

MEASUREMENT MATTERS

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES & ACCOUNTABILITY

“The measure of compassion is more than good intentions, it is good results.”
 --President George W. Bush, April 30, 2002

President Bush set the Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI) in motion as a sweeping strategy to address human need more effectively, from homelessness, student success, and prisoner reentry here at home to combating malaria and HIV/AIDS in the developing world. To solve some of society’s most challenging problems, the FBCI works to strengthen both secular and faith-based nonprofit organizations and expand partnerships with them at every level of government.

While noble aspirations are important, what ultimately matters is delivering tangible outcomes: transformed government, strengthened nonprofits, and lives changed for the better. As President Bush expressed, “The measure of compassion is more than good intentions, it is good results.”⁷²

Attaining results first demands clarion objectives, persistent measurement, and hard-edged accountability. The FBCI is marked by each of these elements through the President’s Management Agenda, the FBCI’s annual grants data collection exercise, and the FBCI National Conference on Research, Outcomes & Evaluation to be held in Washington, D.C., from June 26-27, 2008.

I. THE PRESIDENT’S MANAGEMENT AGENDA: OBJECTIVES, MEASUREMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The President’s Management Agenda (PMA) is the authoritative management document for implementation of the FBCI. The White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) works with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) annually to establish clear, measurable PMA objectives for the FBCI in the coming year.

These standards drive agency-level strategic planning and quarterly milestones, shape long-term goals, and hold agencies accountable for achieving the President’s objectives. Under the PMA, good intentions are not enough. Agencies must demonstrate success based on measurable progress and real results.

What is the President’s Management Agenda?

The PMA was announced in the summer of 2001 as a “bold strategy for improving the management and performance of the Federal Government.” In launching the PMA, President Bush acknowledged, “Government likes to begin things—to declare grand new programs and causes. But good beginnings are not the measure of success. What matters in the end is completion. Performance. Results. Not just making promises, but making good on promises.”

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To this end, the PMA sets clear objectives and measurable standards in key areas to ensure effective governance. These include five government-wide goals ranging from “Expanded Electronic Government” to “Budget and Performance Integration.”

The PMA includes nine additional areas of emphasis that apply to specific portions of the Federal Government. The first of these is “Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.” The stated criterion for inclusion of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI) and other agency-specific reforms within the PMA includes:

- Severity of the problem and the importance of the problem to those served;
- Direct and demonstrable benefit to citizens;
- Opportunity to make a dramatic and material difference in program performance; and
- Probability of achieving improvements in the near term.

Each government agency’s chief operating officer (COO) holds responsibility for implementing the agency’s PMA responsibilities. Working through their respective COO and other senior agency staff, FBCI Centers map out the agency’s strategy and planned actions for meeting PMA standards. As a result, the FBCI is integrated within the agency’s core mission.

PMA Standards and Evaluation

OMB sets the standards for each of the 14 PMA focus areas, including the FBCI. Each year, the White House OFBCI works with OMB to establish goals and benchmarks for the coming year.

The standards for PMA evaluation take effect each year on July 1. These standards are formalized in a document entitled, “Proud to Be.” This name reflects the idea that agencies can feel “proud to be” at certain levels of accomplishment in implementation of PMA objectives by the end of the annual cycle. OMB measures agencies’ success in reaching these standards every quarter, evaluating agencies on both “progress” over the prior quarter and overall “status” in achieving the PMA’s primary measures of success.

The “Proud to Be” standards are now in their fifth iteration, known as “Proud to Be V,” which went into effect on July 1, 2007. They are publicly available at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/results/agenda/standardsforsuccess08-2007.pdf>.

The PMA and the FBCI: A Brief History

The FBCI received its first PMA rating in June 2002. OMB issued ratings to the five Federal departments with established FBCI Centers on both “progress” and “status” for implementing the PMA objectives. These standards, among other objectives, included launching pilot projects to test innovative program improvements; coordinated outreach and technical assistance to faith-based and community organizations; and systematic use of evaluations for key aspects of the impact of the FBCI and reported results.

