

Asset Based Community Development California Farmworker Communities Project

*Rural Community Assistance Corporation and
Center For Collaborative Planning/Public Health Institute*

Final Narrative Report September 1, 2001 - February 28, 2002

Background

In March 2001, Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) and the Center for Collaborative Planning (CCP)/Public Health Institute (PHI) entered in a contract agreement. RCAC requested assistance to provide Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) principles and practices to the RCAC Agricultural Worker Health and Housing initiative. CCP/PHI is an experienced Consultant in providing ABCD capacity building trainings and technical assistance to communities throughout the state. This contract was extended to August 16, 2002 to allow for completion of this report and the ABCD guidebooks in English and Spanish for use by agricultural workers, community organizers and RCAC staff.

Asset Based Community Development principles and practices are a positive approach to building and mobilizing the assets of individuals, citizen associations, and local institutions from the work of John McKnight and John Kretzmann, co-authors of Building Communities From The Inside Out; A Path Toward Finding And Mobilizing A Community's Assets (1993). During the late 1980's and early 1990's, McKnight and Kretzmann visited thousands of communities across the United States. Primarily, their research identified neighborhoods that are "communities" in a true sense. These neighborhoods demonstrated that in every type of community, in every economic condition, among every race or ethnic culture, the most successful communities concentrated on what they have, not on what they lack or "need". These communities focus first on local skills, talents and resources or assets of individuals, associations, and institutions, and later organize and mobilize those resources or assets to fulfill the community vision.

ABCD is a capacity building process in which people who live and work in the community play the central role in the development of the vision, the decisions made, raising the money, and the work necessary to build their community. ABCD training inspires communities and groups to recognize that every individual in a community has something important and worthwhile to contribute to the good of their community and that these contributions can be mobilized along with resources of community groups, organizations, businesses, and government agencies to realize the common vision. Projects developed through the ABCD capacity building process

have proven to be sustainable because ideas, strategies, and skills to implement projects derive from the assisted communities themselves.

CCP is the West Coast center for the California ABCD Institute, an extension of the National Asset Based Community Development institute launched by McKnight and Kretzmann based at the institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. During the past ten years, CCP has provided trainings and technical assistance in ABCD principles to hundreds of local community residents throughout California.

The purpose of this summary is to describe the progress and details of the scope of work and deliverables of this pilot project with monolingual agricultural worker communities as outlined in the contract for September 1, 2001 through February 28, 2002. There is some cross over of reported activities from the first two interim summary reports, submitted July 2001 and September 2001, in order to provide background for project activities and contract deliverables. An evaluation of the project's scope of work is included with this report. A third grantee community was identified during the RCAC third round of grant making, which took place in July 2001. In order to allow time for orientation and relationship building with the third community group, and in light of RCAC staff changes mid project, trainings for this third community began in December 2001.

Accompanying this report is the last contract deliverable described as a camera-ready English and Spanish document of the project process to be utilized as a tool for implementing ABCD by and for similar communities.

Narrative

Technical assistance activities and methodologies used to meet the contract agreement for September 1, 2001 to February 28, 2002 are summarized as follows by line item as outlined by the project contract.

I. Integrate Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) principles and practices into the RCAC Agricultural Worker Health and Housing Initiative by participating in three pre-planning meetings.

Summaries of early pre-planning meetings for the early contract period were included in the first two narrative reports submitted in July and September, 2001. During July and August 2001, RCAC underwent significant staff changes. This required a re-orientation of the pilot project and some planning changes. In addition, the third grantee community had just been selected.

On September 5, 2001, the Consultant met with RCAC staff, Maxi Villones (replacing Shoshana Zatz), and Sandra Perez-Schwartz, (replacing Aaron Stillwell) to review RCAC staff changes and the contract scope of work. During this meeting, Ms. Villones and Ms. Perez-Schwartz expressed that involvement of RCAC staff with facilitating ABCD trainings was inappropriate for their roles as grant managers. They supported a focus on the capacity building of grantee staff, community organizers and agricultural workers.

