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KNOTS OF KNOWLEDGE:
HOW COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS ADVANCE SOCIAL CHANGE

A Dissertation Presented

by

JENNIFER COHEN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies,
University of Massachusetts Boston,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

June 2011

Public Policy Program

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KNOTS OF KNOWLEDGE: HOW COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
ADVANCE SOCIAL CHANGE

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by

JENNIFER COHEN

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ABSTRACT

KNOTS OF KNOWLEDGE: HOW COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS ADVANCE SOCIAL CHANGE

June 2011

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Building on existing literature and research that identify nonprofits as agents of democracy, this research explores how community-based organizations (CBOs) advance social change. Strategically placed to improve social and economic security for individuals, families, and communities, CBOs have unique characteristics, successes, and challenges. The study seeks to understand, document, and apply these in building theories for use by practitioners, academics, public officials, and people living the experiences that public policies address. The research articulates a new model of social change, wherein individual transformation, organizational growth, community strengthening, and public policy work together in dynamic and complementary spheres.

The methodology is qualitative in nature, with a sample drawn from a pool of nonprofits in Boston, Massachusetts and Haifa, Israel, whose leaders participated in a multi-year

peer learning exchange¹. Bridging between theory and practice and situated within a wider poverty policy context, the research synthesizes the thinking and experiences of activists from externally-recognized high impact organizations.

The power of interconnectedness can be heard in the study's findings. These successful CBOs:

1. Integrate service provision with advocacy *and* facilitate diverse partnerships, with each of these core strategies relating to and affecting one another;
2. Intentionally employ people with the lived experiences that organizational missions seek to address;
3. Possess an internal, rather than external, locus of power; and
4. Systematically search for and create new ways to define, capture, and measure their social change outcomes.

Threads of interdependency within these cases are found to be woven into a knot, a bond of knowledge, which is tightened by stakeholders as they pull to meet their own needs, and strengthened as the players explain themselves to each other. A key implication of the study is that relationships, informed by communication, agreed-upon language and commonly-constructed tools, are critical for social change. Recommendations therefore suggest ways for increasing conversations between and across stakeholder groups.

¹ The Boston-Haifa Learning Exchange Project will be referred throughout this document as “the Learning Exchange”.

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In modern Hebrew one can say “*Todah*”, which means, simply, Thank You. The plural of the word, “*Todot*” or “*Rav Todot*” means many thanks. I need to use a further developed form of this word: “*Todot L*’”, which builds on the plural form of thanks and means “thanks to”. The expression “*Todot L*’”, followed by a person or event, suggests that without the identified catalyst there would be literally nothing for which to be grateful. My choice in using this form of “Thank You” is to express, beyond the simple, obvious and deep appreciation I have for each one of the following individuals, the sincere sentiment that *thanks to* their intellectual, physical, and emotional support, this piece of work is sharper and more thoughtful than it would have otherwise been.

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² They are not named here specifically, so as to maintain consistency of anonymity throughout this document.

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³ *Tikkun* is a term that references a Jewish mystical explanation of the meaning of life. *Tikkun Olam* calls for each of us to do our part in repairing the world by uncovering, inside and out, hidden sparks of divine light, which are stuck in scattered shards and are waiting to be reunited into a healthy and balanced whole.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This study examines how community-based organizations (CBOs) advance social change. Building on existing literature and research that have identified nonprofits as potential tools for social change (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008; Haig-Friedman, *et al*, 2008; Strichman, 2009; Jennings, 2005; Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2004; Gittel, Ross & Wilder, 1999; Glickman & Servon, 1998; Gidron, Kramer & Salamon, 1992), the work was designed to explore the particular role of *community-based* nonprofits, as strategically placed to advance change that can improve social and economic security for individuals, families, and communities. The study strengthened the assumption that CBOs have a critical role to play in the design and implementation of public policies (Perry, 2009; Scott, 2009; Campbell & Kunreuther, 2006; Gidron & Katz, 2001), especially in diverse democracies (Salamon, 1999; Ott, 2001) such as Haifa, Israel and Boston, Massachusetts. As will be described below, special characteristics, successes, and challenges of four community-based organizations that participated the study can help researchers, practitioners, elected and appointed officials, people living the experiences that the public policies work to address, and other stakeholders, to better understand and explain the role of CBOs in public policy and social change.

The original main research question of the study was: What are the core strategies used by successful CBOs to achieve their social change missions?

Related questions included:

- How do two strategies in particular (1. providing direct service and advocacy and 2. facilitating partnerships between diverse groups of stakeholders) complement each other or work at cross purposes for organizations seeking to advance social change?
- Are there other strategies that CBOs use to achieve their mission (including advancing social change)?
- What is the role of and effect on different stakeholders in the use of these strategies?
- What are the challenges associated with the use of these strategies?
- How do CBOs assess their effectiveness in advancing social change including those associated with the two strategies cited above and other types of strategies?

To be explored more deeply in the research methods chapter, this research used four case studies (Yin, 2003), two community-based organizations from Boston, Massachusetts and two from Haifa, Israel. In order to protect the anonymity of interviewees from within the case sites, the names of the organizations have been changed for purposes of this report. The participating Boston organizations will be referred to as New Home and Youth

Change. The participating Haifa organizations will be referred to as Strong Women and Neighborhood Power.

The following descriptions of each organization are adapted from the organizational websites, existing secondary documentation, and media sources. To preserve the anonymity of the interviewees from each site, the actual identities of the sites have been kept confidential for purposes of this report. While some identifying features have been changed in the following descriptions, the general goals and approach of the organizations remain the same.

New Home

New Home is a multi-service agency at the forefront of efforts in Boston to move families beyond homelessness and poverty. New Home is a leader not only in efforts to end family homelessness, but to prevent it in the first place by partnering with families to move up and out of poverty. The agency provides low-income women with children access to education, jobs, housing and emergency services; fosters their personal transformation; and works for broader systems change. New Home was founded in the early 1980s by a religious order of women, who had first moved to their target neighborhood more than fifty years ago. The group settled in this area in order to live and work with families, and to join with them to make this a better community. They began with “the seeds of love for people of all cultures and faiths; commitment to meeting basic needs and seeking broader solutions; flexibility and adaptability as needs change; and above all, that which overcomes questions and doubts when the needs could

seem overwhelming: hope”. New Home has evolved over the years, but its core mission and approach remain the same.

Examples of External Recognition of Organizational Social Change Successes:

- New Home is regularly featured in the local and national press as a successful leader in homelessness prevention and eradication.
- New Home leaders, including professionals and program participants, are regularly invited to the statehouse to report on issues directly affecting New Home’s constituents and community.
- New Home, together with other advocacy agencies in Boston, hosts regular meetings for representatives to listen to the experiences and issues facing homeless families.
- Awarded one of 32 New Markets Tax Credit nationwide allocations.
- Recent leadership prizes include: honorary doctorate degrees and other prestigious fellowships to key organizational leaders.

Youth Change

Founded in the 1980s by a diverse group of neighbors, Youth Change began as an effort to reverse the trend of youth violence in its target neighborhood. At the time drug-dealing had occurred openly on the streets and gang violence had been rampant in this neighborhood that was once known as the “cocaine capital of Boston”. To call attention to these problems, residents organized public meetings, peace marches, street cleanups, and crime watch groups. After several years, the group of activists realized that significant changes would be possible only through sustained preventative measures that

focused on developing the skills of local youth and building positive relationships among youth, families and all residents. In the early 1990s, Youth Change was incorporated as a 501(c) 3 nonprofit to build the skills of youth and their families through civic engagement, cultural celebration, and community organizing. Since then, Youth Change has grown into a professionally-run nonprofit with a reputation as one of the most dynamic community-based organizations in Boston. It has expanded to work with over 320 youth on a daily basis and more than 800 each year. The organization's mission is "to develop the skills of youth and their families so that they are empowered to enhance their own lives and build a strong and vibrant urban community". Every Youth Change program is developed by residents in response to community needs. Since its founding, Youth Change has developed on-going programs for youth and families that not only help them advance at school and in careers, but also help create positive relations and opportunities to take pride and action in their community. Youth Change has frequently been recognized for its work in youth development and community building. Youth Change's program participants have also been recognized for their dedication to creating a brighter future for themselves and those around them.

Examples of External Recognition of Organizational Social Change Successes:

- Youth Change is regularly featured in the local, city and state press for its successes with youth empowerment and policy change work, including in the Boston Globe and numerous on-line media sources.
- Youth Change programs are regularly attended by community members including residents, elected officials from the neighborhood, city, and state, academics,

funders, and other policymakers, who recognize Youth Change's organizing efforts as a place where policy can be influenced.

- Youth Change was awarded a Boston Foundation "Out of the Blue" award, an unsolicited grant for local groups doing outstanding and innovative work.
- Numerous organizational and leadership prizes have been awarded to Youth Change and its team members.

Strong Women

Strong Women was founded in 1998 by Arab⁴ feminist women to promote social, legal and economic equality for all Arab women in Israel. Strong Women's approach is to focus on grassroots capacity building to advance the status of a population that often experiences double discrimination, as women and as Arabs. The organization's guiding belief is that social change can be achieved when women are empowered to exert influence and make decisions about their own lives as well as society as a whole. The process of empowerment is viewed as fundamental for building the capacity of women as social change agents, thereby enabling them to promote a more equitable and just society both for themselves as well as for their communities. The activities of Strong Women lay the foundation for this process of empowerment to take place by equipping women with knowledge and the ability to organize collectively. The founders of Strong Women are interested in issues that address the tension between nationality and gender, feminist concepts and ethics in feminism as it relates specifically to Arab-Israeli women.

⁴ According to the Strong Women team, they have intentionally chosen to use the term "Arab women", as opposed to "Palestinian women", in an attempt to be as inclusive as possible, to leave space for as many women who want to belong as possible. Not all Arab women in Israel identify as Palestinians. Not all women who identify as Palestinians identify as Arabs. Some Arab and/or Palestinian women who live in Israel identify as Israelis. This complicated issue remains unresolved and continues to be discussed within the organization, between paid employees and program and board volunteers.

Examples of External Recognition of Organizational Social Change Successes:

- Strong Women is identified and regularly called upon as a leading source of knowledge and power for policymakers from the public, private, academic and nonprofit sectors on issues of women's rights, transportation, health, labor and childcare policy, etc.
- Strong Women is one of the most popular nonprofit research and volunteer sites in Israel for national and international human rights interns and students.
- Strong Women is regularly invited to national and international forums as the most legitimate voice of Palestinian women in Israel today.
- Recent leadership prizes include national and international recognition of Strong Women's accomplishments.

Neighborhood Power⁵

Neighborhood Power empowers low-income and vulnerable Israelis to break the cycle of poverty and reach self-sufficiency by accessing their rights and economic opportunities. Through a nationwide network of Citizen Rights Centers, highly trained volunteers provide assistance to thousands of needy individuals and families from across the spectrum of Israel's multi-cultural society. Programs include free individual assistance, community empowerment activities, and national advocacy efforts. Volunteers include professionals from the practices of law, business, social work and accounting, who work side by side with former clients, who initially come to the organization for help.

⁵ Neighborhood Power is a branch of a national organization. The organizational description here references the national organization, which includes the Haifa branch. Data in the research findings section of this report references Neighborhood Power Haifa, unless otherwise noted.

Examples of External Recognition of Organizational Social Change Successes:

- Neighborhood Power is called on regularly by local and national policymakers to weigh in on important policy matters including in the areas of housing, education, poverty, and public health.
- Neighborhood Power is regularly cited in the Israeli press as one of the most influential nonprofits in the country, especially in the area of public policy.
- Recent organizational and leadership prizes recognize the agency itself, their innovative models, and individual team members, both salaried and volunteer.

Background

This research project was largely influenced by an innovative applied research model (Haig-Friedman, 2005) that was created in the context of a transnational learning exchange. The Boston-Haifa Learning Exchange started in 2005, is a bi-national peer learning project, a growing group of nonprofit leaders from Haifa, Israel and Boston, Massachusetts. Haifa and Boston are "sister cities" under an international partnership project between Israel and the United States. These two cities share many central characteristics including a historic commitment to diversity, progressive policy-making, and creative cooperation between sectors and organizations (Freund, *et al*, 2006; Haig-Friedman, 2005). The Learning Exchange Project rests upon the assumption that transnational peer learning can strengthen local social change efforts. Its primary goals have been to strengthen the capacities of nonprofits to affect social change and to strengthen the third sectors in each city. The specific focus for Haifa nonprofits is

reportedly to strengthen their organizational infrastructures and their influence on public policy; for Boston's nonprofits, the focus has been on reinforcing cross-cultural effectiveness and working in the face of daily and extraordinary crisis.

Since 2005, the Learning Exchange has included peer learning exchange seminars, face-to-face and transnational videoconferences, site visits and jointly-planned and facilitated academic conferences in each city. In addition, in both Boston and Haifa, local networks and informal and formal cooperative efforts have developed between participants and organizations of the Learning Exchange. The action research component of the Learning Exchange was designed to examine the adaptive capacity of nonprofits (in Haifa, Israel) to respond to their changing roles in society on behalf of the people they serve (Haig-Friedman, 2005). In addition, the research aimed to provide a baseline portrayal of nonprofit organizational capacities and predictions for the implementation of anticipated welfare reforms in Haifa (Haig-Friedman, 2005). Selection of research partners was made by the research director, after in-depth consultation with local actors, knowledgeable about the particular organizations and the nonprofit sector in Haifa and in general. Research site selection used as a primary criterion organizational success⁶, defined in part by formal and informal recognition by other nonprofits, activists, community members, government officials, private and foundation funders, and the media, as having the capacity for making change for individuals and communities. Organizations were recruited, invited to apply, and chosen for the Learning Exchange

⁶ That success has become a central element in the Learning Exchange Research Project, including as part of the criteria of participant organizations on the various project components, can largely be attributed to the work and influence of Dr. Yona Rosenfeld, Israel Prize winner and Professor Emeritus of Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

based on a number of criteria. At each stage of recruitment and selection for the different components of the project, a committee of professional and lay leaders consulted one another and outside stakeholders, knowledgeable of the organizations and the contexts within which they work, to determine which organizations should be chosen to participate.

Theoretical Framework and Study's Significance⁷

Public policymakers often fail to hear or understand the individuals and communities most impacted by poverty-addressing policies. An underlying assumption of this research is that if the voices of those most directly affected by policies were heard and used in the policy development and design, the policies would work better than is often the case. As such, the research assumed that all members of society are potential policymakers. This runs counter to a common approach wherein some members of society have power (and are recognized as policy makers) while others are powerless (and are not considered policymakers). Community-based organizations, strategically situated in communities, can serve as vehicles for surfacing, translating and bridging knowledge between their constituents and other stakeholders. Understanding CBOs that are successful because of their capacity to communicate with diverse policy players can contribute to public policy in a myriad of ways. This study especially sought to understand how CBOs work to reduce social and economic power gaps in ways that encourage inclusive and sustainable public policies.

⁷ These theoretical underpinnings draw from the fields of organizational development and sociology (Frumkin, 2002; Salamon & Anheier, 1997) and build on empirical research about successful (non-CBO) nonprofits (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008; Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2004).

Definitions of Terms

Nonprofit language still remains somewhat blurry and under-defined (Frumkin, 2002; Goodman, *et al*, 1998), a phenomenon which can lead to confusion in research (Yin, 2003). For purposes of this study, the following are working definitions of the core concepts as named in the research questions and findings. Many of these definitions and terms emerged from the research itself, a recognized practice in qualitative research (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), a subcategory of nonprofit organizations, are organizations that, regardless of their size (budget, number of members, staff), are grounded in the communities they serve. Concrete signs of “groundedness” include, for example: being legally owned by community members; being physically located in a neighborhood whose demographics match the communities they seek to serve; and intentionally and consistently engaging community members in key decision-making processes (including serving as paid staff, program and board member volunteers, and participating in strategic planning sessions). These indicators point to the organization’s perception and treatment of their constituents and communities as assets and holders of knowledge that the organization needs to do its work (Martinez 2010; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Findings from this research support that CBOs: are in constant dialogue with and listen to their communities and constituents; may grow up out of the community; and are deeply connected to their communities and constituents. This research focused on CBOs whose primary mission is social change that can lead to the reduction of social and economic gaps.

Social Change refers to a continuum of transformation that happens on the individual, family, community, organization, and systems (including public policy) levels. While the changes needn't happen simultaneously, this understanding of social change does require that they work together to bring about coordinated and sustained progress toward social and economic equity and improved social and economic security for marginalized people, groups, and society at large. The change processes weave among organizational stakeholders. It is not a one-way process; rather it is multi-directional and multi-dimensional. Success on the continuum is where just practices are created and sustained on multiple levels and where people experience "mutual empowerment" (Jordan, 2004; Pigg, 2002).

Public Policy is a broad arena, where attitude and behavioral changes can happen, through advocacy, public education, administration related to regulations, guidelines, resource coordination and distribution, and implementation of new laws and practices (Donna Haig-Friedman & Michael Stone, personal communication, October 2010). Public policy work recommends and implements ways to increase accountability, not only of citizens but also of government and other forces that are recognized as legitimate policymakers (Program Director, New Home, personal interview, April 21, 2010). "Public policy is about the systems and rules through which the values, ideals, and identity issues of a society play out" (Program Director, Youth Change, personal interview, April 27, 2010).

Success in organizations is defined as the achievement of substantial and sustained results that have an impact on an entire system or field (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008). This research explored examples of success that go beyond assumptions about growth and scale to look at measures of change that are seen as valuable even when they happen on multiple levels of society and in on-going ways (Edwards, 2008). Success is related to the obtainment of mission. In the field of social change, talking about success can be a critical place for learning for stakeholders of public policy, including practitioners, politicians, academics and people living the experience (Rosenfeld, 2005). In other words, success can be a measurement *and* a method for learning or evaluating.

Core Strategies, as they relate to organizational work, are defined in many ways in the literature (Smith, 2008; Smith & Ingram, 2002; Fung & Wright, 2001; Sirianni & Friedland, 2001). Organizational strategies, together with particular activities and principles, increase organizational capacity (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008; Linnell, 1996). Sustainable strategies, along with people, learning, infrastructure and resources at organizations, allow organizations to achieve their missions (Linnell, 2003). In the case of this research the strategies most core are those related to social change.

Achievement of Mission The missions of the CBOs selected for this research are related to improving the social and economic security of people and communities. The organizational missions of the four CBOs in the research sample identify, as a core goal, social change that includes both improvement in the condition of individuals and families and changes on the structural level. Given this, indicators of social change that are

measurable may include individual, family, community, organizational, and/or policy outcomes. To be explored further below, findings from this research suggest that outcome indicators of community-based social change are those which link *between* the different types of transformation. Outcome measurements may vary by population and/or organization, but in all cases should be recognized as valuable and positive by the people who are themselves most immediately affected by the policy.

Constituents are those community members most directly affected by policies that CBOs work to improve. This researcher prefers the term constituent with its sense of belonging and influence, as opposed to the commonly used “client” or “beneficiary”, which connote a sense of consumption or charity.

Weak is a term, like poor, that is often used by policy makers and stakeholders to describe people who are living in poverty and/or struggling with other social barriers and challenges. This research uses language that emphasizes the strengths of individuals and communities, language which, while not always recognized as strengths by outsiders, are indicators of capacity and power. When research partners themselves used the term weak or poor, the word is placed in quotation marks.

Poverty is defined in this research as social and economic exclusion (Wresinski, Fr. J. in Anouil, 2002).

Core Team Member in this study refers to any person who serves a central role in the organization. This category includes all full- or part-time paid employees, and all full- or part-time program (at least two hours per week) or advisory or executive board member volunteers (at least three hours per month). At some of the sites, students, receiving stipends or not, are considered core team members at the organization, as long as they work at least two hours per week at the organization and are involved in key decision-making processes.

Recognized Policymakers are usually elected or appointed officials, funders from the public or private sectors including philanthropists, academics, and/or professional leaders from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Unrecognized Policymakers are usually people with the lived experience of poverty who are also engaged in advocacy and are stakeholders in the worlds of policy and social change but who are as of yet unrecognized as policymakers. Some nonprofit leaders, volunteers and/or activists are still un-recognized as policymakers but CBOs, like the ones in this study, are working hard to change that reality.

Context

Nonprofit Literature⁸

The existing empirical research literature reviewed for this study focused on successful nonprofit organizations and their approaches, community-level social change, and organizational capacities.

Nonprofits have advanced social change and democracy, throughout history, by encouraging and facilitating engagement (Smith, 2008; Skocpol, 2007; Skocpol, 1985; Boris & Steurle, 2006; Salamon & Anheier, 1997a; Hall, 1992). An inherent paradox of nonprofits is that they can both threaten and/or empower citizens in a democracy society (Skocpol, 2007). For purposes of this research, the framework builds on the latter. Empowerment that is brought about by the actions of nonprofits occurs when organizations give voice and/or action to “a citizenry that, without them, would be powerless to influence the state” (Hall, 1992, p.15)⁹. Recent and historical trends have led to the need for society to better engage its citizens by both redesigning institutions, and restructuring the relationships between its institutions and citizens (Skocpol, 2007). It has been noted recently that public institutions may be “increasingly ill suited to the novel problems we face in the twenty-first century” (Fung & Wright, 2001, p.5). New pressures have created a situation where traditional “industrial age institutions face

⁸ Literature that deals with the role of nonprofits and community-based nonprofits as agents of social change can be found in the fields of history, organizational theory, and sociology, among others.

⁹ The simultaneous threat could come from the wealthy, through their support of organizations, “exercising power disproportionate to their numbers” (Hall, 1992, p.15). In addition, nonprofits can weaken society and democracy by sacrificing active involvement and engagement of “ordinary citizens” for the sake of professionalism (Skocpol, 2007).

unprecedented challenges to adapt and evolve” and scholars and practitioners have called for new theories and programs to address these gaps (Senge & Scharmer, 2006, p.205).

Recent forces and trends have contributed to nonprofits needing to restructure their expectations and roles and relationships with societal institutions. Such trends include the privatization of services, blurring of the sectors and their traditional roles in providing services, reduced funding from traditional sources, welfare reforms including devolution, opening of markets, enhanced role of faith-based service provision, increased dependency and connectedness of policy makers and stakeholders, and the subsequent change in the relationship between citizens and institutions (Ott, 2001; Sirianni & Friedland, 2001; Salamon & Anheier, 1997a; Weisbrod, 1997).

Nonprofits are responding to these changing dynamics with particular organizational strategies (Smith, 2008; Smith & Ingram, 2002; Fung & Wright, 2001; Sirianni & Friedland, 2001) that strengthen their ability and commitment to empowerment and engagement. Such engagement can be promoted by: balancing accountability, service and advocacy missions, and engagement opportunities (Smith, 2008); observing, analyzing, and advancing new poverty policies that can promote good outcomes through cross-sector partnerships (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008; Brilliant, 2000), and partnering to advance democracy and public policy development (Guo & Musso, 2007).

Nonprofits have further responded through a variety of activities related to engagement, including those that create and strengthen social capital (Putnam, 2000). Nonprofits

influence social change and democracy by developing social capital; it is suggested that social capital can serve as a measurement of citizen participation in communal activities, politics, and political institutions, an indicator of vibrant and healthy societies (Putnam, 2000; Putnam, 1996). Nonprofits help to generate and strengthen social capital by serving as a “vehicle by which millions of people participate in the concerns of their community and advocate in the public arena” (Smith, 2008, p.143). A variety of organizational strategies, to be explored further below, are employed by nonprofits to build social capital (Reichman, 2002). Within the space of civil society, nonprofits contribute to democracy by facilitating cross-sector partnerships (Salamon, 1995; Ott, 2001) that include interaction and cooperation between government, individuals, business, and nonprofits (Reichman, 2002; Salamon and Anhier, 1997b).

The existing empirical research literature reviewed for this study focused on successful nonprofit organizations and their approaches, community-level social change, and organizational capacities. Crutchfield and McLeod-Grant (2008), whose research focused exclusively on American nonprofits whose impacts occur on the national and international level, identified the following six “most critical” strategies employed by organizations to affect social change: 1. Advocate and Serve, 2. Make Markets Work, 3. Inspire Evangelists, 4. Nurture Nonprofit Networks, 5. Master the Art of Adaptation, and 6. Share Leadership.

Explanations (hypotheses) for how these could play out, independent of one another and working together, to make community-based anti-poverty organizations more effective might include the following:

1. *Advocate and Serve*: How CBOs effectively balance between these activities intentionally, rather than reactively, including their ability to do so cooperatively with other nonprofits and across sectors (Sr. M. Leonard, personal communication, April, 17, 2008; Campbell & Kunreuther, 2006; Minkoff, 2002; Withorn, 1984; Halmos, 1978).
2. *Make Markets Work*: The ability of CBOs to adopt strategies from the for-profit world (those often associated with the field of social entrepreneurship/social innovation) and cooperate with the business sector (Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship: Duke University, 2008; Light, 2008; Phills, Deiglmeier & Miller, 2008; Root Cause and The Aspen Institute, 2008; Dees, 2007; Martin & Osberg, 2007; Dees, Emerson & Economy, 2001).
3. *Inspire Evangelists*: The CBO's ability to recognize and respect their constituents and community members, in addition to public and private donor partners, as valuable assets (Park, 2006; Rosenfeld & Tardieu, 2000; Schon, 1983).

4. *Nurture Nonprofit Networks*: The CBO's ability to establish and maintain partnerships within the organization, the nonprofit sector and across sectors (Boris & Steuerle, 2006; Najam, 2000; O'Regan & Oster, 2000; Ferris, 1993).
5. *Master the Art of Adaptation*: The CBO's use of adaptive capacity, related to creativity and flexibility in dealing with financial, human and other in-kind resources, as well as their ability to strategize and to sustain itself on a variety of levels (Strichman, Bickel & Marshood, 2008; Sussman, 2003).
6. *Share Leadership*: The CBO's ability to share leadership (referring to leadership that is facilitative and dynamic), both within and outside of an organization and at a variety of leadership levels (Tierney, 2006; Jaskyte, 2004). This trait help makes a CBO a learning organization (Haig-Friedman, *et al.*, 2008; Senge & Scharmer, 2006; Senge, 1990).

Scholars have recently called for further empirical research that can surface theoretical and practical learnings to support the nonprofit sector's ability to advance engagement between citizens and institutions.

Community-Based Organizations in Social Change and Public Policy

Community-based nonprofits set boundaries within which the public meaningfulness of action can be grasped.

- Stivers in Alexander, Nank & Stivers, p.454.

The overarching working assumption of this research is that CBOs can and should have a central role to play in creating and implementing public policies that contribute to social change, and especially so in diverse democracies. This assumption is supported by recent research which finds that public policy outcomes, considered interdisciplinary by nature, can be stronger when created and evaluated by teams of people that have the capacity to look at the issues from a variety of lenses (Bardach, 2005). The claim that CBOs are an important voice at and bring critical knowledge to the public policy table (Eisenberg, 2004; McKnight, 2001) warrants deeper research attention.

The special potential contribution of CBOs relates to the fact that they are strategically located closer than any other social institution to the people who are most directly affected by certain public policies. CBOs seem to have special capacity, not present in other nonprofit organizations, to reveal, surface, and explain knowledge, grounded in the field (Jennings, 2005). These voices affect decision making and program development, and can contribute to effective public policy. These organizations, even when they manage to “scale up” (Frumkin, 2009), stay intentionally grounded in the community.

Jennings (2005) has conducted empirical research on CBOs that proposes placing an increased emphasis on performance and outcome measures that reflect community well-being and change. This research resulted in important policy suggestions for Massachusetts that included: economic incentives to encourage increased charitable

contributions to CBOs; eliminating bureaucratic hoops that prevent CBOs from maximizing their potential; increased support for nonprofits to diversify their funding, partnership, communication, and technological capacity across the sectors, including with government, business, and foundation partners, always and especially in times of crisis. Other existing research explores how these and other strategies and capacities contribute to the ability of nonprofits, and the sector overall, to advance social change (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008; Haig-Friedman, *et al*, 2008; Strichman, 2009; Jennings, 2005; Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2004; Gittell, Ross & Wilder, 1999; Glickman & Servon, 1998).

Nonprofits and Community-Based Organizations in the United States (Boston) and Israel (Haifa)

The nonprofit sector in the United States has been credited as a central force in the country's economic, political, and legal realities, through roles that it plays in practice and on the level of values and ideals (Frumkin, 2002). Overall, nonprofits in the United States have approximately \$3 trillion in assets. The sector represents six percent of the total national income and employs (excluding volunteers) over nine percent of the labor force (Boris, 2006). As in the case of Israel, it is misleading and difficult to give an exact break-down in percentages of different funding streams (public, philanthropic and fee for service, among others) in the United States because the larger nonprofits, overwhelmingly funded by fees for service and/or public support, are smallest in number but largest in terms of concentration of resources (Steuerle & Hodgkinson, 2006). Moreover, as in Israel, many of the smaller nonprofits in the United States do not register with the Internal Revenue Service and their data is therefore not available (Gronbjerg &

Paarlberg in Boris, 2006). In Massachusetts there are 37,748 registered nonprofits¹⁰ (The Boston Foundation, 2008) and the majority of these are considered small or medium (with an annual budget of less than one million dollars) and community-based¹¹ (MassINC in Jennings, 2005). Nonprofits in Massachusetts generate more than \$86 million in revenues, hold some \$207 billion in assets, and employ almost fourteen percent of the state's workforce (The Boston Foundation, 2008). In Boston there are approximately 5,000 nonprofits serving a wide variety of individuals and communities and through a diverse range of activities (National Center on Charitable Statistics, 2007).

In Israel the nonprofit sector has been described as pivotal to Israeli democracy (Yishai, 2002), where it performs several primary roles: as service provider, as a place for social capital to develop (The Israeli Center for Third Sector Research, 2007), and recently as a space for voices alternative to the government and business forces to be fostered and platformed. As of 2007 there were over 34,000¹² registered nonprofit organizations in Israel. The majority of these registered nonprofits were service organizations and a reportedly growing number of these were foundations and advocacy groups (The Israeli Center for Third Sector Research, 2007). As an indication of high growth, an average of 1,500 new organizations register annually in Israel. The nonprofit sector constitutes over 13% of Israel's GDP, and employs over one tenth of the nation's paid workforce (The

¹⁰ These are organizations that are both registered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and have also obtained federal tax-exempt status.

¹¹ Community-based organizations are defined in Jennings' research as organizations that work in communities and which are "connecting points between people from different backgrounds and ages, people and opportunities, and people and other sectors" (p.7).

¹² 23,650 are considered "active" organizations, according to this report, from 2007 but more recent informal reports put that number at closer to 17,000 active (Expert witness, personal correspondence, January 10, 2011).

Israeli Center for Third Sector Research, 2007). In an international study comparing twenty-two countries, Israel ranked fourth (behind Holland, Ireland and Belgium and ahead of the United States) in the relative size of the sector within the larger economy (Salamon & Anheier, 1997b). As of 2002, Israeli nonprofits were funded by three main sources: public (52%), philanthropy (13%) and earned income (34%) (The Israeli Center for Third Sector Research, 2007)¹³. This picture has changed somewhat since the war with Lebanon in 2006, the economic downturn that began in 2008, and the Madoff scam in the United States, mainly in that public and philanthropic support overall dropped and large numbers of nonprofit organizations have been forced to shut down, either legally or in practice (Katz & Yogev-Keren, 2010). While limited research specifically about Haifa exists, it is known that three hundred registered nonprofits function in the city including in areas of the health, education, welfare, environment, women, social change, culture, sports, religion, and more (Abada, 2010).