Although measuring the accomplishments of the five departments, the 2002 ratings were issued as an aggregated, government-wide rating rather than as a rating of each respective agency. With rating options of red, yellow and green, with green being the highest rating possibly, the FBCI earned a “yellow” rating for “progress” and a “red” rating for “status.”

As the PMA matured, two significant improvements ensured a more sophisticated and effective FBCI rating. In June 2003, OMB issued its first FBCI ratings to each respective agency, rather than using the blunt tool of a government-wide rating. This served as a powerful accountability mechanism for departments and agencies, as PMA ratings are considered a serious matter by senior departmental leadership. As a result, desire to improve and/or sustain high PMA ratings drives agency priorities and allocation of attention and resources. Inclusion of the FBCI in individual PMA ratings helped secure senior-level support for FBCI objectives within each agency.

A second major innovation began with “Proud to Be II.” As implementation of the FBCI took shape in a wide range of agencies, distinctive models and approaches proved to be particularly effective. These elements were incorporated into PMA standards as “best practices.” Beginning in July 2004, each agency’s rating would depend upon effective implementation of specific best practices, as well as innovations and new models.

Each annual iteration of “Proud to Be” has brought new best practices, higher standards for an agency to receive “green,” or successful, status, and additional refining. Meanwhile, the primary goals articulated in the original “Proud to Be” remain central to the PMA’s standards for the FBCI.

Proud to Be V Standards for the FBCI

As noted, “Proud to Be V” set updated objectives for FBCI implementation for the year beginning July 1, 2007. In addition to its six overarching standards, “Proud to Be V” includes a total of 21 specific “best practices.” Each of the overarching objectives must be achieved for full “green” status, including engagement of all 21 best practices. For “yellow” status, an agency must demonstrate at least partial achievement of all six objectives, including engagement of at least 15 best practices.

The six objectives ensure that each Agency:

1. Implements a comprehensive outreach and technical assistance strategy for enhancing opportunities of faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) to compete for Federal funding, including working with State and local officials to expand access to Federal funding awarded through them. This strategy employs all seven best practices;
2. Provides and facilitates education on the equal treatment principles at the Federal, State and local levels, assists Federal programs within their purview in developing mechanisms for assessing compliance with appropriate regulations and in addressing violations once they are brought to the agency’s attention, and works to enable State and locally administered programs to implement equal treatment principles using proven models for partnering with FBCOs. Activities employ all nine best practices;
3. Collects accurate and timely data as requested by the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) on participation of FBCOs and other applicants, including government entities, in selected Federal non-formula programs. When requested by the White House OFBCI, works with Federal formula program offices, in partnership with State and local administrators and State FBCI Liaisons, to collect information on FBCO participation at the State and local level;
4. Implements pilot programs to strengthen the partnership between FBCOs and the Federal Government to deliver services and inform implementation of the FBCI, and expands the use of pilots to test new strategies when appropriate;

5. Undertakes outcome-based evaluations of its pilot programs where FBCOs participate, provides quarterly progress reports and interim results to the White House OFBCI throughout the life of the program, and builds an evaluation component into new pilots. Incorporates FBCO component into broader program evaluations when appropriate;
6. Implements an aggressive strategy to facilitate the expanded participation of grassroots faith-based and community organizations in services funded by both Federally-administered and Federal block/formula funds. Activities include initiation of all five best practices within the FY 2007 grant funding cycle.

Quarterly OMB Evaluation of FBCI Implementation

Prior to the beginning of the current PMA cycle in July 2007, each agency included in the FBCI collaborated with OMB to set specific milestones for each quarter in the coming year. The milestones are specific, planned activities to achieve “Proud to Be” standards. Although milestones are set at the beginning of the annual cycle, they may be updated quarterly to reflect changing situations.

