

THE COMMUNITY ACTION
APPROACH TO HUMAN SERVICES

Social Policy SERIES No. 3

February, 1982

ilsq INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is based on the evaluations of seventeen Community Action Agencies in Region IX which were conducted by the Institute for Local Self Government between 1978 and 1981. These original evaluations were made possible by a grant from the Community Services Administration, Region IX, the openness of the Community Action Agencies themselves to the evaluation process, and the support and participation of the California Nevada Community Action Association. The volunteer evaluation team members must be recognized for their work, and the hundreds of public officials and clients who agreed to be interviewed are also acknowledged.

This report, which summarizes and analyzes the lessons of Community Action Agencies in Region IX, was directed by Kathy Humphrey, Project Director, ILSG. It was written by Rick White, formerly with CSA Region IX, with editorial assistance from Donald Will, Research Assistant, ILSG. Patricia Bert Frost, Elissa Morrash, and Jerrel Johnson of ILSG typed the manuscript, and final word processing was done by Judith Rathbone. Patricia Bert Frost, ILSG Office Manager, supervised the entire production and design effort. Edward Schoenberger, ILSG Deputy Director, provided overall coordination and staff direction.

The project was supported in part by funds made available by the United States Community Services Administration, now the Office of Community Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Region IX. Particular appreciation is expressed to Bob Leavitt, Field Representative and Carl Shaw, Division Chief for Planning, Budgeting and Evaluation at CSA, who joined us in the belief that such a summary would be useful to public officials and community action agencies alike in their efforts to prepare for the budget cuts and governmental restructuring now upon us.

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January 31, 1982

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
	<u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</u> 1
	<u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u> iii
	<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u> v
INTRODUCTION	<u>THE COMMUNITY ACTION APPROACH TO HUMAN SERVICES</u> . . . 1x
CHAPTER 1	<u>WHAT IS COMMUNITY ACTION?</u> 1
	● History of the Program 2
	● The Character of Community Action Today 3
CHAPTER 2	<u>THE LOCAL HUMAN SERVICES CRISIS AND HOW CAA'S CAN HELP YOU OUT OF IT</u> 5
	● The Four Human Services Challenges. 5
	● Local Strategies for Action - CAA's Can Help. 9
CHAPTER 3	<u>COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES - HOW EFFECTIVE HAVE THEY BEEN?</u> 15
	● Standards of Effectiveness Define Community Action 15
	● Examples of Agency Effectiveness. 17
	● What Impact Do CAA's Have on Their Clients? 21
	● CAA Effectiveness - Some Conclusions. 23
CHAPTER 4	<u>CAA PROGRAMS - A VARIETY SECOND ONLY TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT</u> 27
	● Income Security and Economic Opportunity. 27
	● Promotion and Maintenance of Health 28
	● Provision of Basic Material Needs 29
	● Opportunity to Acquire Knowledge and Skills 30
	● Environmental Quality 31
	● Individual and Collective Safety. 31
	● Social Functioning. 32
	● Organized Action. 32

Table of Contents (Cont.)

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER 5	
<u>THE STRUCTURE OF A GOOD COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY. . . .</u>	35
● Delegating Programs.	35
● Public Versus Private CAA's.	35
● Characteristics of a Good CAA Board.	38

TABLE OF CHARTS

	<u>Page</u>
CHART 3A	
● Effectiveness of Seventeen Region IX CAA's in Achieving Mandated Standards.	15
3B	
● Sources of CAA Funds	18
3C	
● Levels of Government Allocating Funds to CAA's . . .	19
3D	
● Impact of CAA Direct-Service Programs on Life Changes of Consumers.	22
3E	
● Performance of Six CSA Standards of Effectiveness. .	25
CHART 4A	
● Programs Administered by Seventeen Region IX CAA's .	27
CHART 5A	
● Relationship of CAA Administrative Structure to Program Effectiveness	36
5B	
● Relationship of Governmental vs. Private Status to Effectiveness on Mission	37
5C	
● Public vs. Private CAA's	38
5D	
● Relationship of Public vs. Private Status to Mission Effectiveness Among CAA's that Operate Programs Directly	39

TABLE OF APPENDICES

	<u>Page</u>
APPENDIX A	
<u>CAA EVALUATIONS - AN OVERVIEW.</u>	45
APPENDIX B	
<u>LISTING OF THE PROGRAMS OF THE SEVENTEEN REGION IX CAA'S FOLLOWING THE UWASIS SYSTEM</u>	51
APPENDIX C	
<u>LETTER TO DWIGHT INK FROM THE INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT</u>	65

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State governments have been presented with a challenge - to design a state human services program with fewer federal dollars and the increased flexibility that block grants and deregulation promise. Of all the block grants, the Community Services Block Grant brings the most flexibility to state and local officials. As such, it represents an opportunity to explore a range of policy and program alternatives for the delivery of human services. One of those alternatives, discussed in detail in this report, is the community action program approach to administering and delivering human services. Its block grant principle of locally determined strategies for meeting low income needs plus the existing Community Action Agency's service delivery network represents a human services approach worth consideration. This report was written to share with public officials the experience and lessons of this human services program - the Community Action program.

CAA ABILITIES

Data collected over four years in seventeen CAA's across Region IX have produced this report's conclusions about the abilities of CAA's and the viability of the community action approach to human services. This data cannot be used to judge or compare individual CAA's - given the passage of time, differing local conditions and the changing participation on the evaluation teams. But, taken together, these seventeen evaluation reports show that, in general, CAA's:

1. Have proven abilities in bringing in additional resources to focus on low income needs.
2. Have extensive experience in assessing community needs, developing policy and setting priorities - so as to target the always limited resources to the task of overcoming the obstacles of self-sufficiency.
3. Have worked to coordinate existing programs, services and agencies to ensure there are no gaps in needed services and to ensure that these services are targeted effectively towards low income needs.
4. Have successfully involved the low income community in planning and operating programs.
5. Have developed innovative and non-service approaches to addressing community needs.
6. Have operated successful employment efforts although many CAA's relinquished their employment efforts to CETA in the early seventies.
7. Have had significant secondary impacts on their clients (other than the successful delivery of program services); increased self-confidence, more community influence, reduced social isolation, and access to needed information.

¹See the major findings of the evaluations summarized in chart form on Page 25.

8. Have operated a tremendous variety of programs (second only to local government); basic needs, income/employment, organized action, social functioning, knowledge/skills, safety, and health (according to UWASIS goal categories).

Moreover, the most successful CAA's (public and private):

1. Operated their own programs - not delegate.
2. Had balanced and active policy boards; with one-third public, one-third private, and one-third low income participation.

THE HUMAN SERVICES CRISIS

Organizations with these capacities are potential partners for public officials in their efforts to respond to the human service crisis now upon us. With greater decision making flexibility, fewer resources and growing demand for services, local government faces these four challenges:

1. To meet the basic needs of its citizens.
2. To use resources with increased effectiveness.
3. To mobilize additional resources.
4. To maintain public confidence.

Six possible accommodations to the human services crisis and its challenges to local government are discussed in this report. Community action has something to offer to each:

1. Cutbacks in programs might be necessary. CAA's have experience in assessing community needs and handling the difficult priority-setting and allocation discussions.
2. CAA's have experience in developing non-service strategies for overcoming obstacles to low income self-sufficiency. There are other ways to meet low income needs than simply delivering a service.
3. Local government considering consolidating existing programs may want to look at CAA experience with coordinating services and directing them towards low income needs.
4. CAA's have the planning capability, administrative experience, and community support either to absorb services previously delivered by other community based organizations or help bring these programs into local government.
5. Local governments might wish to contract out for human services; CAA's not only have administered a tremendous variety of programs - second only to local government itself - but have experience in contracting and monitoring the service delivery of delegate agencies.

6. CAA's also have their experience in community development and organizing to offer local governments considering supporting neighborhood or community responsibility for needed programs and services.

THE COMMUNITY ACTION APPROACH

The Community Action approach to human services involves six essential characteristics:

- Locally assessed needs and the development of priorities and strategies for enhancing the self-sufficiency of the poor.
- The coordination of existing services to better target them to the needs of the poor.
- The involvement of the low income community in planning and operating programs.
- The development of innovative strategies - beyond direct service delivery for addressing low income needs.
- The mobilization of resources to target to low income needs.
- The emphasis on employment strategies as the key to self-sufficiency.

The Community Action approach has defined the relations between the federal government and Community Action Agencies. It is, in essence, a block grant approach - it allows for the local determination of need and strategies to address the needs - with a few general requirements; that CAA's coordinate existing service, involve the low income community in agency decision making, mobilize additional resources, and constitute a policy board with representation from the public, private and low income sectors.

The data clearly shows that effective community action programs can help meet the human services crisis. CAA's have assessed the basic needs of the low income population, set priorities and targeted resources to these needs; they have always had to maximize the effectiveness of limited CSA resources and have shown themselves to be successful resource mobilizers. Aside from the services delivered, CAA's have helped to develop communities by enhancing the influence, organization, and self-confidence of the poor.

States now faced with the task of implementing the Community Services Block Grant and designing their own anti-poverty program should consider carefully the lessons of these programs. Community action agencies continue to be viable and have generated strategies which have proven to be effective. Their approach to human services should be considered seriously by public officials as they implement the Community Services Block Grant and develop a state anti-poverty program.

INTRODUCTION: THE COMMUNITY ACTION APPROACH TO HUMAN SERVICES

State and local governments face a major challenge: to provide for the basic human needs of their citizens with fewer dollars than ever before. And, with the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), states are being given the opportunity to develop their own anti-poverty programs.

There are lessons to be learned from the eighteen years of federal community action experience. This summary and analysis of the achievements of seventeen Community Action Agencies in Region IX was written in order to share their experiences with public officials who now face the issues that the Community Services Administration and the Community Action Agencies have struggled with for many years.

FIRST, HOW CAN COMMUNITY ACTION HELP LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FACE THE CHALLENGE OF MEETING NEEDS WITH FEWER RESOURCES?

CAA's were given few resources when they were created and told to mobilize additional resources and focus what there was on the most acute community needs.

Chapter 3 of this report shows that CAA's have been most effective in mobilizing resources; approximately four dollars have been generated for every single CSA dollar received. Moreover, as this chapter also illustrates, CAA programs have had wide ranging benefits for clients beyond the stated purpose of the programs. Besides a meal or a ride, CAA programs have helped to bring residents together to address the needs of their community.

Chapter 4 shows that CAA-administered programs have been those which focus on the basic needs - food, clothing, shelter, transportation - of the low-income community.

Chapter 2 discusses a variety of strategies local governments are likely to undertake in dealing with human services funding cutbacks.

CAA's have had success in areas of current public sector concern:

- Contracting for services;
- Turning responsibility back to neighborhoods;
- Consolidating programs;
- Turning responsibility for programs back to local government;
- Non-Service approaches.

Human services cutbacks will cause increased competition for scarce resources at the local level. The increased flexibility and decision making freedom of block grants promise to force public officials into the politically difficult tasks of setting priorities for human services spending, making allocation decisions, and probably cutting back funds to some human service providers. Chapter 2 demonstrates CAA ability to deal with competition for resources and difficult allocation decisions. CAA's have set priorities and targeted the always scarce resources towards those problems or needs that prevent the poor from becoming

self-sufficient. They have developed processes and strategies for focusing resources in a difficult political environment.

If a public jurisdiction is going to try to raise human service dollars by increasing local taxes, it must cultivate public support for government programs. Chapter 2 also explores ways in which a CAA can help restore public confidence in government.

Chapter 5 concludes that public, private and low-income participation on CAA Boards is a key ingredient in developing needed and accepted community human service strategies. It also warns that CAA's which have delegated their programs to other agencies tend to be remarkably unsuccessful as community action agencies. These findings should be carefully considered by jurisdictions currently developing their own human services planning and delivery systems.

SECOND, WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY ACTION EXPERIENCE OFFER TO THE DESIGN OF A STATE ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAM?

In past years, Community Action Agencies received core funding for human services directly from the federal government. States must now, with the Community Services Block Grant, design their own programs. While the grant must be used in activities that will have a "potentially major impact on the causes of poverty" and must be designed to "remove obstacles to self-sufficiency," there is considerable latitude given to the states in actually implementing these provisions.

The Federal Community Action Program was designed to leverage and target limited resources towards those problems or needs where they could have the most effect in developing the self-sufficiency of the low-income population. Obviously this program did more than divide up a small piece of funding to distribute to every jurisdiction and poor person. The Institute evaluation teams have taken an in-depth look over the past three years at what CAAs do to target and focus resources - including the resource of "a community in action" - to attack the obstacles to low income self-sufficiency.

State officials will have to decide two critical issues: (1) Whether to continue the policy of focusing on key targets of opportunity to make improvements, or to adopt the practice of dividing the funds equally and in necessarily small portions among all contenders (often an admittedly "safer" approach, politically). (2) Whether to continue the policy of designating existing Community Action Agencies or selecting other entities to tackle the tasks of leveraging funds, coordinating efforts, delivering services and developing the community. While there are vast differences among states and a range of experiences and capabilities among CAA's, community action has proven to be a successful anti-poverty strategy and Community Action Agencies have a wealth of experience to offer to public decision makers who now wrestle with the task of developing their own anti-poverty program - one that adequately meets crucial needs and develops self-sufficiency on the basis of even scarcer resources.

GENESIS OF THIS REPORT

Over the past three years, the Institute for Local Self Government has conducted evaluations of seventeen Community Action Agencies in Region IX. This effort was funded by the CSA Region IX office and supported by CALNEVA, the California and

Nevada Community Action Association. The evaluation methodology and specific CAAs evaluated are discussed in Appendix A.

The demise of the Community Services Administration and the federal anti-poverty program and the Reagan Administration's call for the states to take over social programs created the need to collect and analyze these past eighteen years of federal government Community Action Agency experience. The Institute felt that these lessons were valuable and should be considered by states which are now trying to implement the Community Services Block Grant and create a state anti-poverty program.

