networks, especially with nonprofit, business, and public sectors. These intermediaries tend to recruit influential business leaders to participate on their boards. An intermediary with experience in partnership management in only one sector must decide whether it can form multi-sector partnerships. Having influential business leaders on the intermediary's board is a good starting point. Summit participants considered the following elements essential to successfully implement this practice.

Identify local opportunities for a multi-sector solution. For any initiative to address a local need, the intermediary can ask questions such as: What is the need addressed by the solution being proposed? What are the available resources that would create opportunities for a solution? What are the organizational costs incurred by this solution? What environmental conditions may make this solution optimal?

Engage local leaders. Reach out to the intermediary's social network to find people who can engage local leaders. An intermediary can engage nonprofit social service providers, public agencies, and businesses to help solve complex problems when interests are aligned. Clarify the problem and the barriers to a solution from diverse perspectives. Communicate to prospective partners in the language that they use. For example, a homeless prevention initiative can lead to a decrease in mortgage foreclosures. The dollar savings that a housing lender can realize by sponsoring this intervention may persuade the lender to support the intervention instead of pursuing legal recourse to recover lost mortgage revenues. A public official may be persuaded by the reduction in the number of families moving into emergency housing.

Design a solution. Using research-based strategies and leveraging the leaders' knowledge and expertise, design a multi-sector solution that addresses the problem. The solution to a complex problem will almost always require compromise.

Recruit partners throughout the process. Not all of the leaders you have engaged as development partners will agree to become implementation partners. Recruiting partners may be necessary throughout the process of systems change. At the same time, consider how to communicate to all sectors in language that is meaningful and in line with their self-interest to engage new partners throughout the process. Give all participants, new and old, an interest in implementing the solution.

Establish performance metrics. Establish the overarching goal, identify supporting objectives, and establish milestones and performance metrics. Consider how the strengths of each sector involved in the collaboration lend themselves to different but meaningful metrics for everyone in the partnership. Align milestones and performance metrics with each partner's self interest, using data collected from each partner. The metrics must translate the benefits into units of measurement that stakeholders in each sector can understand. Ensure continued alignment among partners by measuring progress against incremental milestones.

Implement the solution. Successful implementation relies on collaborative partnerships and networks. Maintain the collaboration by establishing professional standards and aligning work processes. Establish and manage a work plan, including roles, accountabilities, and timelines for leaders, planners, and implementers.

An effective multi-sector partnership requires skillful navigation of the challenges associated with diverse sectors cooperating. There may still be skepticism among the sectors, and intermediaries must be aware of common misperceptions, such as: businesses only care about the bottom line, governments are slow and bureaucratic, and nonprofit "do-gooders" misunderstand the real world. An intermediary leader must have excellent facilitation skills to ensure that the group builds consensus, trust, and cohesion. An intermediary facilitator must be able to expose the built-in barriers and contradictions among systems and institutions to craft a workable solution.

Publicize the solution. Consider each project a case study, and chronicle its development and achievements. Engage stakeholders with public relations expertise to engage influential public and private organizations and people whose mission and goals align with your partnership's goals. Contact media outlets to build momentum for policy change and adoption. Gather local media to cover

the project, especially at the unveiling. Seek opportunities to present the multi-sector solution at symposia, conferences, and other forums. Meet with congressional representatives. Create a website that documents your success.

Benefits and Risks

A multi-sector approach can address the interdependent root causes of some of our most intractable social problems. A multi-sector network can achieve greater things than a single organization. An intermediary organization can help resolve conflicts and contradictions that inevitably crop up along the way. A systems change entails restructuring the formal relationships among organizations, institutions, and people to accommodate remedies to social problems.

Intermediaries adopting this approach must mitigate the following risks:

- Failing to identify the self interests of each sector, and losing commitments

- Failing to communicate in language that resonates with each sector

- Insufficiently demonstrating success, thereby reducing partners' trust in the collaboration, the solution, or partners from other sectors

To mitigate these risks, the collaboration must not only articulate the long-term desired outcome, but also identify incremental milestones, and measure progress against these milestones using language and units of measure that resonate with each partner, and that align with their self interests.

PRACTICE 6: MANAGING NETWORK PERFORMANCE

As funders of social services become more focused on outcomes, social service agencies must be able to measure performance and manage programs accordingly. Smaller organizations may not have the capacity to measure and manage performance sufficiently well to compete with larger organizations. Intermediaries can organize supportive networks that allow the smaller organizations to focus on service delivery. Good intermediaries can measure performance for their beneficiary organizations. Exceptional intermediaries are measuring and managing the collective performance of a network of providers.

An intermediary can measure and *Manage Network Performance* to leverage its greater capacity to manage administrative activities for a network of social service providers. This support structure relieves smaller organizations of a significant burden, freeing their capacity to provide direct services. In this practice, the agencies make their performance data transparent to all members of the network, while the intermediary executes the performance management and measurement functions, performs financial functions, and establishes the collaborative structure. Providing performance measurement and management services involves an intermediary in meeting the strategic goals of the funder.

Good intermediaries can measure performance for their beneficiary organizations. Exceptional intermediaries are measuring and managing the collective performance of a network of providers.

Case Study

In 1996, welfare reform resulted in the transfer of workforce development efforts from New York City agencies to outsourced performance-based contracts. Small organizations bidding on these contracts allied themselves with organizations that could compete with large companies. Seedco acted as an intermediary to allow small organizations to establish themselves as viable workforce development agencies. Seedco executed the performance and contract-management functions, provided cash reserves to accommodate the government's reimbursement timelines, and assumed part of the financial risk. Seedco and its partners use a centralized, customized, outcome-driven management system, called Performance Measurement and Management (PM&M), to achieve identified outcomes, pinpoint operational, fiscal, and administrative hurdles, and foster learning and collaboration. All of Seedco's programs use PM&M to ensure the quality of program services, achieve performance objectives, and engage in continuous improvement. PM&M includes the following components:

- Performance Management Reports: This component produces outcome-oriented management reports each month that describe the status of quality and performance indicators.

- Continuous Performance Improvement: This component enables participants to review program strengths and weaknesses and create any necessary corrective action plans.

- <u>MIS Database</u>: This component is a data tracking and reporting tool that tracks performance indicators.

- <u>SmartStat</u>: This component is an analytical and graphical tool that assesses data on a range of indicators, allowing Seedco to review the performance of community organizations individually or in comparison with other organizations.

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for intermediaries with a systems perspective, exceptional performance measurement and management practices and tools, and a long-term commitment to raising the performance of a network of providers. Summit participants considered the following elements essential to successfully implement this practice.

Form a network of qualified social service providers to collectively address a community need.
The intermediary must recruit a group of service providers that can consistently meet performance targets. These service providers must be willing to share their data with the intermediary and the other members of the network.

Plan the initiative. The initiative must be directed toward an overarching community goal that is aligned with the intermediary's mission and business practices. The intermediary must design and develop the initiative to meet that goal. The design includes an analysis of community needs, evidence-based strategies to address those needs, success criteria, the business processes that will be used to implement the initiative, and the tools and technologies that support the business processes. Outcomes, indicators, and units of service must be uniformly defined, so that the intermediary can aggregate collected data and report meaningful results across the entire network of providers. The plan describes the network structure and its communication protocols, along with the roles and responsibilities of the intermediary, each of its network partners, funders, and other stakeholders. The plan must also include a project plan with milestones for each phase of the initiative and for the achievement of the initiative's goal.

Determine what the intermediary will provide. The intermediary must have the capacity to provide management services to the network of service providers, including performance measurement, data warehousing, network management, and contract or grants management. The intermediary must either procure or develop the required program tools, MIS systems, curricula, and assessment tools. The program tools offered to the network partners must be designed to maximize the network's efficiency and effectiveness, allowing the network partners to focus on producing results.

Negotiate and execute an MOU. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is an agreement between the intermediary and each network provider that formalizes the roles and responsibilities first described in the initiative's design plan. Clarifying expectations in an MOU is essential to setting limits, communicating requirements, and defining successful outcomes for both parties. The MOU should include a description of the management services and program tools that the intermediary will provide.

Collect and report data. As the network partners fulfill their responsibilities, they will use the business processes and data collection tools to capture program data. The network participants can view the data entered by all of the other providers, as well as their own. The service providers may work to achieve different program outcomes or select different outcome indicators, but they will choose from a set of uniformly defined outcomes and indicators to capture their data. This uniformity allows the intermediary to aggregate the data from all of the providers to report meaningful results for the entire network in real time.

Improve performance. The efficient processes and tools for capturing, aggregating, and reporting outcome data accelerate improvement efforts. The intermediary can test and compare strategies, thereby facilitating innovation and increasing effectiveness. Rapid feedback of performance data into program design allows the intermediary to evaluate its strategies with previously unimaginable speed.