In response to a variety of internal and external forces, including war and shifts in economic trends, nonprofit organizations in both Israel and the United States have increasingly been called upon to provide a safety net and serve as central players in the developing and strengthening of civil society (Toplin, 2010; Freund, *et al*, 2006; Haig-Friedman, 2005). Civil society, often defined as the space where social change is inspired, nurtured, and launched (Edwards, 2008), has a particular role in democratic

¹³ These average income sources are representative of the three largest nonprofit areas (health, education, and culture/recreation), which slant the picture. In sub-areas, the percentages of either philanthropy (especially in the case of civic, human rights and advocacy nonprofits) and fee-generating income (especially in areas of environmental, professional and labor associations and social services and housing and development) are higher than this “average” (Gidron, Katz, Anheier & Salamon, 1999).

societies (Salamon, 1999; Ott, 2001). It is a critical time for civil society and nonprofit organizations in both the United States and Israel; nonprofit organizations in both countries are responding to change forces in ways that challenge their existing missions and practices (Toplin, 2010; B. Gidron, personal communication, December 2008). In an effort to expand their focus at the individual level to larger systemic issues, increasing numbers of nonprofit service organizations are integrating social change principles and activities into their work (F. Marshood, personal communication, March 11, 2008; Campbell & Kunreuther, 2006). At the same time, veteran advocacy organizations have been increasingly called upon to respond to the emergency basic needs of their constituencies, especially in times of crisis. Policy activists and thinkers in both Boston and Haifa have cited these trends as critical areas for deeper exploration and research (A. Withorn, personal communication, November 2007; F. Marshood, personal communication, March 10, 2008). While existing research explores the impact of nonprofits in terms of service provision, relatively little has been explored on the role of nonprofits in promoting social justice while also providing needed services (Boris & Steuerle, 2006). Further research is needed to examine how the nonprofit sector can maximize its effectiveness in carrying out its daily work while also advancing democracy (Boris & Steuerle, 2006).

This dissertation research is situated in a current policy and funding environment, in both the United States and Israel, which increasingly expects readily measureable outcomes. In such an environment, this research sought to understand how CBOs try to affect public policy outcomes and social change. “This new era of possibility is also one of

accountability” (Smyth & Schorr, 2009, p.1). In the United States, President Obama has made a point of prioritizing the active search for “solutions to our nation's challenges that have resisted traditional approaches and support innovation that is working in communities across the country” (Etienne, 2009). In Israel the government has, for the first time in the history of the state, made formal recognition of the critical role of CBOs. This comes in response to the critical role filled by nonprofits during the 2006 war with Lebanon (Katz, *et al*, 2007)¹⁴ and continues to be negotiated in the wake of the fall-out from the economic crisis that began in 2008 (Katz & Yogev-Keren, 2010). In both countries, the response of nonprofit organizations to these and other new challenges and opportunities, and to their evolving roles in society as mediators of social justice and service provision, is vital. It is of utmost importance not only to the organizations themselves but to national and municipal officials and policy makers, as well as to advocates, low income households and the public at large (Freund, *et al*, 2006).

Israel and the United States are both multi-cultural and democratic societies with strong (Salamon & Anheier, 1997b; Gidron, Kramer & Salamon, 1992) and fast-growing (The Boston Foundation, 2008; The Israeli Center for Third Sector Research, 2007) nonprofit

¹⁴ According to Gadi Elgazi, a professor of history from Tel Aviv University (personal communication, November 24, 2010), only after the 2006 war did the term “privatization” start being used in public discourse in Israel, even though formal privatization policies and the breakdown of the welfare state began in 1977, with the rise of the Likud government and their adoption of increasingly neoclassical economic practices. Prior to 2006, security referred to *national* (military) security. After 2006, as a result of the government failing to function on the *social* security front, the public began talking about *social* (related to health, education, economics, for example) security, as related to but different from *national* security and to privatization as it relates to social and human services. This matters because this discourse is beginning to chip away at the age-old myth or excuse, that Israeli investment in social and human services would come at the expense of national security, a threat whose bluff (for political and cultural reasons) no one is willing to call. As the final touches were being put on this dissertation, a ground-breaking report researched and published by Israel’s Ministry of Social Affairs, which found that numbers of households in Israel receiving social services rose by over forty-five percent (45%) between 1998 and 2009, has been touted as “proof that societal security is no less important than national security” (Weiler-Polak, 2011).

sectors that have been profoundly affected by the global economic crisis that began in 2008 (Katz & Yogev-Keren, 2010; UCLA Center for Civil Society, 2010). Policy in the United States and Israel are linked on a number of levels and through a number of forces, including those related to shared values, economics, and history. These links have implications for the nonprofit sectors and nonprofit organizations in both countries. This is in particular the case for smaller social change nonprofits in Israel which have traditionally been disproportionately dependent on U.S. philanthropy as a source of funding (Asa in Strichman, 2009), and many of which were hit especially hard by the economic crisis that began in 2008 (Katz & Yogev-Keren, 2010). While Haifa appears to be impacted by the work of its nonprofits that are characterized by strong organizational capacities (Strichman, 2009), not enough is known about these organizations' role in promoting social justice and about how the sector should and can be strengthened to maximize its effectiveness as a critical force within the city's civil society (Gilboa, 2000 in Friedman, *et al*, 2008; Freund, *et al*, 2006). Following the dramatic US welfare reform of the mid-1990s similar voices were heard in the United States:

Continued inquiry is required to better understand the changing capacity, roles, and structure of the NGO sector in the United States and other countries. This will assist policy makers in assessing the full range of implications of alternative social welfare legislation patterns for NGOs and the people affected by their operations, including the staff, volunteers, and the countless community members who rely on NGO services (Sommerfeld and Reisch, 2003, p.317-8).

Over the past few decades, the United States and Israel have been coping with welfare policy reforms that increasingly place the burden of responsibility on individuals, rather than on society or the state. In both countries persistent and growth of economic

hardship, as evidenced by a growth in homelessness and child poverty have led to a search for new policy approaches and solutions (Haig-Friedman, 2005).

At the same time as nonprofits have stepped in to address society's most pressing problems, CBOs and social change nonprofits in the United States and Israel have recently been targeted and criticized. In the United States in general and in Massachusetts in particular, public and private sector forces question nonprofit effectiveness and fraud, and raising concerns about redundancy and dependency being created by CBOs (Jennings, 2005). In Israel, recent turmoil triggered by politically-motivated activism has led to a proposed parliamentary ruling to investigate the (supposedly suspicious) funding of social change and human rights nonprofits. Under the guise of a call for increased transparency¹⁵, this effort is "part of a systematic attack on civil society" (Former Knesset Member Naomi Chazan, documentation of presentation, October 27, 2010).

While North American and Israeli nonprofits share many characteristics, there are also significant differences between them, in terms of their historic, social, cultural, and economic contexts (Strichman, 2009). The developmental stage of each country as well as the cultural and historical context, sets the stage for significant variation in that way that the nonprofit sector is understood and defined in each country (Salamon & Anheier, 1997b; Salamon, 1999; Gidron & Katz, 1998). In addition, it is important to note that quantitative and qualitative data on the nonprofit sectors in the United States and in Israel

¹⁵ All financial data on registered nonprofits in Israel is entirely accessible to the public.

are not always comparable. In the United States, data exists on the national, state and city levels, while in Israel the data is almost exclusively national in nature. In both the United States and Israel, what has remained clear is that CBOs are dynamic forces worthy of the attention and investment of public policy practitioners and academics.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The research approach of this study is qualitative in nature. The research questions, below, ask how and why rather than seek to measure or prove or disprove an idea (Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2003). How strategies help or hinder CBOs from achieving their goals and mission is appropriate to examine through qualitative research (Maxwell, 2005), in particular, case study research (Yin, 2003) and action research (Reason & Bradbury, 2007).

Case study research (Yin, 2003) is recognized as particularly appropriate for exploring organizational success measurements such as capacity (Cowan, Rohe and Baku, 2000). The research used a multiple case study design that allowed for meaningful exploration of research sites by internal and external organizational characteristics. These characteristics include: system and leadership sustainability; relationships; program outcomes; decision making processes; navigating tensions between service and advocacy work and facilitating relationships between diverse stakeholders. A case study strategy was used to "explore, describe, and explain" these dynamics (Yin, 2003).

Often referred to as “collaborative research”, the methods used in this study are especially appropriate for community and social change research (Roussel, Fan and Fulmer, 2002). This is because the approach is based on the assumption that public policy most impacts (and can be impacted by) those living the experience which the policy is designed to address (Reason & Bradbury, 2007). One type of collaborative research, namely action research, recognizes the potentially valuable multi-dimensional interplay between social change practitioner work and academic scholarship (Minkler, 2008) and its possible impact on the policymaking process. Action research treats the people or organizations being researched as partners, rather than subjects in the research process (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Criteria for community-based action research approaches, such as those employed in this study, include that the research: be participatory and empowering; foster co-learning; build capacity; work towards systems change; and balance research and action (Minkler, 2008). The participatory approaches employed in this study can contribute to positive outcomes for the research, the communities, and the researchers themselves (Roussel, Fan and Fulmer, 2002). Collaborative methods were integrated into the study, including throughout the data collection and analysis steps of the process, and will be described in greater detail below.

A growing emphasis on accountability among nonprofits has increasingly led funders and policy makers to expect measurement-based outcome research designs and evaluation methods. This trend can prevent access to programs and services for those most in need, which has led to a call, by scholars and practitioners, for a “rethinking of what constitutes ‘evidence’” (Smyth & Schorr, 2009, p.1). The study here reflects this trend by

intentionally employing a methodology that values *both* accountability *and* success as measured by a diverse group of policy-makers, including the individuals most directly impacted and engaged in the programs and policies being studied.

Amount, types, and diversity of capacities can be measurements of a nonprofit's impact on communities (FSG Social Impact Advisors, 2009). Nonprofit groups often measure success and progress through indicators such as organizational growth, membership base, people served, and overhead cost. This research was designed to include measurements that capture how capacities (and the strategies that strengthen them) affect an organization's ability to achieve its social change mission. Creating such measurements requires creativity and perseverance (Cowan, Rohe and Baku, 2000). A central challenge in this research project was to identify cross-case measures for organizational abilities that help organizations advance change/achieve their missions, since by definition there was diversity between the cases. Consequently, important steps in this process included carefully defining terms, linking objectives and goals to organizational views on root causes of social problems, and adapting research methods during the process.

This research can be considered exploratory rather than comparative. The qualitative methods employed worked to surface knowledge that is largely underexplored in the literature, namely how community-based organizations use particular strategies to advance sustainable social change, and especially in the current policy environment. While quantitative data was used in this study, particularly through existing demographic and quantifiably measurable outcome data from within the organizations themselves, the

research seeks to contribute to new knowledge about how and why particular strategies make a difference. The theories that emerged from this work can be used to create future tools and models for quantitatively measuring and analyzing information¹⁶; at this stage the research focuses on dynamics and processes about which only limited theories and models exist (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008).

Research Questions

The main research question of the study reads as:

What are the core strategies used by successful CBOs to achieve their social change missions?

Related questions included:

- How do two strategies in particular (1. providing direct service and advocacy and 2. facilitating partnerships between diverse groups of stakeholders) complement each other or work at cross purposes for organizations seeking to advance social change?
- Are there other strategies that CBOs use to achieve their social change mission?
- What is the role of and effect on different stakeholders in the use of these strategies?
- What are the challenges associated with the use of these strategies?
- How do CBOs assess their effectiveness in advancing social change including those associated with the two strategies cited above and other types of strategies?

¹⁶ A methodology of building theory from data is often referred to as grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Research Processes¹⁷

As is apparent in the visual found in Appendix B, the research analysis process itself reflects a dynamic and interconnected model of social change, which this study served to uncover. Building on the one-directional and upwards flowing chart in this picture, common in both quantitative and qualitative research (Cresswell, 2003), the methods in the current study were less like steps and more like a two-directional escalator or game of “chutes and ladders”, wherein the research activities themselves influenced each other and directed the uncovering and analysis of different kinds of data. Between the literature review and data collection phases one through three (as named in this picture), there is back and forth, with active analysis and culmination in the research synthesis.

Case Study Methodology

As defined above, case study research is especially useful to explore questions of “how” and “why” (Yin, 2003), as is the case in this study. Drawing on the work of the Learning Exchange among CBOs in Boston and Haifa, this research is based on four organizations (two from Boston and two from Haifa) to allow for depth into a few organizations.

A “purposive sampling” (Maxwell, 2005) selection method was used to select four CBOs out of the thirty-four participating organizations in the Learning Exchange.¹⁸ Using purposive sampling, the selection of case study sites was made intentionally and in consultation with key informants who helped identify which organizations are most suitable given the study’s research questions. In contrast to a random sample, this purposive sample was selected based on specific criteria and because the CBOs chosen

¹⁷ An overview of the research activities in this research can be found in the chart in Appendix A.

¹⁸ Please see Appendix C for a description of the entire Learning Exchange pool.

allowed the research to explore particular kinds of specific information (Maxwell, 2005).

The selected organizations met all of the following basic criteria:

- Registered as a 501(c)(3) in Boston or as a registered nonprofit organization in Haifa;
- Has existed for at least five years (which shows that they are established, including with consistency of leadership;
- Is a Community-Based Organization (according to the definition of CBO from above);
- Addresses social and/or economic inequities as part of the core mission;
- Is identified by others as successful (i.e., exhibit the capacity and commitment for making sustained change in their field¹⁹);
- Be an active member of the Learning Exchange.

Other considerations in choosing the sites included: proven availability, willingness and capacity of the organizational leaders to participate in the research; the current state of the organization including leadership stability, funding-related crises, and others. The sample was chosen using data collected over the past five years, in the context of the following Learning Exchange activities, which included consultation on the applicants with other activists and thinkers, knowledgeable of the organizations, the nonprofit sector in general, and the particular local context for their social change work:

- The on-going Learning Exchange from January 2005 – Present
(written documentation through May 2009);
- Dr. Donna Haig-Friedman's Fulbright Research;

¹⁹ Please see the introduction chapter for details on selected site fulfillment of this requirement.

- The development and implementation of Lead Haifa; and
- An exercise of scoring each of the total (34), based on the above-stated criteria²⁰.

Data from these activities includes secondary documentation from the organizations and the media, primary documentation from extensive individual and group interviews, and observations of activities within individual sites, between research partners, and community-wide meetings or events, in which research partners took place.

Action Research Methodology

Some of the research processes used in this research draws on the action research tradition (Minkler, 2008; Reason & Bradbury, 2007; Heron & Reason, 2006; Herr & Anderson, 2005). Similar to other qualitative methods, action research requires ongoing efforts to link and compare between literature and field knowledge. These included planned thought experiments and/or reflective memos (Maxwell, 2005) and conversations with internal and external stakeholders, and with thinkers and leaders from the wider community both in Boston and in Haifa. All of these processes required an iterative and cyclical process (Herr & Anderson, 2005) that alternated between data collection and analysis, between literature and field research, and across organizations and between different countries and contexts. These extensive processes²¹ proved to be satisfying and interesting for both the researcher and organizational partners, consequently leading to deeper insights that enriched the research process.

²⁰ The documentation of this exercise can be found in Appendix D.

²¹ These can be found in Appendix A.

Data Collection

Utilizing the case study framework and an action research approach, this research relied on relevant data in multiple ways from multiple sources (Freund, *et al*, 2006). “Relevant data” in this context refers to information about the content and processes that can help explain how CBOs both achieve their missions and perceive success (Rosenfeld, 2005), challenges, and impact (Dorius, 2009) on the individual, communal, organizational and public policy levels.

As is common in qualitative research (Cresswell, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994), primary data sources were designed to come from interviews²², field observations, and thought experiments (Maxwell, 2005) with key informants and stakeholders related to the case study sites in Boston and Haifa. Key informants and stakeholders were designed to include the executive director and other organizational leaders, direct program professional staff, program participants or alumni, nonprofit and community activists, researchers, and philanthropists.

“Thought experiments” are exercises that help researchers to develop explanations of what they observe and sense. Thought experiments can contribute to the building of a conceptual framework and theories (Maxwell, 2005). Several thought experiments, conducted within the framework of the on-going Boston-Haifa Learning Exchange as well as with research partners and their colleagues, contributed to the development of a conceptual framework, working definitions of core terminology (including community-

²² One example of an interview guide used in this study can be found in Appendix E.

based organization, success, service and advocacy, partnership, engagement, capacities, social change, and others), and other models used in this study. Thought experiments continued to be a part of this research, throughout the data collection and analysis stages, in an attempt to continuously link between theory and practice. The tools used included discussion, writing, peer learning sessions, peer coaching and evaluations, and/or the use of other creative methods. Specifically, regular reflection sessions with a “thinking group”²³, in Boston consisted of bi-monthly meetings over the course of two years (2008-2010), which resulted in documentation that was included in the data reviewed for this research.

An action orientation approach (Reason & Bradbury, 2007) can be felt in this study’s data collection processes, including that research partners were consulted in the development of the primary data collection plans. Secondary data included existing documentation of in-person and video conference Boston-Haifa Learning Exchange seminars between 2005 and 2009; other thought experiment activities facilitated and documented between 2007 and 2009; and organizational program materials including written or web-based grant applications, existing evaluations, public relations or media reports, and/or meeting notes. Between July 2006 and May 2009, international travel and peer learning exchange and transnational videoconference activities, as part of the Learning Exchange, were documented by audio recording and through live-time note-

²³ The Boston Thinking group engaged a core group of three leaders from the Boston and Massachusetts nonprofit sector and three other occasional attendees, also from the Boston nonprofit sector. This researcher participated in and took the lead on documentation of the sessions.

taking²⁴. The documentation resulted in the writing of twenty reflective memos²⁵, which were a central secondary data source for this research. The overall pool of nonprofit organizations from Haifa and Boston, from where the case studies for this research were selected, participated in at least one of the documented program components, and in at least several of the documented meetings. An additional secondary data source used was a set of articles, cooperatively written and edited through on-going discussions with Learning Exchange and current research partners, which was ultimately published as a special edition journal of the New England Journal of Public Policy (2010).

Data Management

Data management processes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994) are chosen and applied in qualitative research based on considerations such as resources and time (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and personal style. The data in this research was organized in word, excel and media audio files²⁶. In the majority of cases, within twenty-four hours of an interview or observation, the recordings were downloaded to the researcher's laptop computer and the hand-written notes from each interview/observation were transcribed into a word document on her laptop. When activities took place and the raw notes recorded in Hebrew, the computer document was always translated into English, with occasional words or concepts left in English transliteration of Hebrew (in italics), to maintain authenticity of the language.

²⁴ This documentation was recorded and managed by this researcher and other Learning Exchange partners (including especially Dr. Donna Haig-Friedman and Jenna Toplin), and collated by this researcher and combined with written evaluation and reflection writing done by Boston and Haifa Learning Exchange participants whose organizations are referenced in Appendix C.

²⁵ The twenty reflective memos were authored by this researcher with input from Learning Exchange partners, especially Dr. Donna Haig-Friedman.

²⁶ The secondary Learning Exchange documentation was initially organized using NVIVO software, during the Learning Exchange analysis in 2008. For purposes of this dissertation the raw documentation, not the NVIVO version, was used.

Data Analysis

The data analysis approach used in this study, described below, reflects the foundational rule of qualitative research, “that in a continuously changing world, the interplay of practice and inquiry is (also) continual” (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p.5) and “that data collection and data analysis must be a simultaneous process” (Merriam, Marshall & Rossman in Cresswell, 2003, p. 203). Corbin and Strauss state that analysis in qualitative research is a process that builds over time and with the on-going acquisition of data (2008, p.57).

Qualitative research is well-suited for the exploration of contemporary phenomena taking place in a real-life context that are not under the control of the researcher, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are sometimes blurry (Reason & Bradbury, 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2003). As such, it was appropriate to design and facilitate this study using methods such as case study and action research, while taking into account the possibility of complications that qualitative methods can introduce into data analysis (Reason & Bradbury, 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2003). In anticipation of potential complications that could arise, especially in research that sought to reach across organizations, cultures and countries, various recognized methods and tools were utilized including:

- Getting out into the field as soon as possible in order to allow time for an iterative process to take place between the different data sources (both from theory and practice), asking questions, making comparisons, and facilitating additional efforts that lead to deep learning (Corbin & Strauss, 2008);

- Pattern matching²⁷;
- Explanation building²⁸; and
- Cross-case synthesis²⁹.

Each of these methods listed above can be used to check and ultimately strengthen the research findings. Theoretical frameworks from the literature on nonprofits, social work and organizational studies (Crutchfield & Grant-McLeod, 2008; Haig-Friedman, *et al*, 2008; Strichman, 2009; Alvord, Brown & Letts, 2004) were also used to analyze the data of the organizational case studies. Since the research sample consisted of four diverse CBOs, both matrices and summary sheets (Cresswell, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994) of language, practices, demographics, organizational roles, and other phenomenon were used to recognize patterns across the sites.

Informed by advice and recommendations from recognized qualitative researchers (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994), this researcher took specific steps to analyze the primary and secondary data collected. The following activities were facilitated by hand, using a laptop computer and a combination of word and excel sheets.

1. Before beginning data collection in Boston, the secondary data sources (Learning Exchange reflective memos, the 2008 Learning Exchange report, and the documentation from the Boston thinking group) were reviewed.

²⁷ Pattern matching is a process through which several pieces of information from the same case may be related to a theoretical proposition and compared to previous examples of how that theory played out (Campbell in Yin, 2003).

²⁸ Explanation building is a type of pattern matching that stipulates a presumed set of causal links about a phenomenon and compares these through examination of different cases (Yin, 2003).

²⁹ Cross-case synthesis is an analysis technique especially useful when there are more than two cases (Yin, 2003).

2. Throughout the process of Boston data collection, the researcher continued to read relevant literature and actively organize the data, through a back and forth of transcription of field notes and reviewing the recordings.
3. Transcription of field notes, requiring translation as well as the transfer of hand-written to typed notes, produced several sources of data, which were then used for coding. Each activity had its own document and there were also theme note documents, which this researcher calls “bridge notes” opened simultaneously. For example, each site had its own document called “Emerging Case Themes – Name of Site”, which was opened while the researcher was transcribing the field notes, such that she could easily cut and paste relevant issues or patterns that were emerging, in live time. Another bridging document was called “Emerging Cross Site Themes”; this document was an important source of confirmation for findings, later on in the process. Another bridging document that was essentially open whenever the researcher was at her computer, over the course of the last few years, was called, “Might be important, not sure where or when”. This document has been added to, changed, and consulted, throughout the entire dissertation process.
4. Between completion of the Boston data collection and beginning the Haifa data collection, all of the raw notes were organized and reviewed. The existing memos (including reflective memos from the Learning Exchange and a case study memo from each site in Boston) were reviewed, as was all of the raw data that contributed to the memos themselves.

5. All primary and secondary data were reviewed and where there was lack of clarity, more detailed notes, from original recordings, were inserted and the researcher maintained contact by email with the research partners in Boston, including sending back and forth questions and answers about the emerging findings and to fill in missing data.
6. Initial coding by research question was facilitated. Each piece of documentation was reviewed with an eye towards “answers” to the research questions. Where a piece of documentation seemed to answer a question, it was highlighted, cut and pasted into a different document, according to the initial code/research question.
7. Each data source was assigned a different color, such that within each code there were tens of different colors of text. Initially there were eight codes, aligning with main elements of the original research questions.
8. The second coding stage (called “Expanded Coding”) involved looking within each primary code (research question) for subcategories of answers. This level of coding produced forty-five codes.
9. Each sub-code was reviewed first without the color (so as to minimize risk of bias, since the researcher is so familiar with the data sources) and main themes/answers that seemed to emerge were identified.
10. Then within each of these sub-codes, the researcher introduced site colors, such that it was possible to see, within each theme, what each organization had to say. Where organizations seemed to have little to say, it was possible to go back and see if either their voice was missed or if this code simply wasn’t an issue for them. In a few examples, the researcher intentionally went back to research

partners to ask them about one of the themes, to give them the opportunity to respond. The researcher occasionally drew maps or wrote memos to show the story of a particular site's narrative through a given lens (theme).

11. At approximately this stage the in-depth Haifa data collection began. Some initial planning conversations with the site directors had taken place previously, as had a few "expert witness" interviews in Israel.
12. Through a process of "displaying" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.92) and "clustering" (Corbin & Strauss), the sub-codes were repeatedly merged or filed (if they didn't seem to have enough depth of documentation), and finally there were twelve main codes³⁰. This step seems to parallel the Corbin and Strauss (2008) approach of drawing out concepts from descriptive data and then building depth and texture and adding nuance into those concepts from other data. These data and concepts relate to the overall themes the research works to explore; this back and forth leads to theory-building (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Eisenhardt, 1989).
13. Next, the researcher engaged in a short and solitary thought exercise which resulted in a list of six main findings. These eventually merged into four findings and a new paradigm of social change, which became a framework for explaining the remaining four findings.
14. The researcher went back to the codes and found that the (at the time six) main findings fit well within the original set of sub-codes.

³⁰ Ultimately these twelve merged into six, paralleling the initial six main findings, and six "other" categories, which contributed to the introduction and research methods sections. One or two of the "other" categories, for example, "mutuality", ended up supporting one of the main findings.

15. In some instances the researcher reviewed again the raw writing documentation, the reflective memos, and the recordings, to ensure that the documentation really answered the question. This was a way to check (Miles & Huberman, 1994) that the researcher's interpretation of the coding was in fact grounded in the documentation.

These steps seem to parallel the Corbin and Strauss (2008, p.66) approach of "taking raw data and raising it to a conceptual level...it is much more than paraphrasing." As the literature suggests, it is critical to design the process so that interviews and focus group content are recorded verbatim, and the coding and analyzing take place afterwards. This slow but thorough process enhances the validity of the findings. Other tools for validation, also used in the analysis and writing stages of this research, include: triangulating sources, using member-checks, using rich descriptions, clarifying biases, presenting surprising, negative or discrepant information, spending prolonged time in the field, using peer debriefing, and inviting others to respond to initial findings (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Writing

While often "writing" is considered its own section in a dissertation proposal or thesis, in this study the writing was an integral part of the data collection and analysis processes. Writing up the site notes, translating and transcribing them into organized documents ("bridge notes") following data collection activities, was an exercise without which the research would have been much more superficial. At different points in the processes, especially during coding, which can be quite tedious, writing reflective memos served to

help the researcher uncover important connections, an exercise that served to both re-energize her and also to deepen the analysis. Through the last moment of writing the first draft of this thesis, the researcher continued to draw out new learnings about the data and the experience. The writing, for this researcher, was a conversation with herself, the data, and future readers. As someone who learns through engaging and talking, for this researcher this conversation was a critical tool for understanding the data and the research process.

Research Challenges

General

Several of the challenges encountered in this study include those related to qualitative research in general. While qualitative research has inherent strengths, including the potential for going deep in a particular area (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Reason & Bradbury, 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994), its challenges are numerous and require conscious attention (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Reason & Bradbury, 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994). The fact that the researcher serves as a central tool in the research often presents one of the most significant challenges in qualitative work (Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative research requires the researcher to openly acknowledge biases and ensure that systems are in place to intentionally counter any “blind spots”. These processes require time and patience as they depend on consistent alternating between data collection and analysis, between literature and field research. An openness on the part of the researcher to hearing and seeing surprising results is also essential.

Another well-known challenge in qualitative research is identifying when it is time to stop collecting and analyzing data. According to the literature, one sign is when “theoretical saturation” occurs; a researcher starts hearing the same things over and over again, and has already explored any possible rival explanations or trails of disconfirming evidence (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994). This research dedicated significant time for a back and forth process between theory and practice, literature and the field, and between countries/contexts.

An inherent challenge in utilizing an action research approach is that there exists:

A double burden...the concern with both action (improvement of practice, social change) and research (creating valid knowledge about practice)...sets up a conflict between the rigor and the relevance of the research – a conflict that has been viewed as both an advantage and disadvantage by different commentators (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p.5).

The approach expects researchers to address these issues by intervening in “spiral of action cycles” including: developing a clear plan of action; precise action in implementing the plan; observing the effects of action in the context of which it occurs; and reflecting on the effects as a basis for future planning, and action (Kemmis in Herr and Anderson, 2005).

Specific to this Study

Several challenges were particular to this study. Of special concern from the onset was the researcher’s personal relationship with the case study sites and the LERP work and documentation upon which much of the research design relied. While the researcher has never personally worked at any of the four sites, she has engaged with several of them in

the past as a practitioner colleague, activist, and/or researcher. The researcher made a significant effort to check her affinity and respect for the organizations by making every attempt to stay open to surprising or even contradictory findings. To some extent this concern was addressed by the site selection process, which worked to identify, by definition, organizations recognized by the wider community as successful. Moreover, the research was designed to explore how and why their success happens; the research did not seek to prove or disprove the organizations' successes. The researcher was conscious throughout of the idea that challenging findings can contribute in important ways; she trusted that her relationships with the organizations would benefit, rather than harm, the research.

Other strategies that were used to address this issue included:

- Seeking out disconfirming evidence and leaving enough time in the research schedule to explore these completely³¹;
- Establishing feedback loops;
- Planning and facilitating thought experiments;
- Following careful systematic procedures;
- Documenting rigorously;
- Utilizing the tool of pattern matching;
- Involving to the maximum extent possible the research participants in different stages of the research; and

³¹ For example, in several cases data from interviews conflicted with written organizational materials, such as website articles and/or annual reports. The researcher, in these cases, made sure to re-interview the original research participants and follow-up with new data sources, to confirm a solid picture of the truth.

- Using the data to offer new theories about the area of study, rather than about particular populations (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Reason & Bradbury, 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

To ensure rigorous analysis, the research design draws four specific principles recognized in the literature: 1.) give attention to all the evidence; 2.) address alternative interpretations and reject them convincingly; 3.) identify and attend to the most significant aspect of the case study; and 4.) use prior knowledge in the research by "demonstrate(ing) awareness of current thinking and discourse about the case study topic" (Yin, 2003, p.135).

A challenge, which had been anticipated in advance, was staying focused on the original research questions, because there are so many different organizational capacities and strategies and ways of organizing these in the literature. In addition, these are dynamic times, especially for the nonprofit sector, in both the United States and Israel, due to the economic downturn that began in 2008 (Katz & Yogev-Keren, 2010; UCLA Center for Civil Society, 2010) and in Israel to regular security crises that affect the role and frame of the nonprofit sector (Yad HaNadiv, 2010). Ultimately, the process remained close to what was planned, with the exception of one piece. Originally, one of the related research questions read, "What is the role of and effect on the executive director and constituents in the use of these strategies?", questions which evolved eventually to read "What is the role of and effect on different stakeholders in the use of these strategies".

Limitations

The primary limitations of this study are related to the challenges inherent in doing rigorous qualitative research.

The research revealed some, but not all, of the diverse voices that contribute to social change from these organizations. At each of the four organizations core team members, including the executive director and full- and/or part-time paid employees, some of whom work on direct programs and others who fill administrative and/or management roles, were interviewed or observed³². At two of the organizations volunteers who are counted among the core team were interviewed. At three of the organizations constituents were observed and current or past constituents were interviewed. A research limitation here lies in the fact that voices of external stakeholders or partners, such as funders or local politicians are missing. Also, no board member volunteers were interviewed for this study.

This is particularly important in terms of Finding One (related to the strategy of developing and maintaining diverse relationships) because while the data suggest that the connections between different stakeholders matter for social change, the finding relies on examples and reflection by only some of those stakeholders, namely core organizational team members. The findings would be stronger by also knowing the perspectives of the external stakeholders, such as elected and appointed officials or funders.

³² Appendix A shows the exact breakdown of these voices.

Finding two reveals an important strategy utilized by these organizations to advance their social change mission. The organization employs, as paid and volunteer core team members, people (called “People of Experience”) who bring with them lived experiences that the organization’s mission seeks to address. A limitation of the research relates to this finding because the data on People of Experience was provided by the organizational director or human resources director of the organization. This is a research limitation because it is possible that core team members themselves might self-identify differently if surveyed directly.