This report is one in the Institute's Social Policy Series. In the series the Institute addresses the three areas of social policy that are of vital concern to public and private decision makers in the 1980's: Human services under new federalism and block grants; welfare deregulation and local program coordination; and public/private employment strategies. The companion volume to this book discusses the new federalism and the implementation of the Block Grant Program.

The Community Action Agency information used in writing this report - the seventeen evaluation reports, the summaries "Strengthening and Refining the Region's Impact Evaluation Capacity" and "Community Action in Region IX: A Summary of Eight Evaluations," and the questionnaires and evaluation methodology are available from the Institute on request.

CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS COMMUNITY ACTION?

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (EOA) launched a national "War on Poverty." Its direction was to mobilize and coordinate the full range of federal resources with those of the states, localities and the private sector in an attack on economic deprivation. The concept of "community action" refers to a community marshalling its own abilities, tapping state and federal resources, recruiting professionals and enlisting volunteers to solve the problems of its own low-income citizens.

The Community Services Administration was only one of a large number of government agencies with programs that addressed the needs of the low-income population. But unlike the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) or Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs, CSA did not provide a specific program such as employment training or housing. Rather, Community Action Agencies mobilize existing resources in the community and press for more responsiveness to the needs of the low-income population by social service institutions to ensure that no one falls into the cracks between programs or agencies. Where there are gaps or deficiencies in a community's ability to meet the needs of the poor, the CAA can then either marshal or coordinate existing resources, bring in outside resources, or provide the service directly.

Increasing the self-sufficiency of low-income families and individuals is the basic purpose of the Community Action Program. The goal is to enable the low-income population to attain the skills, knowledge, motivation and opportunities to become self-sufficient and move out of poverty.

Six Standards of Effectiveness were developed by the Community Services Administration to guide community action programs and provide a basis for evaluating local programs. It was assumed that a program that meets these six standards would increase the opportunities for self-sufficiency of the low-income population.

The standards are:

- Standard I: Strengthening community capabilities and coordination (of poverty related programs) so as to insure that available assistance related to the elimination of poverty can be more responsive to local needs and conditions.
- Standard II: Better organization of services related to needs of the poor.
- Standard III: Maximum feasible participation of poor in government and implementation of programs designed to serve the poor.
- Standard IV: Broadened resource base of programs directed to the elimination of poverty so as to include all elements of the community able to influence the quality and quantity of services to the poor.
- Standard V: Greater use of new types of services and innovative approaches in attacking the causes of poverty, so as to develop

increasingly effective methods of analyzing available resources.

Standard VI: Maximum employment opportunity for residents of target areas.

The Standards of Effectiveness define the elements of community action. The agency that these standards describe is one that analyzes the needs of the low-income community and existing resources, sets policies and priorities, designs strategies to implement those policies, works to bring in additional resources, coordinates with other agencies to help address the low-income needs (employment in particular), and involve the low-income community in its decisionmaking.

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

When the War on Poverty was launched in 1964, it took its official form in the Economic Opportunity Act: The Act created the Community Action Program, the basic purpose of which was set forth in Section 201A:

Its basic purpose is to stimulate a better focusing of all available local, state, private, and federal resources upon the goal of enabling low-income families, and low-income individuals of all ages, in rural and urban areas to attain the skills, knowledge and motivations, and secure the opportunities needed for them to become fully self-sufficient.

The Community Action Program, managed by the Office of Economic Opportunity, funded about nine hundred Community Action Agencies nationwide. These funds originally bypassed local governments, which were seen by the framers of the act to be too closely tied to the status quo to undertake the activities necessary to take the poor out of poverty.

Community Action Agencies were generally small, grassroots agencies that began by organizing people in low-income neighborhoods. Funding these organizations reflected the view that human services programs could be most effectively run by local, neighborhood organizations, and that the poor needed to organize as a political voice in the community if they were to attain self-sufficiency. Unlike the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), Title XX programs, or other federal programs, the key word in community action is "community." CAAs were conceived as local, autonomous agencies with neighborhood low-income people making the decisions.

Problems arose with Community Action Agencies. The dual role of service provider and community organizer, and the management inexperience of many CAA staffs created conflicts and confusion at all levels of government. In 1967, Congresswoman Edith Green of Oregon proposed an amendment to the Economic Opportunity Act. The Green Amendment, as it was called after its author, gave local governments in jurisdictions of a certain size the right to designate the organization that would be the Community Action Agency, and established a formula for membership on the CAA Board of Directors. Under this formula, local government would have one-third of the seats, democratically selected representatives of the poor at least one-third, and representatives of the private sector up to one-third. The Green Amendment was the first in a continuing series of legislative and administrative

actions that gave state and local governments a more important role in the community action program.

THE CHARACTER OF COMMUNITY ACTION TODAY

Today many CAA's are characterized by their close partnership with local governments. Some are departments in cities or counties, others are private non-profit corporations, but work closely with local government to coordinate the delivery of services to the community.

A typical CAA today is an autonomous or partly autonomous agency with funding of around \$7-10 million, a Board of Directors with fifteen representatives from the three sectors of the community, that operates around fifteen to twenty programs. Community action is not an exclusively urban program; there are many CAA's serving rural areas.

An analysis of the Institute's CAA evaluations reveals that most CAA's deliver programs providing basic needs to the poor - food, clothing, housing and transportation - and many provide employment programs.

CAA staff were found to have become more professional agency and program managers. Moving away from the confrontational role that some took in the late 1960's and early 1970's, CAA's have sought to build cooperative relationships with local government. Some CAA's are departments in cities and counties, others are partners with local government in planning and delivering services. CAA fiscal and management capabilities have improved, and they meet the reporting requirements of nearly every human services program funded by federal, state and local government.

CAA Boards have likewise become more professional. Through training, staff efforts, and the presence of skilled professionals from the public and private sectors, boards are no longer characterized by the lack of decision making expertise of the early days of community action. Low income participation in agency decisionmaking is a problem for some CAA's. This may be the trade-off for professionalizing CAA management and decision-making. CAA's have been able to mobilize the low-income population around areas of concern to the community, and to articulate the needs of the low-income to local decision-makers. But the ongoing participation of the low-income community in agency and area decision-making has not been developed by all CAA's.

Good CAA's have shown themselves to be excellent resource mobilizers, and the evaluations found that nearly all CAA's do an adequate job of this. Most CAA's can leverage additional resources to core funding at a ratio of three to one or often four to one. Little effort has gone into mobilizing private sector funding, and this will have to be an area of focus in the future.

The most successful CAA's coordinate with local government in many areas - operating programs together, being a contract agency for local government, sharing planning and needs assessment data, and informing local policymakers of the needs and concerns of the low-income community. Very little of the turbulence that marred CAA relationships with local government remains in California. In Fresno County, for example, the Community Action Agency worked with the residents of a rural settlement that had been condemned by the County Health Department to

gain public attention for their need for relocation assistance. With public attention focused on the issue, the CAA worked with local elected officials to identify and mobilize state and federal resources to solve the problem. The CAA was able to provide coordination, technical assistance, funding, and political support to an effort which resulted in the creation of a new settlement for the former residents of Three Rocks, California.

Not all CAA's are equally effective, of course. Like any other agency or program, there are successful and less successful CAA's. But, as our evaluations made clear, the flawed agencies are the result of local factors and not the inherent structure of community action as an approach to increasing low income self-sufficiency.

Many CAA's have been successful at balancing the demands of maintaining credibility with local government and meeting the needs of the low income community. A CAA with an active Board that supports the agency, a skilled staff, and an executive director who can tie the needs of the agency and the interests of the governmental and private sector together can be very successful and highly regarded in the community.

CHAPTER 2: THE LOCAL HUMAN SERVICES CRISIS AND HOW CAA'S CAN HELP YOU OUT OF IT

THE FOUR HUMAN SERVICES CHALLENGES

The money for human services has been drastically cut. Federal tax reductions and the block grant program reduce money available for social programs by many billions of dollars. Some states have tax ceilings enacted by their citizens and cannot increase their revenues. A recession has reduced state and local tax monies which depend on economic activity. Inflation drives the costs of delivering services higher each year.

Local government funds for human services will probably be cut by more than 25% in the next two years. The human services network that exists today in state and local government, Community Action Agencies and community based organizations, has developed in response to federal funding levels in the last eighteen years. This amount of money is no longer available, and local government officials must make difficult decisions about how to use their remaining resources.

State and local governments will have increased latitude in spending human services resources. Federal funds in the past reached the local level with specific instructions on how to spend them. The Block Grant program combines the money for these federal categorical programs into lump sums, which can be spent by state government as it sees fit. Block Grants will be provided in nine general areas, including maternal and child care, energy assistance, Title XX social services, etc.

With a recession, inflation, and lack of money for social programs, public officials can expect increasing numbers of citizens with unmet critical needs. With increased decisionmaking powers but diminished resources, local government has four human services challenges it will try to meet:

1. Meet the basic needs of its citizens.
2. Use resources with increased effectiveness.
3. Mobilize additional resources.
4. Maintain public confidence.

The remainder of this chapter discusses how local government can achieve these goals, and ways the experience of community action agencies can help them.

First, Meet the Basic Needs.

Cutbacks in human services focus attention on the basic, elemental needs of citizens. The United Way UWASIS¹ categories of social programs illustrate the basic material needs as food, clothing and household goods, housing, transportation, gainful employment, income maintenance and support for the eligible needy, and economic development.

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1. The United Way of America Services Identification System (UWASIS) organizes all the types of human and social services into eight categories. See Appendix B.

Local conditions determine which of these needs citizens feel most acutely. A housing crisis may exist in a city, while there may be a food shortage in a remote rural area such as an Indian reservation. Public officials must determine which needs are critical in which areas. A needs assessment is the common approach to determining needs, then ranking and weighting them by degree of importance.

Officials must then decide which programs will be most effective to alleviate basic community needs. This program planning and targeting will be of increased importance in the coming years, as cutbacks force some programs to be cut back or cut out altogether, and local governments will have more freedom to plan and target the programs they do deliver.

Community Action Agencies have been required by federal law to do needs assessments and plan programs to target needs. Institute evaluations found that almost all CAA's have a useful needs assessment process, and are very much aware of the needs of the community. Many CAA's run neighborhood centers and outreach programs, and know well the changing needs and problems of community residents. Many CAA's have developed a decision-making process which ties together needs assessment, policy setting, program planning, implementation, and evaluation. Community participation is a feature in all steps of the process. In determining the needs of the community, essential program activities, and new program strategies, CAA's can be expected to provide useful advice. They can be especially useful in the difficult area of deciding which are the most basic needs, and which problems local governments must defer.

The basic grant that CAA's have received from CSA has had a minimum number of restrictions. In this way, it is closest to the block grant approach of the New Federalism. As such, it carries both the advantage of flexibility and the disadvantage of intense competition and multiple demands on the use of these funds.

Here CAA's have valuable experience to share with government. They are used to dealing with the competition while targeting the funds to meet basic needs and enhance low-income self-sufficiency.

This will be a challenge for state and local government in this time of need, few resources and flexibility. CAA's can help. They can help with assessing needs, setting priorities, making allocation decisions and handling the intense competition.

CAA's have experience in determining and then meeting community needs. They operate programs that affect all of the basic needs listed above, they coordinate existing programs to better address community needs, and they have mobilized outside resources to bring to bear on the problem. Other than local government itself² the CAA is the agency that provides for the greatest variety of basic human needs³.

2. Local United Way organizations as umbrella agencies provide for more services than CAA's; however CAA's, like local government, operate programs directly.

3. See below, "Contracting for Services," for more information on CAA's as a service provider for local government.

Second, Increase the Effectiveness of your Human Service Dollar

Managing programs in such a way as to give taxpayers the most value for money spent will be important to local government. Management techniques in human services have developed during the years of federal anti-poverty efforts. CAA's have always worked closely with the community and have felt continuous constituent pressure to get value for money spent. Over the years many CAA's have developed an efficient management system tied closely to community needs.

In addition, every CAA has for years been required by CSA and other grantors to undergo an annual audit by a Certified Public Accountant. Financial reports following a format set by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget have been required quarterly throughout the year, and CSA has required a progress report on each program objective for which the agency received funds.

With their extensive program experience, developed financial systems and role as an agency that has had to deliver the community's needs with an insecure and shoestring budget, CAA experience lends itself to these cost cutting issues.

In fact from its origin, community action has been conceived as a strategy for addressing major problems with the meagerest of CSA funding. CAA's have delivered a lot of services to a lot of people on very few dollars. State and local government can benefit from the CAA experience.

Third, Bring in more Human Service Resources

Human service providers must do two things: (1) find resources to replace lost federal dollars; and (2) make sure available resources are being stretched as far as possible.

Community Action Agencies have been able to attract grants from many funding sources. The seventeen CAA's evaluated administer three or four non-CSA dollars for every dollar from CSA. The basic purpose of Community Action Agencies under Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act has been to "refocus all available resources to address the needs of the poor."

CAA's have assisted local governments in mobilizing resources. The Foothill Area Community Services, Inc., gave critical assistance to the City of Pasadena in mobilizing Older American Act and Community Development Block Grant funds for a senior center. The technical expertise and the political and community support a CAA can lend to a resource mobilization effort can make the effort a success.

Until recently, federal and state dollars for human services have been available. And here is where the CAA's directed most of their resource mobilization efforts - and quite successfully so. CAA's, on the average, have mobilized four federal, state and local dollars for every one CSA dollar.

Because of their success and the availability of public funds, CAA's have not, for the most part, worked with the private sector to mobilize resources.

All CAA's have up to one-third of their Board of Directors made up of private sector representatives, usually including someone from a private business association and sometimes a representative from United Way. These Board members can be the key to a private sector mobilization effort. Some CAA's, most notably

the Fresno EOC, Foothill Area Community Services, the San Luis Obispo County Economic Opportunity, Inc., have worked extensively to mobilize private sector participation.

Innovative mobilization efforts have taken place. With funding from PG&E, the Fresno CAA built, owns and operates an insulation plant that is turning a profit for the agency. Foothill is involved with the private sector in many ways; equipment for a job training program and technical assistance and loans from a local bank are two examples.