Benefits and Risks

The ability to manage network performance makes an intermediary an invaluable partner to funders and policy makers. Quick and consistent access to accurate performance data for a network of providers gives funders and policymakers tangible, reliable evidence of return on investment and enables strategic decision-making regarding the allocation of limited social services dollars. As funders increase their performance requirements, intermediaries need closer contact with grantees to ensure that they are meeting performance demands. Skilled contract managers must align performance management systems with contract goals and requirements.

An intermediary can incur risk by assuming responsibility for a provider network. It must have the capacity to hold grantees accountable for their performance as well as manage some risks for those organizations. It must be able to ensure that the money needed for programs is always available, even when funds are not ready to be released from a grantor. Without the proper systems and data collection tools in place, partner organizations may fail to meet their goals. Establishing a pilot project using data collection tools and systems among a few providers may help reduce this risk.

PRACTICE 7: PROVIDING CLUSTER GRANTS

Community leaders, public and private funders, and intermediaries are increasingly shifting from supporting and strengthening social service providers to supporting and strengthening collaborative networks or clusters of providers. Leading intermediaries are adopting practices that build network capacity, as well as organizational capacity. *Providing Cluster Grants* is the practice of giving grants to a network of organizations with a lead agency, usually a mature organization with the capacity to manage a sizeable grant, lead a change effort, and manage a network. The cluster involves a small, manageable number of organizations. As the capacity of the lead agency to manage the network improves, the network's ability to integrate new partners will increase.

With this practice, it is important that all the organizations in a cluster come together for a common purpose. Their goals and objectives must be developed in collaboration. A shared purpose gives the partners a reason to convene, share knowledge and practices, and reach consensus on how the cluster will achieve its goals. Clusters maximize their efficiency when its member organizations fully participate in the network. The cluster must set goals for meeting critical community needs, building the cluster's capacity, and building the capacity of the individual organizations. Articulating these goals and devising strategies to meet them will increase the chances that organizations can achieve their desired community outcomes.

> Leading intermediaries are adopting practices that build network capacity, as well as organizational capacity.

Case Study

Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston (BMA) is a nearly 50-year old alliance of more than 100 faith-based and youth-serving organizations, representing over 20,000 members and serving more than 26,000 youth through its High-Risk Youth Network. BMA has a history of addressing the complex challenges of youth violence and poverty, particularly where the need has been the greatest: in Boston's poorest black neighborhoods. BMA empowers youth by involving them in the leadership of its programs.

BMA leads the Boston Capacity Tank, which builds the capacity of FBCOs by awarding competitive subgrants, and providing training and technical assistance. BMA approaches its capacity-building mission by providing consulting services and grants to networks or cluster grants, rather than through grants to individual organizations.

The Capacity Tank awards $40,000 cluster grants to existing youth-serving social service partnerships to strengthen the capacity of the partnership, as well as the individual organizations. Drawing on BMA's experience, the Capacity Tank requires cluster partnerships to include three to eight organizations. A cluster must demonstrate that it has already been working to address a community need. BMA's goal is to strengthen active clusters, not form new ones. BMA helps clusters establish, align, measure, and report organizational outcomes, cluster outcomes, and community outcomes. BMA's Compassion Capital Fund (CCF) subawardees (the cluster leads) reported that they serve 26,372 youth, or 23% of the young people in the city.

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for an intermediary that has identified a social service need, a diverse group of providers, and a funder that is willing to support the funding of clusters rather than individual organizations. Summit participants considered the following elements essential to successfully implement this practice.

Assess internal capacity. The intermediary must assess the capacity and commitment of its staff, consultants, and board of directors to design, develop, and manage a cluster grant program. If capacity is lacking, a staff or board development effort may be necessary. The staffing needs should be documented in a staffing plan.

Create an outreach plan. The intermediary should create a comprehensive outreach plan to promote the availability of cluster grant funding to any eligible group of organizations. This outreach plan should include mailings to FBCOs, and funding announcements posted to community websites, in local newsletters and bulletins, on radio and television broadcasts, and in local print media. An intermediary can keep the cost of the outreach plan to a minimum by seeking low-cost options, such as community-access cable channels and public-service announcements. Gaining the interest of a newspaper or television journalist can result in the wide dissemination of the message at no cost.

Create the grant application process. Design a grant application package that clearly defines the purpose of the cluster grants, qualifying criteria, program requirements, elements of the project plan, reporting requirements (including due dates), application evaluation criteria, and period of performance. All of these elements are commonly found in grant-application packages, but cluster grants also include several unique elements. Applications for cluster grants must describe the lead organization's partnership: the number of partners, the duration of their partnership, its track record addressing the community's needs, and evidence of collaboration. The application must describe how the grant funds will be used to strengthen the cluster as well as the individual organizations. Finally, the grant application must describe the ways in which the proposed use of funds will improve the delivery of services and achieve the desired outcomes among the target population.

Conduct information sessions. The granting process should include information sessions that inform organizations in the community about the concept and purpose of cluster grants, and the program requirements. Review the application with attendees, and be prepared to answer questions about the selection process.

Assemble an application review committee. Identify a group of community leaders to serve on the application review committee. Train them to objectively score the applications. Ensure that they have all resources, such as evaluation criteria, available to them as they review the submissions. Use the partnership's history, shared goals, and individual organization goals as criteria. The demonstrated history of working together, the clarity and feasibility of the cluster's shared goals, and the clarity and feasibility of the individual cluster members' goals should all be weighed when scoring grant applications.

Select the grantees. An oversight committee should review the results of the scoring process by scoring a random sample of grant applications, and comparing their results with the application committee's results. If there is a discrepancy, a more comprehensive review may be required. The oversight committee then reviews the top-scoring applications in detail, taking into consideration such other factors as the priority of the community need addressed by the application, the funder's goals for distributing grants to both faith-based and community organizations, what neighborhoods will be served, and so on. The oversight committee makes the final award determination. The intermediary should notify each applicant of the outcome in writing, whether a grant is awarded or not. If time and resources allow, provide constructive feedback to unsuccessful applicants to build their grant-writing capacity.

Set the terms of the grant. Negotiate an agreement with each lead organization so that all the stipulations of the grant are understood by grantees and their cluster partners. The project requirements as well as the contents of the lead agency's grant application (including the proposed project plan) should become part of the agreement.

Provide training and technical assistance. Conduct a needs assessment of the lead agencies to determine their strengths and weaknesses, and which learning objectives would best be met by group training, one-to-one technical assistance engagements, or peer-to-peer mentoring. For example, group training might address reporting requirements, technical assistance might help the lead agency refine and execute its work plan, and peer-to-peer mentoring might match the assets of one lead agency with the needs of another.

Monitor progress. The intermediary conducts sites visits, reviews the lead agencies' reports, and compiles the outcome information for each cluster and for all clusters into a report for the funder.

Connect clusters. Awarding cluster grants to lead agencies and their partners presents a unique opportunity for the intermediary to build connections among clusters. An *assets-based approach* to community development identifies and builds on the strengths of the constituent organizations and their networks. The entire network benefits when the assets of one cluster are matched with the needs of another.

Benefits and Risks

Through cluster grants, the funders, lead agencies, and partner organizations all gain a comprehensive understanding of the range of activities and social service providers in a community. This insight into an entire social service system allows the more cost-effective allocation of funding and reduces the duplication of services. It helps organizations identify gaps in services, promotes the development of necessary services to fill the gaps, and facilitates relationships and knowledge sharing among providers.

Networks have greater resilience than a single organization. If an organization operating in isolation loses a leader, staff, or funder, those who relied on its services may suffer. If a provider in a network faces such challenges, the network as a whole can respond by temporarily reassigning staff, lending

expertise, taking clients, providing alternative programming, adopting the endangered program, or merging the challenged organization with another. The organization's clients are thereby insulated from the negative effects of change.

One risk associated with cluster grants is the unreadiness of organizations to be part of a network. Participation incurs the responsibility not only to the organization's stakeholders, but to other organizations in the network. Each organization's readiness must be assessed as part of the grant application process. Organizations that are not ready can be encouraged to develop their capacity for collaboration before applying.

PRACTICE 8: INCUBATING SERVICE PROVIDERS

Certain communities, such as distressed rural communities or economically devastated urban communities, do not have a network of community organizations to deliver publicly- or privately-funded social services. In these communities, public agencies are often the only social service providers and their offices may be remote from the communities they serve. Intermediaries provide training and technical assistance to build capacity of existing social service organizations, but they can also help to create and launch them. The practice of *Incubating Service Providers* equips community members with the tools they need to launch grassroots organizations. An intermediary provides support and structure for the first stage of the nonprofit lifecycle.