A third area of research limitation is related to language. Many of the terms and concepts relevant to this research remain undefined or not yet agreed upon (Yad HaNadiv, 2010; Frumkin, 2002). Moreover, data was collected across cultures and in multiple languages. As a result, there is a concern that data were interpreted in a way that unfairly reflects the researchers’ biases. Attempts were made to counter this possibility through the use of “member checks” and an extensive literature review within and across contexts. Nonetheless, this must be recorded as a limitation. In addition, while this researcher is binational (United State and Israel) and bilingual (fluent in English and Hebrew), many of the interviewees and observees were neither native English speakers nor native Hebrew speakers, and in many cases they were not natives of either the United States or Israel. As such, a concern exists that their actual pronunciation and/or the cultural context of their expressions prevented the researcher from fully understanding their answers and knowledge.

An additional limitation is related to the use of action research elements of the study. Action research, like qualitative research in general, is labor intensive because its rigor depends largely on the establishment of trust and a rapport between the researcher and her partners (Herr & Anderson, 2005). As such, significant efforts were made to create a comfort level with interviewees both in terms of the content and context of the interviews, as well as issues related to confidentiality. For example, the researcher reframed interview questions as needed to reflect the cultural, educational, and linguistic diversity and to ensure consistency in the way that the questions were interpreted. Despite these attempts, it is possible that inconsistencies exist in the way questions were understood by interviewees. The researcher also deliberated a great deal about how to document conversations. Because these organizations are relatively small, it isn't enough to refrain from naming a particular speaker; even identifying them by position would reveal their identity and represent a breach of our agreement of confidentiality. In some examples, interviewees even requested that their statement be "off the record". This introduced a challenge, in how to report out the findings, without revealing the identities of particular speakers, whose roles (even if not their names) may be important for understanding, explaining, and validating findings. Furthermore, often interviews with constituents and expert witnesses that required a level of informality were not recorded in live time. As a result, the documentation cannot be considered one hundred percent complete. In hindsight, it seems that it would have been better to find a different way to ensure the interviewee's comfort, while also documenting the conversation more precisely. It's even possible that the interviewees would have appreciated this more, knowing that their thoughts were considered valuable enough to actually record.

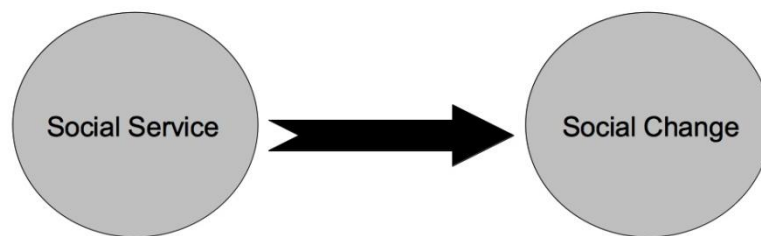
CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO KEY FINDINGS

A helpful framework for understanding the following findings is a paradigm of social change, which has evolved over the course of this study.

In earlier Learning Exchange conversations, seminar participants explained social change through a linear and flat design, with direct service at one end and social change at the other.

FIGURE 1: Original Image for Social Change



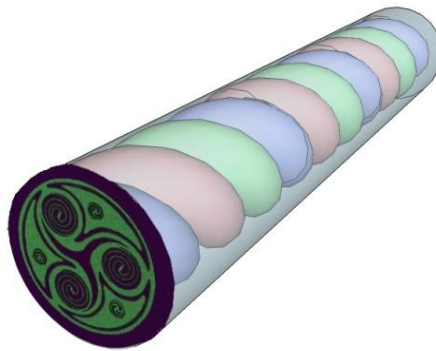
Source: created by Felicia Sullivan using PowerPoint, January 2, 2011

This model reflected an outdated common assumption that providing service and working for social change are mutually exclusive activities. That approach was grounded in the view that service work, helping individual people, only maintained the status quo and had no connection to social change. Social change work, associated with challenging the status quo, required activities such as advocacy, system-level work and public policy,

efforts which, it was assumed, could be undermined by service provision. The old understanding, however well-intentioned, suggested that the experience or well-being of individuals was disconnected from the experience or well-being of society at large (Withorn, 1984).

Over the course of more than five years, this paradigm, and the language used by research participants to explore it, have changed, resulting in a “multi-way and multi-dimensional process” (Boston Thinking Group, October 26, 2009), which is like a kaleidoscope.

FIGURE 2: Evolved Social Change Kaleidoscope



Source: Created by Felicia Sullivan using Google Sketchup.

Social change, according to this understanding, is like a kaleidoscope in that it is dynamic and layered. Kaleidoscopes, made of mirrors, glass, and bits of colors, create diverse shapes and forms, in reaction to movement and based on never-ending processes of changing reflections of light. At their best, kaleidoscopes (and successful social change) enable us to see the world in previously unimaginable ways; they are optimistic and awe-inspiring. Like social change, kaleidoscopes depend on symmetry and mutuality. Void

of light and movement, kaleidoscopes (like social systems) are just dark containers with isolated broken pieces inside.

FIGURE 3: Aerial View of Social Change Kaleidoscope



Source: Modified by Felicia Sullivan from
http://rlv.zcache.com/celtic_spiral_keychain_triskelion_design_1-p146523782641467835qjfk_400.jpg

As can be seen in Figure 3, which is a aerial view of the kaleidoscope, there are three main circles in the social change process that represent where and what kind of change happens. The three circles symbolize individual change (including family), community change (including diverse groups within the communities and neighborhoods) and systems change (including public policies); these spaces affect and react to each other. The triangle-like shapes are the three sectors: public (government); private (business); and the “third sector” (civil society), which each have in them a smaller circle. These small circles represent forces that share commonalities with the individual, the community and systems; they are resources, constraints, and relationships. Within each of these spaces are policymakers and other stakeholders. Each of these influences the sector itself and its way of interacting with others. The flexible dancing figure in the center represents a Community-Based Organization, which may originate in any of the

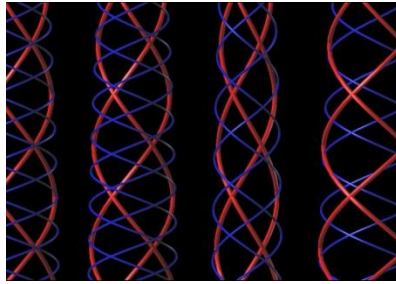
sectors. The CBO is capable of connecting between the other forces. While in some models of social change the formal structures are dominant and the constituents and communities react to them, here the opposite is the case. The constituents and communities (the green space here) ground the change process. The other structures (in black), even though they may *seem* more dominant, are actually held up and defined by the surrounding space.

We used to look at our change work through three separate areas -- individual, community, policy. Now we think that they are linked, that they work together in a cyclical way but it's a spiral cyclical way. It's not like the individual, community, or policy work happens in a particular order, one before the other, but rather they are back and forth. The whole premise is that individual strength comes out of doing. It's not enough to have just classes for skill building but we need opportunities to practice engagement and advocacy. The system-wide activities are the foundation and the means for creating resiliency on the individual level (Program Director, Youth Change, July 12, 2010).

The kaleidoscope metaphor of social change employs a continuum of transformation that involves multiple levels of society. The new continuum has more depth than the previous one. As appears in Figure 2, the image is more like a tube than a line.

Inside the tube there are levels of change, like strands of DNA (see Figure 4), which show the interaction of dynamics that happen on the levels of the individual, family, community, organization, public policy, systems, and more. The following image is a side view of the inside of the kaleidoscope.

FIGURE 4: Internal Sideview of Social Change Kaleidoscope



Source: <http://www.core.form-ula.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/11/4spirals.jpg>

These multi-dimensional and interwoven cables can explain how change happens, through different activities and tools, and at different places in society. The change processes weave between the stakeholders (all people connected with the organization) and they move back and forth on the continuum. A few possible examples follow:

- A cable of organizational activities and strategies which may be as diverse in goal and method as service and advocacy. On this cable, points on the line indicate direct service, law or policy creation, advocacy, community organizing, “empowerment” groups, and more.
- Another spiral is one which shows where change happens, through space-appropriate indicators - for example, improvement in educational outcomes for individuals, employment rates for the community, and changes in numbers and types of policies being created, proposed, and/or made into law on the systems-level spiral. These indicators of success on the continuum. Where successful change happens and is sustained a light flashes on and where the change isn’t sustainable the light flashes off. One color might symbolize individual

empowerment, as an indicator of success, while “mutual empowerment” (Jordan, 2004; Pigg, 2002) would be indicated by a different color of success.

- A third string indicates where (at the individual, family, community, organizational, and/or wider social levels) particular policies are implemented. This layer of change, of policy implementation, is perhaps one of the most important for social change work and is especially under-researched (F. Twersky, personal communication, October 20, 2010).
- A fourth strand is the path on which knowledge is shared, through the CBO, between sectors and stakeholders.
- Other threads will react, develop, and grow, reflecting ongoing social change processes that meld into and contribute to this cord of power.

While the changes described do not need to happen simultaneously, this understanding of social change does require that they work together to bring about the coordinated and sustained reduction of social and economic gaps and improved social and economic security for marginalized people, groups, and society at large.

We should think about the social change spectrum not hierarchically, but rather as a process of alleviating suffering through structural institutional change and the transformation of hearts and minds (UMB conference Learning Exchange Seminar, September 16, 2008).

The following are the four main research findings of this study:

1. Two core organizational strategies used by successful CBOs a.) providing both service and doing advocacy and b.) facilitating diverse partnerships are related to and affect one another;
2. Another important strategy utilized by these organizations to advance their social change mission is employing, as paid and volunteer core team members, people who bring with them lived experiences that the organization's mission seeks to address;
3. CBOs have an Internal Locus of Power; and
4. These organizations are searching for and creating new ways to define, capture, and measure their social change outcomes.

The following section is organized by key finding. At the beginning of each section is a review of the key terms and concepts which can help to explain the context and implications of these findings. Following this literature review are cross-site similarities from the case study data. After that are site-specific descriptions of how the dynamics play out at each organization. Because of the numerous translations involved, sometimes back and forth between several languages, direct quotes are rarely used and lieu of this, italics indicate the voices of research participants. The researcher has repeatedly reviewed the oral and written documentation, and directly confirmed with speakers, when necessary, that the intended sentiment and meaning of a statement retained its authenticity, even in translation.

The study was not designed to establish a causal relationship between organizational strategies and successes. Instead, numerous examples of *how* these strategies help organizations achieve their social change missions are surfaced and as such, the findings are descriptive (Yin, 2003) and can contribute to theory-building efforts (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The following analysis is designed to synthesize the ideas, experiences, and stories of social change activists and thinkers who are involved in high impact organizations and projects. These exemplar cases show how leaders and organizations are grappling with issues that are of concern to all CBOs, and presumably many nonprofits in general.

CHAPTER 4

FINDING ONE: TWO ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES ARE INTER-RELATED

Two organizational strategies (balancing direct service and advocacy and facilitating diverse partnerships) used by the CBOs in this study are found to be related to each other and one seems to contribute to the success of the other.

Related Literature

If once the nonprofit goals of providing service and doing advocacy were presumed to be incompatible (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008; Domhoff, 2005; Rosenfeld & Tardieu, 2000), recently the opposite seems to be the case. The nonprofit sectors in both the United States and Israel are currently at a “strategic crossroads” (Haig-Friedman, 2005; Freund, *et al*, 2006), where within the context of a broader movement for social change (Hawken, 2007), organizations and activists are doing more intentional balancing between advocacy and service activities (Haig-Friedman, *et al*, 2008; Sommerfeld and Reisch, 2003). This trend is in part a reaction to the assumption that doing both can increase organizational capacities (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008) and in part in response to pressure from funders and other external stakeholders who want to know that their support is challenging rather than maintaining the status quo (J. DeBeer, personal communication, November 18, 2010). Even funders whose mission is primarily focused on charity, rather than social change, increasingly expect that the work will decrease

individual dependency on good will, while advancing systematic solutions and interventions. The Learning Exchange research showed that balancing these strategies requires flexibility and creativity (Sr. M. Leonard, personal communication, July n.d., 2008), including dexterity in working with external partners; and that the balance actually enhances the organizations' ability to do each of these well, even in the face of conflict that at times ensues (Haig-Friedman, *et al*, 2008). This study built on these findings in looking at the special role CBOs have in facilitating the service/advocacy dance and how this strategy relates to diverse partnerships.

Diverse³³ partnerships are defined for this study as relationships which exist between stakeholders within organizations, between organizations within the nonprofit sectors, and between nonprofit organizations and stakeholders from the public and private sectors. Partnerships, a kind of engagement or relationship, have been promoted as “a solution to reaching efficiency and effectiveness objectives” (Brinkerhoff, 2002) and as such are assumed to facilitate public policy outcomes that can be positive for the partners involved. Successful social change nonprofit partnerships require capacity to engage and sustain relationships with diverse stakeholders, from within and between organizations, communities, and sectors (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008; Salamon, 2003; Sussman, 2003). The ability to establish and maintain these relationships and partnerships requires talented leadership, internal and external organizational resources, systems, and

³³ Diversity refers to differences in mission, approach, culture, political stance, and on the individual level that may include age, race, nationality, socio-economic level, status, gender, educational level. Diversity is critical to this model because of the (sometimes mistaken) assumption that stakeholders who are very different from one another can have a hard time building partnerships. Literature on nonprofit partnerships increasingly suggests that diversity in partnerships can strengthen the partnership itself and the outcomes credited to it (Dees, 2007).

capacities for building alliances between individuals and groups (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008; Salamon, 2003; Sussman, 2003). Rosenfeld and Tardieu (2000) define successful organizations as those which build relationships between individuals and institutions across sectors – especially those which have traditionally been alienated and excluded from one another. Successful CBOs are well situated to deal with the challenges inherent in partnerships (Boris & Steuerle, 2006; O'Regan & Oster, 2000; Weisbrod, 1997) because of their ability to communicate with diverse stakeholders (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008).

Strategies related to partnership building fall on a continuum that can reflect intensity of the partnership, by intention and actual behavior. The continuum may include collaboration, engagement, and bridging between different stakeholders or sectors. Collaboration refers to partnerships wherein each side is motivated by and loyal to their own agenda; it is about independent entities working together for mutually beneficial reasons, without an expectation of change (Wood & Gray, 1991). Engagement, different from collaboration, refers to partnerships and relationships wherein each side is motivated by and loyal to their own agenda and also recognizes the legitimacy and authenticity of the other's knowledge; engagement is the opposite of estrangement. Engagement implies reciprocity, inclusion, and a willingness to merge, blend, and share power (Rosenfeld & Tardieu, 2000). Bridging strategies are those which strengthen organizational power through the joining of different forces in communities and society (Samuel in Reichman, 2002). Another element of partnership building that contributes to CBO power is a capacity for learning and reflection (Sirianni & Friedland, 2001). The

capacity to learn and reflect cooperatively is a tool for individual, collective, organizational and social change (Senge, 1990; Schon, 1983). Organizations that engage in on-going learning processes, including documentation, reflection, and evaluation with all stakeholders (including practitioners, community leaders and members, funders, academics, and other policy makers), have the kinds of capacities needed for organizational sustainability (Senge & Scharmer, 2006; Strichman, 2009; Rosenfeld & Tardieu, 2000). Sustainability is an important element of effective public policy work (Dees, 2007).

The internal relationships explored in this study include those which happen within organizations: between people with the lived experience the organization's mission seeks to address and professionals, between diverse constituents who are served by and/or are members of the organization, and program and board volunteers (these categories are, of course, not mutually exclusive).

The external relationships explored in this study include those which happen between: nonprofit organizations; recognized policymakers from the public sector; private philanthropic funders; and representatives from the business sector. Especially for social change organizations that are addressing complex social problems, it is essential to collaborate with external stakeholders (Strichman, *et al*, 2011).

Each of these two core strategies, balancing service provision and advocacy, and facilitating diverse partnerships, helps organizations to advance social change. Findings

from this research, grounded in nonprofit literature and experience from the Learning Exchange, suggest that these two strategies are strongly related to one another; while they are not necessarily dependent on one another, one can significantly contribute to the success of the other. This phenomenon is related to the increasing blurring of boundaries between the nonprofit, government, and business sectors, and subsequent new “cross-sector fertilization”, which leads to increased innovative cooperation and sharing of ideas and values (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008). CBOs are especially well situated to facilitate these in their role of “mediating institutions” (Guo & Musso, 2007; Ott, 2001) and by promoting inter-organizational and multi-sector collaborations (Salamon, 1999), especially those required for service provision to diverse constituents. This view echoes recent literature that calls for policies to support the three sectors working together to deal with a variety of current challenges including the need to: provide public goods and services (Dees, Emerson & Economy, 2001); increase high impact public policy outcomes (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008; Young, 2006; Reichman, 2002; Brilliant, 2000; Salamon, 1999); and promote both democracy and economic growth throughout the world (Salamon & Anheier, 1997a).

The delineation of appropriate relations among the sectors has real consequences for praxis, and profoundly affects social policy in this country....this is because of payments of service delivery, involvement of business in providing work to welfare recipients, and in terms of the role of nonprofits in encouraging dialogue between citizens and institutions in democracies (Brilliant, 2000, p.174).

Innovation and social entrepreneurial strategies are known to advance public policy (Goldsmith, Georges & Burke, 2010). Many CBOs have innovation (O'Regan & Oster, 2000; Salamon & Anheier, 1997a) and social entrepreneurship (Light, 2008; Phills,

Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008; Martin & Osberg, 2007; Alvord, Brown & Letts, 2004; Dees, Emerson & Economy, 2001) capacity. Successful CBOs often serve as hubs of social innovation and entrepreneurship (Cleveland & Plastrik, 2009), and are situated to see community resources and needs firsthand (McKnight & Kretzmann, 1996). As such, they have an important role to play in public policy making. Social innovation and entrepreneurship require diverse relationships (Goldsmith, Georges & Burke, 2010), which CBOs have developed through their balancing both service provision and advocacy activities, as described above. Successful CBOs have the capacity to communicate and relate with both recognized policymakers (elected and appointed government officials and philanthropists) and unrecognized policymakers (community members). This is a two-way dynamic: the diverse relationships make the service and advocacy possible and the service with advocacy strategy is a vehicle for developing relationships. All of this is, of course, greatly dependent on an organization's ability to establish and maintain trust among all of the stakeholders (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995).

The kinds of organizational capacities that are created and strengthened by the balancing of service and advocacy, especially those related to relationships, accountability, and learning, are of particular importance to nonprofits seeking to promote social change (Dees, 2007). This study's emerging definition of social change helps explain how these strategies, employed interdependently, help CBOs achieve their mission.

Core Organizational Strategies

Two core organizational strategies (balancing direct service with advocacy and facilitating diverse partnerships) have been found in this research to be strongly related to one another. While they are not necessarily dependent on each other, one can significantly contribute to the success of the other. While challenging for organizations, findings from the literature (Sommerfeld and Reisch, 2003) and existing Learning Exchange documentation (Haig-Friedman, *et al*, 2008) suggest that the pros of doing both of these outweigh the cons for organizations, program participants, and policy outcomes. This study has revealed that as nonprofit organizations develop and maintain the relationships needed to provide services (for example, externally with government agencies and/or other nonprofits and internally between staff and program participants), connections are made which lay the foundation necessary for successful lobbying, coalition-building, advocacy activities and other policy change work. And in the other direction, strong external relationships (such as the ones upon which successful lobbying, coalition-building and advocacy activities depend) and internal relationships (such as those based on mutual respect and trust among employees, volunteers, and program participants) facilitate the sharing of resources (financial, in-kind, and knowledge) that efficient and effective service provision requires. The new metaphor for social change, described above, can help explain how the two strategies work together in CBOs in particular. This section will describe how dynamics between the two strategies play out at four particular case sites, and in so doing, will contribute to theory development (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) about how and why the strategies help CBOs advance social change.

Strengths

The case study sites reveal common theories and practices that show the strengths of these strategies. For example, a working theory used across sites is that when one works *for* the clients, then it is service work that doesn't advance social change; if one works *with* the client, then it is service work that does advance social change. Another shared belief, that successful relationships must be grounded in trust and mutual respect, was heard across sites; relationships are often defined in these organizations as partnerships.

The CBOs studied in this research regularly check their working assumptions, which include that: when relationships develop between people who might not otherwise connect with one another, these unlikely connections can lead to very strong partnerships; social change nonprofits are strengthened when they partner with each other, locally and globally; and that recognized policymakers change when they listen to and speak with people with the lived experiences of poverty and other social and/or economic exclusion. At the same time, the sites also assume that people with the lived experience of poverty or other kinds of economic and/or social exclusion are changed when they feel heard and valued by recognized policymakers. In other words, they believe that engaging people with the lived experience in service provision, advocacy, and policy work, is a tool for individual and collective transformation and empowerment. According to the approach of these organizations, a primary organizational tool *and* goal is to translate knowledge and experience from the field and the community into language that formal decision-makers can understand and vice versa. All four organizations reported some level of surprise that despite fears to the contrary, providing direct services strengthened their

stance as advocates and their ability to make demands on the government for structural solutions.

Practically speaking, all four organizations shared examples of how these core strategies, and their social change work in general, are strengthened when people with the lived experience of poverty advocate on their own behalf and hold positions of leadership at the organization. In addition, when basic services are provided at the CBO, volunteers and local activists are more available to partake in community organizing (policy and advocacy related) than they might otherwise be. Related to this, when service provision is accompanied by education about the context of social inequalities in society and/or political activism, participants and workers feel a sense of satisfaction and belonging to something bigger than themselves.

Each of the CBOs use some form of regular peer learning and reflection as a tool for creating and strengthening individuals, nurturing partnerships, and enhancing organizational sustainability. What becomes apparent is the significant effort of these CBOs to maintain consistency between their ideals and the way that the work is carried out on a daily basis. They also use the above-described strategies intentionally, as a way to create stability in the organization, rather than in reaction to outside forces.

Challenges

Several common experiences, from across the case study sites, can help to illustrate the challenges of using these strategies. For example, all of the sites described examples of

how the balancing between service provision and advocacy can work but can also lead to tensions within the organization, between departments and/or between staff members as well as between the organization and other external partners and/or stakeholders. Many of the interviewees, including directors themselves, identified that while various people or departments in an organization may be responsible for advancing the different (diverse) relationships through different strategies (service, advocacy, others), the director is the one who holds the vision together and who really understands that these strategies are intricately related and that one supports the success of the other. This is a challenge because, as described above as a success, the ability to both provide service and do advocacy requires strong relationships, both internal and external to the organization, and when this depends heavily on one central person, the relationships can be especially vulnerable.

Case Descriptions

The following examples, from the case study documentation, describe how the strategies of balancing between service and advocacy, facilitating diverse partnerships, and doing both of these at the same time, affect individuals, the organization itself, and in terms of policy and systems-level work.

New Home

At New Home the strategy of balancing between service provision and advocacy has been intentionally employed since the founding of the organization and is credited as one of the main tools with which the organization advances social change. An agreed-upon strength of the strategy is that it provides balance, where people “with their heads in the

clouds provide vision and connect our day-to-day hard work with something bigger, that's helpful" (Program Administrator, personal interview, July 14, 2010). At the same time, according to research partners, the visionaries don't always have enough direct contact with clients. Several team members reported frustration in this area and expressed openness to finding ways "to bridge between that really good service and the wider social impact, (which) is the real challenge here" (Front-line Case Worker, personal interview, July 8, 2010).

I think it is important that all of the people be mission-driven, but also that they talk to each other all the time, to be sure they understand that all of the work they are all doing is driving the mission forward. More importantly, my own experience has shown me that the larger disconnect comes down to values, and assumptions we make about our clients, which impacts decision making up and down the ladder. So, my question here is about how organizations that are doing both service and advocacy maneuver the different and shared values that go along with these activities (Program Director, Learning Exchange Seminar, March 20, 2007).

The dichotomy is because different people are attracted to different pieces of this puzzle...not everyone is inclined towards service or has the capacity, support or tools, to do the reflection that would help make the service really effective, beyond the immediate personal solution. For example, in one of our financial literacy training programs, which could be about both service and change, we don't always take the time to ask teachers to research how to translate what they learn into policy. (Program Director, UMB conference Learning Exchange Seminar, September 16, 2008)

Another area of tension which came up in almost every interview at New Home related to individual team members wanting to engage in activism both on the individual level and with their organizational hat. Several team members reported hearing "mixed messages...that on the one hand we are working here for social change, on the policy level and not just on the individual client level, and on the other hand, we get in trouble for circulating calls for action (invitations to rallies, for example) from our organizational

emails” (Front-line Case Worker, personal interview, July 8, 2010; Program Administrator, personal interview, July 8, 2010). Further research revealed that this tension originates from the resource development department, where the staff is worried about advocacy and lobbying efforts threatening the organization’s legal nonprofit status, a concern that is common among nonprofits (Nelson, Brady & Snibbe, 2007).

New Home works hard to develop and maintain partnerships that reflect the organization’s ideological and practical value of mutuality³⁴. One can see how the assumption of mutuality plays out in New Home’s partnerships both within the organization (between core team members and families, for example) and externally (between New Home and other nonprofits as well as across sectors, with public and private partners).

Our clear expectations and policies are what helps our relationships be partnerships. Both sides know what is expected of them and the boundaries are defined carefully...I always explain to new families very clearly that we take a team approach to our work. I’m not working for them and they don’t “owe” me anything; we are in this together (Program Director, personal interview, June 21, 2010).

We build partnerships by finding mutually-beneficial solutions. For example, in the housing department, we also put an emphasis on educating the landlords, not just the clients; this isn’t just the family’s problem. Too often there’s an us and a them. In reality that’s not true at all...so many landlords get burned and then they are adversarial and don’t give tenants the benefit of the doubt, so we are present to soften this and to show landlords too that working together can also be beneficial for them. For example, we show them that giving someone another chance (in the case of an eviction) will ultimately be more cost-efficient for the landlord too (Program Director, personal interview, June 21, 2010).

³⁴ To be explored further in Finding 3, mutuality for New Home means that relationships and their worth are defined and benefit all partners; contributions, respect and reward from relationships are shared equally.

At New Home, interviewees described exactly how doing service and advocacy, combined with their diverse relationships, enables the organization to advance social change.

Our way of balancing between both service and policy-level work includes thinking about how leaders, community organizers, and visionaries can interact, interchange, and create a collective voice that can affect public attitudes by keeping the voices of the people at the soup kitchens right there, at the table (Program Director, UMB conference Learning Exchange Research, September 16, 2008).

Factors that seem to be critical include the way the organization treats people, with an assumption of good will and respect, and a commitment to being engaged for the long-run. The organization seems to realize that strong relationships take time.

Treating people with respect and dignity goes hand-in-hand with our doing both service and advocacy here. We do this in collaboration with other agencies, it takes a village and it takes a multitude of agencies with the same heart and mission to make a difference and bring out the good in people and open doors for people. We couldn't do it alone, there's a very strong message of deserving here and that people, even through their paths and trials and tribulations are both deserving and have strength (Program Administrator, personal interview, July 8, 2010).

Recently I've noticed a change here...I've been organizing for years and now I see how they (government and politicians) are starting to listen more. There is a recognition that the process is a back and forth one...constituents have recognized that they can hold government accountable and decision-makers are friendlier/more open than they used to be. It's also that we've informed them more about the issues, through testimonies and cards that we regularly send them (Program Director, personal interview, April 21, 2010).

Youth Change
At Youth Change,

the strength of our model is that it gives the youth a combination of real individual support and services (tutoring and just being able to talk to us) and big picture education (that they don't get elsewhere) about a social issue and saying/showing them that THEY can do it - - they can have a role in these change processes. Transformation - both external and internal - happens thanks to BOTH of these levels and giving them that message, that they can do it, is what helps (Program Director, personal interview, May 17, 2010).

Core team members report that the two-pronged approach here helps them sustain themselves as well, in that

balancing the teaching/youth development work and the community organizing is satisfying and inspiring when we see immediate impacts and changes, and these reflect larger ideals and goals of our work with youth and families" (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 17, 2010).

Youth Change facilitates partnerships with an assumption of trust and with the recognition that social change doesn't happen in isolation:

Those of us engaged in youth community development know that organizations serving youth cannot do this work alone (Group Interview, Staff Meeting, April 27, 2010).

One of the challenges with this approach for core team members is knowing how to facilitate the delicate dance, between "getting into the right rooms and being accepted", but without compromising one's ideals and integrity (Program Coordinator, personal interview, April 28, 2010).

The way we get to be around the right tables (for example, with schools and city officials), is by being open to working WITH them. There's more negotiating, we're not just demanding and against them, and this is significant. This is about building relationship and it's what gets us into the important doors (Program Coordinator, personal interview, April 28, 2010).

For us what works is that we have a real presence in the community. Almost every staff member sits on a different community board or committee and works on political campaigns. These external relationships help lead us to success. It's about the personal relationships, and being seen at public events, being out there, getting positive media exposure, it creates a sense of legitimacy (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 10, 2010).

How did we get a meeting so fast with a representative from the police? We got in contact with them so quickly because a while back I had served on the police community advisory committee. We got invited after we began to be recognized by the police as a player in this community - as a result of a big transportation safety campaign we conducted about five years ago. Since then people know us, they have an eye for us because we've been successful. We've had some wins and losses, on different campaigns. We've worked on building our image and then they began to turn to us. So now we have a relationship with them and when we call, they answer (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 13, 2010).

For me, someone who came here having lived through the challenges of being an urban youth of color, what matters most here is the trust and faith that the directors have in us. This place embodies trust and faith and that drives my work here. It keeps me engaged here. This place is different because we and the youth hear messages from people with power that we/they are capable as opposed to the messages they/we hear on the outside. The challenge with this is that there's a struggle between the culture in here and what happens on the outside. External influences constantly counter the messages we're giving them in here. For example, with conflict resolution-- about two years ago there was huge wave of youth violence...We had been working right then on a youth documentary and when four youth who were close to this community were murdered. What are the youth to do when everyone around them (outside) are talking about retaliation and we're talking about getting along, alternative ways to be? Questions arose about how to work with officials, they wanted to quit and we couldn't let that happen. There was a parallel process that happened, when they saw that four young people from four different neighborhoods (working on documentary together) could get along and invited friends and family to see the film, people who would not normally sit together, came together. There was a message of we can do it differently in here and out there (Program Coordinator, personal interview, April 28, 2010).

At Youth Change, like at the other organizations in this study, the ability to succeed at both service provision and advocacy is understood by them to be directly related to their diverse partnerships, including those with both government officials and community members.

The power of leadership influence and positioning, knowing how to balance both as a partner with government and as a provider to the community, is a very important factor in our ability to survive. We manage to do both service and advocacy because we have relationships with recognized powerbrokers (politicians and funders) and unrecognized powerbrokers, well, those that we recognize as powerful but that the politicians don't (community members) (Executive Director, Learning Exchange seminar, January 2009).

Strong Women

The team at Strong Women states very clearly that connecting service (legal and other) with advocacy, community organizing and activism, is precisely the way they advance social change. Because it is a feminist and an Arab organization, this balance takes on particular meaning. The element of advocacy and systems change is critical as a source of power and as a way to contextualize Arab women's experiences. Were the organization to only provide service, that might reinforce a needy and passive women's experience, a model that is anathema to feminist ideology (Rapping, 1997). On the other hand, as Strong Women has learned over the years, women in the Arab community are often in need of basic services including legal and social counseling, for themselves, their families, and as the building blocks for empowerment. According to Strong Women, addressing these needs under one roof, and through an integrated approach, serves to strengthen the women, their relationships, and their social change outcomes.

At the same time, Strong Women is careful not to let service projects take over the work of the organization, even though they report that it would be easier to fundraise for service projects than for empowerment and advocacy projects. For the reasons explained above and being careful to avoid mission-drift (Jones, 2007), even in the face of the regular challenges and crises faced by their constituents and communities, Strong Women

designs and coordinates service projects, for example legal aid, which is directly related to organizational mission.

Over the last several years, Strong Women has developed an approach to partnerships that is practical and flexible.

