

The application of performance-based indicators to inform an integrated approach to program and service delivery in concentrated poverty neighborhoods

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Statement of the Problem:

There is a growing sense of urgency to improve policy and programmatic outcomes in urban neighborhoods with persistently-high concentrations of poverty. In the United States, the population in extreme-poverty neighborhoods rose more than twice as fast as suburbs and cities, as a whole, in the last decade after declining in the 1990s. The population in extreme-poverty neighborhoods - where at least 40 percent of individuals live below the poverty line rose by one-third during this period. Poor people in cities remain more than four times as likely to live in concentrated poverty neighborhoods (Kneebone, Nadeau, and Berube, 2011). Studies have found that poor individuals and families are not evenly distributed across communities or throughout the country. Instead, they tend to live near one another, clustering in certain neighborhoods and regions (Kingsley, Coulton, Pettit, 2014). This concentration of poverty results in higher crime rates, underperforming public schools, poor housing and health conditions, as well as limited access to private services and job opportunities. The urgency and complexity of concentrated poverty issues places a burden on community development organizations generally strapped of financial resources and with limited management capacity. The use of transparent and effective performance management techniques can be an important planning and administrative tool for community development organizations involved in the delivery of programs and services to neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty. The use of well-crafted performance management data can improve the capacity of community development

organizations to administer and target program resources and evaluate both internal and external benefits (Cowan, Kingsley, 2015).

The research focuses on the policy and program delivery of the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT) to 17 Targeted Urban Areas (TUAs) in Miami-Dade County, Florida. MDEAT's role is to help ensure the equitable participation of Blacks in Miami-Dade County's economic growth through advocacy and monitoring of economic conditions and economic development initiatives. MDEAT, formerly Metro Miami Action Plan (MMAP), was founded shortly after an explosion of civil unrest ravaged Miami-Dade County's inner-city communities in the early 1980s. In its current capacity as a county-government agency, (MDEAT) is responsible for providing quarterly financial reports and submitting to the Board an annual report card on the state of the Black community in Miami-Dade County. MDEAT has oversight for four policy areas within the TUAs: jobs/economic development, housing, education and criminal justice.

Objectives:

The research will build on a growing body of knowledge on how comprehensive and integrated, performance-based indicators can assist community development organizations to build management capacity and improve program and service delivery outcomes in concentrated poverty neighborhoods. The research will expand on the existing baseline analysis performed of the 17 Targeted Neighborhood Areas by the Florida International University Metropolitan Center on behalf of the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust to 1) develop a comprehensive and integrated set of performance-based indicators that can help improve the planning and management capacity of community development organizations, 2) identify potential gaps in program and service delivery to concentrated poverty neighborhoods, and 3) provide a scorecard mechanism to assist in program evaluation, decision making and budgeting.

Methodology:

The research methodology includes the following elements:

- 1) In collaboration with MDEAT, define the issues and program needs within Miami-Dade County's 17 Targeted urban Areas (TUAs) and how these issues and needs relate to the four policy areas for which MDEAT has oversight;
- 2) Develop a comprehensive and integrated set of neighborhood-based indicators that address the issues, needs and policy priorities of the MDEAT;
- 3) Applying the neighborhood-based indicators, perform a baseline analysis of all 17 TUAs to determine current level of need and potential crossover effects under each policy area, i.e. how economic disparity, high poverty levels and low educational attainment correlate to the high violent and property crime rates;
- 4) Determine potential gaps in program and service delivery;
- 5) Develop an annual scorecard to enable MDEAT to build internal and external performance-based management capacity.

Main results and contribution:

Established community development organizations such as the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT) in Miami-Dade County, Florida play important roles in both the struggles and the interventions to gain better outcomes for affected disadvantaged communities with persistently-high concentrations of poverty. The research addresses how community development interventions can gain better outcomes for affected disadvantaged communities by more effectively planning and managing program service delivery through the use of performance-based data.

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