Each quarter throughout the year, a department or agency must submit to OMB a Scorecard reporting its achievements for the past three months. The Scorecard presents specific steps taken to execute “Proud to Be” objectives, and achievements are weighed against the milestone activities the agency had set as goals. Although these Scorecards are generally prepared by an agency’s FBCI Center, it reports on activities related to the FBCI from across the agency.

Once a Scorecard has been submitted, OMB examiners launch a formal review, engaging the agency much like an auditor. Examiners seek clarification on unclear items reported in the Scorecard, request documentation of important claims, and explore areas where it is unclear whether Centers have fully met goals set in the prior quarter.

During the Scorecard process, OMB examiners frequently elicit guidance and feedback from the White House OFBCI. Examiners seek to ensure that the actions an agency reports do indeed represent achievement of the objectives set forth in the current “Proud to Be.”

Examiners generally provide an initial rating to the agency’s overall status and progress in implementing PMA standards. Agencies that disagree with ratings can appeal to the examiner or, in more extreme cases, to senior OMB staff. Once appeals have been settled, the rating is made final and appears as a part of the department or agency’s PMA rating.

As noted, OMB delivered the first FBCI agency-specific PMA ratings in March 2003 for the five departments initially charged with implementation of the FBCI. Ratings were as follows:

President’s Management Agenda Ratings for FBCI March 2003

Faith-Based and Community Initiative	Current Status	Progress in Implementation
*Education		
*HHS		
*HUD		
*DOJ		
*DOL		

With the addition of the Department of Homeland Security in 2006, eleven Federal departments and agencies are now formally responsible for implementation of the FBCI. Each submits quarterly PMA Scorecards and receives quarterly PMA ratings from OMB. For the quarter ending December 31, 2007, the ratings were as follows:

Program Initiatives Scorecard

Faith-Based and Community Initiative:	Current Status	Progress in Implementation
• Agriculture		
• Commerce	↑	
• Education		
• HHS		↑
• DHS		↑
• HUD		
• Justice		
• Labor		
• VA		
• AID		
• SBA		

Weekly Progress

In addition to OMB’s quarterly Scorecards, the White House OFBCI cultivates a more frequent, granular level of accountability from departments and agencies.

Each week, agencies report to the White House OFBCI their highest-priority actions, key challenges they are addressing, developments in major programs, and other data. This regular flow of information increases government-wide coordination of the FBCI through the hub of the White House Office. Digests of these weekly reports, shared with all FBCI agencies, enable agencies to draw upon the effective practices of others and build collaborative efforts.

Since weekly reporting reflects the same priorities as the “Proud to Be,” issues that might otherwise arise only at the end of a quarter when Scorecards are submitted can be identified and addressed immediately.

II. ANNUAL FBCI GRANTS DATA COLLECTION: A KEY PROXY MEASURE

As explored throughout this report, the FBCI seeks to reorient the way government solves problems. It works to shift the emphasis from large, distant, and bureaucratic programs driven from Washington to, whenever possible, local, personal solutions rooted deep within the community.

As much as this transformation requires policy and programmatic changes, it equally entails a “cultural shift” in government’s approach to addressing human need. Thus, while the PMA guides and measures specific steps in implementation, a fundamental question remains: Is government actually changing the way it meets human need?

Even in the early years of the FBCI, anecdotal reports evidenced the beginning of a transformation. Government was changing in the way any massive institution changes—slowly, and by fits and starts. But quantitative measures were desired, as well. The question now revolved around what data could be used to measure this change.

As President Bush articulated from the start of the FBCI, faith-based service organizations stand among America’s most vital frontline soldiers in any attack on need. Yet—as had long been known by observers and was systematically described in the FBCI’s 2001 “Unlevel Playing Field” report—these organizations were often forced to work in isolation from government. While often unintended or erected with positive motives, a range of barriers kept many of these organizations from partnering with government, even to address problems they were particularly skilled at solving.

