

NASCSP

2015 Mid-Winter Training Conference

Learning Communities Resource Center



Learning Communities Presentation

LCRC Overview

Cluster Group Work

Summary of Early Lessons

Next Steps



LCRC Overview

Learning Community

Using Peer Learning to Achieve Outcomes



gather



share



improve

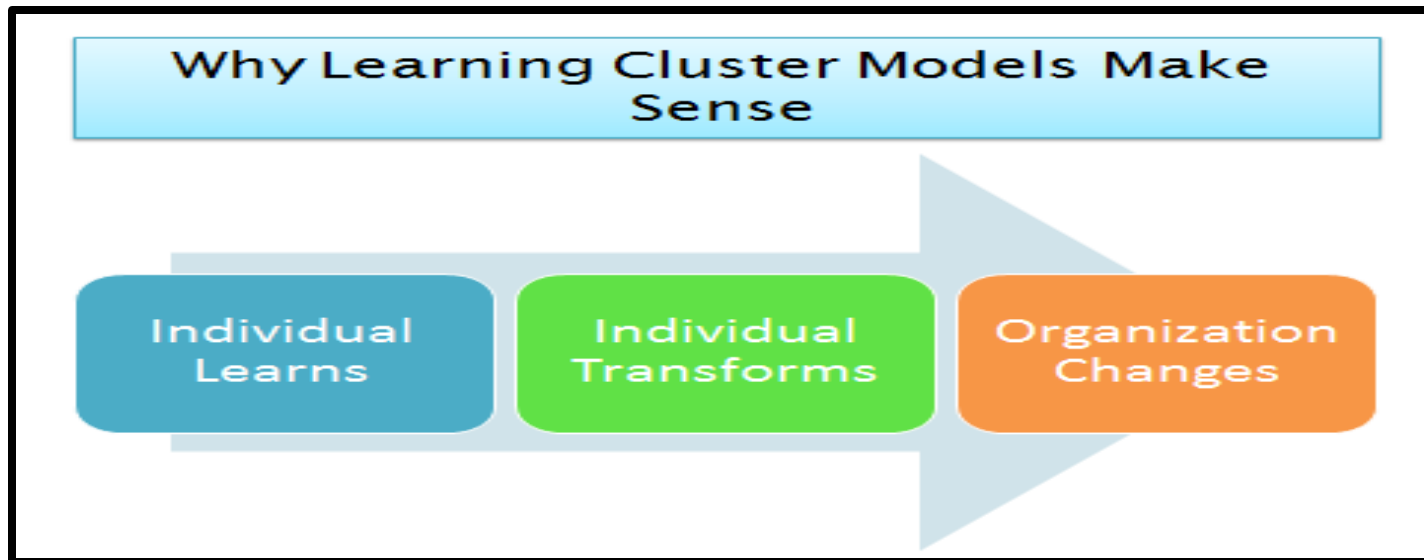
TRANSFORM



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Peer Learning will...

- Build the network's capacity to achieve social change
- Foster ongoing transformative learning
- Promote rapid learning and adaptation within peer organizations
- Develop leaders for the Network



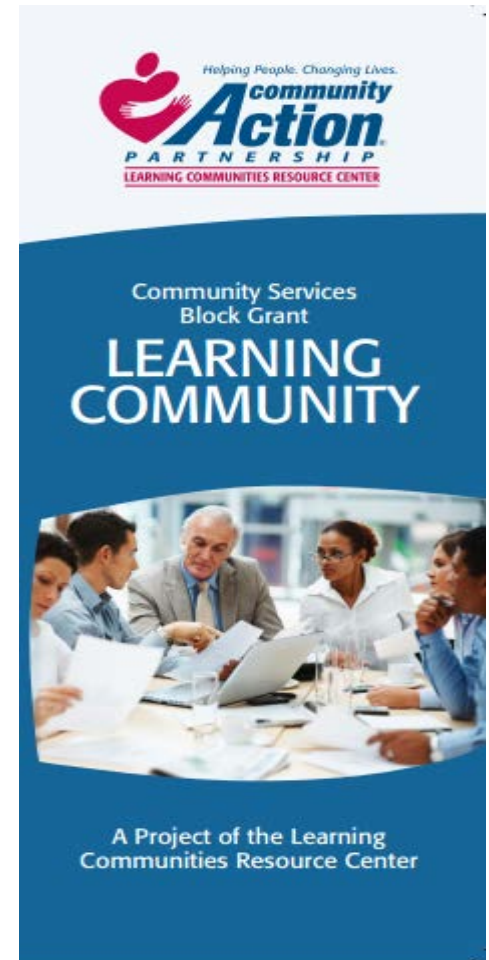
Source: Catherine Marshall, Capbuilders
CSBG Learning Community Subject Matter Expert