Still, it is safe to say that neither local government nor community action agencies have put much effort into private sector mobilization. Nonetheless, experience in attracting grants and in performing for grantors provides part of the basis for future successes in attracting non-governmental resources. Solid management and effective communication with broad local constituencies contributes further to private and voluntary fundraising potential. Community Action Agencies need to work with local government to give priority attention to building on this potential as the old funding sources become scarcer and the competition fiercer.

Fourth, Regain Lost Confidence in Government

What is public confidence? and why is it important to local government? Lack of public confidence in local government programs expressed itself in tax-cutting measures such as California's Proposition 13. In its Action Plan for the 80's, the League of California Cities notes: "the relationship between city government and city residents has suffered, due in large part to the public's disenchantment with taxation levels." And three of the six tenets in the County Supervisors Association of California's Platform for Efficient Government are "fostering of individual responsibility among citizens," "streamlining administration of services and programs," and "reduction of bureaucratic process and the bureaucracy," all designed to regain public confidence in the operations of local government. Cities and counties are now retrenching, but without some means of increasing revenues and service provision they must guard against reaching such a low performance level that they may barely be able to move from one crisis to the next. Some steps must be taken to regain public support of local government programs.

Government cannot serve the community without knowing the community's specific needs and problems. In this case "community" is even too broad a term - local officials must know the problems of the many groups and neighborhoods that make up the community. Being able to target specific strategies to specific areas gives agencies the reputation of being useful and effective.

There are fewer resources available for human services programs, and taxpayers are less than willing to increase their support for these programs. More than ever before, human services depend on community support. The League of California Cities notes: "Citizen groups interested in more parks, for example, are more likely to win voter approval for a new park than a city council in the current political climate." Community Action Agencies and local government can work together in regaining public support.

Community Action Agencies have been an important means to communicate with portions of the community missed by other organizations and to give them a voice in its

collective life. This is demonstrated by the accomplishments of many CAA's we evaluated - particularly by the answers of consumers to questions about the effects of CAA programs on their lives. These effects have been most noteworthy on clients' community influence, access to information, self-confidence, and social life. CAA's have also involved low-income persons in planning and policy-developing activities; the Sonoma CAA has assisted low-income persons to join a County human services task force and trained and assisted them in their participation, Kern County CAA has enlisted low income individuals on task forces aimed at establishing a senior center, setting up a farmers' market, advising the jurisdiction about the Community Development Block Grant, and other matters. The Oakland CAA has developed low income participation on committees dealing with para-transit, juvenile diversion, and ethnic youth problems. FACS has involved them in manpower planning, human relations, aging programs, para-transit, and planning for access to community facilities to the disabled.

The effect of Community Action Agencies in integrating low income families and individuals into the fabric of the community has been significant. Community Action Agencies are guided by a Board of Directors which includes one-third representation from the private sector, one-third local officials, and one-third low income persons. Local government will need to develop a network of community support which includes government, business, labor, the voluntary giving sector, private agencies, the neighborhoods, the ethnic groups, and all income levels. A Community Action Agency has the potential to help in this effort significantly. Elements whose support is needed are represented on the CAA Board of Directors. The CAA's mission is to involve and assist the low income community and can be part of a broader effort to rebuild public confidence and convince the community to provide the public or private revenues needed in support of programs.

Community Action Agencies will also be looking to local governments for support and funding in the coming years. Local government is likely to have more flexibility over the way it can fund human services. It should recognize that CAA's are an important partner in the effort to rebuild community support.

LOCAL STRATEGIES FOR ACTION - CAA'S CAN HELP

Under the new Block Grant Federalism, state or local officials will be able to determine the administrative arrangements for service delivery. Officials may find it necessary to discontinue some programs or elements of programs entirely. Non-service approaches to solving community problems can be explored. Programs can be combined with others having related functions and clientele. Independent programs may be incorporated into local government either as a unit within an existing department, or as a modification in the work program of such a department without adding funds. Programs and administrative activities now in local government can be contracted with outside organizations. Activities can be turned back to neighborhoods or other social communities to do for themselves. The Community Action Agency, with its ability to mobilize broad community support, its administrative flexibility and its program experience, should be recognized as a vital resource and source of assistance for any one of these strategies.

1. Setting Priorities in the Face of Cutbacks

The CAA experience in determining which needs and human service programs are most essential has been discussed. The CAA Board and administrative and program staff

gather broad-based information on community needs and program effectiveness. This input can be essential to all human service providers during the difficult task of deciding which programs must be cut, as can CAA experience in making those difficult allocation decisions.

2. Considering a Non-Service Approach to Problems

CAA's have used a variety of non-service approaches in attacking poverty. This approach recognizes that a change in rules, regulations, and practices can be as important as a direct service in affecting the ability of the poor to improve their circumstances. For instance, in one jurisdiction, policies aimed at protecting the environment may be discouraging business expansion, thereby curtailing employment opportunities. These policies may also be slowing the development of new housing. The CAA might work with other community interests to arrive at revised policies that will encourage expansion of housing and job opportunities. In another jurisdiction there might be a policy banning jitneys and other non-conventional forms of transit. The CAA might take the lead in changing this rule, resulting in improved transportation and small business opportunities.

3. Consolidating Programs

Not all programs need to be cut, but human service providers can benefit from merging and consolidating existing programs. The last fifteen years have seen a continued expansion of community organizations, anti-poverty agencies, and programs of all kinds. Many of these programs can be consolidated to reduce administrative and delivery costs.

Program consolidation, to be effective, must take place across local government boundaries. Can any programs of local cities, community action agencies, community-based organizations, and counties be consolidated? As an umbrella organization with experience at managing and operating an extraordinary variety of human services activities, a Community Action Agency is a logical choice in assisting other human service providers in consolidating programs. Some CAA's can assume responsibility for programs and incorporate those services into their existing programs. CAA's can pull together community-based organizations and help them combine services. A CAA and local government can create a broad community planning effort with United Way, business associations, and others to explore consolidating programs.

4. Bringing Programs Into Local Government

Many services developed during the last fifteen years have been funded outside local government; largely because local governments had neither the policy nor the resources to address the needs of the poor. Since then, there has been much change inside and outside local government. Many public officials, recognizing the value of these programs as well as the problems inherent in federal categorical programs, now envision a strong local role.

With funds no longer available to pay for a variety of agencies administering human services, elected officials will expect local government departments to

absorb some of these responsibilities. Departments will be expected to operate additional programs and services without additional funds, or even within smaller budgets.

The Community Action Agencies that are now a department within county or municipal government will find these additional responsibilities are now expected. CAA's will be asked to find ways to change their programs to absorb services previously administered by community-based organizations. Planning should begin now to meet these new demands. Public CAA's should determine which programs they will most likely be absorbing. Are there other funding sources available for the programs? Do other local government and private agencies have resources for planning, technical assistance, or administrative support that the CAA can link to the program? Can the program be merged with other existing programs to reduce its costs? Is there another agency that could operate the program at a low cost?

Not only public CAA's will be expected to absorb programs. Private CAA's - perhaps especially in rural areas - will be expected by local government and human service providers to assume responsibility for some programs and play a major role in determining how many programs can be kept alive.

5. Contracting for Services

At times an agency has the authority to operate a program, but for various reasons decides that another agency can operate the program more effectively. Contracting for services is an established policy in many California jurisdictions. According to a study published in May 1981, by the California Tax Foundation: "It is looked to as a means of acquiring skilled personnel and special equipment as needed, reducing costs, and allowing easier adjustment of program size."

Local government can look to Community Action Agencies as potential contractees. CAA's have great experience in providing services for other agencies. The typical CAA has staff that have administered many different kinds of programs. Along with direct service delivery, CAA's are competent at planning, delegating programs, and administering innovative programs. Through a system of linking needs assessment and community participation to all phases of program development, CAA's have the capacity to target programs to the most needy.

A primary concern of contractors is compliance and accountability. For years CAA's have been meeting the fiscal and program reporting requirements of federal, state, local, and private funding sources. Almost all of the seventeen CAA's evaluated by the Institute had contracts with their local governments. Interviews with public officials in these jurisdictions, for the most part, brought praise for CAA performance.

According to the Cal-Tax study, the public services most commonly contracted by cities were⁴:

4. Source: Contracting Out for Local Services in California, California Tax Foundation, 1981. While the Cal-Tax methodology does not reflect this, human and social services are contracted by many counties to private, voluntary organizations.

Cities: services

Public works
Health and social services
Animal control and shelter
Parks and recreation
Transportation services

The most common internal support activities contracted were:

Cities: housekeeping functions
Communications equipment maintenance
Office and laboratory equipment maintenance
City vehicle maintenance
Data processing equipment maintenance
Landscape maintenance
Building maintenance

Counties contracted out a somewhat different list of services and activities:

Counties: services
Air pollution control
Ambulance services
Health care services
Museum and cultural activities
Certain park and recreational services
Certain public works services

Counties: housekeeping functions
Architectural, engineering and design services
Building and grounds maintenance
Office and laboratory equipment maintenance
Electronic data processing
Personnel services
Professional services

Community Action Agencies in the seventeen evaluations had specific experience in the delivery of health services (five CAA's), recreation programs (four CAA's), and transportation services (11 CAA's). Employment programs, economic development, neighborhood centers, information and referral, senior services of all kinds, and planning and technical assistance are all areas where a local government could profitably contract with a CAA.⁵

It might be worthwhile to explore how housekeeping services such as maintenance and janitorial activities or the upkeep of public parks and rights-of-way can be contracted to the CAA. Most CAA's we studied had a clearly established policy and record of employing the poor on their programs and administrative staffs. Contracting to CAA's for housekeeping services can increase the number of low income persons employed and learning skills, and lead to creation of small

5. See Government Contracts with Voluntary Organizations, United Way of California, 1981, for a discussion of issues in contracting human and social services.

businesses among the poor. The funds flowing from local government through the CAA for such essential tasks can benefit the community, as well as accomplish their original objective at reduced cost.

6. Turning Responsibilities Back to Neighborhoods

The national policy is to transfer human services program design, funding, and implementation to the local level. With the idea that local government and neighborhood and community groups know their needs better than the federal government, the community is asked to assume greater responsibility for programs that affect them.

With the reduction in local government capacity to provide funds for services, whether these funds have been collected in the first place by local, state, or Federal government, local governments and voluntary organizations are beginning to think about what neighborhoods and villages can do to absorb tasks that were carried out by government, or at least to share these tasks. Maintenance of the smaller parks has been turned over to neighborhoods in some jurisdictions. Neighborhood crime watch programs exemplify such local self-help.

Many Community Action Agencies have extensive experience in organizing neighborhoods. Among the seventeen CAA's that were evaluated, eight operate general purpose neighborhood or community centers whose purpose is to serve as a means to pull together the community around common interests. The Phoenix CAA has organized and coordinates a burglary prevention program out of its series of neighborhood centers. In addition, local centers specifically for seniors are operated by eight of the CAA's. Altogether, thirteen of the sixteen CAA's operate some kind of local gathering place for people of the community to share their interests. These centers, and others like them, would appear to have high potential for organizing neighborhood and townspeople to work together with the city or county government on community tasks. Human services staff will need to begin making a change in their orientation - from delivering a service to the community to training and assisting local groups to deliver these themselves. CAA's can assist in this reorientation.

SUMMARY

We have discussed six accommodations⁶ to the reduction of public funds available for human services and other community programs; program cut-backs, non-service approaches, consolidating or bringing programs into local government, contracting out, and turning responsibilities back to neighborhoods. Community Action Agencies have something to offer each and every strategy. Next we will look at the variety of programs administered by seventeen Region IX CAA's, the source of funds to support those programs, and their effectiveness in achieving the purposes for which they were funded.

6. This section is indebted to Martin Paley, Executive Director of the San Francisco Foundation for information he provided.

Very low	Low performance on all effectiveness standards	2
	TOTAL CAA's	17

These ratings are based on team conclusions about the agency at the time it was evaluated. Some of the conclusions were unambiguous and easy to rank - "none of the accomplishments cited by the agency related to Innovative Programming." Other conclusions were less clear: "the steps taken show little accomplishment in the present, but most persons interviewed believed the future potential was great." In these cases some interpretation was needed to assign the agency a rating.

It is important to remember that these evaluations were done over four years by seventeen different evaluation teams. While the method and controls were generally uniform, differences in team members and the passage of time weakens comparison among CAA's. The Long Beach CAA evaluation report included in our summary and analysis, for example, refers to a public CAA that has since closed and then recently reorganized as a private CAA. All references to Long Beach in this report, then, apply to an agency that no longer exists and should not be misconstrued as referring to the existing Long Beach CAA. CAA's found weak in some respects have changed for the better; a few may have changed for the worse. These pages should not be read as a description of the seventeen CAA's as they are today, but as teams saw them when they were evaluated. Most important, these results should be used as a picture of the general pattern of CAA effectiveness and the potential inherent in the community action approach to human services, not as judgments of individual agency performance.

Chart 3A shows that the teams found a solid majority of the agencies to be successful in meeting the standards of effectiveness. Ten were in the high range, three moderately successful, and four unsuccessful.

If a CAA is not addressing a particular standard, this can be an indicator of agency weakness. It can also reflect the environment a CAA is operating in. For example, CAA's in general received a low rating in their efforts to maximize employment opportunities (Standard 6). Many CAA's have not operated employment programs because CETA has funded employment programs at levels higher than a CAA could hope to achieve. A CAA may rank low in program planning (Standard 1), but have links to a county-wide planning network that does this for the agency. Rural CAA's may receive generally higher ratings than urban CAA's in some areas, not because they are intrinsically better agencies, but because a rural CAA may be one of the only service delivery agencies in the area, and something always looks better than nothing.

Mobilization of resources was the most effective area of CAA activity. Eleven of seventeen CAA's scored high at mobilizing resources. Coordination of services, Standard 2, was next best - nine CAA's were given high ratings. In declining order of CAA performance, the remaining standards were program innovation, participation of the poor, improved planning², and employment opportunities.