When a social need goes unmet in one of these underserved communities, an informal group of volunteer activists usually responds by donating their time, money, and property to help their neighbors. An intermediary can use an incubation strategy to give structure to these unofficial efforts. *Incubation* is a process that transforms highly cohesive but loosely structured volunteer groups into sustainable grassroots organizations. Through intermediaries, funders can award grants to grassroots organizations that operate in the neighborhoods they serve. The newly empowered grassroots organizations can then deliver accessible social services to those in need.

> Intermediaries provide training and technical assistance to build capacity of existing social service organizations, but they can also help to create and launch them.

An intermediary incubates a grassroots organization by assuming the burdens of a formal organizational structure while mentoring the organization's members. The process is incremental, and the organization slowly assumes more responsibility under the guidance and support of the intermediary. As the grassroots organization builds its capacity, the intermediary's role changes. It no longer provides day-to-day support, but serves as a pass-through funder and technical assistance consultant. Mentoring is a significant design element that helps ensure the long-term viability of the incubation project: after completing incubation, beneficiary organizations can serve as mentors to new organizations.

Case Study

The Cherokee Nation has been a sovereign nation for more years than can be counted. Cherokee Nation's mission is *Ga-Du-Gi,* which can be simply translated as "Cherokees helping Cherokees." Today, the Cherokee Nation is comprised of over 250,000 citizens located in 14 counties of northeastern Oklahoma. The Cherokee Nation's tribal government manages more than $300 million in social services, which have until recently been delivered at the tribal headquarters in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Tribal members from communities dispersed over 9,234 square miles travelled to the tribal headquarters to receive social services. To address this problem, Cherokee Nation launched an ambitious effort to transform the delivery of social services from a centralized bureaucracy to community-based organizations. In essence, the Cherokee Nation is reinventing its social services delivery system.

To achieve this bold reform, the tribal government set a strategic goal to build 100 strong communities with economies and resources that support individuals and families, promote their physical and mental health, and encourage mutual support among residents. A supporting objective is to increase the number of decentralized, sustainable grassroots organizations that can deliver critical social services in the communities, thereby reducing dependency on the centralized tribal government. To sustain themselves and make services accessible, these organizations must develop the capacity to obtain and manage grants.

The Cherokee Nation adopted an incubation strategy to transform active volunteer groups into viable community-based organizations. The CCF-funded project focused on 18 communities and incubated 53 fledgling community-serving volunteer groups. Many of these organizations served communities of fewer than 500 tribal members, who suffer from unemployment and alcoholism at four times the U.S. average. The communities face poverty, hunger, poor education, and a lack of economic development.

The Cherokee Nation established a training and technical assistance program that includes conferences, workshops, individualized technical assistance, a guidebook series, and a website to facilitate knowledge sharing. The Cherokee Nation's experts in Native American adult learning methodologies develop training and technical assistance materials and train the consultants who coach the community-based groups. Instructional topics include incorporation, board training, grant-writing, financial and human resource management, and best practices. At least two members of each organization attend the training to help ensure continuity.

In the first two years of the project, more than 600 people attended two-day training workshops focused on a range of capacity building topics, such as nonprofit organization life-cycle, community asset identification, strategic planning, and volunteer management. In addition, 50 people attended week-long grant writing workshops. The Cherokee Nation has provided more than 5,000 hours of on-site, individualized technical assistance.

More than 50 fledgling organizations have achieved significant outcomes in the last three years, such as establishing and improving financial and personnel policies, establishing nonprofit and 501(c)(3) status, certifying the acquisition of a wide range of nonprofit management skills, creating performance measurement systems, and acquiring and managing grants. Cherokee Nation has documented these gains using pre- and post-service tests, participant evaluations, skills certifications, and observable organizational gains.

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for influential intermediaries with high name recognition, credibility with stakeholders, leadership in its community, and the ability to obtain long-term financial support from funders. The practice is well-suited for distressed communities with a need to increase the number of FBCOs at the local level. Summit participants considered the following elements as essential for effective implementation of this practice.

Assess the community need. The intermediary must first assess whether there is sufficient community need for a significant increase in the number of community-based service providers. One indicator of this need could be that community members must travel a long distance to access social services, and lack the personal or public transportation, money, or time to make the trip.

Obtain stakeholder commitment. The intermediary must solicit institutional and community support for the incubation project. The intermediary must obtain support from the public social services agency to decentralize social services from the agency to grassroots service providers dispersed throughout the region. Social services grant specialists and other agency staff with specialized expertise can participate as trainers. The intermediary must also engage community leaders who are influential by virtue of their relationships, experience, and social standing, who can provide useful information about how official agencies are perceived, the kinds of services people in the community need, and the barriers that keep potential clients away from social service providers. Other stakeholders include institutions, funders, and the active volunteer groups that can benefit from incubation.

Identify and recruit candidate groups. When a social need goes unmet in a community, informal groups of volunteer activists step forward to provide services. In some instances, these groups may be willing to take the further step of formally organizing themselves into small nonprofit organizations. Community, religious, and educational leaders, as well as members of the central social service provider's staff may be able to help an intermediary identify and contact these groups. Because many volunteers do not have offices and work out of their homes, the intermediary should convene informational meetings in public places (such as churches, schools, or even restaurants).

Educate each group and facilitate its decision to participate. To effectively engage the interest of a group of volunteers requires time, patience, and caution. Their inexperience, lack of formal structure, and unfamiliarity with the nonprofit sector shifts the burden of responsibility for launching each organization from the volunteer groups to the intermediary. Realistic assessment of each group's potential to successfully complete the transition to professional community-based nonprofit must temper initial enthusiasm.

An intermediary must educate these groups about the benefits and responsibilities of running a nonprofit organization, with particular emphasis on the benefits to the community. The intermediary should not, however, gloss over the often labor-intensive grant-application process, which is just the beginning of a long-term commitment. The intermediary should present the incubation process itself in some detail, including the substantial commitment necessary to launch and sustain a viable nonprofit organization. If some volunteers in a particular group lack the necessary commitment, an intermediary may recruit volunteers from one group to join another to create a potential nonprofit organization. The strongest and most resilient groups can go the distance, and should be encouraged to proceed.

Assist with the grant-application process. Incubation candidates consist mostly of volunteers who are unlikely to possess the skills needed to prepare a competitive grant proposal. The intermediary should provide step-by-step training in the intricacies of grant-writing, and the grant application should be simplified. Most grant applications ask for the applicant's history, which is a good starting point because it is well-known to the writers. Although the technical assistance that the intermediary provides may be substantial, the candidates must write the grant application themselves. With adequate training, the applicants should be able to describe the community needs, the group's mission, the services it will provide, and the clients who will be served. After grants are awarded, the intermediary will lead each group in developing its work plan, timeline, milestones, and outcome measures. This planning is the first step in the incubation, rather than part of the application, as is typical.

Award the grants to a cohort. A group of community leaders reviews and scores the grant applications. An executive committee composed of experienced stakeholders, such as intermediary and funder staff, should validate the scoring process by reviewing a sample of scored applications. This same committee reviews the top-scoring applications and makes the final determination for awarding the grants. The intermediary should notify each applicant of the outcome in writing, whether a grant is awarded or not.

All of the beneficiary groups that receive their awards in the same funding cycle should be considered part of the same cohort, allowing the intermediary to establish benchmarks and measure the progress of each group. This information can be used to improve the design of future incubation efforts.

Conduct a needs assessment. The intermediary should conduct a needs assessment of each group in the cohort, and analyze the data. The findings will reveal common needs, which translate into the learning objectives and training plan for the cohort. The unique needs of each group inform the development of its customized incubation plan.

Provide group training. A cohort learning experience facilitates knowledge sharing, peer-to-peer support, and group training. Topics for group training may include:

- Nonprofit organizational life cycle
- Organizational structure
- Roles and responsibilities
- Accounting and financial management
- Human resources
- Volunteer recruitment and management
- Strategic planning

- Grant acquisition and management
- Program design
- Outcome measurement
- Data collection and reporting
- Community needs assessments
- Acquisition and use of technology
- Fundraising

Create an incubation plan for each group. The intermediary can assign each group an experienced consultant to create an incubation plan. The plan should include an assessment of the beneficiary group's strengths and weaknesses, its technical assistance priorities, and its facilities and equipment needs. It also includes the technical approach, work plan, timeline, milestones, and outcome measures for the group's incubation.