Description

- **What is the CSBG Learning Community?**

A peer learning model funded by OCS where CA peers, ranging from beginners to accomplished professionals, assist each other with strategies to improve organizational outcomes within Community Action Agencies.

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- **Purpose:** To analyze Community Action outcomes and identify effective, promising and innovative practice models that alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty.

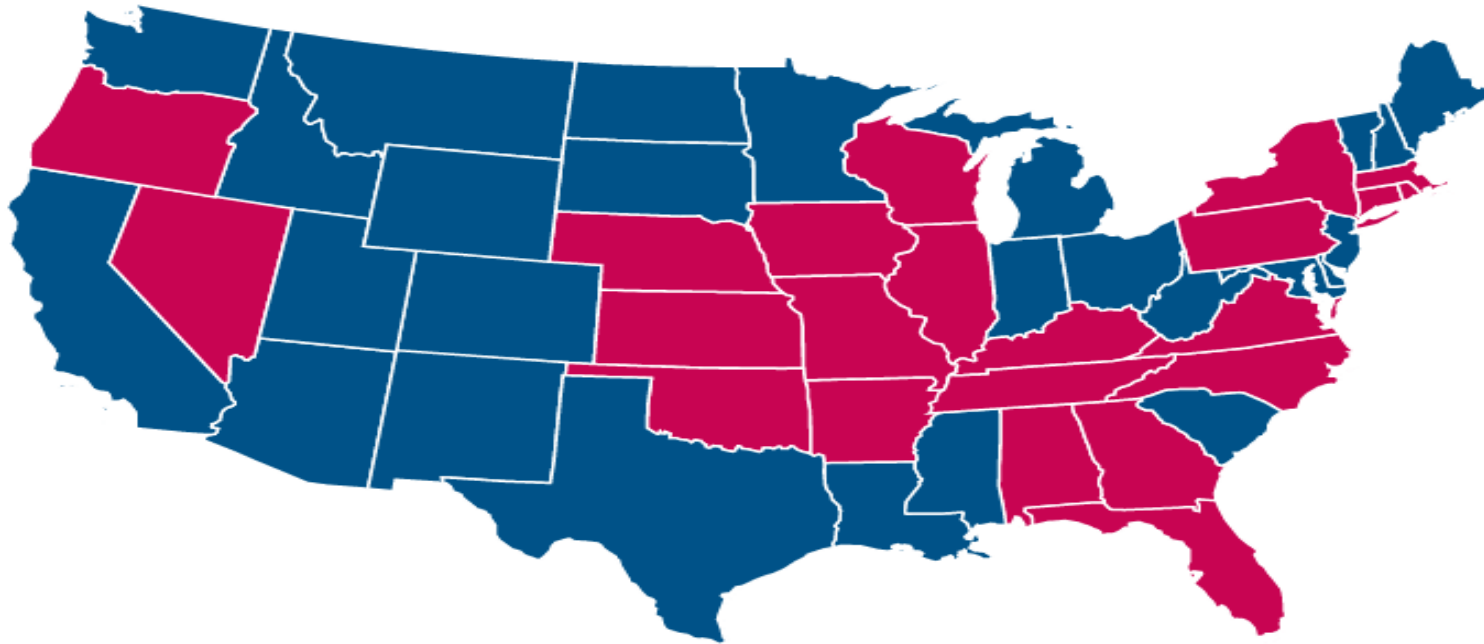


CSBG Learning Community

- 160 Entities Engaged: CAAs, State Associations and State CSBG Offices
- 5 poverty-related topics and 3 specialty topics
- Working together over 15 months