Thus, removing unnecessary barriers to ensure a level playing field for faith-based organizations stood as a foundational goal of the FBCI. However, this was not the *final* goal. The ultimate purpose was a “determined attack on need.” These internal changes were critical in doing everything possible to enlist and equip every willing partner. As the President stated in launching the FBCI in January 2001, “We will encourage community and faith-based programs, without changing their mission. We will eliminate barriers to charitable works, wherever they exist....”

Thus, if government was truly being transformed and new partners were being welcomed, the change would undoubtedly be reflected in an expansion of government partnerships with faith-based organizations.

Admittedly, any quantitative measure would be limited in capturing the full scope of change advanced by the FBCI. However, this data—measuring the expansion of partnership with faith-based organizations—could serve three invaluable purposes: First, it would document the delivery of financial resources to vital allies in the attack on need; Second, it could serve as a gauge to determine whether barriers to the participation of faith-based organizations were indeed coming down; Third, it would serve as a proxy measure of broader transformation in government’s approach to addressing human need.

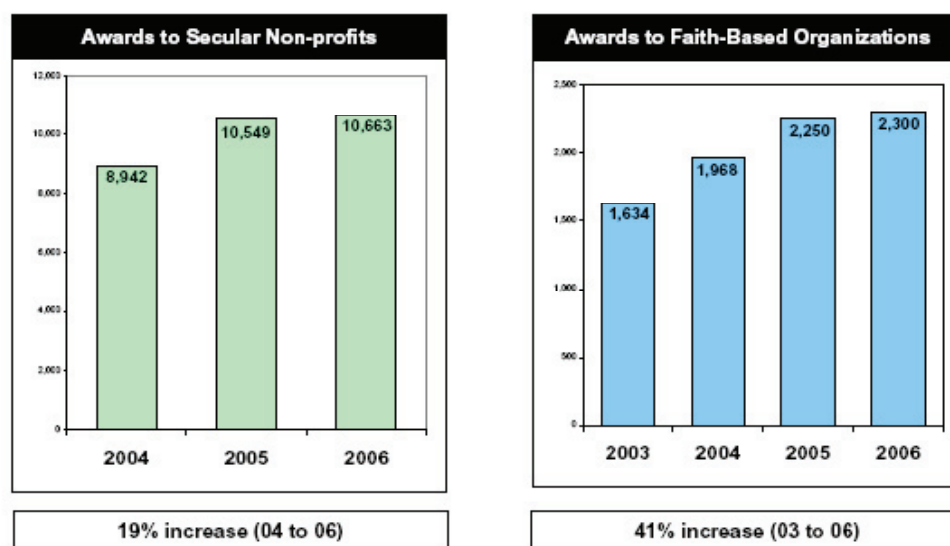
As a result, since FY 2003, Federal grants data have been captured and analyzed on a massive scale. The scope and sophistication of the data has grown every year. In the first year, data was collected for a set of programs open to nonprofits from within the first five Departments housing FBCI Centers—Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Labor, and Education. By FY 2006, the data collection efforts compiled and analyzed information on competitive grants from 134 programs and 35 program areas at 11 Federal agencies.

The FY 2006 data captured in excess of 27,000 direct Federal competitive awards. Of these, more than 15,000 were won by secular nonprofits and over 3,000 by faith-based nonprofits. In total, secular nonprofits won \$12.56 billion and faith-based nonprofits won \$2.18 billion.

The comparison of awards from five agencies between FY 2003 and FY 2006 reveals a 41 percent increase in the number of competitive awards made to faith-based organizations (from 1,634 to 2,300). Data for competitive awards to secular nonprofits saw an upward trend as well, with a 19 percent increase in the number of awards made from FY 2004 to FY 2006. (Note: secular nonprofit data was not collected for FY 2003).

These data trends not only indicate a leveling of the playing field for faith-based organizations, but they also suggest a growing government inclination toward expansion of partnerships with nonprofits of all kinds to address social ills.