Establish facilities. Even without an office, small organizations can be effective, but beneficiary groups may share an office or collocate with the intermediary if space permits. The intermediary can help small groups find space in a public facility such as a school, recreation facility, or government center. Private places of worship frequently volunteer their space, and commercial enterprises have been known to make in-kind contributions of office space. An intermediary can provide virtual office services such as:

- A postal address
- Email addresses
- Voicemail boxes
- Shared workspace, including computer access
- Office equipment (copier, printer, fax, scanner, and so on)
- Shared meeting, conference, and classroom facilities
- Staff to maintain and manage the office space

Provide customized technical assistance. Following the group's incubation plan, the intermediary provides each group with one-to-one technical assistance that addresses the group's developmental needs. Intermediaries may provide technical assistance in many forms, such as leadership coaching, skill building exercises for workers, technical assistance resources to help develop customized policies, procedures, and forms, as well as the facilitation of peer-to-peer mentoring by matching a group with a mentor organization from a previous cohort.

Assign responsibilities and assess progress. As the group moves through the incubation process and becomes more self-sufficient, the intermediary shifts responsibilities to the beneficiary organization. This process is incremental. The organization slowly assumes more responsibility under the guidance and supervision of the intermediary. The intermediary assesses the organization's progress using the outcome measures in the incubation plan. The results of the analysis either confirm the effectiveness of the technical assistance or reveal unanticipated gaps in the organization's capacity. The intermediary may address these gaps by modifying its technical assistance.

Certify completion. The intermediary should establish benchmarks that allow it to identify when an organization's incubation is completed. Benchmarks may include completion of the training curriculum assigned to the cohort, completion of an incubation plan, or other observable evidence that an outcome has been achieved.

Build a network. The incubating intermediary should be able to call upon a previously incubated veteran organization to provide training and technical assistance to new cohorts of start-up organizations, thereby helping the intermediary to sustain its incubation project. In almost all cases, the intermediary and veteran organizations will continue to offer mentoring and support after the incubation process is complete.

Benefits and Risks

Incubation enables the decentralization of social service delivery, promotes a community's ownership of its needs and solutions, and helps develop a community-based social service sector. In bureaucratic systems, incubating social service providers and outsourcing social services can overcome real and perceived barriers that may prevent client access to government agencies. Incubation can extend the reach of public social service agencies into hard-to-serve communities, leading to more clients accessing available social services.

The incubation process requires a long-term commitment from funders, intermediaries, and community groups. Without the visionary leadership necessary to reinvent social service delivery, and create a whole new community-based social services sector, this practice will fail. Furthermore, the people in the centralized bureaucracy must help implement the transformation. If they resist the changes for reasons such as job insecurity or uncertainty about their new roles, the transformation is at risk. A change management plan must be created with input from the front-line staff to clearly communicate to all stakeholders how the bureaucracy will be reorganized.

Change occurs on two fronts. The existing centralized bureaucracy must be open to the sweeping changes in positions and processes when social services are transferred to the nonprofit sector. In the nonprofit sector, fledgling organizations must develop new systems and staff capacity to manage grants, provide services, and maintain formal relationships with funders. An intermediary incubating such organizations must devote significant resources to maintaining the confidence of both funders and beneficiary organizations. The intermediary must also help the funder assume a new role, in which it no longer provides services, but instead oversees implementation partners.

PRACTICE 9: ASSESSING READINESS FOR CHANGE

Conducting comprehensive organizational assessments for beneficiary organizations before initiating a technical assistance engagement has long been recognized as a best practice for intermediaries. Numerous excellent field-tested organizational assessment tools (varying in depth, complexity, and focus) are readily available. Traditional organizational assessments include a wide range of practices and tools (self-assessments, pre- and post-engagement formal assessments, informal assessments, and so on). While the practice of conducting organizational assessments is not new, it has taken a significant step forward to incorporate *Assessing Organizational Readiness for Change,* an emerging practice adapted from for-profit management consulting and the related disciplines of change management and organizational development.

> The ability to assess readiness for change gives the intermediary a powerful tool for gaining insight into whether or not an organization is ready to benefit from a sustained change effort.

A readiness-for-change assessment can be embedded in the larger, formal organizational assessment of strengths and weaknesses, or conducted separately. The ability to assess readiness for change gives the intermediary a powerful tool for gaining insight into whether or not an organization is ready to benefit from a sustained change effort. It can help prevent the investment of significant time, energy, and resources in an unproductive engagement by identifying underlying conflicts, tensions, or alignment problems. It improves an intermediary's ability to deliver effective technical assistance and increases its chances for success.

Case Study: New Detroit

New Detroit is a coalition of leaders from civil rights and advocacy organizations, human services, health and community organizations, business, labor, foundations, education, media, and the clergy. It was formed in 1967 in response to civil unrest that uncovered a host of entrenched social and community ills. New Detroit has performed numerous organizational needs assessments and delivered hundreds of hours of training and technical assistance. From this experience, it learned that an organization's lack of readiness for change was a significant barrier to its ability to benefit from technical assistance. New Detroit realized that organizational readiness for change was the foundation upon which all other capacity building technical assistance rested, and that it must learn how to identify the frequently elusive evidence of an organization's readiness for change.

Drawing inspiration and expertise from the disciplines of change management and organizational development, New Detroit identified indicators for change readiness, and adapted readiness assessment methods and tools from the business sector. New Detroit made organizational self-assessment part of its request for proposal (RFP) packages. This became the intermediary's first opportunity to gain insight into an organization's awareness of its strengths and weaknesses, as well as its readiness for change.

Organizations deemed ready for change can apply for a competitive capacity building grant. If an organization is awarded a grant, it participates in customized technical assistance. For groups not yet ready to engage in organizational change, New Detroit provides job-related skill-building training to front-line program staff, introducing them to organizational change and capacity building, and increasing the organization's readiness to participate in more advanced capacity building grants and customized technical assistance in the future.

Case Study: Wichita State University

Wichita State University's Center for Community Support and Research (CCSR) provides capacity building assistance to nonprofits, volunteer groups, and coalitions. Known for its comprehensive organizational assessment methodologies, CCSR deploys best practices as well as customized and adapted instruments that not only identify the organization's needs, but also diagnose and expose the root causes of organizational challenges.

CCSR conducts two formal onsite organizational assessments, one at the outset and another at the conclusion of the technical assistance engagement. In addition to measuring the achievement of outcomes (like other intermediaries), CCSR compares the results of the pre- and post-engagement organizational assessments to gauge an organization's growth and quantify the engagement's success. Formal organizational assessments may include a combination of data collection methods such as observing team interactions; reviewing policies, procedures, and other materials; facilitating focus groups; and conducting confidential interviews with organization members (including board members, the executive director, managers, front-line staff, volunteers, and clients). Informal organizational assessments are also conducted to identify and prioritize new or previously undisclosed needs, allowing the intermediary to adjust its technical assistance services.

Because CCSR continually strives to find the right depth, breadth, and type of assessment methods and tools necessary to fully understand an organization's needs, as well as the underlying issues, it has added assessing organizational readiness for change to its organizational assessment toolkit. CCSR concluded that assessing organizational readiness is an essential prerequisite to a productive technical assistance engagement. Organizations are asked to complete a self-assessment, which is compared to the intermediary's formal assessment, revealing an organization's awareness of its strengths and challenges. CCSR also informally assesses readiness for and resistance to change. Experts in conflict analysis and resolution, CCSR is adept at observing and unearthing underlying conflicts and dysfunctional dynamics that can sabotage a change effort.

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for intermediaries with strong organizational assessment practices, and a desire to increase the precision of their assessments and improve their chances for successful outcomes. Summit participants considered the following elements essential to successfully implement this practice.

Learn the indicators. An intermediary must know these indicators and build them into its assessment processes and tools. Organizations that are ready for change have members who:

- Understand their organization's strengths and weaknesses

- Possess a positive outlook for change

- Share a vision of where they want the organization to be

- Articulate what capabilities they want the organization to possess

- Understand the benefits and risks of change

- Demonstrate an interest and commitment to organizational improvement

- Demonstrate executive leadership and board alignment

- Communicate effectively about change

- Value adaptability

Ask organizations to perform a self-assessment. Organizational self-assessments are most useful when at least three members with different roles at different levels in the organization respond. Intermediaries can compare responses and assess the degree to which responders agree or disagree about their organization's strengths and weaknesses. Expect to find different perspectives, but great differences in responses indicate a lack of alignment or lack of transparency among members of the organization.

An intermediary should also compare an organization's self-assessment to the intermediary's formal or informal assessment to determine whether or not the organization has sufficient awareness of its strengths and weaknesses to benefit from a sustained change effort.

Conduct an onsite readiness assessment. An intermediary should conduct an onsite assessment of the organization's readiness for change. This assessment can include:

- Focus groups (including members of more than one team)

- Observation of culture and dynamics (such as observing work sessions and other interactions)

- Confidential interviews with members at different levels of the organization and with different roles (such as executive director, board members, front-line employees, finance staff)

Administer a readiness assessment survey. An intermediary should identify and adapt or create a readiness-for-change assessment tool. The intermediary should ask members of an organization to complete a confidential questionnaire, and analyze results. Themes and readiness indicators will emerge from an analysis of both the qualitative and quantitative data.

Benefits and Risks

This practice can help any intermediary that wants to increase the precision and sophistication of its organizational assessment processes to include identifying those organizations that are ready to benefit from a change effort. An intermediary's chances for success are greatly improved when it works with organizations that are ready and able to commit to change. An intermediary that is currently finding its return on investment compromised by organizations that are not ready to engage productively in a sustained change effort will find that the benefits of this practice far outweigh its risks.

One risk associated with this practice occurs when an intermediary encounters an organization that is not ready for change. The intermediary may choose to provide limited services—or no services—to that organization. Also, the process of determining readiness may unearth difficult underlying issues that an organization may be ill-equipped to face. Newly visible problems such as lack of alignment between board members and the executive director, poor staff morale, lack of trust between departments, mission creep, or confusion about strategic goals, can exacerbate tensions. To mitigate this risk, an intermediary must be prepared to facilitate conflict resolution, so that organizations are not left with unaddressed conflict.

PRACTICE 10: SUPPLYING CAPACITY TO NONTRADITIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

An *organizational ecology* approach to social service delivery is an asset-based framework that cultivates the network of providers in a community, enhances the relationships among the providers, and values the contributions of traditional and nontraditional social service organizations. This approach assumes that sustainability resides in a wide range and diverse mix of providers. Each provider, from the large nonprofit to the volunteer-driven and nontraditional provider, plays a distinct role in providing social services to the community. An intermediary should recognize the diversity of organizations and offer customized support to each type.

Nontraditional social service providers are informally organized service efforts. These providers offer focused services and have little or no organizational infrastructure. Nontraditional providers may be individuals with a personally driven passion for service, and may work alone. These providers address a specific local need in populations that perhaps only they can reach. They often come from these hard-to-reach populations and can communicate effectively with them.

In addition to building the capacity of traditional social service providers, intermediaries can help by *Supplying Capacity to Nontraditional Social Service Providers*. This support may be manifested by setting up virtual offices, offering management support, coordinating collaborative networks, or managing grants on the providers' behalf. An intermediary can enhance the impact of providers and extend the reach of social services to the hardest-to-access populations. This practice is applicable to intermediaries that want to extend the reach and strengthen the social service network in their community by engaging and supporting nontraditional social service providers to incorporate them into a broader network.

> ## An intermediary should recognize the diversity of organizations and offer customized support to each type.

Nontraditional providers often do not want to build a formalized structure. An organizational ecology values these nontraditional providers, without trying to change them into traditional providers, requiring them to form a board of directors, create a governance system, and engage in other activities common to more traditional providers. These requirements may drive nontraditional providers away. By providing the necessary supports and structure, an intermediary can free nontraditional providers to deliver services to populations that traditional providers cannot reach.

While organizations that could benefit from this practice may appear similar to the volunteer groups mentioned in the *Incubating Service Providers* practice, the context is different. Incubation creates social-service providers and establishes a community-based social service network where none had previously existed. Supplying capacity to nontraditional social-service providers assumes the existence of a provider network, which the intermediary is seeking to strengthen, broaden, and deepen.

Case Study

The Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC), a faith-based nonprofit organization serving the state of Minnesota since 1905, fights poverty by helping distressed families become self-reliant. GMCC is an intermediary, offering and coordinating various services to the community. In 2003, GMCC received its first grant from the HHS CCF Demonstration Program. Under the CCF program, intermediaries provide training, technical assistance, and subgrants to FBCOs. At its informational meetings about subgrants (referred to as *subawards* in the CCF program), GMCC was surprised at the large number of nontraditional providers interested in the process. GMCC Executive Director Bruce Bjork cites the example of Donna: an experienced mother, Donna invites her daughter's friends, all of whom are young mothers in the neighborhood, to her home to discuss issues related to parenting and child development. Because they trust her, the younger women are willing to listen to what Donna has to say about caring for young children. Other providers in Minneapolis offer the same service, but none offers the same access, trust, and authority.

Many nontraditional providers, like Donna, are solo efforts. They have no office space, and no operating budget. These individuals and groups would almost certainly fall short of the traditional definition of a social service organization. GMCC understood the value of this underused, nontraditional sector of the social service provider community. In reflecting on GMCC's work with nontraditional providers, Mr. Bjork stated that intermediaries "have to rethink how we define 'effective' and 'efficient' when considering the provision of social services. These groups do not have a board and they do not have full-time staff. Assisting these groups and meeting them where they are will help the sustainability of the overall network" (Bjork, remarks made at the Intermediary Summit, February 20, 2008).

Elements of a Successful Implementation

This practice is recommended for an intermediary that has identified community needs and established a network of social service providers to meet those needs. Intermediaries considering this practice must also understand the value of engaging nontraditional service providers who can best serve hard-to-reach populations. Summit participants considered the following elements essential to successfully implement this practice.

Negotiate service outcomes. Each nontraditional service provider must agree to measure and report on a set of agreed-upon outcomes. These outcomes should be simple, and it may be necessary for the intermediary to re-think the concept of outcomes for each provider. Outcomes must be realistic, consistent with the provider's capacity and competency, measurable, and achievable. All partners' outcomes must be in alignment with the collaborative network's goal and objectives. Intermediaries must negotiate agreements with a clear sense of expectations concerning outcomes, timelines, and service levels.

Identify the resources that the nontraditional service providers need. A formal organizational assessment is not required because a nontraditional service provider is not, by definition, a formal organization. Common needs include funding, reporting, and back-office services such as accounting. Email, voicemail, and postal mail delivery, and information on best practices are also frequently needed.

Negotiate and execute a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU should include the negotiated service outcomes that the nontraditional service provider will achieve, as well as the services and resources that the intermediary will supply. Clear expectations formalized in an MOU are essential to setting limits, communicating requirements, and quantifying success for both parties. Draft the MOU in plain language, avoiding legalese.

Supply the agreed-upon services and resources. Intermediaries can offer administrative services to nontraditional providers, enabling them to focus on delivering social services. For example, nontraditional providers may not have access to grant information and may have never written a grant application. Intermediaries can solicit, secure, and oversee grants on behalf of nontraditional service providers. They become accountable to the funder, manage disbursement of funds, and ensure that funds are used properly. Administrative services that the intermediary may provide to nontraditional service providers include:

- Technology support: individual and group training, Help Desk assistance

- Financial management

- Group purchasing discounts for office equipment and insurance

- Access to legal services

- Report writing and submission

- Human resources management: payroll, human resources, insurance, benefits

Virtual office services can enhance the legitimacy and efficiency of nontraditional providers. An organization with an established business address is more credible than one with a post office box or home address. A virtual office gives credible occupancy to nontraditional service providers. These services may include:

- Postal address

- Email addresses

- Voicemail boxes

- Shared workspace, including computer access

- Office equipment (copier, printer, fax, scanner, and so on)

- Shared meeting, conference, and classroom facilities

- Staff to maintain and manage the office space

Evaluate performance. The intermediary monitors and measures provider outcomes against the network's goals and objectives, and when necessary, provides training and technical assistance to help the nontraditional service providers bring their performance in line with the intermediary's expectations.

Sustain the network. Sustainability resides in the network. Individual providers may change or even leave the network, but the goal remains the ongoing provision of services to the community. The intermediary should continue to strengthen the network, build peer relationships, promote knowledge-sharing, and recruit new members, including traditional and nontraditional service providers.

Benefits and Risks

Intermediaries must recognize that nontraditional providers can make a significant contribution to the social service network of the community. In many cases, these providers have a high level of cultural competency in service delivery to populations that traditional providers cannot reach. The ability of culturally competent, nontraditional providers to connect with difficult to reach clients should not be underestimated. When efforts to support their work are encouraged, the provider network can extend its reach to underserved populations.

In addition to the funding, administrative, and virtual office services, intermediaries can arrange for nontraditional service providers to meet, learn what is going on in the larger community, and develop beneficial working relationships. Nontraditional service providers may also appreciate the opportunity to be mentored by an intermediary who acknowledges their value and strengthens their ability to serve the community.

One of the risks associated with this practice is that nontraditional service providers may resist the intermediary's requirements for measuring outcomes and reporting results. Intermediaries must establish appropriate and realistic accountability requirements. Small, nontraditional service providers, having little to no budget or organizational infrastructure, can be difficult to guide. They are prone to change more quickly and more frequently than traditional service providers, and intermediaries must remain flexible and inclusive while ensuring that its expectations are clear.