25 States are Represented in the Learning Community



Learning Community comprised of Cluster Groups

- **5 Primary Groups**
 - Decreasing Family Homelessness
 - Increasing Financial Empowerment for Families
 - Increasing Organizational Capacity (Board Governance)
 - Utilizing Place-Based Strategies
 - Bundling Services to Improve Outcomes
- **2 Specialty Groups**
 - Tracking the Use of CSBG Dollars
 - National Trends in Poverty

(Implementing Organizational Standards for States will continue under OSCOE.)

How does the Learning Community operate?

- Members attend bi-monthly meetings, virtually or in-person, and strategize on ways to improve outcomes within Community Action Agencies.
- Bi-monthly meetings may include:
 - Discussing “what works”
 - Sharing data findings
 - Solving problems
 - Offering support for implementing new ideas
 - Sharing best practices/innovative practices
 - Support and ideas from OCS staff

Cluster Group Work

Bundled Services Cluster

- **Focus:** Affirming the existence of comprehensive bundled services in the Network and identifying which bundle of services are most impactful for serving low-income families

– *i.e. Employment, Adult Education, and Housing Assistance*

- **Challenge:** Strategies for integrating intake processes and data collection systems

- *Subject Matter Expert-Mary Virtue, Cornerstone Consultants*

Decreasing Family Homelessness

- **Focus:** Strategies to increase affordable housing in safe neighborhoods, expanding shelter supports and other services leading to home ownership.
- **Challenge:** Serving rural areas; expanding permanent housing programs
- *Subject Matter Support-Stuart Campbell, National Alliance to End Homelessness*

Increasing Financial Empowerment

- **Focus:** Strategies designed to help families with low and moderate incomes stabilize their financial lives and rise above poverty.
- **Challenge:** Identifying/streamlining core components for effective financial coaching.
- *Subject Matter Expert-Catherine Marshall, Capbuilders*

Utilizing Place-Based Strategies

- **Focus:** Developing tools to transform neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into neighborhoods of opportunity that support the optimal development and well-being of children and families.
- **Challenge:** Thinking differently about community partners and a common agenda for community results.
- Subject Matter Expert-Dana Jackson, Better Together Strategies

National Trends in Poverty Cluster Group

- **Focus:** A survey course on the causes and conditions of poverty today, exploring declines in social mobility, challenges in generating wealth through safe investment or savings, obtaining and maintaining stable employment that allows for the generation of wealth and a viable standard of living.
- Special invitation extended
 - ROMA Trainers
 - CCAPs
 - Network Leaders