Following this meeting, the Consultant met with the coordinator of the third RCAC grantee project, Susan Slover, Community Housing Opportunities Corporation (CHOC), on October 31, 2001. CHOC is rebuilding a mobile home park community in Woodland, CA, and is using RCAC funding to assist with enlisting the mobile home park residents (primarily agricultural workers) in the transition phases of the park's redevelopment. During this initial meeting, the Consultant provided a brief overview of ABCD and how it has been integrated into other community building projects. Ways that ABCD could be used to build capacity amongst the residents of the mobile home park were also discussed, it was necessary to wait until this grantee received their RCAC orientation and had time to establish relationships with the local community before planning and trainings could take place. As a result, the Consultant and RCAC staff met with CHOC on November 8 to discuss, strategize, and begin planning trainings scheduled for December, 2001 through February, 2002. In the interim, technical assistance and trainings were provided to project grantees in Anderson Valley and Raisin City as planned with the communities.

II. Build capacity within three separate grantee communities to understand and implement ABCD principles and practices by conducting three local ABCD Workshops (one in each of the three communities). These will be conducted in partnership with local representatives, RCAC and CCP.

Trainings were developed to meet the capacity building requirements, outlined in the contract, of the three project grantee communities. Although the three grantees targeted agricultural worker communities, the size and focus of the agricultural worker groups from each community recruited for this project varied significantly. Core training agendas were designed to be interactive in keeping with the fundamental aspects of Asset Based Community Development. In addition, trainings and technical assistance to the grantee communities was flexible, utilizing varying technologies and approaches according to each community group in order to appropriately integrate ABCD in the community's planning and development.

Agendas, training materials, and interactive activity results for each of the community trainings are included at the end of the summary and as templates or samples in the accompanying handbook.

Anderson Valley

Following an initial introductory visit in June, Anderson Valley training sessions and on-site technical assistance took place during two consecutive weekends in August, 2001. Participants were seven board members of Sueño Latino, a locally organized group of agricultural workers. The Board also includes Jerry Cox, the bilingual and locally esteemed community organizer who also serves as a local school and clinic board member, and who represented the grantee partners during the trainings. The trainings, bilingual materials, and activities were delivered and facilitated in Spanish. The trainings were held on the Saturday late afternoons and Sunday mornings through midday over two consecutive weekends in August. Two members of the local grantee partners observed the trainings and provided positive support to the Sueño Latino Board. The Sueño Latino Board meets regularly, once a month on a Friday evening. The weekend dates were agreed upon after much relaying between the Consultant, RCAC Staff, the community organizer and the Sueño Latino Board. There were many factors to consider just in selecting the dates including: the season, availability of workers, agricultural worker family commitments, childcare, potential site schedules, and the scheduling of other community events.

Sueño Latino Board developed an understanding of ABCD principles, successfully developed a common vision, created an action plan, and learned how to implement their new skills. In addition, they were excited and enthusiastic about being the center and focus of the trainings and technical assistance. Upon defining their action plan, the Board immediately began to explore solutions to local issues and looked forward to demonstrating their new skills with their community. For example, they found ways to utilize ABCD skills and thinking to garner support and resource contributions from local farms, businesses, institutions, associations, and community members to enter a float highlighting their community building priorities in the September 2001 Mendocino County Fair Parade.

Casa Del Sol, Woodland (CHOC)

Three hundred residents of Casa Del Sol, a mobile home park in Woodland, CA were also the focus of community ABCD trainings, technical assistance, and capacity building. The Casa Del Sol residents are primarily agricultural workers and their families with a few retirees and other low/limited income elders. As a grantee, the Community Housing Opportunities Corporation (CHOC) sought technical assistance with engaging resident participation in the renovation plans for the mobile home park they had purchased. CHOC planned to invite the residents input and participation in some of the latter transition planning phases of the park.

CHOC already had architectural drawings, resident relocation plans and permits to begin renovation in less than four months.