SELECTED IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

Program Design Checklist

This tool can be used in conjunction with Practice 1, "Designing Replicable Programs." (Courtesy of Dare Mighty Things.)

Needs Analysis: How do we know what we need?	
Identify research questions.	
Identify primary and secondary data sources.	
Determine methodology, resources, and roles.	
Involve stakeholders.	
Analyze findings.	
Organizational Alignment: Does this program suit our priorities?	
Conduct post-analysis stakeholder interviews to discuss findings.	
Enlist key stakeholders in the program design team.	
Constantly review decisions using the organization's vision, mission, and values.	
Outcomes: How do we establish our goals?	
Use your needs analysis and organizational vision, mission, and values.	
Determine what you want to achieve (that is, the desired outcomes).	
Determine the capacity you have to work with. Identify fiscal and human capital resources.	
Explore partnerships, expertise, and other external resources you might leverage.	
Determine the necessary resources to produce desired results. Scale back if necessary.	
Benchmarking: What works?	
Research best practices.	
Evaluate your own practices against benchmarked practices.	
Determine the appropriate practices that will produce the desired outcomes.	
Assessment and Evaluation: What should we do?	
Determine indicators—the observable proof that an outcome has been achieved.	
Choose the most critical measures and keep the number manageable.	
Determine what data must be collected to prove that an outcome has been achieved.	
Ensure that reporting methods and tools facilitate the collection of this data.	
Build evaluation processes into program design.	
Implementation: How do we conduct the work?	
Create a management plan and work breakdown structure (WBS).	
Establish a schedule for tasks associated with planning, launch, and management.	
Develop program materials (guidance, tools, templates, checklists, forms, activities, etc.).	
Deliver ongoing training and technical assistance.	
Continually assess and improve processes.	

Team Action Plan

This tool can be used in conjunction with Practice 4, "Aligning an Organization." (Courtesy of Corporation for Supportive Housing.)

CSH
supportive housing | it works

Team: _____ Date: _____

For each section, add or remove rows as needed.

Organization's strategic priorities	Organization's core values

Section 1: Team Goal

In a brief narrative, describe your team's overall program focus and goals for this year. Incorporate how these goals help advance the organization's strategic priorities. (Note: It is not expected that all teams will work to advance all priorities in any given year. Only address those priorities you plan to advance.)

Team Goals:	Strategic Priority Advanced:

Section 2: Outcomes and Key Activities

Briefly summarize outcomes and key activities of your team's action plan (in measurable, achievable, and time-targeted terms). Include how qualitative measures will be exhibited in the activity or task to be accomplished: quality of work, productivity, job knowledge, interpersonal skills, leadership, and management/supervision. List fund development goals in this section.

Outcomes, Activities, and Tasks (*Note if funder required. Also note any products you will develop.*)	Benchmarks with target dates	Requests from and contributions to other teams	Mid- year modifications

Section 3: Internal Investment

Summarize the activities your team will pursue (other than those listed above) to strengthen your team and the organization. Include activities you are pursuing in categories such as diversity, cultural competency, advancing core values and strengthening the organization. (This section can include committees that your team will participate in: knowledge sharing activities, leadership development, mentoring, management and supervision, etc.)

Category and outcome of investment (*for example diversity, leadership development*)	Activities and project benchmarks	Requests from and contributions to other teams	Mid- year modifications

Section 4: Capacity and Other Considerations

Describe key internal and external factors that will impact your team's ability to advance your goals. Also note any items you teams will phase out or stop doing. (This section can include internal considerations such as staff capacity, financial limitations, in-house staff expertise, or time constraints. External challenges may include action by legislature or elected officials, partners, provider capacity, etc.)

Internal Factors:	External Factors:

Individual Action Plan

This tool can be used in conjunction with Practice 4, "Aligning an Organization." (Courtesy of Corporation for Supportive Housing.)

CSH supportive housing it works

Name: _____ Team: _____

Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

For each section, add or remove rows as needed.

Organization's strategic priorities	Organization's core values

Section I. Individual Goals

In a brief narrative, describe your overall goals for this year. Where appropriate, note how your efforts advance the organization's strategic priorities. (It is not expected that each team or individual will work to advance all priorities in any given year. Only address those priorities that you plan to advance).

Individual Goals:	Strategic Priority Advanced:

Section 2. Outcomes and Key Activities

Briefly summarize outcomes and key activities that you will perform to advance your team's action plan and strengthen the organization. Include quantifiable outcomes, as well as how quality of work, job knowledge, interpersonal skills, and leadership will be exhibited in the activity or task to be accomplished.

Outcomes, Activities, and Tasks (*Note if funder required. Also note any products you will develop*.)	Benchmarks with target dates	Requests from and contributions to other teams	Mid- year modifications

Section 3. Internal Investment

Summarize the activities you will pursue (other than those listed above) to strengthen your team and the organization. Include activities you are pursing such as diversity, cultural competency, advancing core values, and strengthening the organization. (This section can include committees, knowledge sharing, leadership development, mentoring, etc.).

Category and outcome of investment (*for example diversity, leadership development*)	Activities and project benchmarks	Requests from and contributions to other teams	Mid- year modifications

Section 4. Capacity and Other Considerations

Describe key internal and external factors that will impact your ability to advance your goals. Also, note any items you will phase out or stop doing. (This section can include internal considerations such as capacity, expertise, willingness, or availability of others to collaborate, or time constraints. External challenges may include action by legislature or elected officials, funding, partners, provider capacity, etc.)

Internal Factors:	External Factors:

Section 5. Staff Development Plan

List activities and tasks in your efforts to 1) master core competencies, 2) develop special skills, and 3) improve your qualitative performance and advance the organization's core values in your work.

Outcomes, Activities, and Tasks (*Note if funder required.*)	Relation to core competency, special skill, or improved qualitative performance?	Mid- year modifications

FOR SUPERVISORS ONLY:

Section 6. Team Performance Expectations

List concrete performance expectations for the team from the team work plan.

Managers will share progress on team's performance indicators with their staff during regular reporting intervals.

Team performance expectations and indicators:

Section 7. Supervisory Responsibilities and Outcomes

This section is for supervisors only. List the outcomes and key activities you will perform in an effort to build your team, support your staff, raise funds to support your team and the organization and fulfill your supervisory responsibilities (Items in this section may include hiring, staff supervision, coaching, fund development, training, team meetings, budgeting and work planning.)

Outcomes, Activities, and Tasks	Benchmarks and target dates	Requests from and contributions to other teams	Mid- year modifications

Facilitator Tips

These tips can be used in conjunction with Practice 5, "Creating Multi-Sector Solutions." (Courtesy of Dare Mighty Things.)

• Hold yourself and your partners accountable.

• Build alignment and consensus around the shared goal.

• Invest significant time in learning about each partner's perspective and value to the partnership. Model active inquiry and listening.

• Ask partners to share their interests and fears. Go first, if necessary, and enlist at least one other partner prior to the discussion, making it a safe environment to be open. Ask: What will you gain from success? What will you lose if we fail?

• Reinforce and value each partner's self interest, unique contributions, and concerns.

• Ask: What does it mean to transform, integrate, and build systems, not merely a program? Ask: What will it take? What rules, processes, and policies must change?

• Do not avoid conflict. Exposing conflicts and contradictions among sectors, systems, and institutions is essential to transforming systems and implementing a workable multi-sector solution.

• Continue to build toward consensus, bringing discussions back to shared goals when necessary.

• Practice adaptive leadership skills. Systems change across sectors requires adaptive leadership, the ability to:

  • Lead change

  • See opportunities buried inside complex problems

  • Collaborate on solving problems and making decisions

  • Align people with different values, beliefs, and behaviors around a shared mission and goals

  • Expose conflicts productively, without long-term damage to the group

  • Build momentum and excitement

  • Take risks.

• Build adaptive leadership capacity in your partners through modeling. If modeling is not effective, bring in a trainer or coach. Each partner must learn how to go back to his or her institution, advocate for the solution, and lead change.

Cluster Grant Project Description

This tool can be used in conjunction with Practice 7, "Providing Cluster Grants." (Courtesy of the Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston.)

1. Cluster need for grant

• Describe your cluster partnership's strengths and challenges in relation to the grant requirements. Overall, what are the cluster's greatest strengths and its most pressing challenges?

2. Cluster changes (outcomes). What changes or objectives do you expect the proposed project will help your cluster to achieve together? The changes should address: how should the grant help improve the effectiveness, efficiency, or sustainability of the cluster's program or the cluster members? Be as specific as possible, describing how you will know when the changes have happened. Describe the specific organizational or cluster changes using the following categories:

• Initial outcomes resulting from grant-funded activities (new policies, plans, or procedures adopted, or new skills learned).