2. Note, though, that needs assessment, one part of planning, was an area of strong performance for CAA's. CAA's were particularly weak in evaluation, another part of planning.

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES - HOW EFFECTIVE HAVE THEY BEEN?

The next two chapters discuss what CAA's do and how well they do it. This chapter summarizes what the evaluations suggest about the effectiveness of Community Action Agencies. Chapter IV gives a detailed picture of the particular programs Community Action Agencies operate.

THE STANDARDS OF EFFECTIVENESS DEFINE COMMUNITY ACTION

Agencies were evaluated in terms of the six Community Services Administration Standards of Effectiveness. These standards define what an effective Community Action Agency ought to be doing according to the Economic Opportunity Act; these standards make high demands on an agency and differentiate a CAA from any other human services delivery agency.¹

1. Needs assessment, policy making, and planning.
2. Coordinating with other agencies.
3. Increasing participation of the poor in agency operations and community life.
4. Mobilizing resources.
5. Developing innovative programs.
6. Maximizing employment opportunity for the low-income.

In each of the seventeen CAA evaluations analyzed as part of this report, the evaluation team made a judgement on the CAA's performance on each standard. These judgements have been converted to a rating scale. Each CAA received a rating of high, medium, or low on each standard. Results of the rating process are summarized in Table 3A.

CHART 3A

EFFECTIVENESS OF SEVENTEEN REGION IX CAA'S IN ACHIEVING MANDATED STANDARDS

<u>Effectiveness Rating</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Number of CAA's</u>
Very high	Very high performance on all six effectiveness standards	2
High	High performance on at least five of six	8
Medium	Moderately successful on most standards	3
Low	Mostly low performance. Moderate success on some standards	2

1. For more discussion of the Standards of Effectiveness, see Chapter I above.

CHART 3B
SOURCES OF CAA FUNDS *
(\$ in Thousands)

CAA	ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION				
	FEDERAL		STATE	LOCAL	TOTAL GOV'T FUNDS
	CSA	OTHER			
Contra Costa	\$1002	\$1230			\$2232
Sonoma	420	1257		**	1677
Kern	630	1683			2313
Phoenix	1885	4328		2273	8453
Oakland	1367	3977	577	"some"	5921
FACS (Pasadena)	764	3059	155		3978
San Francisco	3114	1096	1522		5732
San Diego County	2322	4897	1687	695	9601
ESO (Santa Clara County)	1416	634	905		2955
Fresno	2128	13,534			15,662
TOTAL	\$15,018	\$35,695	\$4846	\$2968	\$58,524
PERCENT	26%	61%	8.3%	5.1%	100%

* Donations and fee income are not included.

** Sonoma had a \$7500 foundation grant.

EXAMPLES OF AGENCY EFFECTIVENESS

Resource Mobilization: One CSA Dollar Brings In Four

CAA's are able resource mobilizers. Mobilizing resources for the low-income community has been a purpose of the Community Action Program throughout its history. It has been absolutely vital - given the small amount of CSA funding available - that CAA's have been able to supplement their CSA core funding. Our analysis shows that CAA's pride in their ability to attract financial resources is justified. For ten of the CAA's that provided such information, the cash budgets include about three non-CSA dollars for every dollar from CSA. Excluding three agencies that performed poorly, the ratio of the remainder is four to one.

The bulk of the money that has been available for activities such as those carried out by Community Action Agencies has been appropriated by the federal legislature, and the ten CAA budgets reflect this fact. About 86 cents of every dollar administered by these community agencies is from a federal appropriation.

Most the remaining 14 cents is from two California State appropriations: one for child care and one for probation services. Four of the ten CAA's had funds from these state sources. Two CAA's administered substantial monies from local tax collections.

Not all CAA funds were from government grants and contracts. One CAA administered a \$7500 foundation grant. Three showed significant revenues from patient fees (the total was \$178,000 that year) and from voluntary contributions in congregate feeding programs (\$64,000). The \$249,500 total from these other sources was less than half of one percent of the funds administered by the ten CAA's.

Many federal funds administered by CAA's are allocated to them by state or local government. CETA or General Revenue Sharing funds are in this category. A typical CAA budget, by allocation sources, would look like this:

- CSA Funding 26%
- Other Federal Funding (e.g., Headstart) 21%
- State Funding (e.g., State LEAA) 20%
- Local Funding (e.g., CETA or Gen. Fund) 33%

Certain federal funds are not directed to the poor by law. General Revenue Sharing is targeted to no particular group or activity, and CETA funds may be used to assist various groups needing help with employment as well as the poor. Allocation of these funds to CAA's has enabled states and local governments to assure that those services reach the low-income community.

The ability of CAA's to attract fund allocations from multiple sources varies widely. This ability is related to overall agency effectiveness. San Francisco EOC, a non-profit corporation, drew 54% of its operating funds from CSA, and had no other significant federal grants. At the opposite end of the spectrum was another private CAA, the Fresno EOC, an agency of firmly demonstrated effectiveness. Community Services Administration allocations made up only 14% of Fresno's revenues; 38% were allocated by local governments; there was an even split between non-CSA federal funds and state-allocated dollars at 24% each.

Four lessons come from a study of CAA resource mobilization. First, CAA's are in general good resource mobilizers, and have leveraged their CSA core funding by close to four dollars for every CSA dollar.

Second, local government depends on and trusts CAA's to administer funding for them. CAA's have accommodated themselves to patterns of behavior required to attract funds from local government, and are thoroughly integrated into the web of fiscal interrelationships among government entities.

Third, a CAA's ability to mobilize funds is related to its reputation as an effective agency. The better name an agency has, the more money pours in.

Fourth, whether CAA's can mobilize resources in the coming years is not easy to predict. They are proven mobilizers from local government, who will play a bigger role in funds allocation. Few CAA's have mobilized resources from the private sector, or have given this area much attention. Yet it is private sector funding that is being looked to to make up for federal funds lost in the next few years.

CAA's Determine Needs and Set Priorities

The agency most concerned with Standard I - human services policy development - was North Coast Opportunities. The CAA contracted with the City of Ukiah to prepare a social element for its General Plan. The resulting document enabled the City Council to set priorities and focus resources on the most important needs. The result was a significant increase in both the level and effectiveness of city involvement in programs for the poor and elderly. The city soon used the plan to assess requests for a teen center, senior centers, a child development center, a volunteer bureau, and other proposals. The plan was used to guide housing development, has provided a fuller hearing for requests and concerns of citizens, and has guided the City Council in supporting and funding several programs. NCO also assigned staff to the County Administrator to help pull together a central evaluation unit, resulting in changed resource allocation processes for General Revenue Sharing, health services, manpower services, and rehabilitation funds.

CAA's Coordinate Existing Human Services

With respect to Standard II, better coordination of services, the Phoenix CAA, a department of city government, has been one of the best among the nine CAA's that received high ratings. Service centers established and maintained by this CAA contain an extraordinarily comprehensive range of agencies and programs to help the poor. Upon recommendation of the CAA, top city officials have worked with state and local officials to assure that programs important to the poor are provided at these centers and are coordinated with one another.

CHART 3C

LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT ALLOCATING FUNDS TO CAA'S

(\$ in Thousands)

CAA	ALLOCATION BY				TOTAL GOVT FUNDS
	FEDERAL	STATE	LOCAL		
Contra Costa	\$1002 45%	\$930 42%	- -	\$300 13%	\$2322 100%
Sonoma	420 25%	902 54%	- -	355 21%	1677 100%
Kern	630 27%	1078 47%	605 26%	- -	2313 100%
Phoenix	1855 22%	3025 38%	1085 13%	2491 29%	8456 100%
Oakland	1367 23%	1676 28%	1923 32%	955 16%	5921 100%
FACS (Pasadena)	764 19%	858 22%	635 16%	1721 43%	3978 100%
San Francisco	3114 54%	- -	2594 45%	24 0.4%	5732 100%
San Diego County	2322 24%	245 2.6%	- -	7034 73%	9601 100%
ESO (Santa Clara County)	1416 48%	- -	992 32%	547 19%	2955 100%
Fresno County	2128 14%	3832 24%	3748 24%	5954 38%	15,662 100%
TOTAL	\$ 15,018 26%	12,546 21%	11,582 20%	19,381 33%	58,527 100%

CHART 3D

IMPACT OF CAA DIRECT-SERVICE PROGRAMS

ON LIFE-CHANGES OF CONSUMERS

CAA	n	Percent of Consumers Reporting A Life Change	
		PRIMARY	SECONDARY*
El Dorado County	50	6%	25%
Long Beach	48	52%	56%
Solano County	79	40%	21%
San Luis Obispo County	50	24%	29%
Kauai County	86	27%	28%
Hawaii County EOC	46	27%	30%
Contra Costa County	106	15%	18%
Sonoma County	38	37%	38%
Kern County	48	43%	42%
Oakland	35	37%	14%
Foothill Area	66	41%	31%
San Francisco	91	58%	40%
San Diego County	61	34%	32%
ES0 (Santa Clara County)	58	53%	36%
North Coast Opportunities	39	33%	43%
TOTAL	901	35%	32%

NOTE: Consumers were not interviewed in Fresno and Phoenix

*Integrative

CAA's Involve the Low Income in Decisionmaking

"Maximum feasible participation of the poor" has been a goal for Community Action throughout its history. Sonoma County People for Economic Opportunity is outstanding among the seventeen CAA's with respect to Standard III. PEO's policy-making process elicits full low-income participation at every step. Many mechanisms for low-income participation have been developed, including Program Advisory Committees, town hall meetings, and active recruitment of low-income people for Boards and Commissions. Training for low-income board members is also seen as effective. PEO staff are mostly individuals who were poor before joining PEO and working their way up in the system.

CAA's Develop Innovative Strategies

In discussing Standard V, innovative programs, Foothill Area Community Services, Inc., can serve as an example. FACS established a large demand-response transportation system to transport the elderly and handicapped, working out the needed coordination with several cities. The Young Saints Anti-Crime Program trains youths in the use of telecommunications equipment, so they can produce and present multi-media programs for their peers which build self-esteem and stress the values of schooling and proper behavior. Other multi-media programs by the Young Saints offer information on crime prevention to senior citizens.

CAA's Develop Employment Opportunities

Fresno's company producing insulation has been discussed earlier, and it is an excellent example of Standard VI, maximum employment opportunity. The Fresno CAA has become a major employer itself, with a \$15 million budget. EOC has transitioned most of its CETA workers into permanent employment with the agency. Low-income parents of Headstart children are employed as aides. As in Sonoma PEO and other CAA's, low income persons have been employed by Fresno EOC, have provided training, experience and support, and have worked their way into responsible leadership positions.

WHAT IMPACT DO CAA'S HAVE ON THEIR CLIENTS?

The evaluation teams interviewed a total of 901 CAA program clients to determine the range of impacts a program had on their lives. The results clearly demonstrate a significant and direct impact.

More than a third of 901 enrollees in CAA programs who were interviewed by evaluation teams cited direct improvements in their lives due to the program: increased wages due to an employment program, better nutrition due to a feeding program, reduced costs from bulk buying.

Programs can also have a secondary impact. Many clients cited an improvement in their lives other than direct program results: increased self-confidence, more community influence, reduced social isolation, access to needed information. Nearly all CAA programs had such effects.

run in, cooperation with local government and other human service providers, and the input and support of the low-income community.

It does not seem to be a special type of CAA that is effective. Public as well as private, urban as well as rural, small and low profile as well as large and well known CAA's all proved themselves effective at helping the poor.

Why do programs have secondary impacts? Why are these impacts so desirable? We can examine one specific program for an answer.

The greatest number of clients interviewed were part of a senior nutrition program. The direct impact most often cited was improved nutrition. Many clients also said that the program had linked them to transportation services. Indirect program effects cited were overcoming social isolation, improved community influence, and increased self-confidence.

These effects can come from a nutrition program in various ways. The program brings people together for congregate meals, an obvious way of reducing isolation. Some program managers facilitate discussion of senior problems in the community and what can be done about them. This also takes place without any outside assistance when people with similar problems are brought together. Provision of the basic need of one nutritious meal a day gives the clients some security, and frees some of their energies to focus on other problems of community life. Program managers can aid this by providing information and referral service at the meal sites on other community activities. Interested seniors might become volunteer workers in the community.

These secondary effects may be more important to the health or stability of a community than are primary program objectives. Problems that communities have today - violence, decaying inner cities, inability of low-income areas to attract new business and economic activity - must be addressed indirectly as well as directly. Programs that bring people of the community together, that are run by an agency identified with the community, that have a proven record of making people feel that they have a voice and a role to play in their community, have a much better chance of attacking today's problems. CAA programs do not throw money at problems, in the best instances they bring the community together to solve the problem.

Primary program effects were accompanied by secondary effects in all but one CAA. When the program achieves its primary goal - helping participants improve their earnings, their nutrition, their transportation - it has the most impact in secondary areas. Programs without a strong primary effect also lack the desired secondary effects.

The impact on the lives of clients of the agencies rated as most effective appears to have been two to three times as great as the impact of the least effective ones. It should be noted that comparisons between agencies must be made cautiously, for the reasons noted in the introduction to this chapter. Still it seems that agencies with tighter management, effective policy-making, and good planning and money-raising abilities, run more effective programs in terms of client impact.