History of Awards to Faith-Based and Secular Non-Profits Across Five Agencies



Note:

Data based on a review of amenable programs from the 5 agencies (HHS, HUD, DOJ, DOL and ED) for which data are available for the years shown.

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Data of this nature was not widely collected in years prior to the FBCI, so no exhaustive comparison between pre- and post-FBCI grants data is possible. However, meaningful comparisons exist that hint at the magnitude of the change wrought by the FBCI.

For example, Welfare-to-Work grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) in FY 1998 and 1999 represent an early movement toward the goals of the FBCI. Welfare-to-Work supporters emphasized nonprofits as key to helping struggling individuals transition from welfare to successful employment, and often affirmed that faith-based organizations were uniquely positioned to add value to the effort. This inclination was further bolstered by the inclusion of “Charitable Choice” in the legislation governing Welfare-to-Work grants, essentially requiring a level playing field for faith-based applicants. DOL appears to have taken Charitable Choice requirements seriously, engaging aggressive outreach efforts for grant applications by faith-based organizations.

Yet despite the Charitable Choice requirements, strong intellectual justification, and active outreach for full inclusion of willing faith-based partners, only 3.1 percent of grant awards and 2.3 percent of grant funding went to faith-based organizations.

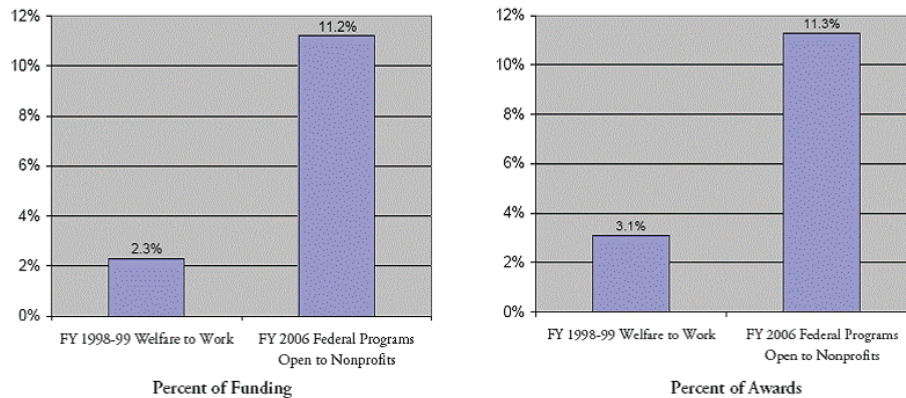
These numbers were considered a significant improvement over other Federal grant programs at the time. For example, of all competitive grants awarded in FY 1998 and FY 1999 by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) (which administered Welfare-to-Work) less than one percent of funds were won by faith-based organizations. However, despite the positive comparison against the Federal Government more broadly, the Welfare-to-Work statistics seemed to reveal the presence of major barriers for faith-based organizations—even in the face of Charitable Choice. This is particularly notable since helping unemployed, high-need individuals has been at the heart of many faith-based organizations’ work since long before DOL existed.

Weighed against the Welfare-to-Work grants data—which, again, was officially governed by Charitable Choice legislation and bolstered by aggressive outreach efforts—the progress of the FBCI is remarkable.

By comparison, in FY 2006, a total of \$2.18 billion in competitive Federal awards went to faith-based organizations. This dollar figure represents 11.2 percent of all competitive award funding measured and a significant increase compared to the 2.3 percent of funding won by faith-based organizations under Welfare-to-Work. Likewise, the 3,125 Federal competitive awards won by faith-based organizations represents 11.3 percent of all awards in FY 2006— a number more than three and a half times the percent of awards won under Welfare-to-Work.