• Intermediate outcomes resulting from initial outcomes (new staff, management or volunteer practices implemented, not funded by grant).

• Long-term outcomes resulting from changed behavior (new agency or cluster status, better positioned to achieve mission). How will this project lead to significantly improved outcomes for the targeted service population?

If the cluster project addresses goals in programs, services or in the community, describe how the grant will help address them.

3. Description of program activities. In concrete terms, describe how the new resources and activities this grant will help you achieve the changes described in question 2. Ensure that your grant budget reflects the cost of the activities described here. If applicable, attach a job description for each new staff position (or new portion of staff position) to be funded by this grant and a draft scope of services for each consultant to be hired by this grant. In addition, refer to any supplies or equipment needed to implement these activities, if included in your budget.

4. Sustainability Plan. What is the cluster's plan to fund the activities you expect to continue beyond the grant period?

Cluster Grant Funding Criteria

This tool can be used in conjunction with Practice 7, "Providing Cluster Grants." (Courtesy of the Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston.)

1. Lead agency and cluster are ready to receive and oversee services:

- Lead agency demonstrates sufficient organizational capacity to administer the grant (evidence of prudent planning and management in budget, financial statements, financial systems, and fiscal controls; ability to segregate funds in financial records, ability to manage sub-contracts, if planned).

- Lead agency and partners demonstrate commitment to realistic and meaningful organizational change (understanding of key challenges, evidence of commitment to proposed plan).

- Missions of partner agencies are clearly defined, goals of cluster are clearly defined (alternatively, may request assistance to focus mission statement more clearly).

2. Lead agency describes a clear cluster program plan, which provides tools to facilitate key changes within cluster organizations and their partnership:

- Lead agency articulates cluster partnership's clear need for [type of services/products].

- Lead agency describes, in concrete terms, plans for using funds to [specify purpose for use of funds].

- Lead agency articulates measurable expected impact of funds for partners' goals. The cluster should be able to answer the question "What will the grant enable our agencies [to do differently or improve]?"

- Lead agency articulates realistic strategy for related cluster or partner activities continuing beyond the grant period. For cluster applications with outcomes addressing goals in programs or services must clearly be addressed.

3. Cluster partners are positioned to significantly impact outcomes for program/service area:

- Cluster partners demonstrate a history of partnership relationships.

- Cluster partners show that the members of the cluster are the types of agencies strategically necessary to accomplish the stated outcomes of [program] plan.

- Cluster demonstrates how the grant's outcomes lead to significantly improved outcomes for [service area].

- Programs of the partners or collaborative program clearly leads to meaningful [program] outcomes.

- Preference is given to clusters of partners which serve [targeted service area].

Readiness for Change Assessment

This tool can be used in conjunction with Practice 9, "Assessing Readiness for Change." (Courtesy of Dare Mighty Things.)
Rate on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the most positive or favorable condition.

Consideration	Rating
Is there a clear vision for change?	
Do members understand the reasons for change? (Survival? Growth? Adapting to address community or internal changes?)	
Have specific outcomes been articulated?	
Is there a consensus among members for change?	
Are the board and executive leadership in alignment regarding the direction of the organization and proposed changes?	
Do staff members share the same view of the organization and need for change as leaders?	
Can the staff articulate the organization's vision, mission, values, and strategic objectives?	
Are positive results for change understood?	
Does the organization have an adaptive culture?	
Will both informal and formal leaders adopt and promote the change?	
Do leaders listen?	
Do members of the organization generally trust and respect each other?	
Do staff members trust and respect the leadership?	
Does the organization promote learning?	
Does the leadership engage staff in decision making?	
Do employees feel empowered to share ideas, suggestions, and feedback (positive or negative) with leaders?	
Is there a blaming culture?	
Is staff morale strong?	
Do leaders have the influence to counter resisters?	
Are key people supportive of the change?	
How disruptive will the change be?	
Are leaders committed to training staff to perform any new work requirements?	
Do appropriate avenues for communication exist?	
Do people feel they have a stake in the outcome?	
Are potential risks understood?	
Are strategies in place to minimize known risks or unintended consequences?	
Have people shown their innovative and creative ability in the past?	
Do leaders understand how staff and other stakeholders gauge success?	
Do people trust the known forms of getting information?	
Do people share information in a timely and accurate way?	
Do incentives and rewards exist that will recognize those who lead and support, change?	
Can the organization admit mistakes?	

Are people empowered to become part of positive organizational change?	
Can creativity and the potential for future progress co-exist with pride in the past and present (not seen as criticism and condemnation)?	
Is change a common element of success and ingredient for advancement in the organization?	
How prevalent is negative gossip?	
Are there competing self interests?	
Do members believe that leaders withhold too much information?	
Do members think hidden agendas disrupt productive work?	

Considerations When Sharing Office Services

This list can be used in conjunction with Practice 10, "Supplying Capacity to Nontraditional Social Service Providers." (Courtesy Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches.)

Office Space

- Can your intermediary provide access to physical space, including office or desk space, classrooms, and conference rooms?

Mail Systems

- Can your intermediary provide a mailbox in the building where USPS mail can be delivered for the virtual office tenant?

Computer Equipment

- Can your intermediary supply access to computers in public spaces with password-protected accounts?
- Can your computer system accommodate the addition of email addresses?
- What level of access to your computer system do you want to provide to a nontraditional provider?

Phone Systems

- Does your phone system have sufficient voicemail capacity for nontraditional provider use? If not, would you be willing to purchase additional voicemail capacity?
- Will the providers be able to access messages from offsite?

Office Equipment

- Can your intermediary provide access to printers, copiers, faxes, etc. with the ability to charge to separate accounts? If so, make sure that there are clear guidelines and sufficient training on how to use the equipment.

Accessibility

- Is your intermediary willing to allow accessibility by nontraditional providers to your office and designated space during business hours? During non-business hours?
- What arrangements can you make for the use of space?
- What guidelines do you have to address security issues?

Virtual Office Agreement

This lease can be used in conjunction with Practice 10, "Supplying Capacity to Nontraditional Social Service Providers." (Courtesy Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches.)

This Agreement is entered into on this _____ day of _____ 20___ between the [Name of Intermediary], a nonprofit Corporation (hereinafter referred to as Provider), and the _____ (hereinafter referred to as User).

Provider does hereby provide for the User as many of the following as the User would like:

- Address for mail drop

- Voicemail account

- Internet access and email account

- Use of shared computer, when available

- Access to one classroom for up to 3 hours one evening or one Saturday per month without charge

- Access to the office during regular business hours

- Access to copier (use with a code, user to pay per page)

- Access to fax machine (use with a code, user to pay per page)

- Access to postage meter (use with code, user pay for actual usage)

- Access to small conference room, as available

- Organization's name prominently posted

Subject to the terms and conditions set forth herein, this Agreement shall continue for a term of _____months, beginning on the _____ day of _____ 20___ and continuing thereafter to and including the 31st day of December 20___, unless terminated as herein provided.

The parties hereto mutually agree as follows:

1. User agrees to use and occupy the premises solely for business purposes.

2. The annual payment shall be payable in monthly installments due by the first day of each month in the amount of $___, beginning with the 1st day of _____. If the Agreement term commences on a date other than the first day of a calendar month or ends on a date other than the last day of a calendar month, the base payment for such month shall be prorated based upon the actual number of days in such month.

3. Provider shall have the right to cancel this Agreement of User upon thirty (30) days prior written notice to User. Upon User's payment of all amounts owed to Provider under the Agreement, and User's compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, this Agreement will terminate as of the date set forth in the written notice, and neither Provider nor User will have any further rights or obligations under the Agreement except with respect to those matters in the Agreement which expressly survive the termination of the Agreement.

PROVIDER: USER:

Name of intermediary   Name of organization

By: _____   By: _____

Its: _____   Its: _____

APPENDIX A: RESOURCES

The following resources will help you better understand and implement the intermediary model.

Intermediary Development Series

This series of guidebooks was developed for intermediaries funded by the CCF Demonstration Program, but their contents apply to any intermediary organization.