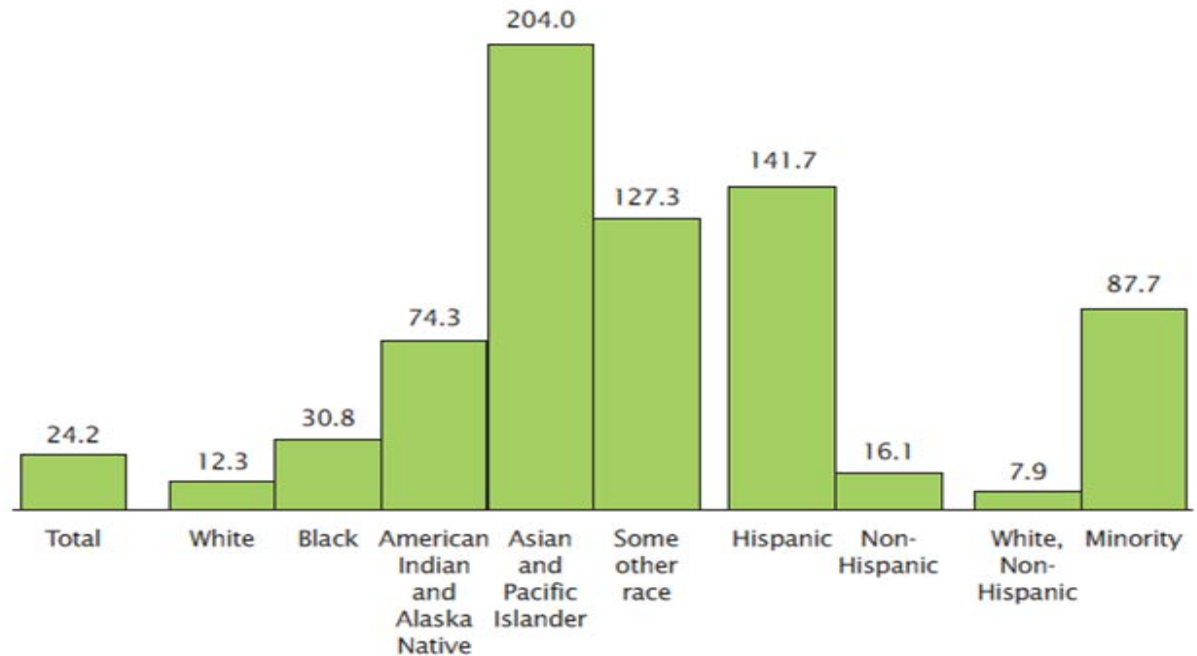
Subject Matter Expert-Jim Masters, Center for Community Futures

Current Trends Shaping Poverty

1. US Birthrate: steadily declining; but more unwed mothers
2. Higher percentage of out-of-wedlock births in 2011 tended to reflect a higher incidence of poverty.
3. More children in poverty in the last 20 years
4. Diversity and immigration: Adds up to greater national strength but little upward mobility for minorities.

Growing Ethnic Diversity

Percent Change in Population Size by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1980-2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census of population, 1980 and 2000.

America is becoming a majority minority nation

While 80% (2010) of American seniors are white, the U.S. population is projected in 2050 to be even.

Tracking the Use of CSBG Dollars

- **Focus:** Identifying ways to track and report use of CSBG Dollars; exploring ways to enhance existing local, state, and national accountability and performance management strategies within the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Network.
- Special Invitation Extended
 - Peers within fiscal departments in local Community Action Agencies
 - Peers experienced in fiscal reporting
 - Peers with an understanding of the fiscal side of the issue.

Subject Matter Expert-Barbara Mooney, ROMA Next Generation Center of Excellence

Tracking the Use of CSBG Dollars

- Facilitated in collaboration with ROMA Next Generation Center of Excellence and National Association for State Community Service Providers (NASCSPP)
- Primary area of discussion centered on identifying the uses of CSBG dollars within the broader Community Action Agency funding.
- It's a strength of the CAA Network to utilize CSBG dollars to leverage other funding sources that are woven together at local agencies to enable them to provide a wider range of services and strategies that are responsive to local needs.

Tracking the Use of CSBG Dollars

Several changes to Section E of the IS Report were suggested with input from this Cluster Group.



Section E: CSBG Expenditures by Service Category

Agency Reporting:

Table 1: Total amount of CSBG funds expended in FY 20xx by Service Category

Service Category	CSBG Funds	
1. Employment		
2. Education		
3. Income Management		
4. Housing		
5. Nutrition		
6. Health		
7. Casemanagement/Family Development		involves multiple service categories, formerly Self Sufficiency
8. Emergency and Stabilization Services		
9. Disaster Services		
10. Linkages		community level linkages, Individual linkages reported
11. Organizational Capacity		
12. Administration		as defined in IM 37 can be administration of an agency
Totals	\$0	

Table 2: Identification of CSBG Funds that were used in the categories identified above for community outcomes.