Our approach to relationships is that if they are practically useful for both sides, they can work. One of our examples is a project that we did with the Ministry of Transportation... This was a great example of really Arab Feminists working with the Zionist male establishment, whom you wouldn't expect to be natural partners. In this project we are the community side and they are the planners. This is a huge success that affected change in both directions – up towards policy change and also to the community – really affecting the lives of women. I don't find it problematic at all to be a nonprofit and to be in this relationship. They aren't using us in an unfair way. We will be able to really help women so we are all benefiting (Director, personal interview, November 19, 2007).

Sometimes people don't understand how we could partner with a Jewish American foundation, as if that would be symbolically kowtowing to the Jewish powers that be, and usually it's the most progressive Jews who don't understand how we would consider such a partnership. Our approach is to be open and clear about our goals and our work and never cut off our nose to spite our face. We don't want to perpetuate the closed- and small-mindedness that so often works against our community even if there are those who see us as collaborators. We can be intentional partners, without being collaborators. (Executive Director, personal interview, October 4, 2010).

Related to the question of collaboration, and when doing so can strengthen or weaken social activism (Nagy-Koechlin, 2010), an expert witness recently described that “collaboration between unequal partners is common...inequalities in society get played out in partnerships and coalitions and we see this in Haifa all the time” (F. Marshood, UMB conference panel, September 16, 2008). Strong Women is conscious about this risk and works hard to build partnerships that acknowledge power, are grounded in shared values, and advance mutually beneficial outcomes.

By definition, being both a feminist and an Arab organization working in Israel complicates the use of these strategies for Strong Women. This is because from a feminist perspective, the organization's primary mission is to improve and secure the status of women in society. As an Arab organization, the primary mission is to improve and secure the status of the Arab population in Israel. These two missions can be at odds with one another in Israel and this can affect Strong Women's ability to develop and maintain relationships, which can be, as described, the scaffolding for partnerships that can facilitate successful and sustainable service and advocacy work. For example, when Strong Women took part in a recent successful campaign which made it possible for Arab women to use the Israeli civil family courts, a system that could better ensure the women's rights than the traditional religious courts where they had to appeal previously, another powerful Arab/Palestinian human rights organization accused Strong Women of disloyalty, an accusation that reflected a belief that using the Israeli civil court system rather than the more traditional one could harm Arab autonomy, by undermining the legitimacy of the traditional courts. Strong Women self-reports being critical of both the state *and* society, whereas some Arab organizations solely focus their criticism on the state.

I think that a feminist organization can't be a patriotic or nationalistic Arab organization at the same time because being a feminist organization by definition means that you have to be critical of your own society...I feel that many other NGOs in Israel, because they are Arab NGOs and because they are suppressed and marginalized in the minority, they feel that they have to fight for this minority and even sometimes idealize the situation and always blame the state and this is something that we don't always do, to blame the state just for the sake of it (Program Administrator/Evaluator, personal interview, November 29, 2010).

This is an example of one of the ways that Strong Women's practical approach to partnerships, with the organization's particular capacity for and challenges of diversity, shape her ability to affect and advance social change.

Neighborhood Power

While doing both service and advocacy is one of the strategies that directs how and why

Neighborhood Power does its social change work, the team reflected on several challenges they have faced in doing so, especially over the past few years.

Our organization provides individual service support (housing, job training, etc.) as a "point of entry". The people who get the services are trained as organizational leaders, which is a good thing. On the other hand, when that project starts to take an organizing stance on behalf of the collective constituency, those participants are inevitably seen to be biting the hand that feeds them (Executive Director, Learning Exchange seminar, January 30, 2007).

When we do advocacy it is seen as stepping on toes, and criticizing our partners who fund our service projects. In a way it's been easier for us with a rightwing government because they expect our push-back. When the left-wing was in power they would get really mad at us; there's an assumption here in Israel that it's not legitimate to criticize friends (National Director, personal interview, October 19, 2010).

At Neighborhood Power, within the organization partnerships are forged that would be improbable in the outside world.

In our center people don't only receive tools for solving problems, but they also meet other people. They meet people with similar stories and connect with them, which is strengthening for them. Some are also former clients, lawyers, economists, students, and members of privileged populations, from different socio-economic and educational backgrounds. You should see how these people then become a team, even though out in the world they might never talk to each other (Program Director, personal interview, November 29, 2010).

We know that recognized policymakers are influenced when they hear the voices of the people who are most directly affected by a particular social problem and/or a proposed

policy. This listening, in both directions, creates the foundation for mutually-beneficial, but previously inconceivable, partnerships to emerge.

We have noticed a real change in the way nonprofits use real people to tell their stories. In the nineties it was very popular to take clients to the Knesset to cry and yell and scream. Now, fifteen or twenty years later, that strategy is really passé. People are tired - the yellers, and the ones listening. Now, if you notice, clients come much more well-prepared, they even sound professional, when they come speak to politicians. Of course it's a trade-off because some people think that if the clients look too good they won't look pitiful and like they need help (National Director, personal interview, October 19, 2010).

Neighborhood Power believes that this trade-off is worthwhile because ultimately the partnership that is formed is not one “of pity, where there's the powerful and the powerless”, but rather one where there is recognition in both directions that each has something to give and to gain and that they need each other. “It's not a matter of choice to help someone. It's a matter of, if we want things to change we have no choice but to work together” (Executive Director, personal interview, October 11, 2010).

Activists and nonprofits who know how to build partnerships are in a totally different caliber from those who don't. It's like the difference between university and kindergarten...we would never try lobbying before first establishing a presence and relationship, possibly even a formal network or coalition (Executive Director, personal interview, October 25, 2010).

The two core strategies of integrating service provision with advocacy and facilitating diverse partnerships are related to each other in particular ways at Neighborhood Power.

The different pieces of our work are connected in that our national level policy campaigns are built from the ground up and then the improvements that result from the policy changes filter back down and improve the lives of people and communities. There's no way we could do this alone and part of the strategy, with all its challenges, is that we work through different avenues and with different partners at the same time (Program Director, personal interview, November 29, 2010).

Neighborhood Power research surfaced several stories which illustrate how the two strategies defined above work together at this particular organization.

Affecting social change related to poverty is about exclusion from knowledge so that CBOs affect social change when they do direct services and advocate because they share knowledge down and up at the same time (down to street and up to government). An example of this is one of our joint projects with the local government. We approached the local housing department after realizing that many people who come to us don't know about their basic entitlements for housing. It's true that for a long time the government was intentionally keeping secretive about this and wouldn't share the information. Now, because of the relationship we've built with them, they've agreed for us to write up the rules, we published them into three languages, and the pamphlets allow clients to have more access to this information. This is a policy change, related to service, which happened thanks to good working relationships (Program Administrator/Evaluator, personal interview, November 29, 2010).

I think our organization has a unique structure because some organizations deal with services and can't make structural change or other organizations that make policy changes but don't have any connection with people on the ground. We, from the beginning, have built a structure that has this balance. The way we connect the two is through our volunteers, keeping in mind the motivation that brought them into volunteer with us. The model we built, after a lot of thought on the local and national levels, is a three-way approach that is very directed and intentional: We have volunteers working on case work, community projects, and/or policy change/organizing; they might pick one project to focus on but we explain to all of them about the holistic way we work. So even if someone walks in for food, the volunteer will try to understand their other problems too (for example, health, education, housing, etc.). In this way, even if I, as an organization, don't have health services to give I can refer the person to another nonprofit and vice versa. I think if we put all these organizational resources together, think about the possible cross-organizational cooperation and sharing resources, we can help clients connect better with the services they need. One of the challenges with this is that these relationships are dependent on me and my personal connections and I want to make this into a model, not just personal and dependent on me (Executive Director, Learning Exchange interview, April 2007).

CHAPTER 5

FINDING TWO: PEOPLE OF EXPERIENCE

A central strategy used by the CBOs in this study to advance social change is having people, whose life experience includes struggling with the kinds of problems that these organizations seek to solve³⁵, fill key roles³⁶ at the organization.

Related Literature

Strategies, as they relate to organizational work, are defined in many ways in the literature (Smith, 2008; Smith & Ingram, 2002; Fung & Wright, 2001; Sirianni & Friedland, 2001). Organizational strategies, along with particular activities and principles, increase organizational capacity (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008; Linnell, 1996). An organizational capacity framework is commonly used for identifying measures of organizational success (Environmental Support Center & Innovation Network, Inc., 2001). This study, building on existing empirical research, explored capacities that increase organizational effectiveness (Linnell, 2003) and help organizations succeed in advancing their social change goals (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008; Haig-Friedman, *et al*, 2008; Strichman, 2009; Jennings, 2005; Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2004; Gittel, Ross & Wilder, 1999; Glickman & Servon, 1998).

³⁵ What these organizations seek to solve can be understood through their mission statements (adapted versions of which can be found in the Introduction of this report). In all four of this study's cases the mission includes addressing social and economic exclusion, sometimes named as poverty.

³⁶ Key roles for purposes of this study are positions which are filled by core team members, paid or volunteer, who significantly influence internal and external policies.

Organizational capacity is defined as the potential ability of an organization to achieve its specific objectives, goals, and overall mission through its knowledge, processes, and resources, (Light, 2008; Linnell, 2003). An organization's capacity is comprised of the individual and collective sum of its attributes, and internal and external environment and relationships (Haig-Friedman, et al, 2008; Horton, et al, 2003; Linnell, 2003). Glickman and Servon (1998), based on their work with community development corporations, offer the following five capacity categories: resource, organizational, programmatic, network, and political. Other possible capacity measurements include leadership stability, program choice and facilitation (Sowa, Selden & Sandfort, 2004); leadership (Tierney, 2006; Jaskyte, 2004); strategic, adaptive (Sussman, 2003); relationship; learning (Senge, 1990); community building (Goodman, *et al*, 1998; McKnight & Kretzmann, 1996); communications; collaboration and coalition; financial and human resources; and diversity (Weisbrod in Ott, 2001). Organizational capacity can also be understood through the lens of social capital, including bridging and linking capital (Putnam, 2000).

Organizational literature has recently captured several core capacities under a new umbrella called "social entrepreneurial capacity" (Alvord, Brown & Letts, 2004)³⁷.

These can include creating and employing:

- A mission-related measure for success (social value instead of profit);

³⁷ Others use different terminology, including social innovation, social enterprise, and others (Martin & Osberg, 2007; Dees, Emerson, & Economy, 2001). Based on an initial review of the literature, "entrepreneurship" seems to have the widest reach, with clear boundaries but enough room underneath it for the other concepts. The others (for example enterprise and innovation) seem to exclude some of the important elements; they are umbrellas that are too small.

- Seeking out opportunities that are often overlooked (as problems) including those related to relationships and resources;
- Flexibility and adaptability;
- Innovation;
- Sustainability;
- On-going and consistent learning;
- Evaluation based on measureable outcomes;
- Commitment to diversity including as these relate to relationships and resources (often challenging old models of sector boundaries and encouraging cross-sector partnerships);
- Commitment and accountability to all stakeholders, not only those traditionally recognized as powerful, but also the constituencies and communities directly served and affected (Light, 2008; Dees, Emerson & Economy, 2001).

Successful organizations use a variety of internal and external strategies to increase their capacities, enhance their work's impact over time, and achieve their missions (Crutchfield & McLeod-Grant, 2008). Certain organizational strategies are especially relevant to nonprofits that see their missions as related to the advancement of democracy. For example, the principles of "empowered deliberative democracy" (Fung & Wright, 2001, p.25), include having a practical orientation, enabling bottom-up participation, and generating deliberative solutions. These principles serve to promote effectiveness, equity, and "broad, deep, and sustained participation", all values with which democracy is concerned. A related framework states that community-based organizations contribute to democracy through representing the interests of their constituents to the state. The

representation can take different forms including what these researchers call substantive, symbolic, formal, descriptive, and participatory (Guo & Musso, 2007). “Participatory policy making” is another strategy which requires involving the individuals most directly affected by a policy in its development and implementation (O’Donnell, 1993). Organizations that use participatory capacities regard their constituency as assets, rather than clients (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992).

Clients are people who are dependent upon and controlled by their helpers and leaders. Clients are people who understand themselves in terms of their deficiencies and people who wait for others to act on their behalf. Citizens, on the other hand, are people who understand their own problems in their own terms. Citizens perceive their relationship to one another and they believe in their capacity to act. Good clients make bad citizens. Good citizens make strong communities (Tom Dewar in Osborne and Gaebler, 1992, p. 477).

CBOs employ strategies that facilitate their special contribution to community development and social change, especially for disenfranchised populations and communities (McKnight, 2001). This is related to an organizational emphasis on individual, group, and community empowerment (O’Donnell, 1993; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992) and the advancement of constituent participation in democracy (LeRoux, 2007; Guo and Musso, 2007).

In the words of Eleanor Brilliant, a social worker and professor of public policy at Rutgers University,

nonprofits encourage dialogue between citizens and institutions in democracies...although it is not always evident in the debate, we know that small grassroots groups and community-based organizations are essential to the preservation of those opposing voices necessary for a democracy (2000, p.174).

Peter Frumkin echoes this sentiment with his assertion that “grassroots community organizations have the capacity to harness community spirit and generate social and political change” (2002, p. 24). Campbell and Kunreuther (2008) agree that community service organizations currently play a key role in promoting social change because of their deep and long-term relationships with marginalized members of society, individuals whose voices are theoretically and practically critical in legitimate civic involvement in democratic societies. Edwards (2008, p.29) identifies the majority (over 72%) of nonprofits in the United States as small (with budgets smaller than \$500,000/year)³⁸ but ultimately more powerful than the larger organizations in their ability to unite communities and advance democracy. Katz and Yogev-Keren (2010) report that small and mid-size nonprofits in Israel³⁹ are the sector’s

avant-garde, being easily able to reorient to new needs, demonstrate creativity and entrepreneurship (Kramer, 1988). These organizations are often involved deeply in advocacy, representing marginalized groups, who pay the highest price in times of crisis.

With particular relevance to the work of CBOs such as those explored here, Dees (2007) suggests that organizational capacities related to relationships, accountability, and learning are of special importance to nonprofits seeking to promote social change. One caution that is noted about utilizing social entrepreneurial capacity, despite its appeal on some fronts (including higher salaries for nonprofit workers) is the risk of nonprofits distancing themselves from the communities that have the knowledge (Park, 2006) and

³⁸ While “small” does not necessarily mean community-based (there are larger organizations that are grounded in the community and smaller organizations that are not), Edwards (2008) suggests that smaller organizations tend to be better at connecting with communities than larger organizations.

³⁹ Available data (The Israeli Center for Third Sector Research, 2007) is not helpful in determining exactly what percentage of nonprofits in Israel are small or medium-sized because many of the smaller and community-based organizations operating within the third sector are not included in the Central Bureau of Statistics database (Gidron, *et al*, 2003).

can most authentically contribute to poverty policies (Light, 2008). Capacities that promote, strengthen, and sustain internal and external relationships contribute to an organization's ability to affect social change (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008; Salamon, 2003; Sussman, 2003). In the face of increasing blurring of the boundaries between the nonprofit, government, and business sectors, new "cross-sector fertilization" can lead to innovative cooperation and sharing of ideas and values that can lead to good policy outcomes (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008, p.40). As explained above, CBOs facilitate these by being "mediating institutions" (Guo & Musso, 2007; Ott, 2001) and by promoting inter-organizational and multi-sector collaborations (Salamon, 1999). Rosenfeld and Tardieu (2000) define successful organizations as those which build relationships between individuals and institutions across sectors – especially those which have traditionally been alienated and excluded from one another.

Having a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies they serve (and how outcomes created affect them), is one of the ways that CBOs advance effective and sustainable poverty policy work (Light, 2008; Dees, 2007). Engagement, one way that CBOs affect public policy, includes an assumption of mutual accountability among stakeholders (Root Cause & the Aspen Institute, 2008). Whether one sees the role of nonprofits as serving to maintain or to challenge the status quo can shape one's expectations for individual organizations and the sector⁴⁰ as a whole. Organizations that see themselves as accountable to their constituents do their work, including service

⁴⁰ Keeping in mind that Hall (1992, p. 14) and others state that the concept of nonprofits as "constitut(ing) a distinctive and coherent sector" is still not absolutely agreed upon in the field. This is the case in both the U.S. and Israel (B. Gidron, UMB Conference, September 16, 2008; Reichman, 2002).

provision, with an eye toward social change, constantly asking themselves if their work is perpetuating inequality or promoting social justice. Paul Kivel further suggests that strategic decisions that reflect this approach cannot be made in isolation, but as part of a larger network to which the leaders and organizations also feel committed: “The accountability then becomes a source of connection that breaks down isolation and increases our effectiveness” (2000, p.15). Rosenfeld and Tardieu (2000, p.xxiii) relate to this theme by explaining how successful community-based organizations recognize and practice the “strength of frailty”, which refers to the recognition of the power and shortcomings of both citizens and institutions in society, as a step toward the transformation of both, toward social change.

As presented earlier, a core working assumption of this research is that CBOs are especially effective at engaging the people from whom the most authentic and personal knowledge, critical for sustainable poverty policy development, can be obtained (Light, 2008). The capacities organizations use to do this take advantage of “new interdependencies” between stakeholders (Senge & Scharmer, 2006) that can generate “representational, relational, and reflective” knowledge (Park, 2006). Successful CBOs embody not only the ability to hear that knowledge and respect it, but also to translate it into terms that can be understood and applied by those policy stakeholders who are currently recognized as having power. One of the tensions inherent in this strategy, especially for the kind of research this study describes, is what Donald Schon (in Rosenfeld & Tardieu, 2000, p.248) called “a resistance to theorizing”, which may be used

by CBOs to defend against the danger of “degrading or turning it (knowledge) into a commodity”.

The extensive empirical research literature reviewed for this study focused on successful organizations and their approaches, community-level social change, and organizational capacities. Scholars have recently called for further empirical research that can surface theoretical and practical learnings to support the nonprofit sector’s ability to advance engagement between citizens and institutions (Warren, 2003). Such engagement can be promoted by: balancing accountability, service and advocacy missions, and engagement opportunities (Smith, 2008); observing, analyzing, and advancing new poverty policies that can advance good outcomes through cross-sector partnerships (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008; Brilliant, 2000), and partnering to advance democracy and public policy development (Guo & Musso, 2007).

Over the course of this study a number of strategies used by nonprofits to advance social change, some of which parallel findings from the literature and existing empirical research, and some of which are new, have been described by research participants across the sites. These include:

- Believing in the power of interdependence;
- Being committed to solutions for poverty that address systems change;
- Creating and maintaining partnerships with poor families;
- Engaging the ideas and voices of people who are poor;
- Subject/subject rather than subject/object relationships;

- Being committed to mutual relationships;
- Encouraging questioning and having regular conversations;
- Being mission driven and ensure that the mission be understood and supported by all sectors of the organization including program participants;
- Engaging in praxis that is defined by ongoing reflection on theory and then changing the theory as needed and in response to input from the community;
- Having a holistic approach;
- Including service and policy and advocacy work;
- Exhibiting a commitment to lifelong learning;
- Using collaboration, partnerships and networking to act on solutions;
- Having a strength-based, rather than needs-based approach;
- Engaging in celebrations and rituals, especially around success;
- Giving importance to a sense of place and culture;
- Engaging the ideas and voices of people living in poverty;
- Being intentional in decision-making and programming, rather than reactive; and
- Having the ability to balance between recognized powerbrokers and as-yet-to-be recognized powerbrokers.

One of the Most Important Strategies

Placing into key organizational positions people with the lived experience of poverty, homelessness or significant social or economic challenges (Kilty & Segal, 2006)⁴¹,

⁴¹ Explained further in the methods chapter of this report, identifying and counting People of Experience (People of Experience) at the various agencies was challenging. To begin with, a high level staff member at the organizations in Boston supplied the researcher with the data found below in Table 1 in response to

named here at “People of Experience”, is one of the most important strategies that emerged from this study.

Each of the sites studied sees their constituents as assets (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992) and as a critical tool for making social change, an assumption upon which the research was designed. Every person interviewed for this study agreed that having People Of Experience as team members matters deeply. In terms of *how* this matters in their ability to affect social change, this finding suggests that it matters because knowledge matters (Park, 2006)⁴². The case studies here illuminate how knowledge facilitates communication, tolerance, trust, and relationships between stakeholders within the organization and its community members, and between the organization and outside partners. It gives a sense to the people most affected by the policies and the recognized decision-makers that there is “*im mi l’daber*”⁴³, someone with whom to partner and with whom to make change. This strategy is important because it explains how CBOs translate the real experiences of people who are most directly affected by certain policies

the question, “how many core team members at your organization have experienced poverty or homelessness”? In Haifa, that question didn’t work. Interviewees objected to the terms poverty and homelessness, based on their understanding of their organizational mission and the local Haifa meaning assigned to the terms poverty and homelessness. Following several conversations at each Haifa site, the researcher rephrased the question to: “how many core team members in your organization have experienced significant life challenges related to social or economic exclusion that could lead to poverty or homelessness”? The data received in answer to this question are recorded also in Table 1.

⁴² Donna Haig Friedman’s Fulbright research (a component of the Learning Exchange) found that successful nonprofits recognize “knowledge as power” (Park in Haig-Friedman, *et al*, 2008). This study builds on that finding, seeking to understand the capacities of CBOs *in particular* to surface, understand and explain a critical kind of knowledge, that which is local and grounded in the direct experiences of community members.

⁴³ “Im Mi L’Daber” in Hebrew means, literally, “with whom to speak”. A version of the idiom has been used by different sides of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, as a scare tactic to suggest that “*Ayn Im Mi L’Daber*”, that there is NO one with whom to speak on the other side, that there is no real partner for peace. This expression, and the message behind it, associated with the breakdown of the second Camp David talks, has become an excuse for the refusal, by all sides, to engage in peace talks time and time again.

to the decision- and policy-makers, who often have no other way of hearing these voices (Warren, 2003). The strategy also works in the other direction by facilitating communication from external policymakers to communities and individuals who might be otherwise alienated (Warren, 2003) from certain messages, especially in language that is accessible to them. This is an example of organizations putting into practice their beliefs that local knowledge (Miller, 2006) is critical for policy work (Bonbright, 2006). The practice of having People of Experience on the core organizational team⁴⁴, either as paid staff or as volunteers, has its strengths and challenges for organizations.

Strengths

Across sites, the impact of having employees and volunteers share their personal narratives, as part of their work, was found to be an important tool for advancing social change.

The way the change worked here for me was that it was part of the educational message...they always ask “what would you like to see changed”? People started dreaming about a youth center or a pool and I was like, whatever, we’re never going to get any of that in our neighborhood, and they (the youth workers who were once like me) were like, why do you think that way? Don’t you think we deserve it? And then I started to see from them and from the older kids a sense of deserving, and how we made a difference with the our highway and KMART projects...and it reminded me of things I’d heard, learned about revolutionary stuff that happened way back wherever, like in Cuba. I thought things like that only happened in another time, another place, that stuff like that doesn’t happen here. My sense here was that people here don’t care...and then I started realizing that there are a lot of other people who believe this too and I started hearing them say, when you get out there you’ll be surprised at how many people will come and support you. The other kids, the other people who worked here, they all have this drive, and then I got it too, even though I was pessimistic a lot of the time (Program Administrator, personal interview, May 13, 2010).

⁴⁴ “Core team member” refers to all paid (full- or part-time) employees and volunteers (program or executive or advisory board members) at the organization. Included in these numbers are paid employees or volunteers who were past program participants or service recipients.

I have an excellent relationship with the families here...I know we're not supposed to be too personal with them but I've been where they've been and I know what they are going through and I know that it's better to listen to them, for them to know that I get it, not just be there with a stone face (Front-line Case Worker, personal interview, June 1, 2010).

Social change is about how much I involve myself in areas where there are things I see or experience that could be better. If I see an injustice somewhere, that's social change work. When I was homeless, that was the first time I ever knew there was such a thing and now I can't turn my face away from it. Social change work informs people about the realities and challenges existing myths about homelessness and poverty. For example, the assumption that a homeless person is always an addict or is depressed – I know that's not me -- so now I have to speak out from my experience. In me something was awakened. Since then I have travelled, talked, shared – at universities and talks, in DC, at rallies, the state house, about my experience and this has become a passion. Also, in this way I've met other people and I feel like I'm a part of a movement for social change (Program Director, personal interview, April 27, 2010).

People of Experience affect internal as well as external policies. Within organizations, program staff who are also People of Experience can serve as role models for program participants or novice employees.

Being here and seeing other youth who graduated and are now working here, knowing that they once were where I am now makes me see things differently, it's the first time that I really looked at it like this and it showed me that yeah, this is messed up but there is something you can do about it. And it's not easy and you can't do it alone but when you get together with other people there's a lot that can be accomplished. It was the first time I looked at it through that perspective and I was like, you know, you're right, ok, where do we start, what do we do (Program Administrator, personal interview, May 13, 2010).

I ended up here because I was a client. It's been a journey. In my position as provider I know what it feels like to be in the resident's situation and this helps me do what I do. We are unique here in the way we provide service. Before I came here it was different and this is key. Today it's because I trust my instincts. We might get criticized but we are really different. Families aren't in a book, they are real. Rules were made to be broken, not made to break the family! These are lives...we have to be ready to make changes. The space here is a good example. We've listened over the years to feedback from the women themselves, and based on that, made policy changes, inside and out (Program Director, personal interview, April 27, 2010).

Diversity breeds diversity. Partnerships between individuals or groups who are very different from one another can advance unusual partnerships, across organizations and sectors. This kind of cooperation can contribute to innovative public policy outcomes (Dees, 2007). Diversity in organizational teams, including in terms of life experience, expands the organization's expertise and increases their capacity for creative problem solving (Senor & Singer, 2009). Interviewees report that when core organizational members have life experience which is related to the social problems the organizational mission seeks to address and they have the skills needed to do the job, the combination is a very important and powerful one.

Another example is another recent hire, a bookkeeper who is an alumnus too and this has worked out great. We didn't hire this person JUST because she's an alumnus, we hired her because she was out in the world and she was a great professional. Now we can say she is an alumnus AND she's a great worker. She has the specific skills that we need but she really gets the organization and she's really committed. It seems that this is happening more and more. Until now it may have happened incidentally but as it's happening more and more, we realize that we should be more conscious and intentional about it (Program Director, personal interview, August 9, 2010).

There is both power and danger in the practice of hiring people with the lived experience of poverty, especially past program participants. The main issue is making sure that participants have enough transition time between being a participant and being a staff member. Our most successful workers are those who graduated high school and our program, left, had time to reflect and process, took time to live a little, not necessarily a certain number of years, and then made the conscious decision to come back, and not because they had nowhere else to go. The less successful workers who were past program participants had minimal or no transition time, and no time or way to practice processing and reflecting on what was happening to them, the changes they were going through (Program Director, personal interview, May 7, 2010).

Challenges

Organizations are struggling to find the most effective way to share the voices of real people with the lived experience that matters. All of the organizations described needing

to find a balance between People of Experience being/sounding authentic (which often means outraged, pained, and sad) but also professional (clear, rational), so that recognized and external policymakers are really able to hear them and not “brush them off as hysterical or exceptional cases” (National Director, Neighborhood Change, personal interview, October 19, 2010).

The strategy of having past program participants, a subcategory of People of Experience, work at these organizations, brings with it a whole set of challenges, for the People of Experience themselves, for other core team members, and in how these interplay with other organizational strategies. Organizations report that there is both power and danger in this practice.

It is a challenge for me to call myself a service provider. I work hard to keep a balance between being in the provider role but also understanding the experience of residents because of my own journey. That journey has been both the worst thing and the best thing that has happened to me in my life and this journey brought me to this place (Program Director, New Home, personal interview, April 27, 2010).

I’m kind of torn...obviously life experience is important but there is a challenge with this... In the past we’ve hired people who were missing basic professional skills and it grayed the area between staff and participants and at the time we had lots of issues about confidentiality, like employees who needed proof that they were eligible for electricity assistance and “fairness” in expectations. It made things blurry. There’s a big difference between some veteran staff (who were once program participants) and new staff who are also past participants, in my mind, and has to do with the amount of time they had out after being in the program and then coming back as a staff member. The transition/being out in the world makes a big difference. The veteran ones were out for much longer before coming to work for us. There are more blurred lines for the ones that graduated and immediately came to work for us. They came with a sense of entitlement which made it difficult to work with them. Some of these folks have a lot of trouble with boundaries and authority (Program Coordinator, Youth Change, May 17, 2010).

When I first got here I heard some criticism of some employees who thought that it wasn't OK that a supervisor had hired on past participants, who had been her clients, because they wondered how she would make that shift to being their supervisor and how would she be able to hold them to the same standards as others at the agency (Front-line Case Worker, personal interview, July 8, 2010).

Related to the balance between authenticity and professionalism, even in organizations where the theoretical assumption is that these two can coexist, maintaining equilibrium in practice, especially with new employees or volunteers who are still very close to their lived experience, is one of the challenges described in these case studies. Also particular to People of Experience who are past program participants, another challenge has to do with evaluation. Interviewees reported that past participants sometimes struggle with being totally honest when doing evaluation, including self-evaluation, peer-evaluation and program evaluation. These People of Experience are nervous of risking their new status, if they are found to be critical of the organization or their peers. They may also lack the maturity to hear feedback about themselves, and/or share criticism in a way that is productive.

Case Descriptions

While all four organizations studied here utilize this practice, they do so in different ways.

New Home

The vision of New Home is to end family homelessness and the organizational mission is to work in partnership with families on their journey up and out of poverty. The organization's constituents therefore are homeless and poor families and formerly-homeless and poor families.

In the case of New Home, forty-one percent (41%) of the organization's core team members have experienced homelessness or poverty in their lives. These individuals hold key positions, including on the advisory and executive board and one of these women is the director of the organization's family shelter. Other women with life experience with poverty sit strategically at the entrances to the organization's buildings, personifying the message of a welcoming home. Asking these women to sit at the front desk (in both the administrative building and the shelter), was an intentional choice, one that was designed to project "the face of New Home, the face of success" (Program Administrator, personal interview, August 8, 2010).

Everyone interviewed from New Home agreed that having formerly homeless women on the team is critical to their success, and it is a strategy that the organization is proud to use.

This is how we understand what transformation is really about (Program Director, personal interview, June 21, 2010).

If we are talking about really living the mission and being committed to the mission, then this is how we do that... Women with lived experiences have SUCH a key role here, they really understand the struggles and what it can be like to make it to the other side (Program Director, personal interview, June 21, 2010).

New Home is intentional about engaging people with the lived experience of poverty in key organizational processes.

We have the capacity to do this... We put this in the job description. It counts a lot for us, making sure we're honoring the values, which are very present our programs, especially the Adult Learner Program (Program Coordinator, personal interview, July 8, 2010).

I think it's key to recognize, retain, invest and keep here workers who were formerly homeless (Program Director, personal interview, June 21, 2010).

My supervisor always tells me that it's OK to talk about my feelings and show my compassion to our families...It's OK with her that I say, "use me as an example" and share my story with them (Front-line Case Manager, personal interview, June 1, 2010).

The strategy is used to affect internal and external policy. Internally, organizational policy is designed by women who have themselves been through the system, and this is reflected, for example, in rules such as hours of curfew, visitation, and the way shopping, cooking and cleaning is coordinated at the shelter. These internal policies reflect assumptions of strength and trust, rather than suspicion and punishment. Externally, New Home program participants, employee and volunteer People of Experience, and graduates (these are not mutually exclusive categories) intentionally and regularly engage in program planning, policy design meetings, advisory board meetings, and cross-sector dialogues such as an annual breakfast event where New Home ambassadors, members of the New Home Speakers Bureau, meet face to face with lawmakers.

At New Home this strategy takes on particular flavor when, as is common, People of Experience who were also past program participants become paid employees and continue to reside in the immediate neighborhood where the organization is located. Several interviewees described being approached around town by program participants, just standing on line in the supermarket or taking a walk, and needing to find a comfortable (for them) balance between their private and public roles.