CAA EFFECTIVENESS - SOME CONCLUSIONS

CAA's are most effective in mobilizing resources, and coordinating and refocusing services and resources for the low-income. While many CAA's tend to be less effective in developing innovative programs and employment programs, there are enough CAA programs here to make it apparent that good programs can make headway in those areas. The CAA's that are most effective seem to be effective for three reasons: planning that is keyed to the special environment the program will be

CHART 3E
PERFORMANCE ON SIX CSA
STANDARDS OF EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness Rating	CAA							TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
		I. PLANNING	II. ORGANIZATION	III. PARTICIPATION	IV. RESOURCES	V. INNOVATION	VI. EMPLOYMENT		
Very High	NCO	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1.00
High	EL DORADO	2	1	3	1	1	2	10	1.67
Low	LONG BEACH	3	2	3	2	2	3	15	2.50
High	SOLANO	2	1	2	1	3	1	12	1.67
High	SLO	1	1	2	1	2	2	9	1.50
High	KAUAI	1	1	2	1	2	2	9	1.50
High	HAWAII CO.	2	1	1	1	2	2	9	1.50
VERY LOW	CONTRA COSTA	3	3	2	3	3	3	17	2.83
High	SONOMA	2	2	1	1	2	2	10	1.67
MODERATE	KERN	2	2	1	2	2	3	12	2.00
High	PHOENIX	2	1	2	1	2	3	11	1.83
MODERATE	OAKLAND	3	2	2	1	2	3	13	2.17
High	FOOTHILL	2	1	2	1	1	2	9	1.50
Low	SAN FRANCISCO	3	2	3	3	2	3	16	2.67
VERY LOW	SAN DIEGO	3	3	3	3	3	3	18	3.00
MODERATE	ESO	2	3	3	2	2	2	14	2.33
VERY HIGH	FRESNO	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1.00
	TOTAL	35	28	34	26	33	38	194	
	WEIGHTED AVG	2.06	1.65	2.00	1.53	1.94	2.24		1.90
	RANKING AMONG 6 STDS	5	2	4	1	3	6		

1 = High
2 = Moderate
3 = Low

CHAPTER 4: CAA PROGRAMS - A VARIETY SECOND ONLY TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The variety of programs administered by Community Action Agencies is second only to local government. The seventeen agencies evaluated in Region IX during the years 1978 to 1981 administered 197 programs.

We have used the United Way of America Services Identification System (UWASIS) to categorize these 197 programs. UWASIS places each service program under one of eight goals. We have assigned each CAA program to only one goal category, regardless of whether it had multiple goals. The category was selected which appeared to represent the major objective of the program. Each program was counted only once. Chart 4A shows the total number of programs under each UWASIS goal, and the percentage of CAA's administering programs under each goal.

CAA's administered programs under seven out of eight UWASIS goals. The most common class of programs related to assuring provision of the basic needs of the poor -- food, clothing or shelter. Fifteen out of the seventeen CAA's operated a total of sixty-four programs to supply such needs. The fifteen represent 88 percent of our sample. The same percentage of CAA's operated a total of 32 employment or income-enhancement programs. Seventy-six percent, thirteen CAA's, administered twenty Organized Action programs; these were neighborhood centers, senior centers, and other neighborhood self-help programs not falling under a more specific goal. Other leading goal categories were Social Functioning (71 percent), Knowledge/Skills (65 percent), and Individual and Collective Safety (59 percent). Health was farther down the list (35 percent). No programs were operated in the field of Environmental Quality, although preservation of the environment can be seen as a secondary effect of CAA home insulation programs directed at saving costs through the conservation of fuel.

CHART 4A

PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY SEVENTEEN REGION IX CAA'S

<u>UWASIS Goal</u>	<u>% of CAA's</u>	<u>Number of Programs</u>
I. Income/Employment	88%	32
II. Health	35	11
III. Basic Needs	88	64
IV. Knowledge/Skills	65	20
V. Environmental Quality	0	--
VI. Individual and Collective Safety	59	17
VII. Social Functioning	71	33
VIII. Organized Action	76	20
TOTAL	100%	197

1. INCOME SECURITY AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Programs under the UWASIS goal of Optimal Income Security and Economic Opportunity are geared towards:

providing gainful employment for all able and willing persons;
 securing income maintenance and support for the eligible needy;
 and promoting economic conditions conducive to healthy and
 steady growth...

Fifteen of the seventeen CAA's, 88 percent, administered a total of 32 programs under this goal during the period they were evaluated. Fourteen of these programs, just under half, were classifiable as employment services; that is, aimed at helping people to find jobs, training in job-related skills, and providing other types of employment-related assistance. Several of these programs were carried out under subcontracts within the jurisdiction's Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) program. Nine other programs under this goal focused on consumer education. Eight provided emergency welfare assistance - five programs assisted in the payment of fuel bills and three provided meal vouchers.

GOAL I: OPTIMAL INCOME SECURITY AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

	<u>% of CAA's</u>	<u>Number of Programs</u>
1.1 Employment Services System (including job training)	71%	14
1.2 Income Security Services System	35	8
1.3 Economic Development and Opportunity Services System	18	3
1.4 Income Security and Economic Opportunity Supporting Services System	41	11
TOTAL	88%	32

2. PROMOTION AND MAINTENANCE OF HEALTH

THE UWASIS goal of Optimal Health covers programs and services geared to

the promotion and maintenance of health, treatment and, where feasible, cure of diseases, and rehabilitation of the handicapped.

Six CAA's, 35 percent of those surveyed, administered eleven programs with health as their main goal. These included family planning, senior health screening, community clinics, midwifery, alcoholism information, and a continuum of services for the developmentally disabled. CAA's administering these programs are listed in Appendix B.

Goal II: OPTIMAL HEALTH

	<u>% of CAA's</u>	<u>Number of Programs</u>
2.1 Health Maintenance and Treatment Services Systems	29%	9

2.2	Mental Health Maintenance and Treatment Services System	0	--
2.3	Developmentally Disabled Assistance Services System	1	1
2.4	Health Supportive Services System	6	1
	TOTAL	35%	11

3. PROVISION OF BASIC MATERIAL NEEDS

THE UWASIS goal, Optimal Provision of Basic Material Needs, covers more CAA programs than any other. Sixty-four of the 197 CAA programs fall under this goal, a third of those administered by the seventeen surveyed. Fifteen of the seventeen had one or more programs aimed at meeting basic material needs of the low-income population. UWASIS says that basic material needs include food, clothing, shelter, household goods, and transportation. The services are geared to the provision of

nutritious food and agricultural products; adequate apparel and household goods; decent housing; and safe, efficient and economical transportation.

GOAL III: OPTIMAL PROVISION OF BASIC MATERIAL NEEDS

	<u>% of CAA's</u>	<u>Number of Programs</u>
3.1	Food, Agriculture and Nutrition Services System	76% 25
3.2	Clothing, Apparel and Household Furnishing, Services System	0 --
3.3	Housing Services System	65 20
3.4	Transportation Services System	65 11
3.5	Food, Agriculture and Nutrition Supportive Services System	18 3
3.6	<u>Housing Supportive Services System</u>	24 5
3.7	<u>Transportation Supportive Services System</u>	0 --
	TOTAL	88% 64

Food Programs

CAA programs to help feed the poor fell into four general categories - provision of hot meals, distribution of food products free of charge or at reduced cost, assistance in growing one's own produce, and help in obtaining food stamps. Ten of the seventeen CAA's administered congregate feeding programs for senior citizens, and three ran supplemental food programs for women, infants, and children. Two CAA's operated "food bank" programs, whose agricultural produce was gathered from farmers and distributed to the poor through a system manned by the poor themselves. These examples represent but fifteen of the twenty-five

food programs identified among CAA's surveyed. The other ten can be found in Appendix B.

Housing Programs

Seventy-one percent of the CAA's administered some kind of housing services program. The most common was home repair and insulation, involving eleven of the seventeen CAA's. Three of the CAA's, North Coast Opportunities, Fresno and Sonoma, were substantially involved in housing development.

North Coast Opportunities, Inc., with headquarters in Ukiah, California, identified housing for the elderly as a key need in Lake and Mendocino Counties. This CAA undertook a comprehensive program, involving future residents in the overall planning and in housing and landscape design. Two hundred units are completed and occupied, all of them solar heated. The CAA coordinated every feature of this development, including arrangements for financing.

Fresno County Economic Opportunities provided important community leadership and obtained a Federal grant that made it possible to pull together a variety of other resources to relocate residents of a condemned rural community onto stable land a few miles away. EOC worked with Farmers Home Administration, the Fresno County Housing Authority, the Board of Supervisors, the Health Department, and the Courts in first arranging for a delay in the implementation of a Court order which was based on Health Department findings, then identifying a new piece of land, arranging temporary housing, lining up financing for a new town, developing the plans, obtaining needed permits, and arranging for construction. The sixty residents of the condemned village, Three Rocks, California, have been involved at each step.

Transportation Services

Sixty-five percent, eleven of the seventeen CAA's, administered transportation programs. Ten of these eleven CAA's provided vans and drivers, and maintained a mix of scheduled and on-call transportation services for seniors and handicapped residents of their communities, to enable them to get to public and private services which would otherwise not be accessible to them. Transportation funds from several local agencies were pooled to make these programs possible.

Through its experience in administering such a program, the El Dorado County Community Action Council was able to assist the County to identify the most needed routes and establish a scheduled bus service.

4. OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

THE UWASIS goal, Optimal Opportunity for the Acquisition of Knowledge and Skills, is intended to cover activities related to the "entire life-span" of an individual, rather than specific matter such as readiness for a particular job market or how to carry out a set of tasks. UWASIS talks about achieving

social functioning in the broadest sense of the term - optimal social, economic, political and intellectual participation in society. The services systems are thus geared to the formal-informal and supplementary education of the individual...

Fifty-nine percent of our CAA's, ten of the seventeen, administer Headstart - a comprehensive pre-school child development program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Other CAA's in the survey were found to be administering bi-lingual programs for natives, immigrants, or refugees, and dropout prevention programs.

One CAA, Kauai Economic Opportunity, acquired the initial funding from CSA and assisted the local community college to establish an agricultural program, the first higher education in agriculture provided on the island.

GOAL IV: OPTIMAL OPPORTUNITY FOR THE ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

	<u>% of CAA's</u>	<u>Number of Programs</u>
4.1 Formal Education Services System (includes Headstart - 10)	65%	17
4.2 Informal and Supplementary Education Services System	18	3
4.3 Supportive Services System for the Acquisition of Knowledge and Skills	--	--
TOTAL	65%	20

5. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

None of the seventeen CAA's administered programs where the main purpose was environmental quality.

6. INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE SAFETY

The UWASIS goal, Optimum Individual and Collective Safety, covers

the protection of persons and property and the administration of justice; disaster prevention and relief; and consumer protection and safety.

Fifty-nine of the CAA's, ten of the seventeen, administered some kind of program related to the goal of individual and collective safety. No one type of program predominated. Six of seventeen total programs provided care, treatment, or assistance for individual offenders, alleged offenders, or ex-offenders. Three others were crime prevention or victim assistance programs.

GOAL VI: OPTIMUM INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE SAFETY

	<u>% of CAA's</u>	<u>Number of Programs</u>
6.1 Protection of Persons and Property and Administration of Justice Systems Service	35%	11
6.2 Services System for Protection	0	--

6.3	Against and Relief from Disasters Consumer Protection and Safety Services	6	1
6.4	Supportive Services System for Optimal Industrial and Collective Safety	29	5
	TOTAL	59%	17

7. SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

THE UWASIS goal, Optimal Social Functioning, covers services geared to preserving and strengthening individual and family life, opportunities for personal development, self-fulfillment, and social functioning.

After Provision of Basic Material Needs, Optimal Social Functioning was the UWASIS goal with the second highest number of CAA programs. Seventy-one percent of the CAA's surveyed administered a combined total of 33 such programs.

Five programs provided emergency shelter - for refugees, runaway youths, transients, abused wives and children, and other individuals either temporarily homeless or needing protection. There were eight child daycare programs; they are included under this goal instead of with Headstart in the UWASIS system because Headstart is seen to be primarily educationally oriented. Senior chore assistance programs, administered by four of the CAA's, are included here because they enable individuals to live in their homes, rather than to become institutionalized. There were also six comprehensive youth development programs and a variety of other activities.

GOAL VII: OPTIMAL SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

	<u>% of CAA's</u>	<u>Number of Programs</u>
7.1 Individual and Family Life Services System	65%	22
7.2 Social Adjustment and Social Development Services System	41	10
7.3 Cultural and Spiritual Enrichment and Development Services System	0	--
7.4 Individual and Family Life Supportive Services System	0	--
7.5 <u>Social Development Supportive</u> Services System	6	1
7.6 Cultural and Spiritual Development <u>Supportive Services System</u>	0	--
TOTAL	71%	33

8. ORGANIZED ACTION

This goal is something of a catch-all, to cover organization and coordination activities that cut across two or more other goals, and to include activity leading to or improving the delivery of services. The services systems are thus geared to:

the social and political mobilization of people; the development of human and material resources and organizational capacity building; and the enhancement of services effectiveness.

Many activities carried out by CAA administrative staff and boards of directors would properly be enumerated under this goal. But such activities do not usually have a separate identifiable staff or budget of their own, so they are not identified as programs.

Two exceptions came to light in the survey. North Coast Opportunities, Inc., contracted with the City of Ukiah and assigned specific staff to coordinate preparation of a social element for inclusion in the City General Plan. Economic and Social Opportunities, Inc., in San Jose, possessed a large planning staff, which furnished socioeconomic and demographic data to other agencies in Santa Clara County.

Many CAA's administer neighborhood and senior centers. Seventy-six percent of those in our sample did so. Eight operated general purpose centers in low-income neighborhoods, and eight ran centers specifically for seniors. An indeterminate but undoubtedly considerable number of the programs listed under earlier UWASIS goals are delivered through these centers - especially feeding, transportation, and recreation. The centers are a means to deliver programs in a coordinated and visible way, and offer an opportunity to assist low-income residents to strengthen or preserve their sense of place and to identify programs they can work to remedy. Burglary prevention activities in Phoenix, Arizona, came about through discussions in a CAA neighborhood center. So did the development of senior housing in Lake and Mendocino Counties. The urban neighborhood or rural town has been the main level of operational activity for many - perhaps most - CAA's, and a neighborhood or senior center has been its focus.

GOAL VIII: OPTIMAL ASSURANCE OF THE SUPPORT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF SERVICES THROUGH ORGANIZED ACTION

		<u>% of CAAs</u>	<u>Number of Programs</u>
8.1	Mobilization of People Services System	0	--
8.2	Capacity Building and Effectiveness Enhancement Services System	76%	20
	TOTAL	76%	20

CHAPTER 5: THE STRUCTURE OF A GOOD COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Community Action Agencies can operate their programs directly, or they can delegate them to other agencies. They can be a department in a city or county, or they can be a private, non-profit corporation. The Board of Directors can be a strong and responsible decisionmaking body representing a variety of community interests, or it can be a liability to the agency, hampering its effectiveness and reputation. This chapter discusses pros and cons of different approaches to these issues. The seventeen evaluations of Region IX CAA's carried on from 1978 to 1981 provide clues about what works best in structuring and managing a program.

