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# **MID-WEST NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM**



## **COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 2017-2018** General Summary, also see 2017-2018 full Community Assessment

**April 2017**

## **Community Needs and Community Action Plan 2017-2018**

Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program (MWNMCAP) is committed to providing services to help empower and improve the lives of low income individuals and families residing within Valencia, Socorro, McKinley, Cibola and Catron Counties. To this end, we have developed the 2017-2018 Community Action Plan. This plan outlines the issues effecting poverty within the service delivery areas and identifies proposed strategies and services to address the identified needs. In developing this plan, special consideration was given to feedback provided by low income individuals and representatives of low income individuals participating in CSBG activities. The needs identified reflect the feedback received through our Community Assessment Surveys, Public Comments and information obtain during client intake and assessment. The Agency utilizes a systematic approach for collecting, analyzing and reporting client satisfaction data to the Board.

The Board of Directors and Head Start Policy Council continue to rely on the Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and other staff for overseeing community assessment activities. As in past years, the Planning Committee of the Grantee Board and Policy Council continued to be actively involved in reviewing and approving the agency wide community assessment.

Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program continues to use a variety of mediums to identify community needs. A comprehensive annual assessment was conducted by the Agency for both CSBG and Head Start activities. Information is shared between each of the agency's departments. The assessment was conducted by agency staff, Policy Council members, and Grantee Board members. Numerous staff meetings are conducted to discuss the outcome of the assessment and to determine an appropriate plan of action needed to prioritize and address the identified needs. Additionally, information on needs was obtained from individuals who applied for CSBG services. Finally, the agency utilized information gathered from key sectors of the community. These sectors included community based, faith based groups, private sector, public sector and educational institutions. MWNMCAP has developed the infrastructure required to help identify and address client needs. We will continue to utilize our Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Offices, Head Start Centers, and administration office, as well as, community partners to address the needs identifies with the available resources.

We will continue to update our needs assessment of the service delivery area on an annual basis. We will also continue to identify and leverage resources required in addressing the needs. We will work closely with other human services agencies and community members in strengthening existing partnerships and developing new partnerships. We will also continue to address the issues of unemployment and under employment, inadequate education, transportation, inefficient or ineffective use of income, inadequate housing, meet emergency needs within our funding capabilities and utilize other resources and services and collaborate and/or coordinate our efforts and program with them to serve the population in need. Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program will continue to seek alternate funding sources to supplement existing resources. Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program will continue to communicate its activities and results to the

community through the Agency's Annual Report and through information posted on the Agency's website.

In accordance with the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funding requirements and other related State or Federal funding requirements, we submit the 2017- 2018 Community Action Plan.

## **Community Profile**

Mid-West New Mexico CAP is responsible for providing services in five (5) counties, (Catron, Cibola, McKinley, Socorro, and Valencia counties). The counties are located in the mid-western part of the State of New Mexico. The population is spread out over a very large geographical area which encompasses approximately 24,643 square miles. Most of the counties are very rural in nature, with Valencia County being closest in proximity to a metropolitan area. Therefore, there are diverse needs in each respective county that Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program serves.

## **Identification of Major Poverty-Related Problems**

There are numerous factors which have contributed to poverty in the service delivery area. New Mexico along with the rest of the nation has experienced significant economic downturns. Rural communities are not immune from this economic downturn. This has served to intensify the issues which effect poverty.

One of the ongoing factors that continue to keep people on the poverty list is that a single parent is head of household. Approximately 26% of the families with children served during 2015 – 2016 were comprised of single parents. Many of these parents do not receive financial support for their children, and thereby have to rely on public assistance. Programs such as TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) have stringent requirements that families must meet. In many instances families have to find some type of employment to help provide for their families. Available jobs are usually entry level and are low paying.

Another factor is the educational level and/or training of some of these families or parents. Approximately, 31% of the families served during 2015 – 2016 did not have a high school diploma or GED. Those clients who completed their GED lacked viable skills or training needed to obtain a job that provided a living wage. (A living wage is the minimum hourly income necessary for a worker to meet basic needs. It affords the earner and her or his family the most basic costs of living without need for government support or poverty programs). The lack of jobs and employment opportunities was cited as being the greatest concern and pressing problem being faced by individuals residing within our service delivery area. Another pressing problem facing families was their concern for being able to pay necessary bills.

