Chicago Urban League with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

Formula for Community Well-Being

April 2010
Table of Contents

The Formula For Community Well-Being: What Makes, And What It Takes To Achieve a Healthy Community 1
The Project
The Opportunity

The Tools 2
The Added Value

What does the FCWB Consist of? A Sampling of Factors 3

FCWB Structure and Representation 4
The Formula for Community Well-Being: What Makes, and What It Takes to Achieve a Healthy Community

The Project
The recent housing and economic crises have made us all aware how much regional, national, and international events impact local communities. These events have focused an unusual amount of attention on how macro-changes affect our lives. But the fact remains that we all live in local communities and that the nature of those localities affect us powerfully no matter what is happening in the larger world.

The Chicago Urban League and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago are collaborating to produce the Formula for Community Well-Being that will give economically vulnerable communities in Chicago and the metropolitan region as a whole a finger on the pulse of those communities, by providing a detailed and recurring guide to their search for stability, economic growth and social health and well-being. Such a picture will ensure that what is happening in these communities is not lost in citywide, regional and statewide data, debates and decisions. It will show how vulnerable communities, similar in many respects, also differ from each other in important ways. It will both allow local leadership to shape agendas for healthier communities and allow the collectivity of that leadership to shape relevant public policies at the city, county, state and even federal levels.

The Formula for Community Well-Being will include analyses of social capital, educational quality and attainment, workforce engagement, housing quality, business and entrepreneurial development, and community cohesion.

The Opportunity
The timing of this project reflects the enormous damage done to many communities by the financial and economic crises of the last two years. The inter-connected financial crises that started with the U.S. sub-prime mortgage crisis, and ended up plunging the world into a global recession, devastated lower-income communities, and many moderate- and middle-income families, especially minority groups.

Now that the most pressing challenges in maintaining the financial services sector have, at least temporarily, abated, policy makers are turning their attention to longer-term strategies to re-build shattered communities and assisting economically distressed families. It is critical that the next round of policy making to bring families and communities into the economic mainstream is based on a comprehensive analysis of how the various crises have affected the vulnerable communities at the local level.
The Formula for Community Well-Being: What Makes, and What It Takes to Achieve a Healthy Community

The Tools

This project idea will exploit the single best source of detailed, contemporary data, the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey. Since 2003, the Census Bureau has been planning to replace the decennial census long form with a yearly sample survey to provide a constantly updated picture of US households and communities. By 2005, yearly sample surveys were underway in all towns and cities with more than 65,000 residents. In Cook County about 30,000 households are interviewed every year, a much larger sample than any other survey sample conducted by any public or private body.

Since the methodology involves a sample, not the entire population like the annual census, care is needed to generalize from the sample to the population. So using any single year’s ACS data, it is only possible to generalize from the sample to the population of larger geographical units. But in 2008, the ACS started to release three year population estimates that allowed reliable population estimates to geographical units of 20,000 people or more, and in 2010 the ACS will release five year rolling estimates that permit generalizations for even smaller geographical units. We are well aware that demographic data, though critical to our understanding of vulnerable communities, only tell part of the story. We intend to get behind the numbers and develop a qualitative understanding of what residents like and dislike about their communities through a series of regular focus groups.

The Added Value

There are a number of local sources that provide community level information in Chicago, but Chicago Urban League is uniquely situated to provide both data and solutions. It enjoys a high level of legitimacy both in the grassroots communities of the region and among high level policy circles. Chicago Urban League’s interlocking policies, programs and services link housing, schools, families and businesses into a comprehensive net. The Formula for Community Well-Being will provide the Urban League and other organizations concerned with the health of Chicago’s vulnerable communities the information to shape, articulate, and help implement key policies and practices aimed at helping vulnerable communities achieve their goals.
What does the FCWB consist of?

A sampling of factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index Factor</th>
<th>Index Sub Factor</th>
<th>Sub Factor</th>
<th>Sub Factor</th>
<th>Sub factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital</td>
<td>parental engagement in schools</td>
<td># of active community-based organizations</td>
<td>% voting in national elections</td>
<td>cultural amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Quality and Attainment</td>
<td>public school funding per pupil</td>
<td>teacher quality ranking</td>
<td>Level of adult educational attainment</td>
<td>number of schools meeting AYP; number of students performing at grade level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Quality</td>
<td>home ownership rate</td>
<td>% homes not in foreclosure</td>
<td>% paying &lt; 30% of income for housing</td>
<td>crime rate change; juvenile and adult criminal system contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce Engagement</td>
<td>employment rate</td>
<td>real income</td>
<td>wages &gt; sector median</td>
<td>time to travel to work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Entrepreneurial</td>
<td>loans to small bizs by banks over $1 billion in assets</td>
<td>% of local hiring</td>
<td>firm growth rate</td>
<td>retail leakage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Community Cohesion</td>
<td>perception of community safety</td>
<td>perception of community belonging</td>
<td>tolerance of diversity</td>
<td>perception of control over daily life % of individuals with health insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCWB Index Score:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Some of these data are not available from the ACS or other regular sources and will require special data collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FCWB Structure and Representation

Steering Committee: CUL with Chapin Hall

Research Areas:
- Workforce Engagement
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Social Capital
- Housing Quality
- Educational Attainment

CUL with Chapin Hall
Collect, compile and interpret data. Co-chair monitoring meetings; report on progress; publish report

CUL Marketing
Lead press activities, build publicity platform for FCWB model, facilitate link to civic community

FCWB Representation
FCWB steering committee includes CUL Policy and Research Dept, Chapin Hall research fellows, plus external policy & research partners to be named
The Formula for Community Well-Being

CUL’s mutually-supportive network of policy, programs and services provide our clients and partners with a uniquely effective set of tools to solve complex, interlocking problems.

Chicago Urban League Programs Set the Strategic Platform for Community Well-Being
The Formula for Community Well-Being

Chicago Urban League

Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago
The Formula for Community Well-Being

David Thigpen
VP for Policy and Research, Chicago Urban League

Malcolm Bush
Senior Research Fellow
Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago