**Measuring Community Impact: Indicators and Methods**

*2005 United Way Community Leaders Conference*
*Grapevine, TX*
*March 31, 2005*

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**Standards of Excellence Framework**

- **Impact Strategies, Resources & Results**
  - Relationship Building & Brand Management
  - Organizational Leadership & Governance
  - Operations

- **Core values** of integrity, impact, volunteerism, inclusiveness, catalytic leadership

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**Component 2:**

**Impact Strategies, Resources and Results**

- **5 Standards:**
  1: Impact Strategies
  2: Partner Engagement
  3: Resource Development and Mobilization
  4: Implementation and Action
  5: **Measure, Evaluate and Communicate Results**

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**Intended Session Outcomes**

As a result of this session, you will:

- Have a clearer picture of what "community changes" are
- Know the importance of clarifying the links between targeted community changes and desired outcomes for people
- Have examples of what to measure and how to measure it to demonstrate community impact
- Recognize community changes that your own community partnerships already are creating

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**Standard 5:**

**Measure, Evaluate and Communicate Results**

*Excerpt:*

United Way and its partners evaluate the effectiveness of impact strategies in order to continuously improve. They identify appropriate measures, collect and analyze results, and assess progress towards desired outcomes. Outcomes may be measured at multiple levels, e.g., programs, system and community. What is learned may cause United Way and partners to re-think, change or adjust strategies, actions and investments.

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**Topics**

**Community Impact: What are we trying to measure?**

More about "community changes"

**Examples from the field:**

- Food Security Initiative; Palm Beach County, Florida
- There's No Room for Domestic Violence in Madison County; Anderson, Indiana

**Q&A**

Measuring your community impact: What and how
Mission of the United Way System

To improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities

United Ways improve lives by investing in:

COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Lasting changes in community conditions
- Direct services to individuals/families


United Ways measure progress and results in improving lives by tracking:

COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Lasting changes in community conditions
- Direct services to individuals/families
- Program outcomes

Community Impact is . . .

Improving lives by mobilizing communities to create lasting changes in community conditions

For example:
- Meeting with neighborhood residents to identify their concerns and assets
- Working with advocates for homeless families on setting priorities for action
- Partnering with residents and experts to pinpoint root causes of and promising responses to family violence
- Convening strategic partners to develop a plan to provide transportation for disabled persons
- Collaborating with opinion leaders to raise awareness of isolated seniors
- Engaging the 2-1-1 service to enlist interested people and organizations in advocating for quality child care
- Linking investors concerned about health care access with efforts to address the issue

Community Impact is . . .

Mobilizing communities to create lasting changes in community conditions that improve lives
For example:

- Banks change lending practices to increase the supply of quality affordable housing
- Businesses provide regular and varied internship and apprenticeship opportunities for youth
- Civic groups (Junior League, Kiwanis, etc.) provide volunteers and other resources to early literacy efforts
- Neighborhood associations in high-crime areas influence the city council to provide funds for improved street lighting
- State and local governments enact new policies and allocate added funds for quality early childhood education
- Public attitudes toward child abuse become less tolerant

Mobilizing communities to create lasting changes in community conditions

For example:

- Low-income children in pilot school districts reach targeted developmental benchmarks
- Families of workers without health insurance have preventive health care
- High school juniors and seniors demonstrate commitment to community involvement
- Homeless families are in quality transitional housing
- Workers laid off in company closings develop needed technical and educational skills
- Residents of high-crime neighborhoods experience increased safety
- Home-bound seniors in central-city high-rises have nutritional, social, and medical support

Mobilizing communities to create lasting changes in community conditions that improve lives

Community Impact is about creating . . .

Specific community changes that will lead to . . .

... specific results intended for a specific population segment

These specific elements and the links between them are the "theory of change" or game plan for a particular community-change effort.

Having a clear plan for what's being changed and how it connects to the end results:

- increases the effectiveness of the effort
- helps identify what to measure

Mobilizing communities to create lasting changes in community conditions

Measuring community impact is about tracking the extent to which:

- Targeted community changes take place
- Intended results are achieved for the specific population segment of concern

United Ways measure progress and results in improving lives by tracking:

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Lasting changes in community conditions

Direct services to individuals/families

Program outcomes

Community changes; Population outcomes

United Ways measure progress and results in improving lives by tracking:

Topics

Community Impact: What are we trying to measure?