One other area of need identified is that of transportation. Many do not have adequate transportation to allow them to get to a job and they lack the recourses to repair their automobile. The transportation issue is further complicated by the rise in fuel costs and the large geographical area of the state that families are required to travel. Public transportation in rural areas is virtually non-existent.

The lack of available and affordable childcare is a significant barrier in preventing low income families from obtaining full time employment. A shortage of high quality infant and toddler child care for working families poses both a health and safety risk to babies whose parents work outside the home, as well as a missed opportunity to connect parents of young children to critical health services. Even if families are able to find appropriate childcare programs, the cost may present a challenge to families who do not qualify for subsidized care, but cannot afford the cost of licensed care.

A major concern of many parents, especially single parents, is that of housing. Many have to rent or access low-income housing, if available, or live with parents or other relatives. If a particular job is obtained, many cannot afford to pay the high rate of rent due to basically being paid a minimum wage, which of course is attributable to lack of a skill, education, etc. We noted that more families are sharing living expenses. Several families are living in one household and functioning as a larger unit.

### **Identification of Current Levels of Anti-Poverty Efforts**

MWNMCAP will continue to communicate and collaborate with local human services agencies and organizations in the five (5) County areas to facilitate the coordination of services to needy families. MWNMCAP has established formal partnerships with federal, state and local public and private organizations in an effort to foster this coordination.

We will continue to work closely with the New Mexico Department of Human Services, Income Support Division. ISD assists eligible low-income individuals and families through statewide programs of financial assistance, food assistance, employment assistance and training services. The specific programs administered by ISD to impact poverty include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), General Assistance, and Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

Additionally, MWNMCAP will continue to work with the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions to help address the employment and training needs of eligible individuals. Special employment and training needs will be addressed through the local Workforce Investment Boards and their respective contractors.

MWNMCAP will be provided copies of the resources inventory to all individuals applying for assistance. The resource inventory will identify other resources in the community that may be available to meet the needs identified by applicants in those instances where MWNMCAP is unable to provide direct assistance. Individuals and/or families with identified needs will be referred to the appropriate agencies.

While the Mid-West NM CAP does not have dedicated case managers on staff, efforts will be made to introduce case management whenever possible. Staff will function in fashion similar to case managers through maintenance of case files and efforts to link the needs of low-income persons and families with available services and resources. Our agency will continue to rely on our respective staff in offices and/or Centers, along with volunteers, board members and parents of Head Start Children to help ensure delivery of services and assistance to low-income individuals and families in our services areas.

## **Selection of the Problems to be addressed in the CSBG Outcome Plan Form (ROMA) and National Performance Indicators**

Based on a review of data gathered from clients, staff and community partners, we identified the issues which individuals and families are most concerned about. These are presented in order of concern.

### **COMMUNITY ISSUES**

- Not Enough Jobs
- Affordable Housing
- Road/Street Repair
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Education for my children
- Child Abuse and Neglect

### **MOST PRESSING PROBLEMS FOR FAMILIES**

- Paying Necessary Bills
- Employment
- Housing
- Food
- Health Care
- Help for Home or Car repair

Mid-West NMCAP will continue to seek funding from available sources to address the needs of the participants in the needs survey. Some we can address directly and others we will collaborate and/or coordinate our efforts with respective County/City entities and other State agencies and local organizations.

### **The Determination of Measurable Goals:**

The Goals and objectives of the Community Action Plan are designed to meet the CSBG National Performance Indicators. The 2017-2018 plans identify the following goals to address poverty within the service delivery area.

Goal 1: Low income people become more self sufficient.

Goal 2: The conditions in which low income people live are improved.

Goal 3: Low income people own a stake in their community.

Goal 4: Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low income people are achieved.

Goal 5: Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results.

Goal 6: Low income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive environments.

Goal 7: Alleviate the immediate effects of poverty by providing emergency services to low income families, including food distribution, rental and mortgage assistance and utility assistance

The specific measures and expected outcomes will be reflected in the Agency Scope of Work. The Scope of Work will reflect the client's needs as identified in the Community Survey.