I live in the neighborhood and this makes a big difference...when people approach me, because they know I work there, I give them some change, like I would for anyone, but I also give them a card, which tells them the hours that they can come to get specific help. I only give my number at work, never at home though (Program Administrator, personal interview, July 8, 2010).

One of my challenges is being in the neighborhood...People think you shouldn't make mistakes like anyone else, since you work here...People come up to me in the supermarket and want to talk to me about their problems and issues, or even when I'm just at home hanging out and when I have to say to them, 'I'm sorry that happened to you but you know I'm really not at work right now', then they think that I don't care (Program Director, personal interview, June 1, 2010).

Youth Change

The Youth Change website describes their organizational mission as “to develop the skills of youth and their families so that they are empowered to enhance their own lives and build a strong and vibrant urban community”. While the word poverty is not specifically used in either their mission statement or in any of the organizational literature reviewed, it is widely accepted that their constituency and community face pressures⁴⁵ similar to those of other inner city neighborhoods, which have among the highest rates of poverty in the United States (Kilty & Segal, 2006). The Youth Change case shows how having people who have experienced poverty on the core organizational team facilitates change for them as individuals and across the community.

In the case of Youth Change, sixty-two percent (62%) of the core team members (paid and volunteer) have directly experienced poverty in their lives. Forty-three percent (43%) of the paid employees⁴⁶ originally entered the organization as service users⁴⁷ and

⁴⁵ Including in the realms of education, unemployment, safety, crime, drugs, gangs, housing, economic development, healthcare, high rates of immigrants and single parent households, and more.

⁴⁶ Data not available for volunteers.

⁴⁷ In other words, they initially came to the agency as a program participant.

eleven percent (11%) as community activists⁴⁸ from the immediate neighborhood where Youth Change is located. The positions filled by these employees include as program directors, board members, and community organizers, such that they have significant influence on internal organizational policies. Youth Change encourages its employees and volunteers to regularly learn about and engage in political activism, including giving them formal work time to read theoretical material and newspapers, attend rallies and lectures, and sit on community boards and committees.

While this study did not seek to prove a causal relationship between the past life experience of core team members and the organization's social change successes, there does seem to be a connection between the two. For example, an indicator of success for Youth Change the presence of youth on neighborhood committees and task forces. As explored above, this is because this kind of engagement serves to open lines of communication; policymakers are inspired by the youth, whose voices they might not otherwise hear and the youth feel valued. Trust and assumption of good will develops and unlikely partnerships are formed; in the words of a participant, "these kinds of meetings lead to mutual respect, when we see another's heart and their hard work" (Front-line Case Worker, personal interview, May 21, 2010). According to many of the youth interviewed for this study, they would never have imagined it possible to sit on, for example, a police taskforce committee. They report finding the courage to fill such a role from seeing how it's worked for their mentors, sometimes siblings or older family members or just other kids from the neighborhood.

⁴⁸ This includes organizational founders and other employees who intentionally sought out this organization because of a local concern/commitment.

Another way that People of Experience advance social change at Youth Change is when local people use their informal connections to forge formal relationships. Cross-sector partnerships, considered to be one of the most promising strategies for advancing public policy and social change (Mulroy, 2003), can happen, for example, when a youth sits on a committee with local school board officials, feels heard and begins to trust those officials. She is then more likely to convince her peers to cooperate and support mutually-beneficial policies.

One way that we approach change is by inviting youth leaders who graduate and go away for a while, to then come back as staff and this is such a natural progression. We recently noticed how this has happened organically and that it is important. It's still informal and the structures that support the trend are still in their nascent stages, but they are there. For example, in the summer institute we realized that accidentally it had worked out that one of our veteran staff (who had been a participant here) was placed with an young alum and then we realized that on each one of the teams there was a full-time staff person (around 25 year old, either alum or not) working with a younger alum (19 year old or so, a past participant). We see now that this is really valuable and as the trend continues, eventually we're going to make it so that all the people filling those positions will be past participants (Program Director, personal interview, August 9, 2010).

What makes a huge difference in our work is that we have on staff people who know what it's like to be a youth here. This is a really recent and significant phenomenon. Currently there are a lot of past participants who are full-timers in significant roles, and we have three or four other alumni coming in for the summer program. One thing we've found is that it's not an easy transition – these were our youth stars. They had lots of traveling and they had their pictures in the paper, it was exciting for them. Now, as employees, they sometimes need a wake-up call...Sometimes they don't make that transition well, it's not an automatic. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. It's a journey of growth, they need a lot of support, they were pampered more and now there's a shift. They need to begin to understand issues of accountability. We're not cutting them slack now like we did back then. The supervisors have to deal with it, they kick butts...I know the proper term would be "helping them develop into professionals"... all the time. We have no formal orientation for doing this (Program Director, personal interview, May 17, 2010).

The issue of age is an important dynamic at Youth Change. At the beginning of the organization, the gap between the youngest and oldest core team members was about ten years. Interviewees explained noticing how dynamics within the organization have changed as this gap has continued to grow. This will continue being the case as the older workers get older and the entering age of past participants (one of the avenues for people with the lived experience of poverty to come to the organization) stays the same. At the beginning, the team looked more “like siblings, with big and little brothers and sisters”, whereas now the founding team members are old enough to be the parents of the older program participants, those who are often then hired as employees or volunteers. Just as in a family sibling relationships are different from the parent-child relationship, so too we see differences here.

We had to let one employee go. He was great, he came from the neighborhood and the youth here loved him, really identified with him. But we had to let him go because he really wasn't capable of holding youth to the standards. He kept wanting to give them more chances, but really that wasn't doing them any good. For example, we had a youth here who's had a really hard time. His brother was murdered last year and he just couldn't get his act together. He kept slacking off. This employee, the one we had to let go, was his team leader. He couldn't get him to show up regularly and he just couldn't put limits down for him. He felt too sorry for him and he didn't want to be the bad-guy. The youth was MIA all the time and no one ever called him on it. Then I stepped in to try to help the kid. I told him that I know I can't really understand what he's going through and I can't make it any better...but I acknowledged his suffering and then told him that if he starts attending regularly he'll have a life and if not, we're kicking him out and he'll be stuck in his bed for the rest of his life. From then on, the kid's attendance was perfect. This was a case where, like we usually think, tighter expectations bring out the best for our youth and this staff member wasn't capable of doing it. I should have let him go sooner but because I know him so well, I didn't, and I made a mistake by not doing so...it wasn't good for him or his student (Program Director, personal interview, July 12, 2010).

With lots of our youth, who have grown up at the agency and are incredibly loyal and like members of the family, but who don't necessarily have specific skills needed at a particular moment...When we've hired people like that, it hasn't worked out (Program Director, personal interview, August 9, 2010).

According to several core team members, the process that happens between youth participants and their counselors, and People of Experience core team members and their supervisors, is a parallel one.

One of the things that's great about the organization is that people know what it's really like to be a youth in this neighborhood, but it's also one of the things that's really hard and is a huge challenge (Program Coordinator, personal interview, April 8, 2010).

That everyone knows your personal stuff, what you are dealing with, is good on the one hand, and it helps you really "get" what the youth is going through, but it also makes it hard because it's hard to get mad at people when they aren't carrying their own weight as a worker (Front-line Worker, personal interview, May 21, 2010).

We've started to implement systems of accountability on all the different levels of the organization, so that we're holding staff accountable in the same ways that we held youth accountable, and vice versa. These are procedures of introducing and explaining clear consequences. They are systems that are built on values and expectations for being rigorous for ourselves as well as for participant. (Program Director, personal interview, July 12, 2010)

That transition from being youth to being staff is a huge challenge, it's a "mind bend", and we need to support that transition and be really intentional about supporting people as they become professional and have all of us get on the same page in terms of culture. How to tell them to put the phone away, with love and respect, it's really hard to tell or ask a youth or a new staff member who is young what to do, tell them how it makes you feel disrespected. There's not always follow-through. We wonder how to make a youth-friendly space but also be professional and ask if we were doing them a service or disservice by expecting or not-expecting them to be professional (Front-line Worker, personal interview, May 13, 2010).

An example, which was a challenge and not a success story, was someone who was an alumnus but who didn't have the necessary skills. Eventually she left by mutual agreement but really, because we had invested in her and she was one of our kids, we had "dragged our heels more than we might have" and that wasn't good for her either (Program Director, personal interview, May 17, 2010).

Strong Women

The mission of Strong Women is to advance social change through the empowerment of Arab women in Israel. While the mission statement does not specifically identify poverty as one of the social challenges faced by Palestinian women in Israel, this community is considered the poorest in the country (Galant, 2001). As discussed earlier, poverty is defined in this study as economic and social exclusion (Anouil, 2002) and this definition is fitting when describing the plight of Arab women in Israel. Arab women face alienation and barriers to economic, legal, and social security in Israel due to state-sponsored policies as well as societal norms (Zaher, 2005). While the founders and professional women who currently run Strong Women now have higher educational levels and more solid economic footing than the women who participate in their programs, they share with constituents a common experience of “disempowerment” (Collins, 1994) and on-going threat of double-marginalization, by fact of being both Arab and women in Israel (Zaher, 2005). Interviewees described that the differences between paid employees (who all have advanced degrees) and volunteers and program participants (called “the women”) is not in their capabilities but in the opportunities they have had in life. One of the team members attributed the difference to a “class gap”; it seemed very important to her and to other interviewees that they not come across as if they feel they are “better than” current participants, but rather that they’ve had better opportunities, related often to unusually open or supportive family members (Program Coordinator, personal interview, December 2, 2010). One core team member said that a difference between team members who are People of Experience and program participants is a “core

drive that allows and/or moves them to follow a path that is so dramatically different from most Arab women in this country” (Program Administrator and Evaluator, personal interview, November 29, 2010).

The difference between us and our constituents is only in our stage of consciousness raising and learned knowledge and opportunities for practice...not in the wisdom or depth of potential for getting involved and making a difference (Core team member interview, December 2, 2010).

Given the above, all of the people who work at Strong Women, with the exception of one part-time Christian German fundraiser, one part-time Jewish Israeli bookkeeper, and one part-time non-Jewish American male fundraiser, come to their work as People Of Experience. Core team members at Strong Women affect internal and external policies related to the status of Arab women in Israel as program coordinators, resource developers, community organizers, lawyers, group facilitators, and teachers. That many of the core team members at Strong Women are People of Experience helps the organization to advance social change at Strong Women in a variety of ways. Strong Women believes that individual transformation, through sharing personal stories of pain and growth⁴⁹, leads to community and wider social change, and vice versa.

Although women who come to Strong Women may not initially know about the policies that stand behind the realities of their lives, their growing understanding, through our community organizing groups, takes away the sense of self-blame. I think it's a very freeing way of accepting yourself and viewing the world and of understanding that your personal problems happen in a context. That context is the larger society and through this process one begins to shift the view of problem solving from individual responsibility and behavior to collective problem solving and issues of wider social justice (Executive Director, Learning Exchange seminar, May 18, 2009).

⁴⁹ “Each of us brings to this work our own personal experiences, ‘havayot al b’sareinu’ (experiences on our own blood and guts)...every single Arab woman in Israel can represent our target population” (Program Director, personal interview, December 2, 2010).

We work to translate the global to the personal and back again. In other words, we need to ground the policy/political issues in the impact they have at the human level and we also need to help women put their personal experience into the political context, to give them opportunities to understand and influence the political process based on their own experience and needs (Program Director, personal interview, December 2, 2010).

Neighborhood Power

The mission of Neighborhood Power is listed on the organizational website as “to empower low-income and vulnerable Israelis to break the cycle of poverty and reach self-sufficiency by accessing their rights and economic opportunities”. Neighborhood Power’s constituents, therefore, include low-income community members. They also include Israelis who are vulnerable in other ways and who come to the organization for help accessing their social rights, not all of which are directly related to money. As can be heard in the words of one of the research partners, “not all of the services provided at Neighborhood Power are about financial poverty; people come in for help accessing social rights and also human rights, like health, education, housing, and employment, which are related to poverty but isn’t exactly poverty” (Core Team Member, November 11, 2010). Data from this study reveals that vulnerability and social exclusion in Haifa can take on many forms, some of which may directly explain economic insecurity and others which indirectly do so. According to the Israeli research partners, social or economic barriers that can lead to poverty or homelessness in Israel may include being: a new immigrant; retired and/or elderly; a single parent; a “working poor” person; a non-Israeli citizen (for example “foreign workers”); physically or mentally challenged; non-heterosexual; a member of a minority population; and more. Given this, People of Experience at Neighborhood Power are those who have had to maneuver through and

survive very challenging social systems, including the Ministries of Absorption, Education, Health, Rehabilitation, and others.

The core organizational team at Neighborhood Power is comprised of paid employees and volunteers and these two groups are “inseparable one from another...the level of responsibility people have at Neighborhood Power doesn’t depend on whether or not they are paid, it depends on their jobs and how much time they have available to give to the organization...it doesn’t matter if they get paid or not” (Staff Interview, November 12, 2010). Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the core team members at Neighborhood Power are People of Experience. Unlike at the Boston case sites, research partners in Haifa were not comfortable using “experienced poverty or homelessness” as a definition of their past life experience. While many core team members counted at Neighborhood Power as People of Experience would not call themselves poor, an outsider looking in would consider them socially and economically insecure, by both Boston and Haifa standards. Core team members at Neighborhood Power reported that what matters is the team member’s personality, made up of “their nature and their life experience, not their bank account” (Staff Interview, November 11, 2010). When the researcher changed the definition, to “having struggled with social and economic barriers which could make them susceptible to poverty”, the research partners produced a list of examples (in the paragraph above) and based on that, provided the data in Table 1. Included in this number are also paid employees and volunteers, who were past service recipients⁵⁰. While the director of Neighborhood Power stated that ultimately she holds veto power,

⁵⁰ Service recipient is the term used at Neighborhood Power for program participant.

she also chooses, strategically, when to give partial and complete decision-making power to employees and volunteers, and as such, these core team members have an important role in setting, influencing, and implementing internal and external policies.

At Neighborhood Power, having People of Experience on the team is a very important strategy. The organization's primary strategy is that volunteers themselves, often people who originally came to the agency for help, run the Rights Center. This strategy helps advance the organization's social change mission in a number of ways. People who come to Neighborhood Power for help accessing their social rights see real live examples (in the form of volunteer core team members) of "weak people who have become strong" and this is inspiring for them (Program Director, personal interview, November 12, 2010). Neighborhood Power People of Experience, who participate in media interviews, "photo ops", or lobbying sessions with politicians, and conferences organized by Neighborhood Power, report that they are transformed by these experiences. The transformation includes increased self confidence, and being inspired to take more responsibility at the organization and in general as community activists. Core team members report that these interventions also work to raise public awareness and change public opinion. Paid and volunteer team members, who may not have ever personally met a "poor or weak person", report a feeling of "increased solidarity" with their fellow (previously unfamiliar) citizens (Program Coordinator, personal interview, November 29, 2010; Executive Director, Learning Exchange interview, February 5, 2007).

One of the dynamics observed at this site, as well as the other Haifa site, was hesitancy on the part of the professional staff to define themselves as having life experience relevant to that of the organization's mission, in other words, to recognize themselves as People of Experience. Speculations about why this is the case may include: cultural sensitivity around definitions of terms (class and socio-economic status), a vulnerability because of still being close to the experience and a psychological need for distance from it; and due to a difference in how certain policy areas, such as housing, family status, minority rights, and poverty, are understood to be related to one another in Israel, as opposed to in the United States.

A Quantitative Snapshot

The following chart of numbers and percentages of core team members with the lived experience of poverty at these organizations may further help to illuminate the impact of this strategy.⁵¹

⁵¹ This study was not designed to necessarily reveal data about typical phenomenon (Yin, 2003). As was stated up front, the organizations may even be atypical, in that they are recognized as among the very highest-impact, by a number of criteria, by external experts in the field of public policy. While they may not be typical, they are leaders in the field, struggling with many of the same challenges as other CBOs; understanding how they are doing so is a source of important knowledge.

Table 1: Core Team Members⁵² at Organization

	Entire Number of Core Team Members	Paid FT Employees (% of total core team members)	Paid PT Employees (% of total core team members)	Total Paid Employees (% of total core team members)	Volunteers ⁵³ (% of total core team members)
New Home	75	41 (55%)	17 (23%)	58 (77%)	17 (23%)
Youth Change	120	14 (12%)	14 (12%)	28 (23%)	92 (77%)
Strong Women	51	3 (6%)	6 (12%)	9 (18%)	42 (82%)
Neighborhood Power	88	1 (1%)	4 (5%)	5 ⁵⁴ (6%)	83 Program Volunteers ⁵⁵ (94%)

⁵² “Core team member” refers to all paid (full- or part-time) employees and volunteers (program or executive or advisory board members) who play key roles and are considered important to the success of the organization. Included in these numbers are employees or volunteers who were past program participants or service recipients.

⁵³ A volunteer who is considered an active member of the core organizational team, for purposes of this analysis, is one who works at least two regularly scheduled hours per week at the organization in a program position or at least three regularly scheduled hours per month in a board or advisory position. It would be beyond the scope of this study to analyze the subcategories of organizational volunteers, because of the diversity in the ways the different organizations design and define these groups. Please see “Implications and Recommendations” for suggested follow up on this issue.

⁵⁴ While there are five paid employees at Neighborhood Power, they only compromise 3.05 positions. One works 100% time, two work 50% time, one works 80% time, and one works 25% time.

⁵⁵ Neighborhood Power program volunteers include those who serve as case managers, intake workers, or community organizing activists. Advisory or executive board volunteers are counted on the national level and are not included here.

Table 2: Core Team Members who are People of Experience⁵⁶

	Average Number of Core team members Who are People of Experience (% of All core organizational team members)	Entire Number of Paid FT Employees Who are People of Experience (% of All Paid FT Employees at Organization)	Entire Number of Paid PT Employees Who are People of Experience (% of All Paid PT Employees at Organization)	Entire Number of Volunteers Who are People of Experience (% of All Volunteers)
New Home	31/75 (41%)	19/41 (46%)	9/17 (53%)	3/17 (18%)
Youth Change	74/120 (62%)	9/14 (64%)	13/14 (93%)	52/92 (56%)
Strong Women	48/51 (94%)	3/3 (100%)	3/6 (50%)	42/42 (100%)
Neighborhood Power	50/88 (57%)	1/1 (100%)	3/4 (75%)	46/83 (55%)

As is described above, that People of Experience sit in core positions in CBOs matters for many important reasons. It matters for the people themselves when their experiences are recognized as valuable by power-holders in society (politicians and funders, for example). This recognition is transformative and “empowering” for the People of Experience themselves. It matters for the organization, which benefits from the lived knowledge in terms of deepened understandings of needs and in that it gives them legitimacy as advocates and policy designers. Recognized policymakers will presumably have a harder time ignoring a CBO’s argument, when it is grounded in the lived experience of the people the policy is directly designed to affect. This strategy matters

⁵⁶ To review, People of Experience are people who have experienced poverty, homelessness, and/or other challenges that can lead to poverty or homelessness. Included in this number are employees and volunteers who were past program participants or service recipients. At the Boston sites, New Home and Youth Change, these numbers represent people who have directly experienced poverty or homelessness. At the Haifa sites, Strong Women and Neighborhood Power, these numbers also include employees and volunteers who have experienced social or economic barriers that can lead to poverty; in Haifa numbers of paid employees who call themselves poor would be lower than these data. In Boston it’s possible that the numbers would be higher if they were asked to include not only people who have experienced poverty and homelessness, but also those who have faced social and economic barriers that can lead to poverty and homelessness.

for public policy because People of Experience are translators and explainers, holders of knowledge that is critical for sustainable solutions. It apparently even matters to funders. When asked how she decides which organization to recommend, a representative of an important Jewish American family foundation that supports nonprofits in Israel recently reported that one of the most important indicators of success for her is that an organization consult regularly with constituents. Upon her recommendation, the foundation's board recently began to directly ask, on the grant application, "do you have members of your target group involved in the decision-making and planning processes of your organization" (personal interview, November 22, 2010). This representative believes that organizations which engage constituents in core organizational processes, "have a higher likelihood of success and of still being here ten years from now...and these are the organizations we are more likely to fund" (personal interview, November 22, 2010).

CHAPTER 6

FINDING THREE: INTERNAL LOCI OF POWER

The CBOs that participated in this study view power for advancing social change as internal rather than external, and they reflect this worldview through their organizational strategies.

Related Literature and Definitions

Just as there are loci of control in individuals (Rotter, 1954), so too there are loci of power in systems, which indicate where one assumes that power lies. Organizational loci of power reflect values and determine how an organization defines and works towards its mission. The CBOs in this study, that recognize internal power, reflect this worldview in their language and organizational structures and practices, including decision-making, evaluation methods, analysis of outcomes, and how they communicate and negotiate relationships. CBOs demonstrate, in the way they talk about constituents, where they think the loci of power for advancing social change lie, namely as close to the constituents themselves. The organizations in this study, recognized by the wider policy community as successful at affecting social change, clearly see loci of power for affecting

social change as internal, rather than external⁵⁷. This approach recognizes power-sharing as part of social change, and assumes that internal power can serve as a basis for cooperative work with external forces (for example, government or funders). This dynamic plays out differently at the four cases in this study, including in the way they define “internal”. Below, one can see a proposed measurement scale which this researcher has called “The Internal Locus of Power Scale”. The ILP Scale allows organizations to be categorized by where they identify a primary locus of power.

For purposes of this study, three subcategories of Internal Locus of Power have been identified: With Organization, With Community and Constituents, and In Mutuality. These terms emerged from the research itself, as can be seen below in the words of the research participants.

With Organization Locus of Power

The “With Organization” model assumes that the primary locus of power lies with the organization itself. This model assumes that the organization itself knows best how to facilitate change. One example of how this works can be seen through the common use of words such as “Em-power (ment)” and “En-gage (ment)”, concepts often used in organizations whose loci of power are internal to the organization. The term empowerment is used to describe goals of self power (Brenton, 1994) and the term engagement can refer to power that is shared (Skocpol, 2007). However, when used in the active verb form, these concepts embody an assumption of power *over* (Stone Center,

⁵⁷ An external locus of power assumes that change is defined and controlled solely by outside forces, such as government or philanthropists and that change is done “on the weak or broken”; the assumption of an External Locus of Power model is that objective specialists know best “what *they* (those communities and constituents) need”.

2003). En or em means to enter into a state of being that is the verb it's attached to; they can mean "cause to" (English prefixes, n.d.). So, in the case of "em" - power or "en" - gage, these can each be understood to em-body a power dynamic whereby the empower-er or engage-er holds the power and control to decide when, where, if, and under what circumstances they will facilitate a change. To empower and to engage someone else implies a one-sided choice, a clear giver (with power) and a recipient (without power). When organizations "engage" or "empower" others, the locus of power remains with the organization itself. Shared power would require "engaging with" or "empowering with". In interventions of em-powerment and en-gagement, without another verb in front to define it otherwise, the ultimate power still lies in the hands of the empower-er or the engage-er⁵⁸. Given the inherent power dynamic in these terms, this researcher suggests that these interventions, however unintentionally and subtle, serve to maintain, rather than challenge, the status quo.

With Community/Constituent Locus of Power

The "With Community/Constituent" model assumes that the primary locus of power lies with the community and/or constituents themselves. This model assumes that the communities and constituents, for whom the organization exists, know best how to facilitate the change they need. The model states that organizations and policies receive their legitimacy and authenticity from the active and undisputable voice of community

⁵⁸ An example of "engaging constituents", given by one of the research partners, is inviting constituent participation in program planning or evaluation. While this is an important strategy for getting critical input from others, there is still an element of control here. Just as today the organization invited feedback, they could decide not to invite feedback tomorrow. This is a strategy that defines the role of the participants as integrated, but not inherently so. They are partners, but not full partners, because the terms of the partnership are set by one side, rather than by both partners.

and constituent involvement. Grounding of the With Community/Constituent approach comes directly from the CBO literature, which, as is described in depth above, defines constituents and communities as assets with power.

In Mutuality Locus of Power

The “In Mutuality” locus of power assumes that power lies in shared, reciprocal, and related processes that occur among organizational stakeholders, both internal and external. The “In Mutuality” locus of power is farthest from the external locus of power, which sees power as lying *only* externally. An “In Mutuality” locus of power assumes internal and collective, rather than solitary, power. With an assumption that power is shared by at least two stakeholders, comes

the belief that the power of growth is in relationships where we all become mutually givers and receivers, the belief that diversity is a gift, and that ultimately we are all on a journey toward unity and communion (from an article written by the Executive Director and referenced on NH’s website).

Also,

“Power-Over” is the opposite of mutuality. Power is created and sustained in relationships. Mutual relationships exist to reduce the differential between powers, not to ignore the differences. The problem isn’t the differences, the problem is the ordering of the differences and the different power assigned to each (M. Walker, Mutuality Conference Panel, June 15, 2010).

Internal Loci of Power and Organizational Strategies

An organization’s locus of power affects which strategies they choose to employ to achieve their social change mission. The organization’s locus of power plays out in how certain strategies are applied, including organizational staff and decision-making structures, evaluation and programming approaches, relationship building, and more.

One of the strategies is to think differently about how and where change happens (internally rather than externally). Underlying this strategy is a shift in organizational assumptions about what motivates people to change, namely that change needs to happen on numerous and interdependent internal levels. This is related to an emerging way of thinking about change in general, proposed by the business world. The new approach challenges an age-old assumption that what motivates people is external pressures – rewards (carrots) or punishments (sticks) - and suggests that a third kind of motivation, which is internal⁵⁹, explains change (Pink, 2009).

The four organizations looked at deeply for this study can be categorized in the following way, along an ILP scale⁶⁰. Following the scale are some examples from the documentation.

⁵⁹ The internal pressure (power) that explains motivation, according to Pink, is comprised of three elements which he calls “autonomy, mastery, and purpose”.

⁶⁰ These subcategories are intended, at this point, to be descriptive. They may serve, in future research, as the basis for an emerging theory about Internal Loci of Power and their impact on social change outcomes.

Table 3: The Internal Locus of Power Scale

The Internal Locus of Power Scale

Power for Social Change Lies on a Scale which Ranges from “With Organization”, through “With Community/Constituents” and onto “In Mutuality”

	With Organization	With Community/Constituents	In Mutuality	Examples in Organizational Systems
New Home		Women of Strength.	Partner with. Engage with. Change with the families. We are a community of women.	Intentionally hiring and putting in leadership roles people with lived experience of poverty. Mutual and deep listening.
Youth Change		Youth have power. Youth facilitate change.	We interact together with youth, we relate to, support, and encourage each other. Family.	Intentionally hiring and putting in leadership roles people with lived experience of poverty.
Neighborhood Power	We...empower them, engage them, facilitate change for them, we encourage them.	Our communities/community members are the resources they need.		Paid employees coordinate/supervise the volunteers. Community organizing project topics generated from the field up.
Strong Women	“The beneficiaries”.	Key organizational responsibilities rest with “the women”. Power of women valued before external power.		Joint model building, community organizing, evaluation and strategic planning.

Case Descriptions

New Home

The Locus of Power at New Home lies between “With Community/Constituents” and “In Mutuality”. This ILP can be understood through New Home’s approach to community organizing, which involves “knocking on doors and knocking on hearts” and “helping people understand that their voices, joined with others, will make a difference...and that bringing different voices to the table can make change on different levels” (Executive Director, Learning Exchange seminar, May 18, 2009). At New Home, women and families

aren’t clients, they are individuals, just like us. The work is about mutuality, we are family, we will grow together and change together and make change together. Working with people is about being in relationship with them (Program Coordinator, Learning Exchange seminar, March 20, 2007).

The ILP at New Home, according to core team members, depends on the recognition that communities and constituents have power. At New Home, the natural complement of recognizing that power is being open to also acknowledge weakness and where change needs to happen.

Our work is not just about helping people, in the traditional sense of the word. There is a lot of mutuality in there and the idea is that we are journeying with people. It has always been clear that families’ experiences in here are key to understanding and to holding up and not imposing on them but really hearing from them what they were interested in and what they wanted and needed. Around welfare reform for example, at the time it was about how to not be victimized by this very victimizing and imposing system. It was about figuring out “resourcing”, who has resources and who is a resource, and recognizing political realities but also helping REAL people (Program Coordinator, personal interview, July 8, 2010).

This mutuality works in both directions. As one core team member reported, “I often hear from families that this is the first time they feel listened to and that because of this,

they can, for the first time, listen back (Program Coordinator, personal interview, July 8, 2010).

Language that reflects the ILP of “With Community/Constituents” at New Home includes “Women of Strength”, which is how the organization describes its program participants. Another example is “we are about treating program participants with dignity and as if they have internal strength, not that they need fixing according to some outside definition” (Front-line case worker, personal interview, July 8, 2010). Organizational practices that complement this language include: intentionally hiring and putting in leadership roles people with the lived experience of poverty and mutual and deep listening. Another practice that fits this model is problem solving along with program participants. Case managers at New Home would never take a phone number, intervene on someone’s case and then call them when the issue is resolved. Rather, they would take steps to network and negotiate the necessary systems *together* with the program participants.

Language used at New Home which reflects an ILP “In Mutuality” includes: partnering with families; power with, not power over; engaging with; working with rather than working for people; “we facilitate change together and we change together” (Program Director, personal interview, June 21, 2010); the use of the terms “families”, “students” and “women”, rather than clients; and when paid employees who have the lived experience of poverty (and/or are past program participants) refrain from calling

themselves “service providers” and rather use language like “team member” or “partners”.

Organizational structures and practices that reflect an “In Mutuality” ILP at New Home include that core team members share their experiences and feelings with each other and with current program participants.

I used to run a domestic violence shelter, for 15 years, and I had to make a change. I myself went through my own challenges, got divorced, and I needed a change. I love the philosophy here, to help families, to treat the women as family, to help them be the best they can. The philosophy here is about human feelings. For example, when I worked in the domestic violence shelter, I couldn't cry. That would be like breaking the boundaries. Here actually you can show how you feel, we are encouraged to do so, and the idea is that this might actually help them open up. What matters here, the way we make a difference, is by treating each person like a sister. I help her like I would help my sister. And we all work as a team and we all change (Front-line case worker, personal interview, June 1, 2010).

Another example is that program directors report having equally high standards for themselves and the program participants. The scale for those standards is as one would be between friends or colleagues, rather than a traditional ‘power-over’ (Stone Center, 2003) kind of relationship. For example,

in a traditional way of working, if a social worker had a meeting with a client and the client didn't show up you wouldn't call to see if they're OK; you would assume that they are blowing off the meeting and that it would be wrong to call them to remind them, as if that would be disempowering, taking the responsibility away from them. But if it was a meeting with a colleague or a friend and they didn't show up, you would worry about them, assume something might be wrong, and you'd call to see what happened. In the model of mutuality, we would assume that we're in this together and call and see if they are OK. I wouldn't call a friend or colleague to remind her of the meeting, but if she didn't show up I would assume something happened, I wouldn't assume that she's being irresponsible (Front-line case worker, personal interview, July 8, 2010).

Youth Change

The Locus of Power at Youth Change also lies “With Community/Constituents” and “In Mutuality”. In every facet of Youth Change it is abundantly apparent that the organization highly values the youth as knowledgeable and strong. The adults who partner with the youth seem to not only recognize the power of the youth and their communities, but even more so, they seem to want to connect to and engage with that power. They seem to be proud, not in a condescending and distant way, but in a humble and grateful way. The adults at Youth Change really seem to be in awe of the youth; not that they don’t get frustrated or angry at them at times, but even those hard feeling don’t get in the way of the respect, which they seem to hope can be mutual. There is a sense that both the adults and the youth want to earn the others’ respect, an indication of mutual appreciation and acknowledgement of power.