DELEGATING PROGRAMS

The most forceful lesson evaluation teams learned in three years was that CAA's that delegate all of their programs are uniformly ineffective as community action agencies. Chart 5A uses the effectiveness rating used in Chapter 3 to show the relative effectiveness of operating or delegating programs. The worst performers delegated all programs, the best operated all programs.

Why are CAA's that delegate all programs so ineffective? An agency that delegates all programs tends to look only at service delivery, neglecting the broader objectives of community action. A CAA cannot be a community building force if clients identify with delegate agencies and specific services more than with the CAA. Delegate agencies simply deliver services; and community action is much more than this.

PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE CAA'S

Both public and private CAA's can be effective. Chart 5B shows the rating scales as applied to public versus private CAA's. While some public CAA's are in the high range, a clear majority of private CAA's appear more effective than public CAA's. Half of the public CAA's - the three worst performers - delegate all of their programs. If we remove these CAA's from the sample, we find the effectiveness of public and private CAA's is roughly equal.

Why, then, do half the public CAA's delegate all of their programs? While CAA's do not generally engage in political activity as such, community organizing and developing the low income support for certain issues can appear to be political organizing. This is often not considered to be appropriate for a governmental jurisdiction. Public CAA's find it easier to meet CAA mandates for public participation and advocacy on behalf of the low-income by delegating out these activities. Unfortunately, when these activities are delegated out, it appears that they often are not done. It should also be noted that some public CAA's engage openly and successfully in community organizing, with the knowledge and support of the Board of Supervisors or City Council involved.

Chart 5C shows that, while both public and private CAA's can be equally effective, each has advantages that the other does not:

CHART 5A

RELATIONSHIP OF CAA ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

TO PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

# OF CAAS	ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE	# of CAAs at each Effectiveness Level					GROUP AVERAGE
		VERY HIGH 1	HIGH 2	MEDIUM 3	LOW 4	VERY LOW 5	
3	Delegates all programs	1	-	-	-	3	5.00
6	Operates all programs directly	-	5	1	-	-	2.17
8	Operates some, delegates some	2	3	2	1	-	2.25
17	TOTAL	2	8	3	1	3	2.71

CHART 5B

RELATIONSHIP OF GOVERNMENTAL VS PRIVATE
STATUS TO EFFECTIVENESS ON MISSION

# OF CAAS	LEGAL STATUS	# of CAAs at each Effectiveness Level]					WTD AVE LEVEL
		LEVEL 1 VERY HIGH	LEVEL 2 HIGH	LEVEL 3 MOD	LEVEL 4 LOW	LEVEL 5 VERY LOW	
6	Governmental Agency	-	2	1	1	2	3.50
11	Private Non-profit Corporation	2	6	2	1	-	2.18
17	TOTAL	2	8	3	2	2	2.64

The average performance of private non-profit CAAs was 1.32 levels out of five higher than the performance of governmental CAAs on the CSA standards of effectiveness.

CHART 5C

PUBLIC VS PRIVATE CAA'S

Public CAA's	Private CAA's
1. Direct funding as a department in local government	1. Do not have to work with two governing boards.
2. Part of the internal local government human services system	2. Independence/flexibility in policy and program decisions
3. Resources of planning/technical assistance from other departments	3. Can qualify for those grants available only to non-profit corporations
4. Opportunity to coordinate local government human services	4. Can form businesses and other non-profit corporations
5. Inclusion in civil service/retirement benefits	5. Can often engage in more community action and activity
6. Can have support of powerful Board of Supervisors or City Council	6. Free from certain civil service requirements

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD CAA BOARD

A Board of Directors is the central element of community action. It assures that agency policy reflects the needs of low-income neighborhoods, the realities of local government management, and the available resources and expertise of the private sector - private, non-profit, business, and labor. It moves the agency from being a strictly direct service provider into the reality of community change and development.

The most effective CAA's of our seventeen were judged to have strong and effective Boards of Directors. There are six characteristics of a good Board:

1. A selection process and training that gives the Board strong leadership.
2. Balance in participation among public, private, and low-income sectors.
3. The representation of all significant elements of the community.
4. Board members must be accountable to those whom they represent.
5. No members have conflict of interest.
6. Strong private (i.e. business) sector participation.

1. Leadership and Commitment

If the majority of Board members are not committed and hardworking, the agency will become a reflection of the wills of a few members and lose its character as a community-based organization. As the public sector makes its appointments to the Board, it should choose representatives with demonstrated leadership ability.

When low-income representatives are seated on the Board, they should receive training in policy making skills and agency operations. Almost all board members

CHART 5D

RELATIONSHIP OF PUBLIC VS PRIVATE STATUS
TO MISSION EFFECTIVENESS AMONG CAA'S
THAT OPERATE PROGRAMS DIRECTLY

# OF CAAS	LEGAL STRUCTURE	# of CAAs at each Effectiveness Level						WTD AVE LEVEL
		LEVEL 1 VERY HIGH	LEVEL 2 HIGH	LEVEL 3 MOD	LEVEL 4 LOW	LEVEL 5 VERY LOW		
3	Governmental Agency	-	2	1	-	-	2.3	
11	Private Non-profit Corporation	2	6	2	1	-	2.2	
14	TOTAL	2	8	3	1	-	2.2	

can benefit from this training. Public sector representatives and CAA staff should make sure training and board development is a regular activity.

It is sometimes necessary to delineate the roles of the Board and executive director. An effective agency is generally characterized by a strong executive director. It is inappropriate, however, for the executive director to play too great a part in setting agency policy. A board of strong leaders will keep this from happening.

2. Balance Among Sectors

Effective CAA's generally have strong and balanced participation among all three sectors - the representatives of public officials, the selected representatives of the poor, and the private sector. All are important institutions, enjoying broad support in their communities, and carrying out a sufficient range of activities to have a potentially major impact on the causes of poverty.

Where a CAA is falling short in its performance, it is often possible to attribute this to weakness in one or more parts of the board.

In one of our CAA's, for example, local government and the business sector had given over running the board to the low-income sector. In the words of the evaluation team, "the effectiveness of low-income representatives is blunted by the lack of a strong public and private sector participation." Instead of resulting in programs responsive to the low-income community, the result in this case was ineffective board meetings and weakened CAA administration. The balance that could be contributed by the other sectors was needed to bring about a level of professionalism.

In another CAA, the opposite problem existed. The low-income sector was seriously underrepresented, and the CAA was excessively professional in its orientation. Lack of low-income input to Board policy making led to a loss of focus on its overall mission, even though it operated programs whose results in assisting individual consumers were impressive.

The business sector was not well represented in most agencies, resulting in few resources from that sector being drawn into community efforts to solve low-income problems. If CAA's are to move into the areas of training, economic development, loans for small businesses, or forming their own corporations, the input of the private sector board members will become particularly important.

3. Balance in Elements of Community Represented

A CAA board can either pull the community together or tear it apart. It can respect a diversity of needs and interests or it can contribute to the further aggravation of existing hostilities and suspicions. The potential for trouble is most severe where there are two organized ethnic groups among the poor of the community which have large and more or less comparable numbers. In this case, the CAA can become a forum for competition between the two ethnic groups for jobs and program dollars.

Judging from the seventeen evaluations, this does not have to happen. In Fresno and in Phoenix, where politically important groups of Blacks and Hispanics are present, the CAA has not been dominated by ethnic concerns. Both agencies operate most of their programs rather than delegate them. Public and private sector officials have stayed involved in the affairs of the CAA, and their representatives have given balance to the board, preventing it from becoming a forum for ethnic competition. It has been clear that persons selected to represent the low-income population were not chosen to represent Hispanics or Blacks, but the poor. If they were chosen from a geographical area, it was to represent all the poor of that area based on area interests, not ethnic or racial. If they were selected by an organization predominantly made up of low-income members, another way that has been permitted by CSA regulations, it was to represent the members of that organization, not the members of a race or nationality.

Training for board members can stress the responsibility of representatives not to create sharp and arbitrary divisions in the board. Board members must represent their constituency, but have a responsibility to keep the board a professional policy making body and further the interest of the entire community.

4. Member Accountability

Board members of all three sectors are frequently held accountable to no constituency but themselves, or to some constituency other than the one they were selected to represent. The mission of the CAA is to pull the community together, "refocus all available resources," involve everyone possible to the degree they might wish to be involved, so that a significant impact can be made on poverty. For this to happen, members of the board generally must see themselves as representatives of specific outside constituencies, responsible for involving their constituents in formulating a view, working to incorporate that view into the deliberations of the Community Action Agency, then reporting back to their constituents with the result. An effective CAA board is not an independent body, but an instrument to reflect community will and implement it in a public forum.

There were several practices among elected officials, and sometimes private sector officials, revealed during the evaluations which severely undermined the ability of the CAA to work out the will of the community. One was to name representatives, then turn them loose - "Don't come to me unless you need me." Another was to instruct their representatives to let "the poor" run the agency. Both of these laissez faire approaches are harmful - the former because it isolates the CAA from important currents to which it must be joined for success, the latter because it assures the agency not be run well. The poor, no matter how talented, do not alone have the experience and connections to make the program work, just as the governmental and private sectors do not have the connections with the poor to make the program work. Letting the poor run the agency is as patronizing as running it for them; respect is demonstrated by getting and staying involved as partners.

Another appointing practice which leads to problems is all three sectors instructing their members they are on the board to represent the poor. Well-intentioned as this practice may be, its effect generally has been to make it impossible for the CAA to arrive at policies and programs reflecting a broad enough point of view to achieve community-wide support.

It is recommended that each appointing body, or official, make it clear that the representative to the CAA board is to reflect the view of the appointing body or official and report back regularly. The role of each member should be to see that the CAA is run efficiently, and to help enlist the broader support needed for success. The most powerful tool each member has in helping the CAA achieve its mission is the member's ability on those issues where it counts to gain the active support and involvement of the constituency he or she has been named to represent. Where each board member is held accountable, the CAA will not stray far from the center of community opinion. Where such accountability is lacking in any of the three sectors, the agency's public support and consequent effectiveness is bound to suffer.

5. Conflict of Interest

Delegate agencies of a CAA have at times gained political control of a CAA board. When this happens it becomes unlikely that the board will set new priorities or fund new programs. A delegate agency hammerlock on the board of directors led to the abuses and downfall of GLACCA, the infamous giant Los Angeles CAA.

Special attention is needed in organizing the CAA board so delegate agencies do not gain political control. It is not enough to make and enforce a rule that employees do not gain political control. It is not enough to make and enforce a rule that employees or board members of delegate agencies or their close relatives may not serve on the CAA board, although such a rule has been required in CSA regulations. An analysis must be done, and policies adopted, to avoid delegate agencies gaining effective control of board representatives through the manner in which low-income representatives or those of any other sector are selected. The simplest course is not to delegate programs to politically powerful community-based organizations.

6. Private Sector Participation

The Green Amendment established a composition for Community Action Agency boards of directors consisting of exactly one-third elected public officials or their representatives, at least one-third democratically selected representatives of the poor, and up to one-third representatives of the private sector - business and industry, organized labor, and private social service agencies. Some agencies have used this "at least one-third" and "up to one-third" wording to justify seating low-income representation at much more than one-third, at seating few or non-private sector representatives.

Participation of business and industry leadership on the CAA board has fostered businesslike management of the agency. Corporations have made professional and executive assistance available to the CAA on financial and other management matters. Business representatives also have lined up political and financial support for agency policies they have helped form, and have drawn upon knowledge of community problems gained in their CAA participation to improve the policies of their own companies and business associations. National economic policies aimed at redirecting national wealth from the public to the private sector increase the importance of business and industry participation on boards of community agencies.

Labor participation is also important, and the relative lack of it on CAA boards may be reflected in the difficulty of CAA's surveyed in meeting the CSA standard referring to maximum employment opportunity for the poor. Although there were many significant accomplishments in this area, it was the weakest performance area among the CAA's evaluated. Seven of seventeen showed little or no accomplishment in relation to this standard while only three were highly successful¹.

The participation of the United Way can also bring particular strength to the board of a CAA. United Way itself represents a broad community coalition, but one significantly different from the Community Action Agency. Where the CAA has gathered most of its financial backing from governmental sources, United Way revenues come from the donations of multitudes of local individuals and organizations to an annual community-wide campaign. The policy-making structure of each local United Way includes a balance among donors to United Way-funded agencies and consumers of services. Top leadership characteristically includes the highest ranking officials of local corporations and other organizations. Hundreds of volunteers from among donors, agency heads, and consumers spend thousands of hours raising funds, deciding priorities, visiting agency programs, and distributing financial and other support to needed services.

Its network of local participants, strong participation by private sector leaders, experience in using volunteers, and ability to mobilize financial and technical resources from within the local community all contribute to the ability of United Way to assist a CAA board in developing and achieving its objectives. The CAA's own combination of abilities can be of like assistance to United Way.

1. The reasons for CAA withdrawal from the employment area when CETA was formed are discussed elsewhere.

APPENDIX A: CAA EVALUATIONS - AN OVERVIEW

The purpose of the seventeen CAA evaluations was twofold: First, to provide each agency with an overall picture of its decisionmaking processes, its efforts to coordinate with other agencies, mobilize resources, develop innovative approaches, and enhance low-income employment opportunities and participation in local decision-making processes. From this overall perspective, the evaluation team offered the CAA recommendations for improvement.

The second purpose of the evaluation was to provide the CAA and the Community Services Administration with an assessment of the agencies' performance in addressing the six Standards of Effectiveness as set forth in Title II, Section 201 of the CSA Act of 1978 and in CSA Instruction 7850-1.