### **The Selection of Strategies, Programs, and Activities**

As a result of the assessment, it was determined that due to the continued recession and economic downturns in our service delivery area, families need assistance meeting basic needs (food, shelter, and utilities). To this end Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program's strategy is to first make sure that the basic needs of families were met by assuring that they had food to eat and are in a safe warm home. Food pantry activities and services will be maintained to help meet the needs of the community. Partnerships and linkages will also be maintained in each respective community to help identify safe and affordable housing. Limited CSBG funds will be earmarked to assist families with utility assistance and/or rent and mortgage payments as applicable. We will leverage CSBG financial resources by applying for Emergency Food and Shelter Funds and through non-financial agreements with the Human Services Department's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Public Services Company's Good Neighbor Fund and Gas Company of New Mexico HEAT Program, as well as through the Cooperative Health Assistance Services (CHAS) program sponsored through the NM Area Agency on Aging. We will continue to work closely with our community partners to conduct on-going education of our clients in the area of income management and health and nutrition, as well as related areas which help to promote self-sufficiency.

### **Identification of Resources**

The agency annually updates information of services and programs available to clients in our respective counties and makes them aware of resources and/or make referrals to social service agencies. We will continue to work with local political jurisdictions, legislators, County and City Officials in trying to obtain funding for programs, whether directly or indirectly to better provide services and programs to our low-income residents. These funds such as Capital Outlay Funds have become near extinct over the last three years due to budget shortfalls at the state level. In addition the agency has increased its search for other funding streams. Historically, the Agency has applied for numerous grants and programs that promote capacity building, Head Start expansion, Head Start summer programming, youth mentoring and staff development. Other grant requests and proposals have been submitted to private entities to further expand services in the way of utility assistance and food programs. These funding initiatives have become very competitive and have decreased drastically over the last few years.

## **Linkages and Coordination of Efforts and Services**

Other services or programs provided by local Income Support Division of the Human Services Department, cash assistance such as Aid to Families with Dependents, LIHEAP, Housing Authority, Child & Adult Protective Services administered by Social Services Division of CYF Dept. and training and employment services by the Department of Workforce Solutions, Health and Behavioral Health Care Services, etc., will be coordinated by staff in respective areas or counties. Coordination and collaboration with local School Districts will continue in areas of education, literacy programs, and collaboration of disabilities programs and services to children.

### **Evaluation:**

The Board of Directors of the Mid-West NMCAP Agency with the assistance of the Chief Executive Officer will identify appropriate outcome measures to be used in monitoring success in promoting self-sufficiency, family stability, and community revitalization. To best determine the most meaningful outcome measures, the Mid-West NMCAP will work with local public organizations including the Income Support Division of the Human Services Department, Department of Workforce Solutions, and Children Youth and Families Department. Assistance will be secured from these organizations in identifying individual who are eligible for the mix of program services provided, which will assist the Mid-West NMCAP in measuring outcomes and assessing the impact of services provided by the agency.

The agency will utilize the Client Track (NewGen) program in each respective county to measure outcomes and assessing the impact of the services provided in all areas of the Results Oriented Management and Accountability, (ROMA). Additional training will be conducted with staff to insure better understanding of all standards and to insure accurate reporting is accomplished. The agency will insure compliance with the new organizational standards and performance management tools to be implemented by the U.S. Department of Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services.

In determining appropriate strategies, programs and activities, consideration will be give to the unemployment rate of Catron, Cibola, McKinley, Socorro and Valencia Counties, incidences of abuse and neglect, as well as data on housing availability and applications for assistance through the various public and private entities.

Special consideration will be given to the needs of the elderly and disabled. To this end, we have established specific food distribution dates for these clients. We have continued to implement changes to the food distribution process to insure timely and efficient food distribution through our food panties. We are partnering with local senior centers and local governments to promote Senior Health Initiative Programs.

To establish meaningful outcome measurements, a document describing measurement criteria is to be developed or updated and reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors. The document will describe the outcome measures to be used in assessing the impact of services provided or coordinated through use of Community Services Block

Resources. It will be the responsibility of the staff of the Mid-West NMCAP Agency to develop the information necessary to properly implement the outcome measurement instrument. The results will be shared and discussed with the membership of the Board of Directors, representatives of other agencies including the Work Family Support Bureau (WFSB) of the Human Services Department. In addition the Board of Directors has implemented an annual evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer performance that will be used as a tool to evaluate the performance and implementation of the Director's goals and objectives.