Funding and Awards Won by Faith-Based Organizations

FY 1998-99 Welfare to Work Versus FY 2006 Federal Programs



Qualitative reports, evaluations, and other indicators remain vital to understanding the changes enacted by the FBCI. These “softer” assessments are invaluable to understanding this transformation of government’s approach to human need. But the data delivered by the FBCI’s annual Federal data collection provide firm evidence that what they represent is more than just piecemeal change. Government is, indeed, welcoming both faith-based and nonreligious community nonprofits as full and equal partners. The playing field has been leveled, at least to an extent hardly imaginable a decade ago. It is, quite simply, a broad reorientation in government’s approach to addressing human need.

III. FBCI NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH, OUTCOMES & EVALUATION

As a “determined attack on need,” the FBCI seeks to measure not only the transformation of government and strengthening of nonprofits, but also the reach of the FBCI’s efforts into the lives of the needy.

Government programs do not often use evaluation techniques to measure human impact on programs. Evaluation may be costly, complicated, and time consuming, but failure to measure results is unacceptable. Compassionate intentions are not enough. Programs that spend money without impact are an affront to taxpayers and even worse for the people they purport to serve. Meanwhile, efforts that work should be built upon and expanded.

A range of reports, evaluations, case studies, and other measurement tools have been released since 2001, providing an initial window into the results of the FBCI for people in need. Likewise, the “Compassion in Action Roundtables,” hosted monthly by the White House OFBCI, have explored impact in areas ranging from prisoner reentry to addiction. However, no single undertaking has sought to capture and present the full picture of the FBCI’s outcomes.

This is the purpose of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative Conference on Research, Outcomes & Evaluation, which will be held in Washington, D.C., June 26 and 27, 2008.

The FBCI National Conference will explore the full gamut of both qualitative and quantitative research on the Faith-Based and Community Initiative's history, activities and outcomes. The Conference and its follow-up materials are being planned to include:

- Reports on the measured success of each of the FBCI's Presidential initiative programs and other major programs and projects;
- Ten major new academic papers by respected independent researchers on FBCI programs and innovations in social service delivery;
- Fifteen academic papers by emerging scholars on the FBCI;
- Results of the FBCI's FY 2007 data collection;
- Reports from Federal agencies on the impact of the FBCI within their field(s) of engagement;
- A report on the expansion of the FBCI in State and local governments nationwide and the impact of the FBCI through major international programs;
- Presentations from leading scholars, writers, think tanks and other respected observers on the innovations, results-to-date, and future of the FBCI; and
- A website that parallels and expands the content provided through the Conference, including more than 100 studies of FBCI-related programs.

The two sets of academic papers noted above (10 major papers and 15 by emerging scholars) have been solicited by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through a nationwide Call for Papers. Abstracts were solicited in late 2007 for papers on research and innovations related to the FBCI. Research in both categories will cover quantitative and qualitative aspects of the FBCI's implementation and impact. Papers will range in scope from studies of major Federal programs that partner with FBCOs nationwide to in-depth evaluations of FBCOs engaging a single issue at the local level.

In addition to new academic research generated through the Call for Papers, a wide range of other research papers and evaluations of FBCI-related Federal programs are currently in progress, many of which will be presented at the Conference. Examples of these are included in the following chart.

Research Papers and Evaluations of FBCI-related Federal Programs (in Progress)