Of the funding listed in Table 1, the funds used for community level work	CSBG Funds
Funds associated with community outcomes reported in NPI Goals 2, 3 or 4	

Early Lessons & Observations



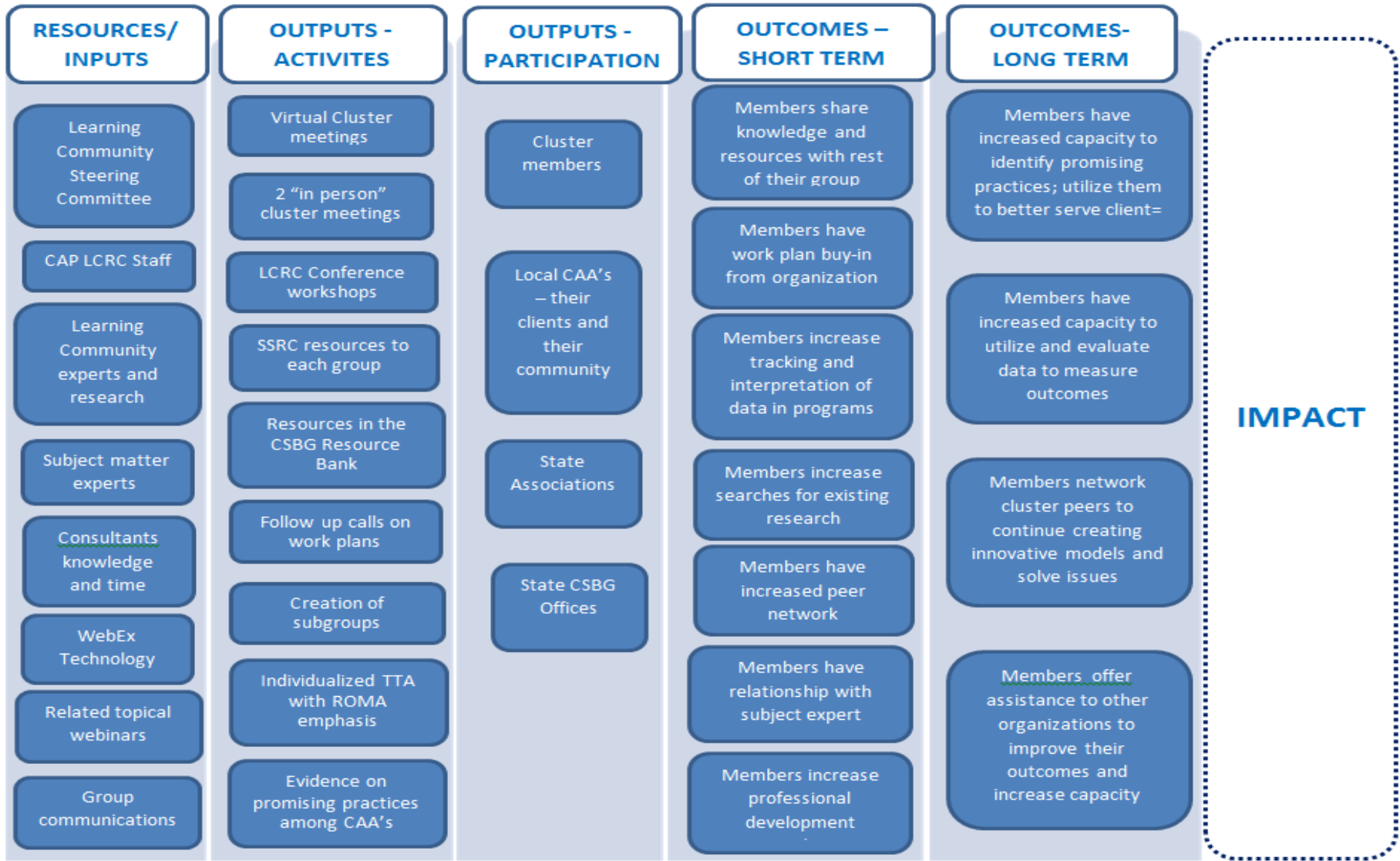
Early Lessons & Observations

- Groups uniquely different
- Work plans have been helpful
- Facilitation is key
- Size matters
- More vertical communication rather than horizontal or peer communication