A basic premise of ABCD is that strong communities are built with full recognition, integration and utilization of the valuable contributions of individual residents, local associations, and institutions to the vision, plans fundraising and objectives throughout the community's development. In Woodland, the relationship between the grantee partners and the residents of Casa Del Sol was particularly sensitive. The architectural plans, renovation, building schedule, and transition plans for the mobile home park had been designed without input from the residents. With support from RCAC, CHOC had hired a community organizer and recruited an Ameri-Corp volunteer to assist them with engaging the community with preparations for the renovation. Via community meetings, residents were informed they were going to have to move their mobile homes to different sections of the park during the estimated two years of construction. Exactly who, what, where and when had not yet been revealed to the park residents. In addition, residents were unaware that there would be new conditions/requirements for mobile units to remain in the renovated park. A number of the residential housing units did not meet the new requirements. CHOC hoped to sensitively inform residents of all these details along with the news that some of their structures were below code and would no longer qualify to be housed in the new park.

It was hoped that with knowledge of ABCD and some capacity building skills, residents would be provided a basis and a channel for participating and contributing their vision, priorities and assets to details of the latter planning and transition phases of the park renovation. After much discussion with RCAC staff and CHOC staff and strategizing and planning, the Consultant designed and facilitated three trainings for the Woodland mobile home park community. The trainings took place in December, January, and February. Trainings were primarily facilitated in English with bilingual materials. Anywhere from three to six park residents participated in the trainings with three or more CHOC staff.

Residents began an asset map of talents and skills of park residents including identification of local associations and their potential contributions, and the resources available through local institutions. They began action planning almost immediately, were successful in contributing significantly to the clean up of the park, and recruited other residents to join in the cleanup effort. (There were many inoperable, dilapidated vehicles, miscellaneous junk and garbage piles around the park.) They were also instrumental in garnering additional input to the transition planning from other park residents. Another primary concern of the residents was the safety and need for a play area for the children during park construction and renovation. Residents advocated their ideas and viable solutions for a safe play area to CHOC. From their park office, Pilar Alonso, the community organizer, and Erendida Vazquez, the Ameri-Corp volunteer, provided a centralized connection to

CHOC for residents of the park. They reached out to residents and were visible throughout the park, visiting sections of the park on a daily basis. They organized walking groups and initiated safe relationship building opportunities. Their open invitation to residents made their office a comfortable central meeting place where residents and their children freely came and went, often adding to the visions, action plans, and asset maps which were displayed on the office walls.

Raisin City

Raisin City trainings and technical assistance were provided during four separate on-site sessions in August, September, October, and January, 2002. The initial training was attended by forty community members gathered by the local resident and community organizer, Lupe Zuniga. Feedback from this training, which was conducted in Spanish, consisted of information that several of the participants did not understand why they were involved in the training, nor had they gained a clear understanding of the information presented. We learned the training pace was too fast, the agenda too heavy, and the information was still too academic for the agricultural worker community at large. In addition, it was clear that for many of the agricultural workers, this was their first experience in a training of this type. In addition, several of the participants were extremely shy and uncomfortable participating in the interactive activities. Several folks hesitated to participate because they did not know how to write. Six to eight youngsters were present, eager to participate and having fun. With feedback from this initial training, it was agreed to focus subsequent capacity building trainings with a smaller group of committed individuals and to invite the original participants back to a visioning session held on Friday, January 14, 2002. During the September and October trainings, the smaller group revisited the ABCD principles, and walked through community visioning, planning and developing an action plan. With the tight timeframe and smaller group, the sessions were delivered in English and Spanish, were more relaxed, and provided opportunities for candid discussions, sharing, and problem solving.

To accommodate community participants work, family, and other commitment schedules, Raisin City trainings/meetings were held in the elementary school cafeteria during weekday evenings for two and a half to three hours. The elementary school is a familiar and central meeting place for many agricultural worker activities and services. At the January community visioning session, there were forty excited agricultural workers, members of agricultural worker families, and youth who developed a common vision, identified local assets, prioritized community issues, and who participated in a community action plan. The community organizer, grantee partner, and the local pastor were also present and were consistent participants at all of the trainings. They contributed their understanding and support of the ABCD process at the

community visioning, and are a source of safety, hope and excitement to the larger group of community participants.