Name of Sponsoring Agency	Title of Evaluation	Description of Research
Corporation for National and Community Services	<i>Serving Country and Community: A Longitudinal Study of Service in AmeriCorps</i>	Assesses the long-term impact of participation in AmeriCorps*State and National and AmeriCorps*NCCC on members' civic engagement, education, employment, and life skills.
Corporation for National and Community Services	<i>CNCS National Evaluation of Youth Corps</i>	Assesses the impact of participation in youth corps on corps members' employment, education, life skills and civic engagement.
Corporation for National and Community Service	<i>Volunteering in America: 2007 State Trends and Rankings in Civic Life</i>	Provides a detailed breakdown of America's volunteering demographics, habits, and patterns by State and region, and a ranking of levels of civic engagement by State through a new Civic Life Index.
Corporation for National and Community Service	<i>Volunteering in America: 2007 City Trends and Rankings</i>	Provides an analysis of volunteer trends among major metropolitan (metro) areas, including a ranking and detailed profile of volunteering for 50 of the largest metro areas in the United States.
U.S. Department of Homeland Security	<i>Homeland Security Institute- Heralding Unheard Voices: The Role of Faith-Based Organizations and Nongovernmental Organizations During Disasters</i>	Informs DHS of the capabilities that FBOs and NGOs have at their disposal during times of crisis.
U.S. Department of Commerce	<i>Private Sector Community Investment Research Project</i>	Explores emerging practices in private sector investment, trends and changing attitudes about private sector investment among business leaders.

Name of Sponsoring Agency	Title of Evaluation	Description of Research
U.S. Department of Justice	<i>HOPE II: FBCO Program Evaluations</i>	Assesses the outcomes and process for distributing subgrants, effectiveness of technical assistance and strategies for capacity building, and enhanced organizational and service delivery among FBCOs.
U.S. Department of Justice	<i>Gang Reduction Program</i>	Analyzes incident level crime data in serious gang violence, both longitudinally and spatially.
U.S. Department of Justice	<i>Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative</i>	Examines the extent to which the program increased services and programming, improved employment, health, and personal functioning, and reduced criminal activity of returning prisoners.
U.S. Department of Justice	<i>Comprehensive Anti-Gang Initiative</i>	Identifies comparison areas for tracking gang crime for area-based interventions and comparison groups of individuals for reduced gang violence.
U.S. Department of Labor	<i>Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP)</i>	Analyzes HVRP, including reporting on assessments, participants enrolled, placements, retention, placement rate, and cost per participant.
U.S. Department of Labor	<i>Latino Coalition Intermediary Grant Program Evaluation</i>	Analyzes and reports on the outcome data generated by Latino Coalition's 28 FBCO sites in six cities that serve at-risk and adjudicated youth.
U.S. Department of Labor	<i>Grassroots Grants Evaluation</i>	Reports outcomes of the Department of Labor's grants to small faith- and community-based organizations, with a special focus on work with government One-Stop Centers and social services to high-need demographics.
U.S. Department of Labor	<i>Beneficiary Choice Pilot Analysis</i>	Analyzes the outcome data generated by the beneficiary choice contracting program.

Name of Sponsoring Agency	Title of Evaluation	Description of Research
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<i>Compassion Capital Fund Evaluation (Retrospective)</i>	Contains the results of a retrospective survey of a sample of FBCOs that received support from intermediaries funded during the 2002 CCF grant cycle and targeted capacity building funding from CCF.
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<i>Mentoring Children of Prisoners</i>	Provides in-depth, outcome evaluation based on assessments of mentored MCP youth and the outcomes in their lives that can be attributed to their mentoring experience.
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<i>Intermediary Model Benchmarking Study</i>	Draws from top-performing intermediary organizations to report best-practice intermediary traits, models and behaviors for strengthening FBCOs.
U.S. Small Business Administration	<i>Large Community Organizations Outreach Test</i>	Will assess whether SBA's outreach partnerships with large non-profit organizations (faith-based and secular) can significantly increase its ability to back potential entrepreneurs and small businesses.
U.S. Department of Agriculture	<i>Children, Youth and Families at Risk Program, New Communities Projects (Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA) (CYFAR)</i>	Will review the role that faith-based and community organizations play as partners in its CYFAR program to determine the effectiveness of community-based programs serving children, youth, and families in at-risk environments.
U.S. Agency for International Development	<i>Organizational Development Traits of Successful NGO Networks</i>	Compares eleven NGO networks in a sample, grouping NGO networks by effectiveness, accountability, and sustainability. They determined those features of organizational development that lead to clustering of the networks, along the dimension of effectiveness, sustainability, and accountability.