More about “community changes”

Examples from the field:

- Food Security Initiative; Palm Beach County, Florida
- There’s No Room for Domestic Violence in Madison County; Anderson, Indiana

Q&A

Measuring your community impact: What and how
Changes in Personal Networks -- Examples

- Parents and other caregivers use everyday moments to encourage early learning
- Friends and family members know to call 2-1-1 for information about local resources
- Parents, teachers and friends know signs of serious depression in teens and how to offer help
- Neighbors routinely clear snow and ice from steps and walks of elderly residents
- Friends don’t let friends drive drunk

Changes in Neighborhoods -- Examples

- Vacant lots are cleaned up and outfitted with safe and sturdy playground equipment
- Residents create and participate in child care co-ops
- Decent-paying jobs are available in the neighborhood
- Housing is safe and complies with local codes
- Residents take action if they see suspicious or illegal activity
Changes in Organizations -- Examples

- Businesses make time and space available for financial literacy seminars
- Service providers have staff and materials appropriate to clients' language and culture
- Faith groups provide vans to transport low-income citizens to prenatal and immunization services
- Pizza parlors serve as drop-off sites for ongoing books-for-children program
- Civic groups work with 2-1-1 to develop year-long volunteer projects related to a pressing community issue

Changes in Systems -- Examples

- The human services system engages all service providers in connecting low-income families with services and supports to grow family assets
- Public, private, and nonprofit sectors join to develop a coordinated community crisis response system
- The juvenile court system helps prevent drop-outs by treating truancy as a serious offense
- The school board and dental association collaborate to operate dental clinics in schools
- A State senate subcommittee votes to broaden access to rehabilitative services for persons with disabilities

Today’s Focus: Measuring progress and results in improving lives by tracking:

Food Security Initiative
Palm Beach County, Florida

Presenters:
- Laurie George
  Senior Vice President, Community Impact
  United Way of Palm Beach County
  Boynton Beach, FL
- Tracey Lamport
  Director, Community Impact
  United Way of Palm Beach County
  Boynton Beach, FL
Background: Palm Beach County Food Security Initiative

United Way Partner: United Way of Palm Beach County, Boynton Beach, FL

- Community Assessment identified that residents of Palm Beach County are not getting basic food needs met
- Food pantries feared running out of supplies and so resisted listing contact information with 2-1-1
- Needed quantitative data to understand who runs out of food (grassroots Hunger Coalition only had anecdotal information)
- Raised money from government agencies and recruited volunteers to conduct a countywide, door-to-door survey
- Using a USDA tool, learned that in the past year, 1 in 3 households with a median income of $35,000 or less ran out of food before they had money to buy more
- Community food security council resulted from strategic planning session

Palm Beach County Food Security Initiative

What's Going to Be Measured

✓ Community Changes
  - Number of contracted school-based community centers that operate SHARE sites
  - Number & percentage of new SHARE sites developing marketing campaigns to build customer base
  - How customers of new SHARE sites learned about SHARE
  - Number of new SHARE sites receiving food deliveries by refrigerated truck
  - Amount of public, private, and nonprofit funds that pay for annual truck maintenance and driver costs

✓ Improved Lives
  - Number & percentage of households receiving SHARE food in new sites who live in low-income neighborhoods

Palm Beach County Food Security Initiative

Measuring Community Change

Targeted Change:
Contracted school-based community centers in low-income neighborhoods operate additional SHARE sites.

Indicator:
Number & percentage of new SHARE sites that turn in food orders each month

Data Collection Tools/Measures:
Records from Palm Beach County SHARE food warehouse showing number of new sites that place food orders each month

Results:
First data on number & percentage of new SHARE sites that turn in food orders each month will be available in June 2005.

Theory of Change Highlights

Improved Lives
More food insecure households in low-income neighborhoods get nutritious food at reduced prices.
Targeted Change:
New SHARE sites receive nutritious food via a new refrigerated truck.

Indicator:
Number & percentage of new SHARE sites that receive monthly deliveries from the newly purchased refrigerated truck

Data Collection Tools/Measures:
Transportation records from the truck driver

Results:
First data on # & % of new SHARE sites that receive monthly deliveries from newly purchased refrigerated truck will be available in June 2005.

Targeted Change:
Food-insecure households in low-income neighborhoods get nutritious food at reduced prices.

Indicator:
Number & percentage of households receiving SHARE food in new sites who live in low-income neighborhoods

Data Collection Tools/Measures:
Household addresses recorded on food order forms, checked against median income of corresponding county census blocks; findings recorded in log and collated monthly

Results:
First data on # & % of households receiving SHARE food in new sites who live in low-income neighborhoods will be available in June 2005.

Learning
- Community changes are easier to measure than improvements in people’s lives, but in the end, improving lives is what matters
- Achieving meaningful results starts with defining the specific improvement sought for a defined population segment, and then identifying the community changes required to create those results
- This “theory of change” also helps identify what to measure to show progress and results
- The theory-of-change flow chart provides a visual picture of the initiative that helps communicate with stakeholders

Challenges
- Measuring results just for the target population (not allowed to ask for household income)
- Timing of various data collection methods vis-à-vis timing of this and related food security interventions
- 2000 census data that identifies low-income neighborhoods is increasingly out of date
- Getting data collected consistently in volunteer-run program sites
- Current tracking system is paper and pencil, not electronic
Measuring Community Impact: Indicators and Methods

There’s No Room for Domestic Violence in Madison County

**Presenters:**
- Taylor Burton-Edwards
  Director of Community Impact
  United Way of Madison County; Anderson, IN
- Jennifer Dennis
  Director, There’s No Room for Domestic Violence in Madison County
  Alternatives, Inc.; Anderson, IN
- Major Ron Richardson
  Madison County Sheriff’s Department; Anderson, IN
- Officer Bob Stewart
  Chesterfield Police Department; Chesterfield, IN

**Background:** There’s No Room for Domestic Violence in Madison County
United Way Partner: United Way of Madison County, Anderson, IN

- US DOJ grant to Alternatives Inc. to work with Anderson Police Department and address roots of domestic violence.
- 2 other police agencies, United Way of Madison County, and the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute were invited to join the effort.
- Research identified a coordinated response and awareness as key to reducing domestic violence.
- Partnership expanded

**Theory of Change Highlights**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Changes</th>
<th>Population Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law enforcement officers are trained in “pro-arrest” response to DV.</td>
<td>People who experience domestic violence are not abused again.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All county LE agencies adopt “pro-arrest” policy regarding DV.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Courts closely supervise convicted DV offenders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business, hospitals, &amp; fire departments provide safe haven to DV victims.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DV shelters help victims assess options, take action.</td>
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<td>LE agencies consistently arrest alleged DV offenders.</td>
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<td>People in danger have places to go to be safe and get connected to further assistance.</td>
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<td>DV victims take action to avoid further abuse.</td>
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<td>Abusers do not repeat abuse.</td>
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**What’s Being Measured**

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<td>Police scores on tests of knowledge regarding current domestic violence policy and procedures</td>
<td>People who experience domestic violence are not abused again.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of law enforcement agencies adopting pro-arrest policy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of DV calls that result in arrest</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of “safe haven” sites in the community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of victims who follow through with filing protective orders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reported instances of domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of deaths related to domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(planned) Percentage of victims who are not abused again</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Targeted Change:**
Businesses, hospitals, & fire departments provide safe haven to DV victims.

**Indicator:**
Number of businesses and services open 24 hours in Madison County with all staff trained in helping people who have experienced domestic violence

**Data Collection Tools/Measures:**
Records of businesses and services

**Results:**
Major local 24-hour convenience store chain, 2 hospitals, several fire stations serve as safe haven sites for victims of domestic violence.
Another chain begins April 2005.
Law enforcement officers are trained in "pro-arrest" response to DV.

Businesses, hospitals, & fire departments provide safe haven to DV victims.

People in danger have places to go to be safe and get connected to further assistance.

People who experience domestic violence are not abused again.

Targeted Change:

All county LE agencies adopt "pro-arrest" policy regarding domestic violence.

Indicator:

Number of law enforcement agencies in Madison County that adopt a uniform "pro-arrest" policy regarding domestic violence response.

Data Collection Tools/Measures:

Policy documents of law enforcement agencies

Results:

All 15 law enforcement agencies in Madison County, including the Sheriff's Department and the Indiana State Police, now use the same set of policies and procedures for dealing with domestic violence calls, including a "pro-arrest" protocol.

Targeted Change:

Law enforcement agencies consistently arrest alleged domestic violence offenders.

Indicator:

Number of arrests as a percentage of total domestic violence calls

Data Collection Tools/Measures:

Law enforcement (police/sheriff) records

Results:

The arrest rate for domestic battery offenses doubled from 35% in December 2003 to 70% in February 2004 and has remained steady to present. This compares with a national average rate of 50%.

Targeted Change:

Domestic violence victims take action to avoid further abuse.

Indicator:

Of domestic violence victims who initiate filing protective orders, percentage who complete the filing

Data Collection Tools/Measures:

Court records

Results:

Before the project, 89% of victims who initiated filing protective orders were completing the filing. The first data to show the project's impact on the filing rate will be available in July 2005.
Ongoing Challenges

• “Tip of the iceberg” syndrome
  - increase in arrest rate and call volume
  - technological barrier of tracking perpetrator re-offense/case management (30 community partners have applied for DOJ grant to address)
• Gathering data on reoffense to measure impact of changed policies over time
• Developing measures to encourage and show increased coordination of law enforcement/court supervision of offenders/victim protection

Learning

• Relationships matter: Building relationships across otherwise fragmented systems was essential for the coordinated response that is having meaningful impact at a community level
• Research matters: Checking current research before we implemented preliminary plans kept us from investing in an effort (batterer intervention programs) that is proving to have no effect and redirected us to an approach (close court supervision of offenders) that research shows does make a difference
• Tracking community change often is not hard; measuring improved lives almost always is very challenging

Related Resources on United Way Online

• Community Impact in Action (keyword = CIinAction)
• Community Outcome Planning and Measurement resources (keyword = Outcome Measurement; select UWA Resources/Community Outcome Planning & Measurement):
  - Community Initiatives: Tracking Progress and Results
  - Community Status Reports and Targeted Community Interventions: Drawing a Distinction
  - Outcome-Focused Planning for Community Mobilizations
• How Program Outcome Measurement Contributes to Community Impact (keyword = POM-CI_3page)

Learning opportunity

• Community Initiatives: Building Strategies, Measuring Results (see Learning Opportunities Catalog in Training/Conferencing section of United Way Online)