Best Practices: Contains information about organizational best practices.
HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_bp/bp_gbk_toc.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_pdf/pp_gbk.pdf*

Establishing Partnerships: Contains information about building organizational capacity through partnerships.
HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_ep/ep_gbk_toc.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_pdf/ep_gbk.pdf*

Grant Acquisition: Contains information about federal grant research and proposal writing.
HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_ga/ga_gbk_toc.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_pdf/ga_gbk.pdf*

Grant Management: Contains information about effectively managing federal grants.
HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_gm/gm_gbk_toc.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_pdf/gm_gbk.pdf*

Outcomes Measurement: Contains information about evaluating the extent to which organizations are achieving intended results.
HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_om/om_gbk_toc.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_pdf/om_gbk.pdf*

Revenue Sources: Contains information about starting, evaluating, and sustaining revenue sources.
HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_rs/rs_gbk_toc.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_pdf/rs_gbk.pdf*

Sub-Award Management: Contains information about developing a comprehensive plan to provide sub-awards with capacity building components, processes, and requirements.
HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_sam/sam_gbk_toc.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_pdf/sam_gbk.pdf*

Technical Assistance: Contains information about effectively designing and delivering training and technical assistance to FBCOs.
HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_ta/ta_gbk_toc.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/gbk_pdf/ta_gbk.pdf*

Intermediary Studies and Tools

Empowering Compassion: The Strategic Role of Intermediary Organizations in Building Capacity among and Enhancing the Impact of Community Transformers In 2001, the Hudson Institute's Faith in Communities initiative launched a year-long study to identify representative intermediaries in the faith community. The study examined 22 intermediaries that served over 8,700 grassroots ministries around the country (available at *http://www.centeronfic.org/v2/articles/intermediaries.html*).

Toward More Effective Use of Intermediaries This paper reviews the "use, misuse, and better use of intermediary organizations" by grantmakers. Its purpose is to identify the best practice to select, task, and relate to intermediaries (available at *http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/practicematters_01_paper.pdf*)

"Findings from a Retrospective Survey of Faith-Based and Community Organizations (FBCOs): An Assessment of the Compassion Capital Fund" The Compassion Capital Fund (CCF) program funds intermediary organizations that serve as a bridge between the federal government and FBCOs. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a survey of organizations that received support during the 2002 CCF grant cycle to determine the extent that the organizations have used CCF resources to build capacity. The findings are available on the CCF website (*http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/surveys/retrospective/retrospective_page1.html*).

"Promising Practices for Improving the Capacity of Faith- and Community-Based Organizations" This report documents the range of services that intermediaries provide to grassroots organizations, and highlights those that constitute promising practices.

HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/promising_practices/content.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/promising_practices/promising_practices.pdf*

"Capacity Benchmarking Tool for Faith- and Community-Based Organizations" This Capacity Benchmarking Tool helps new and emerging community-based nonprofit organizations, including faith-based organizations, work toward greater stability and effectiveness. It addresses issues related to boards of directors, strategic planning, program monitoring, community linkages and partnerships, fundraising, grant writing, technology, management of staff and volunteers, and financial management.

HTML: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/benchmarking_tool/cpct_toc.html*
PDF: *http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccf/about_ccf/benchmarking_tool/Benchmarking.pdf*

Other Resources

The Alliance for Nonprofit Management is the professional association of individuals and organizations devoted to improving the management and governance capacity of nonprofits (see *http://www.allianceonline.org*).

Bridgestar was founded on the premise that mission-focused nonprofits have greater opportunity to achieve breakthrough results when they attract, assemble, and nurture strong board and senior leadership teams. Bridgestar enhances the effectiveness of capable executives in the sector (see *http://www.bridgestar.org*).

The Christian Community Development Association is a strong fellowship of those involved in Christian community development (see *http://www.ccda.org*).

The Corporation for National and Community Service has comprehensive resources for FBCOs under its Faith and Communities Engaged in Service (FACES) initiative (see *http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/faces-toolkit-state-comm*).

The Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations is an interdisciplinary research center at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. It seeks to expand understanding and accelerate critical thinking about nonprofit organizations and civil society among scholars, practitioners, policy makers, and the general public (see *http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/hauser*).

The Internet Nonprofit Center publishes the Nonprofit FAQ, a resource of information provided by participants in many online discussions about nonprofits and their work (see *http://www.idealist.org/if/idealist/en/FAQ/Nonprofit/Home/default*).

The Nonprofit Risk Management Center is a source for tools, advice, and training to identify, understand, and mitigate the risks encountered in nonprofit management (see *http://www.nonprofitrisk.org*).

The Stanford Social Innovation Review is the premier journal on nonprofits, philanthropy, and corporate social responsibility. Its mission is to share substantive insights and practical experiences that will help those who do the important work of improving society do it even better (see *http://www.ssireview.org*).

The TCC Group's mission is to develop strategies and programs that enhance nonprofit organizations, philanthropies, and corporate citizenship programs to achieve social impact (see *http://www.tccgrp.com*).

The United Way of America is dedicated making measurable impact in every community across America. It includes approximately 1,400 community-based United Way organizations, each of which is independent, separately incorporated, and governed by local volunteers (see *http://www.liveunited.org*).

APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (CFBCI) contracted with Dare Mighty Things, a social services management consulting company, to identify exemplary intermediaries and their emerging practices. Dare Mighty Things used a four-step process to identify the intermediaries and describe their practices: identification, ranking, recommendation, and summit facilitation.

Identification

Candidate intermediaries were required to conform to a general definition of intermediary, serve organizations that provide direct social services to those in need, and display strong governance and service quality. The 100 candidate intermediaries were identified from the pool of organizations that appeared in published studies of intermediaries, have documented results that demonstrate their effectiveness, or were recommended by experts in the intermediary field. The studies that were consulted include:

- *Empowering Compassion: The Strategic Role of Intermediary Organizations in Building Capacity Among and Enhancing the Impact of Community Transformers* (Hudson Institute, 2002)

- *The Expanding Universe: New Directions in Nonprofit Capacity Building* (Nonprofit Alliance, 2004)

- "Promising Practices for Improving the Capacity of Faith- and Community-Based Organizations" (Branch Associates, 2005)

- *Toward More Effective Use of Intermediaries* (The Foundation Center, 2003)

- "Building the Capacity of Capacity Builders" (TCC Group, 2003)

- "An Assessment of the Compassion Capital Fund." (Abt Associates and Branch Associates, 2006)

Ranking

Each intermediary in the candidate pool was assessed according to the extent to which it fulfilled several criteria, which are listed below. The items appearing beneath each of the criteria represent possible ways an organization could fulfill the criteria.

- The intermediary has a track record of innovation and leadership.
  - Recognized experts support the organization and make public note of its leadership or staff.
  - The organization's staff have published materials or developed training or curricular materials.
  - The organization has replicated its programs in several locations.
- The intermediary is aligned with the community it serves.
  - The intermediary has a well-defined geographic service area and is headquartered in that area.
  - The staff and board include persons with a background similar to those in the community it serves.
  - The intermediary's programs and activities align with its mission and the needs of the organizations it serves.
- The intermediary evaluates its activity and measures results.
  - To guide its outcome development process, the organization employs a carefully crafted, overarching theory of change and measurement framework for its activities and outcomes.
  - The organization creates and monitors an effective system to collect, analyze, measure, and report its process and outcome data.
  - The intermediary conducts substantive assessments of the organizations served and tailors its assistance accordingly.
  - The organization evaluates customer satisfaction at each point of service.

- The intermediary maintains a high level of recognized excellence in providing assistance to grassroots organizations.

  - The organization has been committed to assisting grassroots social service providers for five years or more.

  - The organization demonstrates core competencies in several capacity building methods (training, technical assistance/consulting, re-granting, network development, publishing/knowledge management).

  - The organization is well-known and recognized among community leaders or is widely viewed by community groups as the place to go for assistance.

- The intermediary maintains highly qualified leadership, staff, and consultants.

  - Among its key staff and consultants, the organization displays a high level of training or higher education in the relevant field of service.

  - The organization's staff has several years of experience in operating or building the capacity of nonprofit social service organizations.

- The intermediary has proven sustainability.

  - The organization has been in existence for ten years or more.

  - The organization has a track record of both attracting and maintaining new initiatives.

  - The organization has a track record of successfully securing and managing public grants in a manner consistent with government regulations.

Recommendation

After candidates were ranked, the identification of recommended candidates included consideration of diversity of organization type (faith-based, secular, university, government, nonprofit, for-profit, etc.), location (urban, suburban, rural, different regions of the country), scope (national, state, regional, community-based), program focus (capacity building, service provision), field of expertise (social services, housing, education, etc.), practices (wide range of best practices, promising innovations), ethnicity (range of ethnic groups representative of diverse populations), and primary funders (past or present government-funded, foundation-funded, etc.).

The final list of recommendations and rationale for each was presented. The CFBCI approved the list of invitees.

Summit Facilitation

Participants prepared for the Summit by submitting written descriptions of their practices, which were posted online for peer review prior to the Summit. During the Summit, participants met in small, facilitated groups to discuss the practices, and convened in large facilitated groups to consider broad application of the practices.

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APPENDIX D: REFERENCES

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