Youth Change language that reflects an ILP of “With Community/Constituents” include expressions, found in the organizational literature, such as “youth have power”, “youth facilitate change, they are critical change agents and are assets in building communities”, “youth-led organizing efforts”, and “the most important thing is that we have ‘youth’ and ‘community members’, at the table all the time”. Organizational structures and practices that reflect Youth Change’s ILP “With Community/Constituents” include that through all of their programming there is involvement of core team leaders who are People of Experience and constituents.

For example,

youth brainstorm the policy and program agendas with the staff, the staff gives skills to the youth, but then the youth do it themselves, even if we disagree with a decision they make... When we know something is lofty/impossible, we don't discourage them, we take them through a mapping of it and then they see for themselves the process and learning... Sometimes it leads to a win and sometimes not but either way, they own it and we think that it's important for them to sometimes succeed and sometimes not. We believe in supporting their learning, through success and yes, sometimes also failures. We stand behind them, support them, but they really do it (Program Director, personal interview, February 24, 2010).

Another example is that youth participate in the interview and hiring processes for paid employee positions and

there's no doubt that the success of this practice depends a lot on us preparing both the interviewers and the interviewees. Sometimes it's tricky if they know each other from the neighborhood and they are friends or relatives (Program Coordinator, personal interview, April 28, 2010).

As with the other cases presented here, intentionally hiring and putting in leadership roles people with lived experience of poverty is an organizational strategy that reflects an ILP of “With Community/Constituents”. Another example is that the organizational website and monthly email newsletters all have youth at the center. Even on the “donate now” click button on Youth Change’s website, the language reflects this ILP, as it portrays youth not as passive needy problems that need fixing, but as core actors on their own destiny:

Your donation will help provide a safe haven where youth are able to develop leadership skills, expand their future opportunities, and build a strong, safe, and vibrant community.

The ILP “In Mutuality” that is at play at Youth Change can be observed and heard through much of their core team members’ language at team meetings, programming and interviews: “We interact together with youth...We relate to and support each other to

affect change...We encourage youth to work to create change through our daily interactions with each other, through exploring new ways to relate to and support each other...(and) there's a feeling of family here".

Organizational practices that reflect the "In Mutuality" ILP include regular reflection sessions that engage core team members from across the spectrum, regardless of their status, age, seniority at the organization, etc. These sessions are designed with intentionality, "with the hope that everyone, no matter what their role, will be open to listening and sharing and learning and even changing their minds today" (Program Director, group consultation session, April 28, 2010). Training sessions are designed to encourage the surfacing of conflict, an approach that relies on mutual trust and respect and the planners of any session are encouraged to be conscious of power relationships. In observing meetings at the organization it is clear that facilitators take care not to separate themselves from the rest of the group. In a planning session, where core team members were designing a workshop for themselves and youth leaders (program participants), the adults stated clearly that one of their goals was to be able to "participate fully and be able to state opinions when they have them but also...level the playing field" (Program Director, group consultation session, April 28, 2010).

Strong Women

The Locus of Power at Strong Women lies "With the Organization" and "With Community/Constituents". This balance at Strong Women reflects the tension, described above, between the organization's deep commitment to its communities and constituents and its drive to affect change on a system-wide scale, which according to the core team

members requires a certain level of professionalism and tools, such that those reflected in legal and other academic degrees. Dancing between these two modes, and recognizing both loci of power, without judging one as more valuable than the other, is something the core team members, as feminists⁶¹, think about a great deal.

Language that reflects the Strong Women “With Organization” ILP includes the somewhat surprising finding that the organization often refers to their target population as beneficiaries. The word beneficiary is defined in an on-line dictionary⁶² as “a person or group that receives benefits, profits, or advantages; a person designated as the recipient of funds or other property under a will, trust, insurance policy, etc.”. This word, as well as “client”, the term used by Strong Women’s legal project, has a connotation of passivity, rather than power. Among the organizational structures and practices employed by Strong Women that reflect this ILP, are that all of the paid staff have academic degrees, a practice that reflects an external set of values. A core team member, when asked about this trend, said that “if there was a job that someone was qualified for according to the job description, we’d hire her, but all of the existing jobs require academic degrees” (Program Coordinator, personal interview, December 2, 2010).

On their website Strong Women refers to their target population as “constituency”, a term that connotes a sense of belonging and influence and as such, reflects Strong Women’s “With Community/Constituents” ILP. Another example is found in the data from this

⁶¹ Feminism in the context of social change and social justice work “requires not the melting away of differences, but institutions that promote reproduction of and respect for group differences without oppression” (Young, p. 47).

⁶² <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/beneficiary>

case study, where interviewees describe success as when “women recognize (that) their own importance and power must come before that of the surrounding policy forces” (Executive Director, personal interview, October 4, 2010). Strong Women also describes, in an on-line newsletter, a significant organizational shift resulting from input from constituents.

Our organizational model has changed and solidified through repeated evaluations, testing, and feedback collected, specifically with our constituents. The responsibility for broadening the base for community activism rests with the leaders themselves (constituents are leaders in this project). The continuous existence of the group in and of itself affords it public recognition, from the women of the community and also from representatives of the public institutions around them (2010).

Neighborhood Power

The Locus of Power at Neighborhood Power lies “With Organization” and “With Community/Constituents”. While there is a very strong belief at Neighborhood Power that communities and constituents have power, many of their organizational processes reflect an ILP of “With Organization”. One of the places where the balance between these two ILP is apparent is in the way the office is designed and the tension between certain employees and volunteers, some of whom want order in the office (“more like a doctor’s office”) and others want it to feel more like a home (“with a living room, even if that’s a bit messier”) (Group Interview, September 24, 2010). The tidy doctor’s office is more closely aligned with the “With Organization ILP”, reflecting a need for systematic control and privacy, which the organizational staff identify as “professional”. The living room arrangement is more closely aligned to the “With Community/Constituents ILP”, reflecting the centrality of community, informal power, and intimacy. The most recent compromise model ultimately agreed upon by the team was an initial intake table in-front

of a living room set-up where community members, walk-in visitors, and core team members can read and socialize. Behind that individual work stations are designed for discreet conversations.

The language used at Neighborhood Power, observed and heard in formal and informal interactions in the office and in on-line organizational writings, reflects their “With Organization” ILP. Such expressions include “empowering them”, “engaging them”, and “we facilitate change for them”. Some of the data reveals a, however well-intentioned, somewhat patronizing tone, for example (from an article written by the Executive director and referenced on their website):

In order to let underprivileged individuals participate in policy-change processes, we use several other strategies, such as publicity, mass recruitment, and public struggles....we make an effort to include them in the organization’s activities on various levels of collaboration – from providing information to cooperating in our actions.

The words, “we make an effort to include them” and “in our actions” describe power that sound like “power-over” rather than “power-with”. Another example is when organizational success was defined by a core team member as “when the volunteers put the needs of the organization before their own needs” (Program Coordinator, personal interview, November 12, 2010). Direct service recipients (those who walk in for help to the Citizens’ Rights Centers) at Neighborhood Power are referred to as “ponim”. While there is no direct translation for this in English, the word commonly used is “client” and the literal translation is “applicant”, a word that connotes aspiration or hope, with the power to answer a yearning that lies external and separate from them.

Organizational structures or practices that reflect Neighborhood Power's "With Organization" ILP include that all of Neighborhood Power's paid employees are professionals, although many of them also have life experience related to the organizational mission, and that this paid staff coordinates/ supervises the volunteers. There's a hierarchical relationship here, where the organizational professionals provide direction and supervision down to the volunteers, who in turn help the clients. When asked if she would ever considering hiring, for pay, a volunteer, one of the core team members said that she didn't think that would be a good idea because "making him a 'formal leader' would have him lose his legitimacy and strength as an 'authentic natural leader' and that natural leadership, that authenticity, is worth more to us" (Executive director, personal interview, November 12, 2010).

Neighborhood Power language which reflects a "With Community/Constituents" ILP include sentiments such as,

if you ask me what resources our clients and volunteers need, we know and we try to get them to know that they are the resources they themselves need" (Executive Director, Learning Exchange interview, March 21, 2007).

Neighborhood Power describes its success as related to practices that reflect their intent and ability to work "with clients to drive a policy change agenda". Related to this, one of Neighborhood Power's intentional strategies is to partner with existing local projects that they recognize as powerful and successful. In addition, as has been described above, community organizing and public policy project topics all surface from the constituents themselves, through the local activist groups or the Rights Centers, and this is an

indication that Neighborhood Power recognizes constituents and communities as having power.

One key place, especially recently, where one can see the Internal Locus of Power playing out is in how organizations define and measure their success, an organizational strategy which will be reviewed in further detail in the next finding.

CHAPTER 7

FINDING FOUR: MEASUREABLE SOCIAL CHANGE OUTCOMES

The CBOs that participated in this study are seeking new ways to define and measure their social change outcomes.

Related Literature

As described in the previous finding, internal loci of power can help explain how some community-based social change organizations work to achieve their mission. An internal locus of power can be seen having an impact on organizational strategies related to the ways organizations define and measure their success, specifically their social change outcomes. The organizations in this study are seeking ways to evaluate their programs not only from the perspective of funders and other external stakeholder, but from an internal perspective of the organization itself, as well as their constituents and communities.

Given recent trends and pressures, including the recent economic downturn, advances in communications technology, and related shifts in funding trends within and between the sectors, nonprofits are increasingly seeking new ways to define, capture, measure, and report on their outcomes (Sawhill & Williamson, 2001), including those related to social change (Kania & Kramer, 2011). Despite significant differences (Strichman, 2009),

especially in terms of scale, the nonprofit sectors in the U.S. and Israel face similar challenges and opportunities (Yad HaNadiv, 2010). In particular, the sectors in both countries are leaders in innovation and entrepreneurship⁶³ (Senor & Singer, 2009), strategies which require significant evaluation capacity (Goldsmith, 2010).

As described earlier, the policy and funding environment, in both the United States and Israel increasingly expects social change outcomes that provide the quickest and easiest possible returns on investments – outcomes that give the biggest possible “bang for their buck”. “This new era of possibility is also one of accountability” (Smyth & Schorr, 2009, p.1) and as such, in both countries, nonprofits are seeking and creating tools and language with which to answer demands from funders and policy makers for measurement-based evaluation methods. These stakeholders, along with scholars and practitioners, have increasingly called for a “rethinking of what constitutes ‘evidence’” (Smyth & Schorr, 2009, p.1). To be explored further below, the CBOs in this study are working as well to complement these appeals with other internal organizational needs of their own.

In terms of CBOs and social change nonprofits in particular, researchers and practitioners have recently recommended increasing investment into performance and outcome measures that reflect community well-being, just practices, new models of partnerships and resource-sharing, and change (F. Marshood, personal communication, September 16, 2008; Jennings, 2005). Investment of this type could include increased support for

⁶³ For the difference between these, please see: <http://innovateonpurpose.blogspot.com/2009/12/difference-between-innovation-invention.html>.

nonprofit evaluation activities and the capacities (partnerships, communication, technology, funding, research methods, others) needed for doing so (Yad HaNadiv, 2010; Shatil, 2009; Jennings, 2005).

An introductory review of how nonprofits are carrying out evaluation in the United States (and Boston in particular) and Israel (and Haifa in particular) reveals that while some advances have been made, there is a great deal more work to be done in this area, especially in terms of the need for agreed-upon sector-wide standards and definitions (Yad HaNadiv, 2010; MacIndoe & Barman, 2009).

Recent research (MacIndoe & Barman, 2009) on outcome measurement practices in Boston nonprofits produced the following findings:

- Seventy-eight percent (78%) of nonprofits surveyed implement outcome measurement, and they report that this is the most common form of evaluation that they use;
- Nine percent (9%) of nonprofits surveyed began this practice within the last year and thirty-six percent (36%) within the last two to five years; and
- Thirteen percent (13%) of the nonprofits in the BANS sample have employed outcome measurement for at least twenty years.

Parallel research on Haifa does not exist, and nonprofit professionals in Israel report that it is woefully missing from the sector's toolbox. From a recent series of interviews with expert witnesses in Haifa and around the country, it seems that shifts in evaluation

practices in Israel are especially related to the 2006 war with Lebanon and expanded partnerships with the for-profit sector. As a result of the 2006 war, nonprofits, especially CBOs, began to be recognized by formal public policy players (Katz, *et al*, 2007) and local Israeli philanthropists “were also empowered and inspired to engage as never before” (United States Foundation Representative, November 22, 2010). Local Israeli funders, especially those from the high-tech sector, are accustomed to learning and evaluation which looks for concrete and measureable indicators of success or failure. These funders are reportedly less emotionally attached to a particular strategy, project, or leader and less hesitant to “cut their losses” if they see that something isn’t working. This attitude has contributed to a new expectation for sound evaluation practices in Israel.

The shift towards increased expectations related to evaluation by Israeli nonprofits can also be explained by advances in communication technology, according to several expert witnesses (November 22, 2010; October 20, 2010; October 19, 2010). With increased communication technology, organizations, on the one hand, “can really put themselves out there and advertise themselves better”. On the other hand, whereas in the past Israel and Israeli nonprofits seemed quite far away, and the motivation to give was largely emotional, there is now access as never before and funders from abroad are asking for more detailed reporting and proof, “of what’s really true and what’s not”.

A recent report on measurement and evaluation in the Israeli Non-Profit Sector outlined eight key observations about the Israeli nonprofit sector’s approach to evaluation (Yad HaNadiv, 2010):

1. Israel's Third Sector is "enthusiastic" about using data to measure outcomes;
2. There is confusion within the sector about the purpose of evaluation and outcome measurement;
3. Not enough nonprofits have defined an organizational strategy clearly enough to do rigorous evaluation;
4. There are insufficient resources in the sector for strategic planning and evaluation;
5. There is no agreed-upon taxonomy of terms for evaluation;
6. There exists "shallow evaluation capacity" in the Israeli nonprofit sector;
7. Several cultural factors discourage nonprofits from fully committing to evaluation; and
8. The overall context of Israel including funder motivation for investment, political fluctuations and geopolitical realities, the size of the country (small), and resource constraints present special challenges for the sector in their efforts to evaluate.

A recent US-based study on nonprofit evaluation efforts reported the following main findings (Salamon, Geller & Mengel, 2010):

1. Innovation is extensive but facing impediments;
2. Performance measurement is widespread but limited; and
3. Nonprofit organizations themselves are generating recommendations for improving their evaluation efforts.

Especially because, "as we all know, social change can be messy, chaotic and unpredictable" (Strichman, 2011), trying to measure it requires both clarity and creativity. For clarity's sake and especially since the field still lacks a firmly agreed-upon taxonomy

of terms for performance measurement (Kania & Kramer, 2011; Yad HaNadiv, 2010), the following framework has been used in this study. The creativity issue will be explored in the following section, through a description of the evaluation work being done at the four partner sites of this study.

Evaluation can be defined as “the systematic monitoring and collecting of data about the work being carried out day to day” (Shatil, 2007). Outcome measurement is currently of particular interest for the nonprofit sectors in both the US and Israel (Yad HaNadiv, 2010) because it can help to “gauge the progress that is being made towards (the achievement of) desired changes” (Shatil, 2007, p.20). Outcomes can be defined as the “benefits or changes for individuals or populations during or after participating in a nonprofit’s activities” (Morley, Vinson, and Hatry, in MacIndoe & Barman, 2009, p.24). Examples of outcome measurements vary across nonprofits, depending on the type of programs and services offered (MacIndoe & Barman, 2009), can reflect organizational evaluation capacities (Strichman & Marshood, 2007) and the motivations for defining and using these can be internal and/or external (Mulgan, 2010; Yad HaNadiv, 2010; MacIndoe & Barman, 2009). Data useful for outcome measurement of change can be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative measurement is comparing “the level of a particular attribute before and after the client (be it an individual, an organization, or a community) receives the nonprofit’s service or good in order to demonstrate the effect of their intervention” (MacIndoe & Barman, 2009, p. 24). Qualitative measurement is important for social change work, especially when social change outcomes depend on processes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

Strengths

While there are many types of evaluation capacity (Patton, 2002), this research focused on the factors motivating and influencing how CBOs are currently working to define and use measurement outcomes of social change. All four cases in this study reported that evaluation is currently an important issue, for both external and internal reasons. Some of the external motivations identified in the literature and as surfaced in this study, include: for grant applications and reports, and to improve program impact. Internal motivations for evaluation, identified in the literature and as surfaced in this study include for planning or changing future programs, for training staff, and for deciding on resource allocation.

We are looking for a way to measure the difference we are making in public policy. We want to be able to say 'here's an instrument' for measuring that and use that instrument to see if our principles are holding up, and how they are playing out at different places and at different organizations (Executive Director, personal interview, May 7, 2010).

Common across this study's sites is an attempt by the agencies to engage as many stakeholders as possible in the process, an indication of an internal locus of power, and a belief that for the process to be effective it needs to come from within, rather than from without.

All four cases in this study are learning organizations (Senge, 1990) and as such, they participate in regular reflection and evaluation activities. The following description and analysis addresses their formal and intentional evaluation processes.

Challenges

A major challenge for CBOs in carrying out evaluation is that different departments, with their individual goals and ways of understanding the Locus of Power, often use inconsistent evaluation and measurement techniques. The diversity of approaches within one organization can lead to frustration and confusion both to internal and external stakeholders. For example, existing tools for outcome measurement evaluation are not satisfying to at least two of the organizations. None of the organizations report having sufficiently defined the terms needed to facilitate measurement outcome evaluation across teams, projects and departments. Moreover, there are no a consistent evaluation or data collection approaches across departments in the CBOs. Different tools and methods are utilized. At least two of the agencies are currently working to correct this. There is also a difficulty related to evaluation training. For at least three of the organizations, data entry is a challenge because the employees and volunteers who are responsible for have not received proper training to do so and the terms and language of the data fields have not yet been agreed upon across the organization. Core team members have also reported feeling intimidated and scared; they are nervous that the results they are imputing will somehow reflect on their work, such that if the data is negative or missing, they will be personally criticized.

In addition, front-line case workers at two of the organizations (one in Boston and one in Haifa) reported that they are largely unaware of evaluation efforts related to the social change part of their work. In some cases, people were frustrated about this, feeling that, for example, “I know that our Executive Director and outside academic consultants worry

about evaluation but I (a program staff person) really care about it too” (Program Director, personal interview, June 21, 2010). At the other two organizations (one in Boston and one in Haifa), core team members at all levels of the organization were aware of and had some role in the outcome measurement work being done.

Another challenge was that the resource development departments, which are responsible for grant-writing and reporting, work from an assumption of External Locus of Power in that they measure outcomes using a framework imposed on them by donors. This can cause confusion, frustration, and tension for employees and volunteers who feel that their motivation to work more on the community organizing or policy projects is being stifled, by others who are concerned that advocacy work may be perceived as criticism by funders and as such, jeopardize the agency’s nonprofit legal status. At each of this study’s sites, leaders reported experiencing the need to negotiate and maneuver on this front between the demands and limitations of programs, their resources, and those of the organization’s administrators and executives.

Also to be explored further below by site, specific challenges include that:

- Existing tools for outcome measurement evaluation are not satisfying to at least two of the organizations;
- None of the organizations report having sufficiently defined the terms needed to facilitate measurement outcome evaluation across teams, projects and departments;

- Different parts of the agencies are approaching evaluation and data collection in particular ways, using different tools and methods from the other departments (at least two of the agencies are currently working to correct this);
- For at least three of the organizations, the employees and volunteers responsible for data entry are not properly trained to do so and the terms and language of the data fields are not agreed upon across the organization; and
- Employees and volunteers have also reported feeling intimidated and nervous that the results they are imputing will somehow reflect on their work, such that if the data is negative or missing, they will be personally criticized.

Case Descriptions

The CBOs in this study report “knowing social change when they see it happening,” which is an important step towards identifying ways to measure that change (Strichman & Marshood, 2007). Since the organizations’ understanding of social change depends on transformation on different levels, it is not enough for them to just measure change at those different levels, despite that organizations are working to capture those outcomes as well, and a review of these follows⁶⁴.

These CBOs measure individual change outcomes related to:

- Program attendance rates;
- Formal education (from school or other external programs);

⁶⁴ The following lists represent a compilation of all of the outcomes looked at by all of the organizations; not every organization is using all of these outcomes.

- Employment (success in job training, in obtaining or keeping employment);
- Housing (success in accessing and/or maintaining permanent housing);
- Civic engagement (voting, attendance at public meetings or events, lobbying or other activist activities, meetings with public officials, funders, other organizations or coalitions);
- Health (for participant and/or their family members, these include physical, emotional or spiritual health);
- Family status (such as relationships between program participant and their close family members);
- Financial security (including welfare benefits and/or “debt management”); and
- “Empowerment” (including a reported increased sense of power or control).

These CBOs measure individual change outcomes related to poverty rates; educational outcomes; housing outcomes; employment outcomes; health-related outcomes; civic engagement rates and outcomes; and others.

Organizational change outcomes currently being measured at these CBOs include: demographics (age, race, gender, life experience, religion, education, other) of paid staff and volunteers; program changes in terms of goals, target population, and/or intervention/implementation tools; mission statement changes; program outcomes; and resource development (budget, diversity of funders, in-kind vs. money resources, other) outcomes.

Policy change outcomes currently being measured at these CBOs include: numbers and content of policies designed, supported, and/or otherwise advanced by the organization; organizational engagement in networks, community or public boards, coalitions, etc. (this includes core team members and/or volunteers and/or participants doing so *with* their organizational hat on); and quantity and quality of policy implementation (in the short and long term).

Quantitative data collection tools regularly being used at the organizations include written or computerized surveys or questionnaires, the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database system, and other commercial or tailor-made databases. Qualitative data collection tools regularly being used at the organizations include written or computerized questionnaires, interviews, group or peer evaluation activities (including focus groups), reflection sessions, documentation of staff and program meetings, and others.

All of the organizations have recently completed strategic plan activities, including the use of logic models (W.W. Kellogg Foundation, 2004) and/or theories of change (Brest, 2010).

In addition to the outcomes on each of the stand-alone levels described above, the organizations looked at in this study are seeking ways to identify, explain, and describe the collective change that happens when the different levels and processes are connected to one another. As was explained through the new model of social change described above, the levels of change don't have to happen simultaneously, but according to this

paradigm, without shift on each of the levels, the change stays pin-pointed, rather than across society. If “isolation is the glue that holds oppression in place” (M. Walker, Mutuality Conference Panel, June 15, 2010), then what organizations are now struggling to find is the “Glue-B-Gone©” (Great Planes Manufacturing Company <http://www.greatplanes.com/accys/gpmr6041.html>), the social change anti-glue that loosens up oppression and advances instead an adhesive of justice and freedom across society. The four organizations looked at in this study are at different stages and are using different tools to define and measure their anti-glue.

An introductory look at how these organizations are working to define and measure their anti-glue finds their approaches to be largely internal in nature, reflecting their ILP. Following are some examples of what has begun to emerge from across the sites.

New Home

At New Home, there has also been a new emphasis on evaluation, outcome measurement, data systems and reporting over the last two years. In particular, the leadership of New Home is very eager to find ways to measure social change. Some of this is motivated by external funder demands and a great deal of it is motivated by a desire on the part of the core organizational team to understand if and how they are succeeding. Some research partners report being driven to capture what is so transformative in the eyes of this organization, before founding stakeholders retire.

The organization and the surrounding policy community know the organization is making a difference. The question this study addresses is *how* it does so. New Home has recently put heavy resources – financial, time, and intellectual, including numerous

meetings and conferences with outside specialists - towards tweaking their model of social change and developing tools for defining, measuring and evaluating the way it works.

New Home's name for its Glue-B-Gone© is Mutuality. Building on theories of mutuality in therapeutic relationships (Jordan, 2004), New Home is working to create public policy that reflects and incorporates these ideas. At a recent conference, co-sponsored by New Home and leaders from the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute at Wellesley College, participants explored and documented the following ideas (documented and synthesized by this researcher, June 15, 2010):

We are hard-wired to connect but modern society has taught us to denigrate that impulse. There are many, many physiological signs that show that we are primed to be sensitive to suffering of others and yet society hammers us to think this is wrong. Biologically we are better off when we are in relationship. When we go against our own-biology, we create stress for individuals, the environment and the economy. Mutuality shields us from stress. Being part of something larger than us heals us. Practicing empathy is good for the brain. Pain from social exclusion shares same physical pathways as separation distress. Social pain and physical pain are identical in how the body responds and so social exclusion and perceived social exclusion can be deadly.

The conference challenged another related mainstream Western assumption that independence is a powerful sign of success to which individuals should aspire. According to panelists at this event, this approach, one that by definition encourages separation, can help explain some of society's most persistent social problems. The underlying belief is that control depends on self-sufficiency, while dependency on others and empathy for others are indicators of weakness. Alternative theories and models, grounded in the assumption that critical knowledge comes from diverse sources and that

those sources are interdependent, can serve as the basis for building more inclusive, just, and sustainable solutions.

We know there are good organizations out there doing a great job measuring, for example, Independence, which may be an indicator for success in some areas and has become quite a mainstream ideal. We are more interested in Interdependence, which to us is a much more important indicator of sustainable social change. For us, change is a mutual process, in which we are each teachers and students in change processes. Our core goal, the center of our mission and the spirituality upon which it is based, is about unleashing the power of mutuality. We are, each one of us, a giver and a receiver and this is the guiding principle for our work. This is our guiding principle for intimacy and for healthy communities and society (Executive Director, observation of presentation, May 24, 2010).

According to leaders at New Home, the assumption that interdependence is critical for sustainable social change has inherent to it the need for individual well-being, and when needed the individual transformation of all members of society, not just the perceived “needy” who “should get fixed”. This model suggests that “my wellbeing depends on your wellbeing” and “I am because you are and you are because I am”. The approach assumes that power can be shared without being expended. It challenges the status quo by working to link people and ideas that are traditionally seen as dichotomous and mutually-exclusive, including:

- Families and Professionals
- Local knowledge (wisdom that isn’t always recognized as such) and academic knowledge (wisdom that is more often recognized by society as valuable)
- Productivity and Relationships
- Professionalism and Life Experience
- Individuality and Mutuality

Since “Mutuality” is what “really matters to New Home”, the agency is now working to assign identifiable indicators of interdependence and measurement tools for capturing, analyzing and explaining how mutuality outcomes lead to social change. This work reflects an assumption of internal loci of power, including that resources exist in communities, which need not sit around waiting for external import of resources, brought in by “professionals who think they know what we need”. In this and other ways, mutuality is about linking between different kinds of power and knowledge (Park in Haig-Friedman, *et al*, 2008).

It is not new, the observation that people in communities, which are over-serviced (“at-risk neighborhoods”, for example) forget their power. They are “dis-powered”. People who aren’t recognized as having power act as if they don’t have any. And people who are recognized as having power act as if they do have power. Real help would require letting go of “power-over” in exchange for “power with”, which would involve interfering with “normal” and mainstream ways of giving. In trying to make real change, relationships need to become “power with” and that requires that service-givers step back, so that the “communities in need”⁶⁵ can reclaim the power they had, but have forgotten. This is, of course, threatening for power-holders for it would mean they would have to share their privilege and power (Expert Witness, observation of presentation, May 24, 2010).

Creating tools for using mutuality and then measuring its implementation in practice presumably requires a willingness and capacity to unlearn traditional and defensive ways of being. It may even require intentionally blurring boundaries. These strategies can build and advance bridges between people and systems, within and across organizations and sectors, especially unlikely allies. This type of work is about acting, rather than

⁶⁵ “Communities in need” is in quotation marks because the underlying assumption of this conversation and this concept is that all communities are needy on some level, at some point. Here we are talking about communities who have been externally defined as needy and for whom policies are created from outside/above.

reacting, about being in control, rather than in crisis, and feeling/being powerful rather than powerless.

As a result of the recent cross-agency and cross-sector conversations exploring mutuality, new relationships and theories have developed. Some of these (documented and synthesized by the researcher and Mary Coonan, 2010) include:

The synonyms for mutuality suggest its appeal: reciprocity, genuine connections, building interdependence, affecting atmosphere, giving people space, being in someone else's world, multiple realities, empathy, transformational relationships, authenticity, common experiences, moving out of one's own boxes and shoes, raising awareness, making people proud, valuing each other's time.

Characteristics of mutuality include: respect, authenticity, atmosphere, awareness of others' conditions and perceptions, accepting multiple realities, listening to others, climbing into others' worlds, transformational relationships, and being yourself.

Strategies for building mutuality include: creating common experiences, raising awareness, practicing reciprocity, valuing each other, openness, respect, doing organizational business (operations) in different ways, building interdependence.

Suggestions for ways to assess mutual outcomes include: create and/or agree on measures of mutuality; use these to assess and analyze to what extent/degree/quality mutuality exists in an organization, measure changes in organizational effectiveness that seem to be related to mutuality; compare two organizations – one attempting to build mutuality and the other not.

A list of possible indicators of mutuality includes: shared language that reflects vision/mission/values; paying people for their knowledge; job placement that works (of people with lived experience, past participants); shared definitions of terms; feelings of case managers and clients (towards each other, towards organization); organizational leadership by people who have lived experience; peer learning; organizational practices (like orientation and on-going evaluation design and practice, on-going curricula) that reach across the organization to reinforce the message and advance the above indicators and (shared) values; the existence of long term relationships with people who keep coming back even after their formal relationship with the organization has ended (students, clients, employees); connections and partnerships that grow out of the initial relationships; closeness between staff and students; peer learning and process and supervision; staff-client relationships that are professional and really close; the presence of trust in our relationships.

Over the last two years, with the new emphasis on trying to measure social change, core team members at New Home report that competition has increased among agency departments. They report feeling like they have to prove that they are making more of a difference than others at the agency. For example, at staff meetings when people are invited to share successes, several staff members reported feeling like this was less of an invitation to share and more of an opportunity to “show off”. Especially for departments in which change processes are slow and hard to quantify, staff members expressed frustration and even despair, wondering “do we even have anything to report?” and unsure if their department’s everyday work is actually valued by the organizational leadership.

Challenges of the Mutuality Approach include:

- To date no agreed-upon definitions of terms for outcome measurements for capturing mutuality indicators exist;

- Stakeholders are often focused on crisis and survival, and mutuality strategies and outcomes take time;
- Funders do not always have the patience, resources or vision to tolerate slow processes; they want to see an immediate “bang for the buck”;
- Mutuality processes are often less immediately visual than more dramatic physical changes, like cleaning up a neighborhood or building new housing; and that
- While measuring impacts, especially sustainable social (individual, community and policy) change impacts, is something organizations report to care deeply about, they also express insecurity about how to do this in a way that “both answers the demands of stakeholders and stays loyal to our core values and mission”.

Youth Change

Youth Change has made evaluation a central focus for their work this year. In particular, all of the program staff report having recently spent enormous amounts of time and energy on thinking about how to link their programming with outcomes related to their social change mission.

One of the ways we are different from other organizations is that we are really outcome oriented. Our actions are really specific. At workshops I give, when I train youth in organizing, I stress not biting off more than we can chew, which is sort of our model as an organization too...moving ahead step-by-step...we see an ultimate goal but identify small wins along the way (Program Coordinator, personal interview, April 28, 2010).

Still a work-in-process, Youth Change has created a hybrid model of youth and community development which translate into three outcome areas that, when facilitated together, help them make the link between their programming and their social change

mission. The Youth Change approach builds on a Youth Community Development Model (Martinez, 2010) and their three outcome areas are defined as follows:

- 1) Youth take care of themselves, for example, increasing numbers and percentages of youth graduating from college;
- 2) they have the capacity to care for others (Community Engagement), for example, youth wrote a book on nutrition and facilitated a travelling book tour, where they read from and distributed copies of the books to younger children; and
- 3) they have the capacity to **Develop** policy level work (which they defined for this year in one of two areas:
 - a.) change policy in public or private institutions (a recent example is a successful effort by the youth to introduce a new civics curriculum into the Boston Public Schools, a project which required that they meet with the mayor and other major policy players); or
 - b.) social change that shifts budgetary allocations (for example, youth participated in a lobbying campaign to prevent the closing of a local branch of the public library).