CAA evaluations from 1978 to 1981 were conducted by the Institute for Local Self Government through a grant from the Community Services Administration, Region IX. Throughout the evaluation process, CAA staff were cooperative and generous in sharing their views and data. Agency openness to the evaluations greatly aided the entire process.

An evaluation team of staff and directors from other Community Action Agencies, together with Institute staff, spent a week in the community, where they interviewed representatives of the CAA and local government as well as private, voluntary and citizen-based organizations. Thus, not only were CAA perspectives captured in the reports, but a community-wide perspective was captured as well.

Each report presented the overall picture of CAA efforts and a set of recommendations for improvements. Reports covered CSA's six Standards of Effectiveness.

FEATURES OF THE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology used in the seventeen CAA's was refined and adapted over time, based upon the experiences onsite, input from evaluated grantees and team members, and the needs and policies of the regional CSA office. The key features of this method are outlined below:

1. Standards of Effectiveness - The six Standards of Effectiveness provided the main set of criteria against which CAA's were evaluated.

- I. Improved community planning and coordination so that available assistance is used effectively in light of local conditions.
- II. Better organization of services for the poor.
- III. Maximum feasible participation of the poor in developing and carrying out programs to help them.
- IV. Mobilization of the resources needed to carry out an effective anti-poverty program.
- V. Use of innovative approaches in attacking the causes of poverty.

VI. Maximum employment opportunity for residents of the area and members of the groups served.

In the later evaluations, these six Standards were further elaborated into twelve areas of agency operations and separate questionnaires were designed for each:

- I. 1. Needs assessment
2. Policy leadership
3. Planning and Program Design
4. Evaluation
5. Internal Coordination/Management
- II. 6. Coordination with other Agencies
- III. 7. Participation of the Low-Income in CAA Decision Making
8. Development of Low-Income Participation on County Board/Commissions
- IV. 9. Mobilizing resources
- V. 10. Innovative Programs
- VI. 11. Low-Income Employment Opportunities within the CAA
12. Development of Employment Opportunities in other Agencies

2. CAA Accomplishments - Each CAA was asked to develop a list of accomplishments related to the six Standards. The accomplishments were to be fairly recent and concrete achievements for which the CAA was in some way responsible. These were then incorporated into the questionnaires to make them more directly applicable and used in the training and orientation of the evaluation team.

3. Interviewee List - Each CAA developed a list of names of people who were knowledgeable about one or more of the accomplishments and about one or more of the areas of agency operations.

Institute staff and CAA staff examined and revised the interviewee list with the following criteria in mind: (1) That the list represent a broad range of interviewees, including CAA staff and Board members, public officials (both elected and staff), and representatives from the private sector. (2) That the list contain people familiar with each area of agency operations, so that interviews would yield a balanced and informative view of all areas of agency operations.

In fifteen of the seventeen evaluations, one or more CAA projects were identified where it would be possible for the team to select and interview a random sample of consumers. A questionnaire was used to inquire about the effects of these CAA projects upon changes in their lives which were thought to represent an increase in their self-sufficiency.

4. Evaluation Team - An evaluation team administered the interviews and processed the results. Members of the evaluation team were familiar with the CAA's of other communities, either as Board members, management, or program staff. This ensured that the evaluation process - interviewing, data collection and analysis, and the development of recommendations - was done by agency peers sensitive to the realities of CAA management and the needs and problems of the low-income community.

5. Rapid Assessment Process - Rapid assessment techniques were used by the evaluation team to draw up observations, conclusions and recommendations while still onsite. Data from each interview in each of the areas of agency operations was discussed by the team. From the team's discussion of each finding, conclusions developed. Each conclusion represented a team consensus of opinion on agency performance. The team then developed recommendations for the agency that it felt were realistic, possible, and, if implemented, would improve the performance of the agency. The findings, conclusions, and recommendations were drawn up while the team was still on site.

6. Draft Review - Institute staff took these findings, conclusions and recommendations and wrote a draft evaluation report which was sent out for review two weeks after the team's on-site visit. The draft was sent to team members, the Executive Director and Board Chair. Any comments received were reviewed and incorporated into the final report.

The team generally came onsite on Monday and the basic observations and recommendations to be contained in the report were presented to the CAA Executive Director and Board Chair in an exit interview Friday of the same week.

SELECTION OF CAA'S FOR EVALUATION

The methods used to select the CAA's for evaluation changed over three years. The first seven were chosen by drawing at random from the names of all Region IX CAA's. The second wave of evaluated CAA's were volunteers: Contra Costa asked to be evaluated specifically because agency leaders felt the evaluation could help them address some of their problems. Sonoma asked to be picked to learn more about the evaluation process, as the CAA Director was a leader in the California-Nevada Association of Community Action Agencies. Kern felt it could benefit from an evaluation. The third wave was designed to include all of the remaining large urban CAA's in Region IX.

CAA's EVALUATED IN REGION IX

Wave I: (1978-1979)

1. North Coast Opportunities, Inc. (Lake and Mendocino Counties, California), March 1978
2. Long Beach (City) Department of Human Resources, April 1978¹
3. El Dorado County (California) Community Action Council, May 1978
4. Solano County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (California), June 1978
5. San Luis Obispo County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (California), June 1978
6. Kauai Economic Opportunity, Inc. (Hawaii), July 1978
7. Hawaii County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc., August 1978

Wave II: (1979-1980)

8. Contra Costa County Community Action Program (California), July 1979
9. Sonoma County People for Economic Opportunity, Inc. (California), February 1980
10. Kern County Economic Opportunity Corporation, March 1980

Wave III: (1980-1981)

11. Phoenix (City) Human Resources Department, May 1980
12. Oakland Community Action Agency/Social Services Department (California), September 1980
13. Foothill Area Community Services, Inc. (FACS) (Los Angeles County), November 1980
14. Economic Opportunity Council of San Francisco, Inc., December 1980
15. San Diego County Community Action Partnership, April 1981
16. Economic and Social Opportunities, Inc., of Santa Clara County (California), June 1981
17. Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission, Inc. (California)

1. This was an earlier public CAA. Since this evaluation, the Long Beach CAA has reorganized as a private CAA.

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

The conclusions in the present report are based on interviews with 901 consumers in CAA programs and 775 officials:

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED IN SEVENTEEN CAA EVALUATIONS

<u>Community/CAA</u>	<u>Officials Interviewed</u>	<u>Consumers</u>
1. North Coast	41	39
2. El Dorado County	32	50
3. Long Beach	22	48
4. Solano County	38	79
5. San Luis Obispo Co.	22	50
6. Kauai County	43	86
7. Hawaii County	26	46
8. Contra Costa Co.	53	106
9. Sonoma County	56	38
10. Kern County	60	48
11. Phoenix	56	--
12. Oakland	54	35
13. Foothill Area	48	66
14. San Francisco	60	91
15. San Diego County	49	61
16. Santa Clara County	59	58
17. Fresno County	56	--
TOTAL	775	901

APPENDIX B: LISTING OF THE PROGRAMS OF
SEVENTEEN REGION IX CAA'S FOLLOWING THE UWASIS¹ SYSTEM

1. UWASIS (United Way of America Services Identification System) is a widely used taxonomy of social goals and human service programs.

GOAL I: INCOME/EMPLOYMENT

1.1.02.01 JOB TRAINING (UNSPECIFIED)

North Coast Opportunities

Long Beach

Solano

San Luis Obispo

Sonoma

Oakland (Vietnam Veterans)

Kauai

Fresno

Economic and Social Opportunities, Santa Clara County

1.1.02.03 INTERNSHIP

VISTA

San Luis Obispo

Phoenix

1.1.03.01 EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (DISADVANTAGED)

Job Finding (Seniors)

San Francisco

Vietnam Veterans Employment Services and Advocacy

Oakland

1.1.03.02 PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT

Hawaii County

1.2.02.00 FINANCIAL AID SERVICE

Credit Union

San Francisco

1.2.02.04 EMERGENCY WELFARE ASSISTANCE

ECIP

Phoenix
Oakland
San Francisco
Economic and Social Opportunities
Fresno

1.2.02.04 EMERGENCY WELFARE ASSISTANCE

Food Vouchers

El Dorado
San Francisco

1.3.02.01 DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES (GENERAL)

Farmers Market
Kern

Counselling and Technical Assistance
San Francisco

Western Community Industries (profit making corporation)
Fresno

1.4.16.01 PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COUNSELLING

Consumer education (general)

Oakland
Foothill Area Community Services
San Francisco
Hawaii
Kauai

Conservation Education

El Dorado
Solano
Oakland
Foothill Area Community Services

1.4.16.03 DISCOUNTS OR FAIR PRICE OUTLETS FOR CONSUMER GOODS

Bulk buying
Hawaii

Senior discounts
Hawaii

GOAL II: HEALTH

2.1.01.02 CHRONIC DISEASE CONTROL

Health screening - seniors
San Luis Obispo
Kern

2.1.01.08 MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CONCERNS

Midwifery
Fresno

2.1.02.05 COMMUNITY CLINICAL CARE

Medical clinic
Kern

Family health
Fresno

2.1.03.01 FAMILY PLANNING (COMPREHENSIVE)

Family Planning
Solano
San Luis Obispo
Sonoma
Fresno

2.3.02.00 NON-RESIDENTIAL SERVICE FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED

Developmentally disabled
North Coast Opportunities: continuum of services

2.4.09.01 PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS FOR HEALTH (UNSPECIFIED)

Alcoholism information and referral, advocacy, organization
Phoenix

GOAL III: BASIC NEEDS

3.1.01.00 FOOD RESOURCES CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

Garden projects
El Dorado
Solano
Sonoma

3.1.02.02 FOOD STAMPS

Food stamp outreach
San Luis Obispo
Kern
Hawaii
Kauai

3.1.02.07 SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN

WIC
Kern
Fresno
San Francisco

3.1.03.02 HOME MEALS OR MOBILE MEALS

Home meals
San Francisco

3.1.03.03 CONGREGATE MEALS

Senior nutrition
North Coast Opportunities

3.1.03.03 CONGREGATE MEALS (continued)

El Dorado
Solano
San Luis Obispo
Kern
Phoenix
Foothill Area Community Services
San Francisco
Fresno
Kauai

3.1.03.04 FREE FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Christmas baskets
El Dorado

Emergency, seniors
Foothill Area Community Services

3.1.04.00 FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION SERVICES SYSTEM, SERVICES AND PROGRAMS
(UNSPECIFIED)

Food bank
Sonoma
Economic and Social Opportunities, Santa Clara Co.

3.3.01.01 REAL ESTATE ACQUISITION, RENEWAL AND REDEVELOPMENT

Relocation of community: Three Rocks, California
Fresno

Site acquisition
Sonoma

3.3.02.01 LOW TO MODERATE INCOME HOUSING LOANS

Repair loans
Sonoma

Purchase loan
Sonoma

3.3.02.06 HOME IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS ASSISTANCE

Weatherization and home repair
El Dorado

3.3.02.06 HOME IMPROVEMENTS (continued)

Solano
San Luis Obispo
Phoenix
Oakland
Foothill Area Community Services
San Francisco
Economic and Social Opportunities
Fresno
Sonoma
Kern

Solar water heaters
Hawaii

3.3.03.01 GENERAL ASSISTANCE FOR HOUSING SEARCH

Housing search
San Francisco

3.4.02.01 SUBSIDIZED TRANSPORTATION FOR THE AGING

Senior/Handicapped/Social Services Transportation
North Coast Opportunities
El Dorado
Solano
Sonoma
Phoenix
Oakland
Foothill Area Community Services
Fresno
Hawaii (including preschool travel)
Kauai

3.4.02.02 FREE TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE FOR INDIGENTS

Rural Indians
San Diego

3.5.09.01 COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN NUTRITION

Nutrition education
San Luis Obispo
Kauai
Hawaii

3.6.01.01 COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR HOUSING NEEDS

Housing authority
North Coast Opportunities

Elderly solarized housing
North Coast Opportunities

3.6.04.01 HOUSING PROBLEMS DEVELOPMENT

Prototype houses
Sonoma

3.6.14.01 HOUSING ADVOCACY

Helped get an authority started
Kauai

Planning/Advocacy
San Francisco

GOAL IV: KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS

4.1.03.01 COMMUNITY COLLEGES OR JUNIOR COLLEGES EDUCATION

Community College Agricultural Program
Kauai

4.1.04.02 SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR THE LINGUISTICALLY AND CULTURALLY HANDICAPPED

Bilingual/Bicultural (elementary level)
Hawaii

English as a Second Language (refugees)
Fresno

4.1.04.06 SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR THE SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED

Headstart

Solano
San Luis Obispo
Sonoma
Kern
Phoenix
Oakland
Foothill Area Community Services
Fresno
Hawaii
Kauai

Home start

San Diego

4.2.02.01 ADULT EDUCATION

Phoenix

4.2.02.06 DROPOUT PREVENTION

Dropout program
Hawaii

Tutorial

Kauai

GOAL VI: INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE SAFETY

6.1.01.01 CRIME PREVENTION (UNSPECIFIED)

Burglary prevention
Phoenix

Crime prevention/Education services
San Francisco

6.1.02.04 CIVIL RIGHTS LAW ENFORCEMENT

Comprehensive treatment to multiple youth offenders
Fresno

6.1.02.10 PRETRIAL INTERVENTION

Youth diversion
Oakland
San Diego

6.1.02.15 TRANSITIONAL CARE OF EX-OFFENDERS

Foothill Area Community Services
San Diego

6.1.02.16 ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE SERVICE PROGRAMS (MISCELLANEOUS)

Own Recognizance (O.R.)
Phoenix

6.1.03.02 LEGAL AID - CIVIL

Legal services
El Dorado
Foothill Area Community Services

6.1.05.02 PROTECTION OF ADULTS FROM NEGLECT, ABUSE, EXPLOITATION

Senior emergency services
Foothill Area Community Services

6.3.05.02 CONSUMER REDRESS

Consumer issues advocacy
Foothill Area Community Services

6.4.14.05 ADVOCACY FOR PROTECTION OF AGED, INFIRMED AND HANDICAPPED

Disabled persons access
San Luis Obispo
Economic and Social Opportunities
Oakland