Early Lessons & Observations

- Steps between participating in group—to measuring improvement in organization’s capacity to impact the lives of those they serve are difficult to say the least!
 - “Not all parts are equally valuable!” -Lee Schorr
 - Administered survey on the process so far to gauge which parts are working well.
 - Continue to respond to training needs of Cluster Group Members and encourage sharing of successes
 - Poking members to present during meetings has worked well, i.e. Oswego County Opportunities, Inc’s *Best Practices for Serving Families Experiencing Homelessness*

LCRC Summative Evaluation Framework



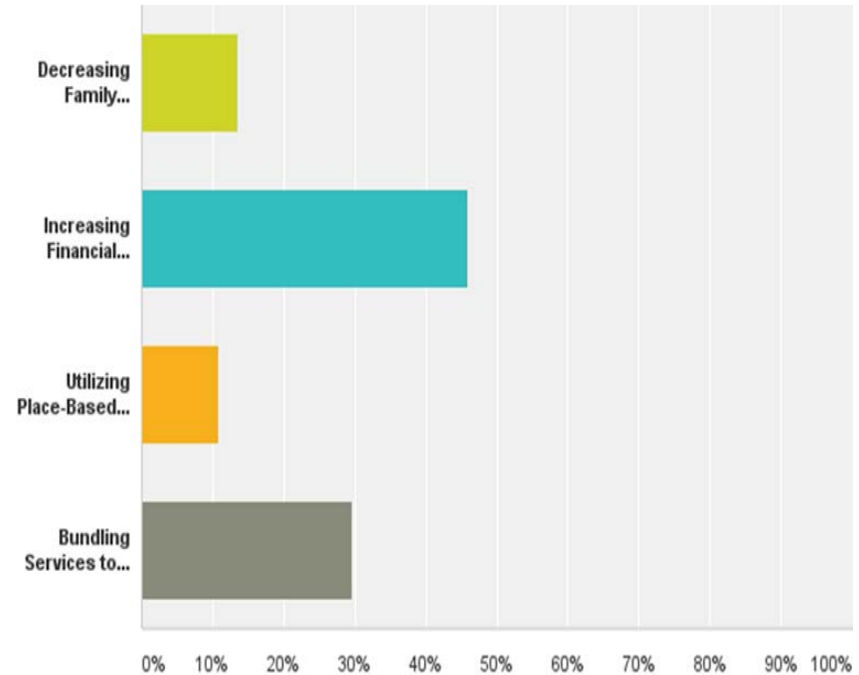
Working document-Draft Form
1/16/15



Cluster Group Process Evaluation

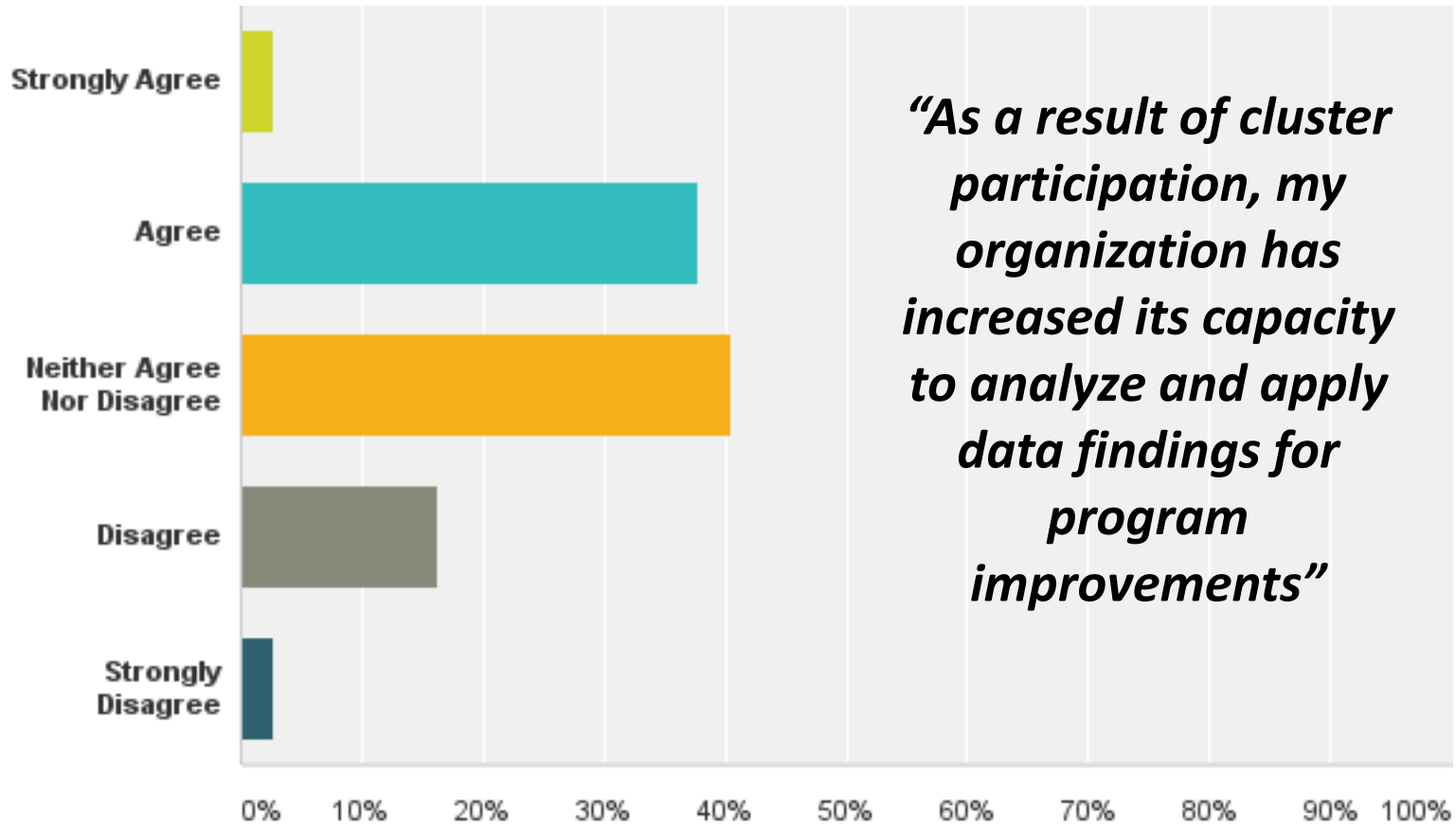
Participation

- **37 respondents** out of 71 cluster members (52% response rate)
- 76% respondents agreed or strongly agreed “**I feel comfortable sharing in cluster group meetings**”



Cluster Group Process Evaluation

Capacity



“As a result of cluster participation, my organization has increased its capacity to analyze and apply data findings for program improvements”

Next Steps....

A Glimpse at LCRC for Year 2

LCRC...

What the Network can continue to expect !!

- Promising, proven and/or best practices
- Innovative methods of addressing poverty
- Experimentation
- Implementation of new ideas
- White papers/Practice briefs
- Lessons learned from the field
- Increased accumulated knowledge
- Improved data collection
- Shared learning and mentoring
- Rapid solution development

Additional Year 2 Activities

Innovative, Proven, Promising Practices

- Cluster Group meetings will highlight proven, promising practices and service delivery models, as well as best practices that are identified within Community Action.
- Consultant-**Ken Ackerman**

Individualized T/TA

- Will be offered to 10 organizations participating in the Place Based and Bundled Services Cluster Groups
- Will serve as an opportunity to provide individual ROMA T/TA and will also increase peer expertise.
- Consultant-**Barbara Mooney**

Other LCRC activities this year:

- Article writing by Elizabeth “Lee” Schorr
- Continued presentations at conferences
- Offering a 1 ½ day board governance cluster group in conjunction with CAPLAW
- National Trends in Poverty Survey (Jim Masters)
- Your Money Your Goals (SD just trained 35; AR will soon have 50)

Upcoming Conferences with LC Sessions

- SC State Association; April 8-10
- NC State Association; May 4-7
- AL State Association; May 18-21
- ACAP, Louisiana; June 3-5
- Partnership Annual Conference; August 25-28



Questions?



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