A program director gave an example of how the Youth Community Development (YCD)

Outcomes play out in one current project, a sex health project:

- YCD Outcome 1 – This level involves the youth participating in “a really graphic sex ed class”. Measurement outcome evaluation here would look at numbers of

participants and their attendance (quantitative) and their experiences (qualitative) as participants in this class.

- YCD Outcome 2 – On this level, the youth would serve others, by working as sex educators with their peers. Measurement outcome evaluation here would look at the success of the peer-run class. Indicators would be as above, with the focus on both the peer-facilitators and the program participants.
- YCD Outcome 3 – On this level kids would be exposed to, and take part in, policy level conversations and learning. Measurement outcome evaluation would look at their increased political awareness (quantitative and qualitative) of the power relationships in society that lead to some public schools offering classes like this and others not offering classes like this, increased factual knowledge (quantitative and qualitative) about related public health indicators such as the chlamydia rates by population, systematic change around implementation, shifting budgets around sex education in public schools, issues of health education teacher retention, and more.

Over the course of the last program year, the organizational model of change and the way Youth Change tries to measure this change has evolved. The shift has happened as the result of several internal and external forces, which include:

- An opportunity to work with an organizational consultant who herself used to direct an organization that sought to achieve its social change mission through a mixture of direct service and policy level activities;

- Key people leaving the agency and the need to orient new people and restructure the organizational model, including staff and programs;
- The economic downturn and subsequent downsizing of the organization and need to connect with new funders;
- The realization that, despite being in the 4th year of a 5-year strategic plan, “we’re still not ready to grow”; and
- Because of the fast growth over a relatively short period of time followed by the major financial cuts and extreme downsizing of the staff in 2004.

We used to look at our change work through three separate areas: individual, community, policy. Now we think that they are linked, that they work together in a cyclical way but it’s a spiral cyclical way. The whole premise is that individual strength comes out of doing. It’s not enough to have just classes for skill building; we also need opportunities to practice engagement and advocacy. A good example of that is some of our participants, who we know haven’t gotten enough academic support, have slid through high school somehow and then in college continue to need intensive academic services. We feel we’ve given them the skills to access those resources; it’s not just that they are dependent on us for more services. They know how to find a Latino student group, for example, for support, and they’ve left us well-versed enough to know how to network and have the confidence and self-awareness and sense of themselves to be deserving of the help they need. We’ve witnessed that across the teams, from each team there are really strong youth (strong in the 3 different ways). We would never stop at the core resiliency activities (skill-building) that are in here because the policy and system-wide activities are the foundation for what creates resiliency, they are the means to individual resiliency (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 17, 2010).

A breakthrough we had last week was when we suddenly asked ourselves, Why are we separating outcome areas 2 & 3? Aren’t social engagement and policy activities totally related? We know that internal change has to happen in all of these cases, so our model suddenly looked less like a Venn diagram with overlaying circles, where there might be youth who ONLY went through individual empowerment/transformation without the community or policy piece. Now it’s more like an the inner circle that has to happen is captured inside of a larger circle that includes community engagement and policy and structure-level activities. This shift really works with our organizational values too (Program Director, personal interview, July 12, 2010).

The organization has already begun to institute new policies that reflect their evolving model and evaluation tools, especially in terms of encouraging the integration of the different levels of change.

Something we've done to reflect this understanding, for example in this year's summer institute, which is so different from years past, is that we've mixed up the teams, now they've been working in cross-team groups. Before, there was a lot of team competition (between teams, some of which by nature did more of one of the YCD outcomes and less of another) and now they have been team-less. Going forward we hope that will build some cross team bonding and integrated work towards the overall mission. Also, from now on, of the 10 hours a week that they have to work, four of them will be core cross-team activities (Program Director, personal interview, August 9, 2010).

Another strategy, related to our goal of integration, is that we now have one broad topic that everyone is working on. This year the theme is education and equity. All different teams are working on this, through their own avenues and projects. For example, the dance troupe has been taking their activist work in the direction of addressing unequal distribution of arts resources throughout the Boston School system. The powerful thing here is that this overarching theme helps us constantly remind ourselves that we all have one vision in mind – equitable education – and we're all working towards that social change, even if we're each using a different tool (Program Director, group interview, February 24, 2010).

Current quantitative and qualitative data, in the form of indicators assigned by the team, is collected and inputted into an ETO database by each program director on a monthly basis. Youth Change values both quantitative and qualitative data. As a result of recent organizational learning, as described above, the indicators are being redefined and reassigned, and going forward will attempt to measure links between the different realms of change.

One thing we've been struggling with is how to count occurrences of change. As we change our model, this will probably work better. For example, when the three areas of change were separate, and we used attendance as an indicator of success (which I happen to think is a good indicator), it looked like the Community Organizing Team (more focused on YCD Outcome 3) was doing lousy, because their attendance, by design, was more sporadic than the Tutoring Team (more focused on YCD 2 Outcome) who had excellent attendance. But since as an organization we really value community organizing, and the impact of the CO project was really felt around the city (it was related to police harassment and it got a ton of press), we felt like judging them by attendance wasn't giving us a true picture of success. And on the other hand, checking how the Tutoring Team was doing on YCD Outcome 3 was setting them up for failure, because by design their program isn't focused on policy interventions. That team was doing great on YCD Outcome 1 and YCD Outcome 2 – and overall they seemed to be doing more and better, but not in the area of YCD Outcome 3, which this agency really values (Program Director, personal interview, July 12, 2010).

If we use as an indicator how many people the program touches, this is also difficult too because, for example, the dance and literacy pieces may reach lots of kids (in a service-y kind of way – through classes) but the social change impact is more elusive. We are “out of whack” with these indicators and their implications...there are inconsistencies (Program Director, group interview, February 24, 2010).

The new approach helps Youth Change address both internal and external needs.

The YCD Outcome approach helps us in many ways. Having an outcome focus with these three levels help us internally & externally, but those are not the same thing. The scale of change for us goes from Internal Youth Development, internal transformation for the youth and then over to External Project/Campaigns, which is about changing structures. Externally the new YCD Outcome focus helps us with how we run our projects. Internally it helps us see how the youth are doing. While the ultimate outcome is always to improve the lives of young people, until a few years ago the main goal seemed to be more about external success. The tool was youth empowerment and the ultimate goal was a better community and society. Now it seems to be the opposite, that as the external projects succeed, then the youth themselves succeed. The ultimate check if we're succeeding is the youth themselves. If they are doing well then the projects are going well. Each of these holds the other accountable (Program Coordinator, personal interview, April 28, 2010).

The United Way, a big funder of ours, has recognized us as a vanguard of this evaluation approach and now they even define their reporting expectations in a way that is grounded in our approach. For example, they ask their grantees: How many hours are youth spending doing policy activities (at the table, having a real voice with policy makers)? This is an example of how our model is having an impact, not only internally in terms of our own evaluation practices, but externally on the field of public policy and the role of the nonprofit sector in general (Program Director, personal interview, August 9, 2010).

The new measurement outcome evaluation approach taken at Youth Change is reported by interviewees to have advanced the goal of cross-agency consistency in language, mission, and evaluation approaches.

Prior to introducing this approach, each team tracked and monitored using different tools. Even though they were all basically doing the same thing, they were all over the place and it was very difficult to compare or contrast or draw cross-agency conclusions about how we were doing. There was also a lot of double-work, people actually collecting the same data more than once (Program Director, group interview, February 24, 2010).

The new process is better because it's more conscious and intentional and each of us is aware of what defines each goal and then we make sure that every program we plan is directly related to one of the outcome areas. In this way I can also see what I've missed, which outcome area, and what we should be prioritizing more. This way we are all holding ourselves to the same standards (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 10, 2010).

The new approach mirrors overall organizational values such as intentionality and integration.

We create strategies and outcomes that are connected to our programs and this keeps us on track and keeps us focused on progress, in all the different departments - towards a common outcome. We're trying to work so all departments and all activities spiral through all 3 outcome areas (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 13, 2010).

This new, more rigorous way of doing evaluation, across all of our programs as opposed to within each project and department, seems to me like it's a tool for doing community organizing. It is clear, with defined goals and it gives direction to the work. As a bi-product this is helpful for our grants but really it's good for the organizing and working towards our mission (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 10, 2010).

The new Youth Change way of measuring outcomes requires definitions that are clearly understood and agreed-upon by the core organizational team, which presents challenges.

We need to spend more time defining the terms we're using and make sure that everyone means the same thing. For example, one program director said that a "Showcase" (theatre arts production) is a good example of a YCD Outcome 3 because it is an interplay of the arts activities and societal change. Another said that the performance is an example of YCD Outcome 1 because they are practicing and performing an individual particular talent/skill. Another calls it YCD Outcome 2 because the audience is exposed to the content and someone else said it's YCD Outcome 3, since the students planned the event and implemented it themselves. Another staff member insisted that YCD Outcome 3 must directly relate to a policy change and that no matter how great that event was, it's not policy change, it's a performance, it's a show (Program Coordinator, personal interview, April 28, 2010).

Thanks to the work with an organizational consultant, we've realized that we need to keep reworking our model. We realize that there's a problem in the way we've operationalized our values and model and we've seen that there's a break in the flow/link between the ideas/goals and how these play out on the program level. In some ways, with the help of consultants, we've realized that in a way we've been too sophisticated about our model and not practical enough about how to apply it. For example, a youth on the health team...how do we know that what is happening to him is relevant to what we care about and then how should we capture that into ETO (the database) (Program Director, personal interview, August 9, 2010)?

There emerged from the site research some confusion among interviewees about how the YCD outcomes are related to one another. Some think the outcome areas are about the activities themselves, while others think that the outcome areas refer to individual participant goals. Some staff see the three levels as progressive, that a participant will gradually move from one to other, while others see them as happening simultaneously. Still others see them "happening over time, not necessarily progressively". One program director described it as,

the youth don't fall into the three categories but the activities do. The kids are tracked on their leadership levels – they start as a leader, then advance to teacher and change maker, and the activities could be in outcome areas 1, 2, or 3 (Program Director, group interview, February 24, 2010).

When the researcher asked if the following chart would be helpful, the program director agreed that this would be a good way to look at how and where the change happens. “You can see that there is progression from leader to change-maker,” she said. “but the outcomes might happen at different times. The change-maker could work on the individual level and a leader could work on YCD Outcome 3 too”.

TABLE 4: Youth Change Program Outcome Chart

<i>Stages of Participant⁶⁶</i>	<i>YCD Outcome 1</i>	<i>YCD Outcome 2</i>	<i>YCD Outcome 3</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<i>Leader</i>				
<i>Teacher</i>				
<i>Change-Maker</i>				
<i>Non-Core Youth</i>				

There is an assumption inherent here, that leaders aren't yet change-makers, and that they need to grow into that role. There is also the message that at whatever stage one is at, they need to work on all three levels at the same time, which is consistent with this study's emerging definition of social change.

When the researcher asked this program director if the outcomes work in a linear way, he said,

⁶⁶ The organization categorizes youth in this way. Core Youth are those who receive a financial stipend for their participation in the program. When they first get hired they are “leaders” and as they advance, through activities and promotions, they move to be “teachers” and then “change-makers”. Non-Core Youth are participants who come for one-shot-deal programs, classes, or camps.

you've hit a main issue for us right on the head...that hits on a lot of tension in our organization – on the surface and deep down. The kids who are doing the more policy level and community organizing stuff are getting on TV and are getting lots of attention. I didn't realize that people would put values on these things, because really all three of them are critical. 1 is something everyone HAS to do, to take care of themselves ...2 is about the heart and learning the inherent benefit of giving to others, 3 is about the head and critical thinking, figuring out power relationships. We shouldn't see them as linear, I don't think it necessarily progresses in that way, I think you could have people who are, for example, great community organizers and know how to mobilize people but they are obnoxious and rude and don't take care of themselves and create havoc in the way they relate to other people. We've had a lot of discussions around this. I think we need to work on ALL three at the same time. There's an underlying tension about who values what more. The media values the #3 more. There used to be in organizing a quiet but cocky critique of just reading to children and we're out there making real change. We don't always manage to do all three levels in all of our projects but where we are functioning best is when we are doing all three. Ultimately that's how we define real social change here (Program Director, personal interview, May 17, 2010).

Challenges that accompany the new way Youth Change is working with measurement outcome evaluation are related to internal organizational processes. They can at once both help and frustrate core team members.

There are pros and cons to having such a clear expectation for evaluation. In other places I've worked there wasn't such a good balance either, they always assumed that I'd know what to do and here there's a lot more direction (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 10, 2010).

While the tool of the three YCD Outcomes gives direction and clear expectations, sometimes it can limit my creativity. It makes me nervous sometimes that if I go off to do something that just comes up, like talk in a session about a particular current event, or go to an exhibit I've heard about, I'll miss out on what I have to do, in order to answer the needs of the grants/outcome requirement. So that might lead to me passing up opportunities to follow a lead that the youth want to take (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 10, 2010).

In general collecting data can intrude on Youth Change programming in that it introduces a formality into the setting that can be threatening for youth who have felt judged by measurement testing in the past.

A big challenge for us is creating a distinction between their experience here and their experience, which is negative, at school. When we want to collect data, like from their report cards, they respond with “what!? This isn’t school, who cares about my report card? Why does that matter?” We’re doing this to help them but it makes them feel like, “hey, this is a youth center, not a school!” and we try to explain that we need the information so that we can help them! They might not realize it, but if we know this stuff, like attendance, we can help them! We want them to have balance in their lives, between formal school and the family feeling we have here but we also need some way to know how we are doing and if it matters what we’re doing” (Program Coordinator, personal interview, May 13, 2010).

The data entry is being facilitated by different workers, with different skill levels and different understandings of the terminology. Because the program team is also responsible for data entry, they may be nervous that the data results will reflect on their work at programming staff.

It will be impossible to analyze the quantitative data without looking at staff performance because the data entry is so dependent on how the staff actually does the work. This creates tension and pressure and insecurity on the part of the staff, who are then distracted by the actual task at hand, and this may affect the actual data. We need to find a way for staff to trust themselves and the data (Program Director, personal communication, April 28, 2010).

One challenge is that the program coordinators who are responsible for collecting and recording the data are themselves often in a state of transition, between being “at-risk” youth themselves and paid organizational staff. This makes it hard sometimes for them to evaluate other youth because they feel like they are “judging” them (Administrator, personal interview, May 17, 2010).

Youth Change continues to improve this new approach and significant shifts in the model continue to take place. One example is that the indicators initially chosen to measure the outcomes turned out to be the wrong ones, resulting in the first quarter’s data being useless for the organization’s evaluation purposes.

There’s a real problem with our ETO data. We realized, after the first three months of data collection, that it’s not actually collecting the kind of data that can say anything about the outcomes we care most about (Program Director, personal interview, July 12, 2010).

The organization recognizes that it is still in a process of defining and shaping this model.

We ourselves are in transition. Prior to this we were really about youth empowerment and now we are dealing more with organizing and power issues. We are loud about what community organizing is and what it isn't but we are struggling internally with the question of 'are we community organizers or youth workers' and then we're not sure if our traditional activities, like workshops, tutoring, dance classes, are social change activities or not. We are talking about this a lot on the staff level and on the program director level and are planning a process with the youth also, to have them ask themselves, 'in what ways are we agents of change?' (Program Director, group interview, February 24, 2010).

Strong Women

Similar to other CBOs in the study, Strong Women reports that one of their biggest organizational challenges is with understanding how to measure their social change success. For organizations that define social change as happening on a variety of levels and in several different directions at the same time, measurement of outcomes presents marked challenges. While it is one of their intentional strategies, these multi-level interventions are reportedly difficult for the organization to measure.

Our goals are to empower women and to affect other organizations and how they work, and to make a difference on the government level, through policies, and to bring each of these levels closer to each other (Program Director, personal interview, December 2, 2010).

Strong Women's "Glue-Be-Gone" is grounded in the organization's search to understand *how* policies are implemented, not only *if* they are implemented. For example, Strong Women works to change attitudes on the part of women themselves and the (largely) male bureaucrats with whom the women and the organizations need to communicate (including schools, employers, community centers, municipal offices, the court system, and others) in order to ensure and receive benefits and entitlements for the women and their children. As such, Strong Women seeks to measure the extent to which local

municipalities, for example, are engaging women in their own program evaluation processes and community planning. They seek to understand how often women are running for public office and/or are invited to give feedback, how often women take their own initiative to get to the public policy table and what that interaction is like for all parties involved. Strong Women is not only tracking whether particular policies advanced by Strong Women and their volunteer activist committees have been passed; they are also evaluating where the policies have been passed, to what extent local women are aware of the change, and if or how the change has affected them.

A new tool, of local activist committees who are learning and documenting local models of partnership, has been created and implemented by Strong Women to define and measure social change outcomes, will be described further below.

The following quote describes a dramatic change in the way Strong Women intervenes in communities, resulting from evaluation findings after the 2006 war, during which local activities grinded to a halt in the absence of Strong Women's presence. In the face of quite disappointing findings, when the local activists, whom Strong Women had previously considered successful, stopped meeting and reverted back into a crisis mode characterized by extreme alienation and passivity, the organization entered a period of mutual reflection and learning. This process culminated in the creation of a series of committees, rather than the earlier style of classes, co-facilitated by local Arab women leaders and Strong Women's community organizers, and in coordination with other local projects and the municipality, on-going learning and evaluation activities about the kind

of social change they want to advance. One of the new committees chose to focus this year's work on partnerships, a topic the local activists and Strong Women recognized as critical to sustaining social change in that particular village and across the country.

Our organizational model has changed and solidified through repeated evaluations, testing, and feedback collected, specifically with our beneficiaries. Our program model has changed in light of findings, with progressively deeper understanding about the continuity required when working with leadership development projects with communities of women and sustainable community activism. The result has become an anchor for women, their communities, and our organization; it is an anchor for concentrating resources in community activism for creating structures whose goal is to preserve and ensure sustained feminist activism (from an article written by the Executive Director and referenced on their website, December 2010).

In recent years, Strong Women has been trying to make evaluation a priority in response to both external pressures, including the war and the economic downturn and internal organizational changes, including hiring a new development director with an academic research background who participated in several leadership development courses that emphasized reflection and organizational learning. The emphasis on evaluation, however, has been hampered by the organization's limited capacity for following through on evaluation. For example, the team recently sent out some fliers to employers in an attempt to collect data on Arab women in the workplace. After designing and distributing the flier, they weren't able to follow up to see if they were hung up or if anyone responded.

Another challenge, which has contributed to the organization seeking out new measurement tools, is that they have had a harder time raising money for the empowerment part of their work than for the legal part of their work. Their explanation

is that the results associated with their legal work are easier to see – for example in numbers of publications they manage to get translated into Arabic. The team explains that they do have clear objectives for the individual or group empowerment part of their work, but those projects take much longer to show measureable results. Some of them, such as “fostering activism,” can be quite abstract and Strong Women finds that donors are less and less compelled by these kinds of outcomes.

Neighborhood Power

Neighborhood Power’s “Glue-Be-Gone” is the implementation of policies which have been designed and advanced with knowledge that surfaced from the ground up. Neighborhood Power considers implementation successful when the follow-through happens “by employees, mostly lawyers, but also in cooperation with the ‘Organizing for Change Project’ - the groups of volunteer activists who get training and also teach the trainers as they go (Program Director, personal interview, December 2, 2010). This measure reflects Neighborhood Power’s Internal Locus of Power, which balances between “With Organization” and “With Communities and Constituents” in that they value and recognize as powerful indicators those that are important and politically useful to the organization but which originated on the ground.

An example of how policy implementation serves as a measure of social change began in 2007, when Neighborhood Power sites around the country noticed large numbers of clients, residents of public housing, coming in for help after their electricity had been shut off. The sites were surprised because living in public housing, even those managing on

public assistance incomes, should be able to afford their electric bill, since their rent is substantially subsidized. Neighborhood Power quickly realized that the public housing of these residents had no solar water heaters, a technology that is both environmentally and economically advantageous in the Middle East. Solar water heaters require an initial investment and minimal upkeep costs, and then heating water is free for residents. Neighborhood Power worked quickly by 2008 to propose and get passed a new policy requiring the Public Housing Authority (PHA) to install solar water heaters into their buildings, showing their government partners how such an approach would save money. In 2009 Neighborhood Power followed up to ensure that the allocated monies had been spent by the PHA and in communities where the budget hadn't been exhausted, they intervened to ensure implementation of the policy. Neighborhood Power now includes in its regular work plan follow-up of policy implementation, and uses this as an indicator of successful social change.

Program coordinators have very regular meetings and phone conversations with the Israeli and international fundraisers as well as with the national assistant directors, "who are constantly asking for stories and anecdotes to use in their reporting and to evaluate how we are doing" (Program Administrator and Evaluator, personal interview, November 29, 2010). They do regular local evaluation informally at staff meetings.

Neighborhood Power has been responsive to evaluation findings, even when they are disappointing for the leadership. For example, a recent external evaluator found that local volunteers didn't feel connected to the national part of the organization. This

connection, as has been described above, is an element of the organization's work and self-image that is central to its theory of change. This feedback was very disappointing for organizational leadership. Instead of denying it or trying to explain it away, the organization took the feedback seriously and proceeded to facilitate several conversations between the national board and local employees and volunteers. Together they formulated a plan for increasing a sense of connection between the different arms of the organization. Neighborhood Power immediately felt the impact of these policy recommendations, which included regular visits between the local and national core team members.

At the beginning of 2009, in part as a result of the economic crisis, but also just “a sign of the times” (Administrator/Evaluator, personal interview, December 2, 2010), Neighborhood Power established a new national database which collects data about community and constituent problems and organizational interventions, from Neighborhood Power sites across the country. The database has quantitative and qualitative fields and one of the mandatory lines is called “subject of visit”. These include, for example, housing, national insurance⁶⁷, employment, consumer fraud, health, debt management, family law, and other. This new approach to data collection allows the organization to identify trends and report these out to affect policy change and to report to donors. It also helps with organizational planning and prioritizing. This new tool is helping Neighborhood Power “to use concrete data to tell their stories of success”. Often, the associate director, who is responsible for the database, looks first at the quantitative

⁶⁷ This is the equivalent of Israel's “welfare” system, which provides public assistance benefits according to categories of need.

data and then calls site staff for explanations through narratives and examples from the field, including speaking directly with the clients who were involved in a particular case. The new approach has introduced some challenges, which are elaborated below.

One of the challenges associated Neighborhood Power's new data collection and analysis processes is that the framework and design do not "speak to the donors...it doesn't look that good" (Administrator/Evaluator, personal interview, December 2, 2010). For example, by far the largest category of help that Neighborhood Power provided over the course of 2009 was input by staff into the "Debt Management" category. According to this research partner, "debt management" is not a priority for donors and in fact, they feel that this problem should be addressed either by the individual or by the government body responsible for providing basic needs to citizens, not by their philanthropy. When the team members looked deeper into the data, they found two major explanations for why this category turned out to be so much larger than the others. First of all, staff and volunteers inputting the data used this category as a catch-all for issues that might explain the initial short-term problem, without identifying the root cause. Related to this, if someone comes in complaining that they cannot pay their electric bill, their intake will be recorded in this category, even though the root cause relates to their housing. Similarly, clients often go into debt as a result of a health problem, when their health expenses are not covered by their insurance. These cases would be recorded as "debt management", which is misleading and obscures possible policy implications and solutions. Another issue identified was that staff often got confused between the subject and their action. A disproportionate number of entries in "other" appeared as "wrote letter on behalf of the

client”. In this case, the actual substance of their problem was lost. The Neighborhood Power team is working on correcting these stumbling blocks, through learning at the level of the field as well as from existing efforts of other nonprofits to build useful systems for outcome measurement evaluation.

Another challenge identified in this study has to do with the fact that Neighborhood Power works in Israel,

where there’s always another crisis around the bend. We work hard to plan but then things come up at the last minute. We’re always having to put out fires and despite our great, lofty, goals, our measureable objectives keep changing day-to-day. We, too often, measure our success retroactively (Administrator/Evaluator, personal interview December 2, 2010).

Neighborhood Power is committed to continuing to use data to make improvements in ways that will be useful for the organization, their constituents and communities, the supporters and partners, and to bring about good policy outcomes (Executive Director, personal interview September 6, 2010).

CHAPTER 8

SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

Implications and Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered by this researcher with great respect for the impressive work already being done by effective and committed CBOs in both the United States and Israel. Stakeholders for purposes of this research and the following discussion include: CBOs themselves, the nonprofit sector, People of Experience, constituents and communities, funders from the public, business and philanthropic sectors, politicians, academics, capacity-building organizations, and other social change activists in both countries.

The four main findings of this study share common a thread, which is the power of interconnectedness. Examples of this thread are woven into a knot, a bond of knowledge, which is tightened by social change activists and stakeholders as they pull to meet their own particular needs (and on the way become intertwined with others). The knot is strengthened as stakeholders explain themselves to one another and recognize that the knowledge each brings is consequential for all.

Precisely because knots connote for many of us a sense of stuckness, frustration, and problems that need to be solved, the knot is an appropriate metaphor. While it's true that a knot can block flow, it can also bond and connect and hold, like in the case of a hammock or with nautics. People and communities who are poor are like knots when they are viewed as problems that need to be solved (un-stuck). In fact, constituents and communities themselves can serve as a buttress, upon which solutions for entangled social problems can, through CBOs, rest. CBOs and their constituents can be the conduit where other forces meet, get interwoven, and strengthened.

The overall implication of these findings, for the stakeholders identified above, and for public policy in general, is that communication, agreed-upon common language, and shared knowledge among all players is crucial. The following recommendations, therefore, offer ways to increase diverse and mutual conversations and build trust, between and across all of the stakeholder groups. Given that successful social change requires partnerships and cooperation, the following recommendations depend on stakeholders' acceptance of the assumption that sharing ultimately increases, rather than decreases, resources. Sustainable progress requires each party to be open to giving and receiving the knowledge and resources they need and/or have.

Stakeholders should study models and definitions of social change. Individual and shared reflection exercises can deepen and strengthen stakeholders personally, by sector or group, and for the overall change each of these seeks to advance. Sustainable social change needs each partner to check their power assumptions at the door. It needs

stakeholders to accept that the roles and skills of (intentional or incidental) partners can be “different but complementary” (Cashman, *et al*, 2008) and that one is just as valuable as another. Reflecting the action research values underlying this study, many of these recommendations were named by the research partners themselves.

FINDING ONE: Two core organizational strategies, a.) providing both service and doing advocacy and b.) facilitating diverse partnerships are related to and affect one another.

The main implication of this finding is that awareness of how these two strategies are related to each other is itself a strategy for organizational sustainability. For this reason the learning suggests that CBOs and their partners share best practices and learning from their own and each others’ successes and mistakes, including about their partnerships and service and advocacy activities. Related to this, the research has confirmed that diverse relationships need to be nurtured in order to stay relevant, healthy, potent, and effective, in terms of both capacity and commitment. Within and across stakeholder groups, efforts should be made to create peer learning opportunities, make time and space for reflection and model-building, and to use community-based participatory research approaches. All of these should be done keeping in mind the importance of creating safe spaces, not necessarily easy when many of the stakeholders described see themselves as in competition with and defensive of one another. While any of the named stakeholders might have the capacity to sponsor such meetings, it could “level the playing field” for more neutral capacity-building organizations to play the convener role for peer learning opportunities. All stakeholders would benefit from increased such investment (through people-time, in-kind, and financial resources) in innumerable ways, including a

diversified resource base and an enhanced reputation for being open to learning and committed to partnerships and collaboration, which is especially important in today's funding environment.

FINDING TWO: Another important strategy utilized by these organizations to advance their social change mission is employing, as paid and volunteer core team members, people who bring with them lived experiences that the organization's mission seeks to address.

The implications of this and related sub-findings include that organizations need to develop and strengthen their infrastructure for incorporating and sustaining People of Experience into significant organizational roles. Successfully doing so requires intentionality on the part of all stakeholders, especially in settings (in nonprofits, on professional coalitions, in the government sphere, among others) where non- People of Experience professionals are used to interacting with People of Experience only as “clients” and not as equals.

Specific suggestions for integrating People of Experience into CBOs, public forums, coalitions, think tanks, policy development, and/or research efforts, which came up over the course of this study include:

- Share funds and systems for orientation and on-going supervision with other organizations or projects, since some organizations lack the resources for comprehensive orientations more than once a year but they do want to integrate volunteers or paid staff more often than that;
- Design orientation and other supervisory activities with sensitivity towards issues related to the role and place of People of Experience;

- Involve People of Experience in the planning and designing of orientation, evaluation, supervision and program planning activities;
- Make space for honest reflection about how personal experiences affect work and activism;
- Evaluate and report on the incorporation and role of People of Experience at organizations and projects, especially since funders have increasingly recognized the value of this practice (Bonbright, 2006);
- Provide extra support to core team members (often People of Experience), who are reportedly balancing this work along with parenting, the pursuit of formal education, another job, and/or other challenges. Other support might include perks such as childcare during school holidays, in-kind bonuses, financial credit for certain classes, and more.

FINDING THREE: CBOs have an Internal Locus of Power.

The implications of this finding include that effective organizational, program and policy strategizing require pro-action from within, rather than reaction to forces from without. Advancing proactive practices depends on the intentional involvement and training of *all* internal and external stakeholders in how the Internal Locus of Power works. It will not work if only some of the partners transform their assumptions about where power lies and how change happens. Related to this, recognized decision and policy makers need training and support in ways to share their power with stakeholders previously overlooked as important and knowledgeable.

This finding has implications for all stakeholders, as well as nonprofit research and public policy, because it embodies a shift in worldview. The implication of such a shift is that evaluation, learning, and resulting policies can and should reflect knowledge and strength that is diverse in nature and practice and that is shared, rather than exclusive. CBOs and other stakeholders should continue to invest in evaluation and research that is participatory, in order to capture the experiences of as many stakeholders as possible. A specific first step is to identify ILP indicators that could be used for evaluation and research, through a cross-stakeholder participatory process. For example, a list of indicators of ILP “In Mutuality” that was brainstormed by a team at New Home includes:

- Shared language that reflects vision/mission/values;
- Practices of compensating people for their knowledge;
- Successful job placement of people with lived experience and/or past program participants;
- Shared definitions of terms;
- Feelings of case managers and “clients” (towards each other, towards the organization or the system);
- Leadership by people who have lived experience; and
- Mutual learning opportunities.

FINDING FOUR: These organizations are searching for and creating new ways to define, capture, and measure their social change outcomes.

This study confirmed that evaluation based on measureable outcomes increasingly matters to all stakeholders. The implications of this finding include that CBOs and other stakeholders are putting significant resources (and will continue to need to do so) toward

this effort. Implicit in this finding is also the reassuring sense that it is possible to measure social change outcomes without losing the essence of what is most important to community-based organizations. As is apparent in the experiences of this study's organizations, assessments can be both creative and rigorous. Evaluation can be evidence-based without being narrow. It can be descriptive without being superficial. It can be subjective (personal and particular) without being subjective (biased and skewed).

Individual CBOs should continue to advance the impressive work that has been described in this study, especially by regularly reflecting and checking in and avoiding long-term investments in new tools or processes that end up not being the most effective or efficient. They should continue to document and study the processes and the outcomes of their current efforts, as a tool for advancing their own learning and to contribute in general to the social change field. Even CBOs that may feel overwhelmed at the prospect of a full-on evaluation can start small. Even small start-up CBOs have the capacity for developing and recognizing "microlevel" goals that can serve as profound indicators of wider-scale change (Goldberg, 2009; Sawhill & Williamson, 2001).