6.4.14.05 ADVOCACY FOR PROTECTION (continued)

Senior advocacy
San Francisco
Sonoma

GOAL VII: SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

7.1.01.02 INTERVENTIVE ASSISTANCE TO MOBILE FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS

Counselling
San Diego

Information and referral
Fresno

7.1.02.05 GROUP HOMES, ADULT

Senior residential home care (small)
Oakland

7.1.02.06 EMERGENCY SHELTER CARE - CHILDREN

Youth shelter
San Diego

7.1.02.07 EMERGENCY SHELTER CARE FOR THE HOMELESS AND TRANSIENTS

Emergency shelter, family violence
Oakland

Family violence
Phoenix

7.1.02.11 RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR RUNAWAYS

Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (residential)
Fresno

7.1.03.01 DAYCARE - CHILDREN
North Coast Opportunities
San Luis Obispo (vouchers) (AB3059)
Foothill Area Community Services
San Francisco
Economic and Social Opportunities
Fresno
Hawaii
Kauai

7.1.04.03 COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Crisis Intervention
San Luis Obispo

7.1.04.07 FOSTER GRANDPARENTS

North Coast Opportunities

7.1.04.08 CHORE ASSISTANCE

Hawaii
Foothill Area Community Services
Economic and Social Opportunities
Phoenix

7.1.04.12 COMPANIONSHIP

Senior companion
Phoenix

7.2.01.01 PARTICIPATORY RECREATION

Summer youth recreation
El Dorado

Senior recreation
El Dorado
North Coast Opportunities
San Diego

7.2.02.01 SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

Status offenders
Phoenix

7.2.02.03 COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Long Beach
Phoenix
Oakland
Foothill Area Community Services
San Diego
Fresno

7.5.15.01 OMBUDSMAN FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (UNSPECIFIED)
San Luis Obispo

7.5.16.01 ADVOCACY FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (UNSPECIFIED)
Sonoma
Fresno

GOAL VIII: ORGANIZED ACTION

8.2.02.02 POLICY PLANNING

North Coast Opportunities (prepared social element under contract to city)
Economic and Social Opportunities

8.2.02.11 PROGRAMS COORDINATION

Neighborhood centers

Long Beach
Solano
Contra Costa
Kern
Phoenix
Foothill Area Community Services
San Francisco
San Diego

8.2.02.11 PROGRAMS COORDINATION

Senior centers

North Coast Opportunities
El Dorado
Solano
Phoenix
Fresno
Foothill Area Community Services
Kauai
Hawaii

8.2.02.14 ADMINISTRATION SERVICES PROVISION

Solano: CETA Payroll

8.2.03.10 I & R, INFORMATION AND REFERRAL (SEPARATELY ORGANIZED)

Contra Costa
Fresno (refugees)

APPENDIX C: LETTER TO DWIGHT INK FROM
THE INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

The following letter and attached memo, written by Institute staff in June of 1981, after 15 evaluations, has served Institute staff and other interested parties as a summary of evaluation reports and general conclusions about community action in California.

■ INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT



CLAREMONT HOTEL BUILDING
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94705
TELEPHONE: (415) 841-4044

Executive Director
ARTHUR G. WILL

June 15, 1981

Mr. Dwight Ink
Director
Community Services Administration
1200 - 19th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506

P E R S O N A L

Dear Dwight:

Following up our phone conversation of a few days ago, I wish to repeat my congratulations to you for your appointment to head-up CSA. I would also like to offer whatever assistance the Institute can provide for your current assignment.

As I told you on the phone, the Institute has performed evaluations of 15 Region IX Community Action Agencies over the last three years. These include both small and large agencies, the last two just completed being San Francisco and San Diego. There are a number of conclusions we have reached over a period of time, all of which have been shared with the Region IX management. In order to provide some information to you on this experience, I have asked our Project Director to prepare a brief summary of this activity. This is attached for your information.

Very briefly, I believe there are some lessons to be learned from these activities and some positive attributes of the program which should be continued even if the Community Services Administration is terminated in accordance with the President's program. While Community Action Agencies have had a stormy history, they have developed the following skills and abilities which should be continued in the future via block grants or whatever structure the Congress will finally approve for providing funds to local agencies in the human services area.

- the ability to use a small amount of core-funding to leverage additional human service resources.
- the ability to coordinate with other human service agencies across categorical lines to encourage a better organization of services to the poor.
- the ability to mobilize a broad-based constituency to advocate for the needs of the low income community in the new state block grant allocation process - at the state and local level.

Mr. Dwight Ink
Page 2
June 15, 1981

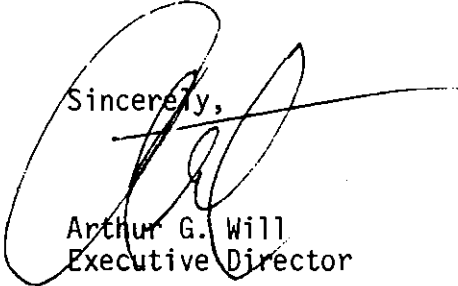
- the ability to ensure that low-income people have information and access to existing human services agencies and programs.
- the ability to provide for other agencies outreach to the low-income community and its needs.

I am also attaching, for your information, a copy of a memorandum prepared March 13, 1981, to Robert B. Carleson, Assistant to the President for Special Programs concerning a demonstration project with respect to the New Federalism Program. This was prepared in concert with the League of California Cities for which the Institute is a research adjunct and relates the project to the current work the Institute is doing for CSA. In short, it is a concept for developing a workable program within a state for equitable distribution of block grant funds. Bob Carleson was intrigued with the project and particularly interested in the possibility of shared funding with the private sector. This is not a proposal but there is keen interest on the part of several state and local agencies in doing something of this nature to follow the federal program once it is formally adopted. I am submitting this to you therefore as a thinking-piece rather than as a formal proposal in hopes that it may be of assistance to you in the transitional process on which you are currently embarking.

Again, congratulations on your appointment and the confidence it represents of the Administration on your ability to take on a very tough assignment. I hope that your confirmation later this month will be quick in order that you may get on with your task.

Best personal regards.

Sincerely,



Arthur G. Will
Executive Director

AGW:jm
dncls.

INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT



CLAREMONT HOTEL BUILDING
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94705
TELEPHONE: (415) 841-4044

Executive Director
ARTHUR G. WILL

June 3, 1981

MEMORANDUM

TO: Art Will
FM: Kathy Humphrey
RE: The Nature of Community Action in Region IX

Fifteen CAA's Evaluated

The Institute for Local Self Government, with cooperation from CSA Region IX and CAL/NEVA, an organization of Community Action Agency (CAA) Executive Directors in this region, has carried out evaluations of fifteen CAA's over the past three years.¹ These fifteen fairly represent the diversity that exists under the description, community action agency: six were public CAA's, nine private; twelve operated their own programs, the smallest CAA budget was \$1 million, the largest almost \$9 million; the proportion of CSA funding in the total agency budget ranged from 74% to 10% (with a median of 22%);² both rural and urban CAA's were evaluated. In total, from these 15 CAA's, some 843 CAA clients and 589 "officials" from the CAA, local government and private sector were interviewed.

Evaluation Method

The evaluation method was designed with two principal objectives in mind; ONE, to evaluate CAA's on their own terms, in light of the Standards of Effectiveness contained in the CSA legislation.³ These standards are what distinguish CAA's from traditional social service delivery agencies. They describe an agency that analyzes the needs of the low-income community and existing resources, sets policies and priorities, develops strategies and programs to implement those policies, works to bring in additional resources, coordinate with other agencies to address low-income needs (employment in particular), and involved the low-income community in its decision making. Moreover, the evaluation process examines the impact of CAA's or their programs had on enhancing the self-sufficiency of the poor.

1. Three more are scheduled between now and September 1981.
2. This figure is not far from the 25% given in a recent California State OEO Issues Paper. During 1979-80, CSA put \$28 million into 38 CAA's - which generated \$82 million from other sources.
3. Title II, Section 201 of the CSA Act of 1978 and CSA Instruction 7850-1.

TWO, to produce concrete and useful findings, conclusions and recommendations for the CAA evaluated and CSA Region IX. To help ensure that the evaluation results were carefully considered and acted upon, these key features were built into the evaluation process; 1) a pre-evaluation process which encouraged CAA understanding and cooperation in the evaluation; 2) an evaluation team made up of CAA directors, board members and staff as well as experts in planning, programs and evaluation; and 3) an implementation meeting - scheduled after publication of the final evaluation report - designed to produce a useful dialog between CSA Region IX and the CAA around implementing the recommendations. While an evaluation of the CSA Regional Office was not part of the project, the Institute did share, on an informal basis, the criticisms and recommendations for improving CSA administration that developed out of the evaluation process.

The Nature of Community Action in Region IX

In light of these fifteen C_A evaluations - and acknowledging the dangers of generalization - the Institute offers the following conclusions about the nature of community action in Region IX:

1. CAA's have moved away from their roles and activities of the 1960's and early 1970's. CAA's today have professionalized their management and sought more cooperative relations with local government. This has meant better fiscal management and accountability, as well as growing acceptance and credibility with local government.
2. CAA Boards of Directors - although still required to have representation from public/private and low-income sectors, have become much more "businesslike" and efficient than they were in the early days of community action.
3. CAA's regularly assess the needs of the low-income community although they vary in type of needs assessment and how they use the data.
4. Most CAA's respond to low-income needs with direct services and programs. There has been little attention given by CAA's to developing non-service strategies.
5. While CAA's have monitoring systems to ensure fiscal and program accountability, there are few evaluation processes in use; where the agency and its programs are evaluated in terms of CAA policies, goals and objectives.
6. Some CAA's coordinate with local government and other human service agencies more than others. The more successful CAA's, however, are those who work to coordinate and better organize services related to the needs of the poor.
7. Developing low-income participation in agency decision making - beyond filling the required low-income seats on the Board and conducting needs assessments in the low-income community - it is a low priority for most CAA's: This seems to be the trade-off for "professionalizing" the CAA. CAA's do mobilize the low-income population around various specific issues and credibly articulate the needs and concerns of that population to local decision makers.

8. The ability to mobilize resources above and beyond the CSA basic grant seems to be another basic indicator of CAA success (in addition to coordination with other agencies/local government, #6 above). While CAA's leverage additional resources on a ratio of approximately 1:3, there has been little effort (beyond securing "in-kind" contributions) to mobilize resources from the private sector.
9. The development of innovative programs/strategies to meet the low-income needs has been a low CAA priority - fiscal and categorical constraints have limited CAA flexibility.
10. Since the advent of CETA programs most CAA's have moved totally away from delivering employment services. Moreover, few CAA's have developed non-service approaches to address the employment problems of the low-income community.

Low-Income Needs and CAA Impacts

1. Interviews with 843 CAA clients and 589 officials in Region IX show these to be the most important needs of the low-income population:
 - transportation *
 - housing
 - health care
 - employment/job training
 - food/nutrition
 - police protection **

* Particularly in rural areas
** Particularly in urban areas
2. Officials interviewed most often gave these as program areas where CAA's put most of their emphasis:
 - information
 - food/nutrition
 - transportation
 - child care
 - community influence
 - counselling
3. Upon which areas of low-income self-sufficiency have CAA's had their most impact?
 - community influence
 - self-confidence
 - food/nutrition
 - overcoming social isolation
 - skills/abilities
 - access to services
4. According to interviews, the major accomplishments of CAA's include: "made city more aware of low-income needs," "brought a focal point to the low-income community," "gave the poor a sense of hope," etc.

Conclusions - CAA Strengths

1. CAA's have developed over the past 15 years experienced and professional staff and Boards.

2. CAA's are very successful in mobilizing resources: The CSA core funding concept - to provide CSA funds to create a small operating base to stabilize community organizing efforts and from which to generate/mobilize other resources to fight poverty - has proven to be a viable one.
3. Successful CAA's have established good working relationships with local government and other human service agencies.
4. CAA's have accrued some local political credibility as representing the low-income community - a broader based constituency than that of most narrow interest-based groups active locally.
5. CAA's have enhanced the community influence, self-confidence and access to services of their low-income communities - as well as making the city more aware of their needs and giving a focal point and sense of pride to the poor.

CAA Weaknesses

The following areas in which we have determined that CAA's need to improve have, for the most part, been recognized as problem areas by CSA and are being addressed in the recently-initiated Grantee Program Management System (GPMS).

1. CAA's need to develop a more coherent policy development process - from needs and resource assessment through policy analysis and development, program design, implementation to evaluation and feedback.
2. CAA's need to do more in developing "non-service strategies and approaches to low-income problems. This is particularly true in addressing employment problems.
3. CAA's could do more to mobilize private sector resources.
4. Not all CAA's have visibility in the low-income community - nor do they take a strong role in organizing and articulating low-income needs and concerns (CAA's which delegate/contract out all their programs tend to be weak in this area).

CAA Functions and Strengths to Support in the Eighties

Before considering CAA roles in the 1980's, distinguishing characteristics of these times should be restated.

1. Cutbacks in government spending and local human service programs - the need for increased efficiency.
2. Block grant funding to the states - the move away from allocation formulas to a more "political" process of competition for existing funds at both the state and local level.
3. The needs and problems of the poor will not go away - nor will local government's position closest to the poor and unemployed. Social problems are first and most acutely felt at the local level.

Given the above analysis, these CAA functions and strengths should be supported and maintained:

1. The ability to mobilize additional resources on the basis of a small amount of core funding.
2. Coordination with local government and other human service agencies.
 - o to cut across categorical lines to better organize and deliver local human resources.
 - o to ensure low-income access to existing human service agencies and programs.
3. Providing a focus and infrastructure of organization for the poor - especially in light of increased competition for funds and programs, the CAA can mobilize a broad constituency (across narrow categorical program interests).
4. Providing outreach for other agencies to the low-income community and its needs.

Moreover, CSA's Grantee Program Management System, or some other social planning process, should be encouraged for CAA's to help them improve their policy analysis and program/strategy development processes.