Several CBO interviewees suggested that front-line staff be more involved in evaluation practices such as data collection and entry, even if this may require retraining⁶⁸, as it is

⁶⁸ As was explored earlier, when programmers are also data entry workers, special steps need to be taken to ensure confidence and trust such that the workers will feel safe being completely honest. This is also true for People of Experience, who may need to be reassured that evaluation processes, tools, and outcomes will be better if they are involved, and that the organization and the wider social change world needs to hear their voices. They and their colleagues should expect and assume that the contribution of People of Experience to trainings and tools will reflect the knowledge most needed to create sustainable social change.

seen as a good motivation tool and a way to ensure that measurement outcome tools and results are rigorous and inclusive. Core team members also recommend that evaluation efforts take a longer term view, a suggestion that echoes recent calls by evaluation experts, who criticize policy studies that look at policy reform rates, without following up also on the policy implementation outcomes (F. Twersky, personal communication, October 20, 2010). Such a recommendation carries with it the assumption that someone will fund the work.

In the United States, foundations have increasingly begun to recognize the value of investing in evaluation activities (The Boston Foundation, 2008) but Israel lags behind in this trend (Yad HaNadiv, 2010), which can be explained in part by the Israeli short-term mentality of using resources to “put out fires” and focusing and reacting to immediate crises, rather than investing in the future. In both countries existing funding networks have begun to share evaluation resources and knowledge (Expert Witness, personal interview, November 22, 2010) and this is a practice that should be continued and expanded. Philanthropists in both countries have the opportunity here to give a message to all social change stakeholders, that investment in evaluation will pay off in the long run.

Such an investment would respond to another key implication of this finding, namely that internal and external stakeholders, including public and private funders and other partners, all need expanded training in measurement outcome evaluation. Data collection and analysis tools, language and reporting techniques should be jointly developed and

accepted across projects, organizations, and sectors. Collaboration and joint commitments around evaluation would introduce and simplify standards for processes, expectations, requirements for design and reporting, and transparency across the board. Such cooperation would cut down on redundancy and raise standards and organizational and systematic capacity. There is room for improvement in these areas both in the United States and in Israel (Kania & Kramer, 2011; Yad HaNadiv, 2010).

Funders and partners from the public and private sectors should adopt the model of funding networks from the world of philanthropy and, across topic area and department, work to find universal processes and tools. These stakeholders, traditionally recognized as powerbrokers, need to be open and purposefully modest about how they enter into the dialogue. In order to create safe spaces of mutually-beneficial partnerships, everyone will need to leave their assumptions of power at the door.

For researchers this outcome has many implications, the most important of which is that academics and practitioner researchers can lead the way, through the creation, training and application of diverse research methods, to facilitate the sharing of knowledge across communities and sectors. Researchers can, through the use of creative and rigorous methods, especially those which are participatory, bridge between individuals and groups of stakeholders. As in the case of other recognized powerbrokers, academics in particular need to be gentle, sensitive, and open in the ways they communicate with under-recognized powerbrokers, to anticipate intimidation that wise but less experienced research partners (including community members and constituents) may experience;

participatory researchers should practice what we preach. Researchers of social change should use diverse methods to reflect the diverse knowledge they are trying to uncover and understand, grounded in and reflecting communities and their local knowledge and culture. One of the challenges for researchers in this field, in both the United States and Israel, is that academia in both of these countries still doubts, to a certain extent and in certain circles, the rigor of participatory research approaches (Herr & Anderson, 2005) and even qualitative methods (Belgrave, Zablotzky & Guadagno, 2002). Researchers should practice how to communicate with other academics about the value of these methods (Smyth & Schorr, 2009; Belgrave, Zablotzky & Guadagno, 2002). Social change researchers have the capacity and responsibility to explain phenomenon from different perspectives and to help knowledge reach different audiences and stakeholders, who are each, in their own way and status, agents of change.

Overall, the primary recommendation related to this finding is that social change evaluation “advance a more inclusive approach” (Smyth & Schorr, 2009, p.17). Combined with the findings from the groundbreaking work being done in the field by the organizations studied here, the following list from Smyth and Schorr (2009, p.17) provides one roadmap for how to beginning to implement the evaluation-related recommendations offered above:

1. Include experimental methods, including randomized controlled trials (RCT),
“whenever appropriate *but only when appropriate*”.
2. Include theories of change.

3. Include a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods (not only outcome measurement evaluation).
4. Allow for systemic complexity, taking into consideration not only one particular program, but how it fits in with other interventions.
5. Privilege adaptation, even while seeking evidence-based understandings that are sometimes easier to manage with rigidity.
6. Employ a philosophy of “enough”, so that sufficient robustness would be generated, while also allowing for quick response and program adjustment time.
7. Include a consensus approach to maximize commitment and buy-in by as many knowledgeable stakeholders as possible.
8. Allow programs to draw on what they already know, rather than reinventing the wheel to fit an external model.
9. Take care to define measurable outcomes that matter, as defined by as many stakeholders as possible.

Future Research

Following are several possible directions for future research, which would contribute to theoretical and practical understandings about the vital role of CBOs in social change.

It is apparent through the case examples that emerged in this study that the dynamics of certain organizational strategies are different at different sites. This diversity may be explained, in part, by the stage of organizational development (Light in Strichman,

2009⁶⁹) and/or the cultural setting (Ferman & Kaylor, 2000) within which an organization works. Future research would explore how these dynamics influence an organization's use of particular strategies in advancing social change.

Related to the finding that employing People of Experience is an important strategy employed by CBOs a future research project would compare and contrast social change and public policy related outcomes at organizations where there are high percentages of People of Experience and organizations where there are not high percentages of People of Experience. Clear definitions of terms would have to include, among others: what constitutes high and low percentages of People of Experience; and agreed-upon working indicators for social change and public policy outcomes.

The way the People of Experience strategy is implemented at organizations may be influenced by the goal of the strategy and the organization's assumed locus of power. If the locus of power lies with the constituents themselves and the goal of the intervention is for people with the lived experience of poverty to feel heard, the strategy may be applied differently than if the target intervention is for them to actually be heard (which reflects, at least in part, an assumption of an external locus of power). It would be interesting and important to further research how this strategy affects outcomes as perceived by the

⁶⁹ Light (2004, p.136) defines five stages of organizational development which include, "the organic phase of life, in which they struggle to create a presence in their environment; 2) the enterprising phase, in which they seek to expand their size and scope; 3) the intentional phase, in which they become focused more tightly on what they do best; 4) the robust phase, in which they strengthen their organizational infrastructure to hedge against the unexpected; and 5) the reflective phase, in which they address longer-term issues of succession and legacy."

activists (informal policymakers) themselves and in comparison with the perception of the recognized (formal) policymakers.

Nonprofits are increasingly using “Efforts to Outcomes (ETO)” Performance Management Software to help them collect and analyze data. In what ways is this approach and others (FSG Social Impact Advisors, 2009) serving or frustrating the agencies’ efforts to capture outcomes related to social change?

We know that CBOs translate knowledge and experience from the field and community into language that formal decision-makers can understand and that this matters for public policy work. Inherent to this research was the assumption that policies created by the people most directly affected by the policies are “better” than those created without consultation with the people with lived experience. Future research should explore in what ways this practice matters *for policy outcomes and implementation*. Future research could quantitatively and qualitatively examine and compare and contrast *policies* that were created with input from clients and policies that were created without input from clients. Is there any difference in the outcomes? Are the policies “better” or not? Who is defining what is “better”?

Across the organizations in this study one can hear agreement that the most successful People of Experience workers are those who have had the transition time and capacity for self-reflection and some distancing from their own personal experiences. Follow up research could look further, including using quantitative data, at the differences between

past program participants who left the organization and then came back after a certain amount of time and those who started working immediately upon completing a program.

Are the trends of program participants and other People of Experience becoming core organizational team members different in Jewish, Arab, and/or “Mixed” Community-Based Organizations in Haifa?

Related to the ILP scale, this research reveals that the CBOs in Boston seem to fall out more towards the right side of the scale, while the Haifa organizations fall closer to the left side of the scale. Future research would take the next interesting and important step of exploring/explaining this further. Is this a coincidence or does it say something about the wider societies, within which the social change work is being done? Is one of these ends “better” than the other in terms of social change outcomes?

On a more macro level, and based on the age-old assumption that the worlds of social change in the US and Israel are linked because social change fundraising in Israel has disproportionately depended in the past on US philanthropy (Asa in Strichman, 2009), future research should explore if these assumptions still stand, especially given the economic downturn that began in 2008 and recent political shifts in the United States, Israel, and between the two countries. What is the reality and what, by now, is myth?

Conclusion

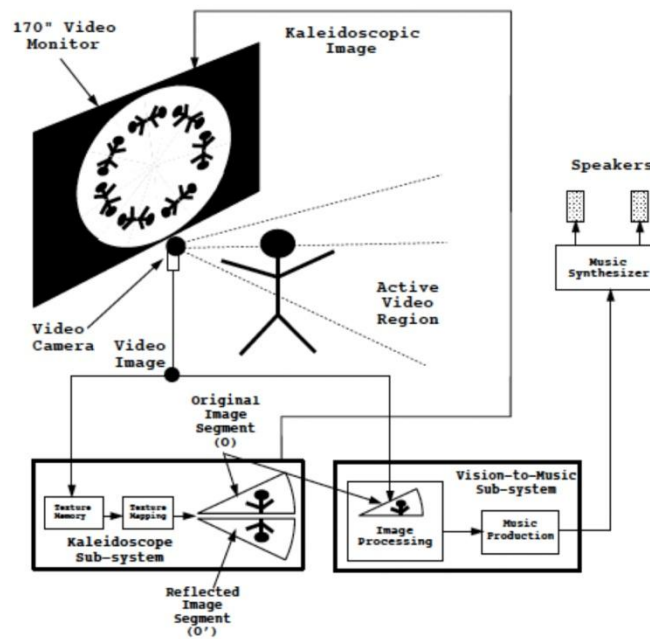
FIGURE 5: Kaleidoscope



Source: <http://www.thegoodstore.com.au/Uploads/Images/kaleidoscope-oldfashioned.jpg>

As a metaphor for social change, the traditional kaleidoscope⁷⁰ (Figure 5) can be limiting in that its creations are fleeting, and social change requires sustainability. A new kind of kaleidoscope, an iamascope (Figure 6), is an evolved image that better parallels the social change explored in this study.

FIGURE 6: Iamascope



Source: University of British Columbia, 2003

⁷⁰ The kaleidoscope metaphor has been used in the context of social change before (Spade & Valentine, 2011), including recently in an inspiring public policy World Café hosted by the Center for Social Policy at the University of Massachusetts – Boston (July 7, 2010).

The iamascope (University of British Columbia, 2003) is an interactive kaleidoscope that uses multi-sensory (sight, sound, touch) technology to combine the motion of an actor with sound and colors from other sources. As a prototype for new social change, the iamascope is useful because the designer (of the art or the social change solution) pieces together random shards (beads or glass in the iamascope and knowledge from the different sectors and stakeholders in social change), into a holistic image, using herself in the process. In the iamascope, “the image processing uses simple intensity *differences over time*, which are calculated *in real-time*” (University of British Columbia, 2003), so that the images and changes can be sustained.

The iamascope can help conclude how community-based organizations advance social change, through particular strategies described in this study’s central findings.

Finding One: Two core organizational strategies, a.) providing both service and doing advocacy and b.) facilitating diverse partnerships are related to and affect one another.

Like the dynamics of an iamascope, when these organizational strategies work successfully together they are synchronized and mutual. They contribute to a product which is stronger than each of the elements on its own.

Finding Two: Another important strategy utilized by these organizations to advance their social change mission is employing, as paid and volunteer core team members, people who bring with them the lived experience that the organization’s mission seeks to address.

People of Experience are the actors who use themselves, in the context of their work at community-based organizations, to make connections and share knowledge across sectors and diverse sets of stakeholders. People of Experience at CBOs, using a variety of relationships and practices, are conduits for change as are the actors, using visual and audio aids, in the iamascope.

Finding Three: CBOs have an Internal Locus of Power.

Whereas in traditional kaleidoscopes and earlier understandings of social change, shifts are largely in reaction to external forces (someone turning the tubes or government withdrawing from service provision), with the iamascope and the social change described here movement depends on internal energy.

Finding Four: These organizations are searching for and creating new ways to define, capture, and measure their social change outcomes.

The iamascope, using evolved technology, can record its creations, such that designs can be studied and used as a base for understanding dynamics, successes and mistakes; it is also satisfying for people to see their work and reflect on it. As in the case of social change, this matters because learning and evaluation are tools for growth and sustainability.

The Findings are Related to One Another

As can be seen by the complex and stunning images created when these dynamics interact with one another, each stronger when in relationship, the findings are also

connected to one another. The knot that ties the findings together is knowledge. In this knot, one can see and feel the power, created by the interconnectedness of practices and stakeholders of sustainable social change. Representing an internal locus of power, the knot is where People of Experience, at community-based organizations, serve as the connector for sources of knowledge and practice that improve service and advocacy activities and outcomes. Findings from this research suggest that outcome indicators of community-based social change are those *which link between* the different types of transformation. These outcomes are measured in ways that reflect the organizations' ILP, values, and strategies, namely in ways that the change indicators are recognized as important and authentic by the people who are themselves most immediately affected by a given policy.

As described above, while these dynamics play out differently at individual CBOs, across mission area, cultural contexts, and countries, there are some concepts that are similar across sites. These commonalities, described above, can further explain the ever-critical role of CBOs in social change and public policy.

Please click here http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wULRgaouB_8⁷¹ for an example of an interactive kaleidoscope (combining images and music). This is not yet an iamascope as there is no human touch factor (except for that of this researcher) in this example. The

⁷¹ Clip designed by Felicia Sullivan.

song, *Shed a Little Light*⁷², pays tribute to Martin Luther King and explains the interconnectedness of people and systems in bringing about social change.

⁷² Written by James Taylor (1991), the lyrics (see Appendix G) and music were also used in a Learning Exchange evaluation exercise in 2007.

APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

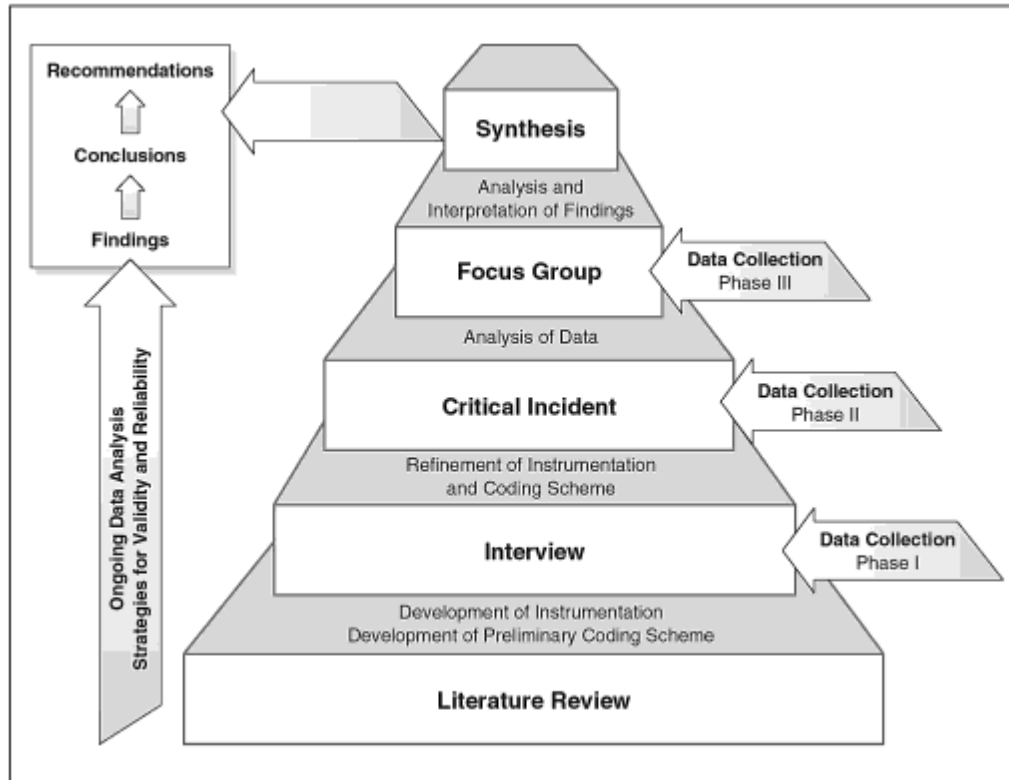
	Cross-Site (All)	New Home	Youth Change	Neighborhood Power	Strong Women
Background Review	Learning Exchange Documentation 2005-2010, Media Coverage, Proposal Process			Neighborhood Power Learning Exchange Case Study Raw Notes and Memos	Strong Women Learning Exchange Case Study Raw Notes and Memos
Document Review	Websites, Annual Reports, On-going Newsletters & Press releases, Strategic Planning Documents, Learning Exchange Reflective memos and raw documentation, Final reports, Special edition journal articles, Newspaper articles, other media coverage.				
Interviews	Israel Expert Witnesses: US, European and Israeli Foundation Representatives (x3), Director of NGO Capacity-Building Project (x2),	Executive Director, Program Directors (x2), Front line case worker, Program Director, Front-line Case Workers (x4),	Program Coordinators (x9), Program Directors (x4), Administrator and Evaluator, Front-line Youth Workers (x2), Administrator, Executive Director,	Individual and Group Interviews from Learning Exchange (x8), Program Director, Executive Director (x2), National Director,	Individual and Group Interviews from Learning Exchange (x8), Program Director, Administrator and Evaluator, Executive Director (x2)

	Nonprofit Researcher and Evaluator, Representative of Local Welfare Office, European Philanthropist, NGO Activist and Public Policy Specialist	Organizational Administrator, Program Coordinators (x2), Program Participants (x7)	Group Interview (x2)	Administrator and Evaluator	
Observations	Knesset Poverty Day, Lead Haifa Public Policy Lectures (Haifa)	Mutuality Conference Planning Meetings (x2), Mutuality Conference	Staff Meeting, Team Directors Meetings (x2), Phone Conference with Organizational Consultant, Random sitting in office (x3), Community Organizing Class, Community Organizing Police Action, Community Organizers Class Debrief of Action	From Learning Exchange including staff meetings, program meetings and random sitting in office.	From Learning Exchange including staff meetings, program meetings and random sitting in office.
Participatory Elements of Research	Active listening by researcher, not just asking questions and recording answers; including sharing models and ideas to trigger reflection and discussion. New Home/Youth Change cross site meeting to share	Research Planning Meetings with ED Research Planning Meetings with Program Director Written and verbal debriefs of Mutuality Conference with several (including	Research Planning Meetings with ED Research Planning Meetings with 2 Co-Program Directors Research Planning Meeting/Introduction with All Program Team Directors	Learning Exchange activities (JC co-researcher case study) Research Planning Meetings with Director	Learning Exchange activities (JC co-researcher case study) Research Planning Meetings with ED Debrief and consultations regarding resource development.

	<p>social change measurement work (scheduled and cancelled by Youth Change)</p> <p>Learning Exchange Seminar, May 2009, Boston (one Boston organization and one Haifa organization present).</p> <p>Co-editing and co-authoring special edition journal of NEJPP, featuring learning exchange participants.</p> <p>Boston Thinking Group: 2008-2010</p>	<p>site affiliated and non-site affiliated) conference participants.</p>	<p>Follow-Up conversation with Program Director, instigated by her and recognized by her as a tool for her own reflection and processing.</p>		
Research Rigor		<p>Taking notes and recording during interviews.</p> <p>Researcher types up hand-written notes shortly following research activity, keeping separate documents: notes, follow-up by site, general site emerging themes, cross-site observations.</p> <p>Reviewing recordings and inserting where missed depth or nuance. On-going documentation of markers and places where need to go back for clarification.</p> <p>Asking for specific examples from the field (research participants) all the time.</p> <p>The data collection and analysis happened simultaneously – in a back and forth way.</p> <p>Feedback Loops, Member Checks in person, on the phone and by email.</p>			

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH DESIGN



Source: Bloomberg, 2008, p. 194

APPENDIX C

SITE SELECTION POOL

The original and complete list of the Learning Exchange pool of Boston and Haifa participating organizations (between February 2005 - June 2009) is available upon request and is not included in the final version of this dissertation in order to keep the identities of case study organizations confidential. Organizations which joined the Learning Exchange after June 2009 were not included in the pool for purposes of case study selection. Seventeen organizations from Haifa and seventeen organizations from Boston made up the initial pool, from which this study's cases were selected. As was described in detail in the research methods chapter above, the pool of participating organizations was formed by the Learning Exchange team, through in-depth consultation with local actors, knowledgeable about the particular organizations and the nonprofit sector in Haifa and Boston, and in general. Research site selection used as a primary criterion organizational success, defined in part by formal and informal recognition by other nonprofits, activists, community members, government officials, private and foundation funders, and the media, as having the capacity to make change for individuals and communities. At each stage of recruitment and selection for the different components of the Learning Exchange, a committee of professional and lay leaders consulted one another and outside stakeholders, knowledgeable of the organizations and the contexts within which they work, to determine which organizations should be invited into the Learning Exchange, such that all thirty-four of these organizations are recognized by their wider communities as successful. Considerations in choosing the sites included: proven availability, willingness and capacity of the organizational leaders to participate in the research; the current state of the organization including leadership stability, funding-related crises, and others.

APPENDIX D

CASE STUDY SITE SELECTION SCORE CARD

The following score card was used to help decide which organizations should be chosen as case study sites. In each category a site could score between 0 – 3 points. In the “Other Considerations” category an organization could earn positive or negative points (between -2 and +2) based on the following: financial or leadership crises (negative points); having been core members of prior related research (positive points); apparent capacity and availability of organization to participate in research (negative or positive points); and others (for example, that this researcher works or has worked at the organization as a paid professional or volunteer, a dynamic that could introduce particular bias into the research). The maximum number of points an organization could earn was twenty (20).

0 – did not meet the criteria at all

1 – met the criteria slightly

2 – met the criteria more than average but not 100%

3 – met the criteria 100% (could not have met it more)

<u>Organization</u>	Is a registered 501(c)(3) in Boston or a registered <i>amutah</i> (nonprofit) in Haifa.	Has been in existence at least five years.	Addresses social and/or economic inequities as part of core mission.	Is a Community-Based Organization.	Is identified by others as successful, including that they exhibit the capacity and commitment for making sustained change in the field.	Is an active member of the Boston-Haifa Learning Exchange.	Other considerations	<u>Total</u>
A	3	3	1.5	2	1.5	3	2	15.5
B	3	3	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	0	12
C Strong	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	20

Women								
D	3	3	3	3	1.5	3	-2	14.5
E Neighborhood Power	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	20
F	3	3	3	3	1.5	1.5	-2	13
G	3	3	1	1	2	2	-2	10
H	3	3	2	3	2	3	0	16
I	3	3	3	1	3	3	-1	15
J	3	3	3	1.5	2	2	0	14.5
K	3	3	3	2	3	0	-1	13
L	3	3	3	1.5	2	3	-2	13.5
M	3	3	2	1.5	2	2	-1	12.5
N	3	3	1	1	2	2	0	12
O	3	3	1	1	2	1	0	11
P	3	3	3	2	3	1	0	15
Q	3	3	3	2	2	2	0	15
R	3	3	2	1.5	2	3	-2	12.5
S	3	3	2	1	2	3	0	14
T	3	3	3	2	3	3	-1	16
U	3	3	3	3	2	3	-2	15
V	3	3	1.5	2	1.5	3	-1	13
W	3	3	3	1.5	1.5	3	0	15
X Youth Change	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	19
Y	3	3	3	3	2	2	-2	14
Z New Home	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	20
AA	3	3	3	1.5	2	1	-2	11.5
BB	3	3	3	1.5	3	3	-1	15.5
CC	3	3	1	1	2	3	0	13
DD	3	3	1.5	2	2	0	0	11.5

EE	3	3	1.5	1	1.5	0	-2	8
FF	3	3	1.5	1	1.5	1	0	11
GG	3	3	3	1	3	1	0	14
HH	3	3	3	1	3	1.5	0	14.5

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE ⁷³

This was the first version created; it was used as a template and tweaked, based on the setting and goals of the particular interview and reflecting trails of information that the researcher chose to follow, between one interview and the next.

Interview/Focus Group Guide: This guide will be used in either individual interviews or in a focus group setting, depending on the needs and design of the organization.

Thank you again for agreeing to meet and share your experience at X (name of organization) with me. I expect that the interview will take about an hour (possibly slightly longer for a focus group). Before we begin, please read the consent forms carefully. If you have any questions, I will be glad to answer them. (ALLOW TIME FOR READING AND QUESTIONS, SIGNATURE).

As you know, this research is about how this organization succeeds at making a difference in the world. The formal language used is “how the organization affects social change” and especially through its “public policy” work. Part of what I’d like to understand from you is what you think some of that language means – to you individually and also for the organization – and how these things play out, from where you sit at the organization.

Interviewee’s Perspective on Organization

I’d like to start first with your role and relationship with the organization:
(The interviewer will have any reviewed any available information on the interviewee – or group members – to avoid asking them information that is available from other sources and as such some of these questions may be eliminated).

- When and how did you come to get to know the organization?
- What is your position currently at the organization (constituent, staff member, board member, volunteer, etc.)?
- Could you please describe any other positions you’ve held in the past?
- How would you describe the main mission of this organization?
- How would you describe some of the strengths of this organization? What would you say are some of the particular challenges of this organization?

PROBES: If the social change part of the organization’s mission doesn’t come up, ask the interviewee if they are aware that the organization has put social change and/or affecting public policy as part of its mission and ask if they see this playing out anywhere

⁷³ This template was designed by Felicia Sullivan, as part of the Public Policy PhD program practicum course 2008-2009.

in the organization. If so, what are some examples of success or challenge in those areas? This is a way to begin to get them to define social change and public policy, which will then be explored further, more formally, below.

Interviewee's Understanding of Social Change and/or Public Policy

- Could you tell me how you define social change?
- Could you tell me how you define public policy?
- Do you think these definitions line up with the definitions of the organization?
- If I were to ask others the same questions – founders, constituents, other staff people, policy makers from the city – would they agree with your definitions? Why? Why not? What are the implications of this symmetry/dissymmetry on how you as an individual or an organization do your work?
- Can you share with me an example of social change or public policy work/activities that you've seen or heard of at your time at the organization (or knowing of the organization)?

PROBES: Ask them to define any key terms related to social change or public policy, if those terms come up.

Interviewee's Role in Organization's Social Change and/or Public Policy Activities
--

- In terms of the kinds of activities you described above, places where your organization works to affect social change and especially through public policy efforts, are you directly or indirectly related to those activities? Could you describe your role to me?
- How does it work? How does the social change or public policy work *happen* at your organization? What are some of the core strategies that you/your organization use?
- What do you like about that work?
- What is hard for you about that work?
- What part of that work is inspiring to you? Makes you proud?
- What about the way you/your organization do that work makes it successful?
- How do you/your team/your organization assess or evaluation your effectiveness in affecting social change, especially the public policy pieces of your work?

PROBES: If appropriate/helpful, ask them what others might say about how this organization manages to affect social change or public policy. What about this organization is different from others (or similar to others that are also considered successful)? If appropriate/helpful and they've shared specific examples of social change or public policy work, ask them how the change happened (their "logic model" or "theory of change", if those terms are helpful).

Wrap-Up

Before I leave, I wonder if there is anything else you think would be important for me to know. Do you have any questions?

Thank you again very much for your time and patience. Your input is very important and will make a difference in this work. I may be in touch with follow-up questions if that's alright and I want to encourage you to be in touch with me if you have any follow-up thoughts or questions. Give them business card.

APPENDIX F

CONSENT FORM

Researcher Contact:
Jennifer Cohen
jcohen1216@gmail.com
(617) 895-8163 Boston
054-7866224 Haifa

Interview/Observation Consent Form

How Do Community Based Organizations (CBOs) Affect Social Change
Jennifer Cohen Dissertation Research

Introduction and Contact Information

Thank you for your consideration of the following request. You are being asked to take part in a research project that seeks to identify and understand particular organizational strategies that successful CBOs employ to affect social change. The researcher is Jennifer Cohen, M.S.W., a PhD candidate in the UMB Department of Public Policy and Public Affairs. Please read this form and feel free to ask questions. If you have further questions, Jennifer Cohen will be happy to discuss them with you and her telephone number is (054) 7866224. Jennifer's academic advisor is Dr. Donna Haig-Friedman and her telephone number, in Boston, is (617) 287-5565.

Description of the Project:

This study, entitled "How Do CBOs Affect Social Change", seeks to identify and understand particular strategies that successful CBOs employ to affect social change. Participation in this study will involve several hours over the course of several months. If you decide to participate in this study, the researcher, Jennifer Cohen, will attend, observe, and document meetings and interview you (one or two one-hour interviews) that will be documented, with your consent, by tape recorder and notes. In addition, Jennifer may ask your permission to review your or your organization's meeting notes, grant or evaluation reports and/or organizational public relations or programming materials.

There are no incentives offered to participants for participation in this study.

Risks or Discomforts:

The primary risk associated with this study is the possible emergence of negative or distressful feelings associated with exploring challenges associated with your organization's programs or your on-going work. You are invited to speak with Jennifer Cohen to discuss this potential or any other distress or other issues related to your participation in this study. Findings to be presented in any formal way will be done so without identifying you or your organization and they will be reviewed with you in advance of any release.

Confidentiality:

Your part in this research is confidential. The information gathered for this project will not be published or presented in a way that would allow anyone to identify you. Consent forms with your names or the names of your children and your contact information will be recorded and stored confidentially and separately from the recorded interview in a separate locked cabinet, with access restricted to me. The organization and participant names will be altered and any major identifying characteristics will be changed in any materials that are shared with outside audiences, unless agreement is received in writing first from the organization and you.

Voluntary Participation:

The decision about whether or not to take part in this research study is completely voluntary. If you do decide to take part in this study, you may terminate participation at any time without consequence. If you wish to terminate participation, you should telephone or e-mail the researcher to indicate your termination of participation.

Rights:

You have the right to ask questions about this research before you sign this form and at any time during the study. You can reach Jennifer Cohen at (054) 7866224 or jcohen1216@gmail.com. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact a representative of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, which oversees research involving human participants. The Institutional Review Board may be reached at the following address: IRB, Quinn Administration Building-2-080, University of Massachusetts Boston, 100 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA 02125-3393. You can also contact the Board by telephone or e-mail at (617) 287-5374 or at human.subjects@umb.edu.

Signatures

I HAVE READ THE CONSENT FORM. MY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. MY SIGNATURE ON THIS FORM MEANS THAT I CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. I ALSO CERTIFY THAT I AM 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER.

Signature of Participant Date

Signature of Researcher

Printed Name of Participant

Jennifer Cohen
Printed Name of Researcher

APPENDIX G

LYRICS

Shed a Little Light, by James Taylor (1991)

Let us turn our thoughts today
To Martin Luther King
And recognize that there are ties between us
All men and women
Living on the Earth
Ties of hope and love
Sister and brotherhood
That we are bound together
In our desire to see the world become
A place in which our children
Can grow free and strong
We are bound together
By the task that stands before us
And the road that lies ahead
We are bound and we are bound

There is a feeling like the clenching of a fist
There is a hunger in the center of the chest
There is a passage through the darkness and the mist
And though the body sleeps the heart will never rest

(Chorus)

Shed a little light, oh Lord
So that we can see
Just a little light, oh Lord
Wanna stand it on up
Stand it on up, oh Lord
Wanna walk it on down
Shed a little light, oh Lord

Can't get no light from the dollar bill
Don't give me no light from a TV screen
When I open my eyes
I wanna drink my fill
From the well on the hill

(Do you know what I mean?)

- Chorus -

There is a feeling like the clenching of a fist

There is a hunger in the center of the chest
There is a passage through the darkness and the mist
And though the body sleeps the heart will never rest

Oh, Let us turn our thoughts today
To Martin Luther King
And recognize that there are ties between us
All men and women
Living on the Earth
Ties of hope and love
Sister and brotherhood

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