A. Design culturally sensitive workshops and appropriate materials as described.

Agendas and ABCD workshop materials were developed to appeal primarily to monolingual Spanish speakers with some degree of literacy skills. The Consultant and RCAC staff learned early on that ABCD workshops for the three communities required a presentation and activities in a manner, which allowed participants opportunities to frame the "new" information within the context of their own experience. ABCD trainings, usually begin with an introduction to the theory of Asset Based Community Development work. This approach proved to be too academic and abstract with the agricultural worker communities.

The agendas were designed to "facilitate" participatory and interactive activities following the "popular" education models of adult education for social change as utilized by social change leaders, Paulo Freire of Brazil and Myles Horton of the Highlander School in Tennessee.

The basic principles of "popular" education include the following:

- Respect for the learner is essential;
- Everyone teaches, everyone learns;
- People want to learn where the knowledge is relevant and valuable to their lives;
- Participants contribute critical thinking and critical analysis;
- Participants learn by doing;
- Popular education is oriented to action for social change and usually has a political context.

These elements are incorporated into activities that provide opportunities for participants to:

- Reflect and share according to their personal experiences;
- Look for commonalities in their shared experiences;
- Assess and analyze their common experiences;
- Develop their skills, strategy and plans for action for positive social change;
- Apply their action plans;
- Moreover, continue reflecting on their experiences, overall.

(Based on materials found in "Educating for Change", 1991, Arnold, Burke, James, Martin & Thomas and "Educating for Social Change; 2000, O'Neal.)

With the agricultural worker communities, we wanted to extend respect and provide opportunities to set a foundation for trust building. We began by making an initial visit to the communities, introducing ourselves, and sharing how other communities had successfully built their communities based upon their strengths. We then "invited them to invite us" to guide them through the steps other communities had taken realize their common vision.

At the initial trainings, participants were provided opportunities to share who they were, create a common vision for their community, and essentially, rediscover what they already know. With ABCD principles as our building blocks, we then reinforced the recognition of individual gifts or assets, their value to community, and the identification of their interests, talents, knowledge and skills as important contributions to community resources. These steps may seem redundant, however, it is important to allow opportunities for participants to re-learn, experience, and build on this process in order to facilitate the thinking, acceptance and memory of the importance of every individual's gifts. This enables the expansion of the asset building to include the traditional (monies) and non-traditional (space, time, buying power, and equipment) resources available through formal and informal associations, and private, non-profit, and governmental institutions. This learning opens the door for residents to other members of their community with whom they may not have traditionally interacted in a positive fashion or whom they did not recognize as potential contributors to, or stakeholders of their vision. Residents become open to new and/or nontraditional partnerships as they collectively engage support for a common vision.

Trainings were conducted primarily in Spanish in Anderson Valley, in English and Spanish in Raisin City, and primarily in English with the Woodland group. Materials were prepared and presented/created in Spanish and English with all participants receiving the bilingual sets of materials. It was important with the agricultural communities to elicit frequent reflection and feedback from all participants to ensure the ABCD principles were clearly understood and/or interpreted for their relevance, meaning or concept. It was just as crucial to not assume a "literal translation" of the ABCD principles and approach. Literal translations of ABCD training materials often do not properly convey the key concepts, which may also require cultural and historical translation in order to reflect the experience and worldview of the participants.

As a result of these technical assistance activities, participants for all three communities were able to prioritize community goals, begin action planning, and mobilizing their communities around their vision. During the February 15-16 joint convening, participants shared their community gifts, vision,

challenges, and lessons learned. They also had an opportunity to discover/share common experiences. The three communities explored different ways to motivate and mobilize their communities around what they already know and have to create positive change.

(Please see attachments for a complete set of materials developed for each training/community. Also, please refer to the evaluation and summary sections of this report for additional outcomes, learning, and observations resulting from project activities.)

B. Prepare the workshop co-presenters (RCAC and the communities). Preparation may vary with individuals and with each group of co-presenters. Possible ways of providing this training: co-presenter's training meeting(s), teleconference calls and a rehearsal or practice session/coaching as needed.

The community organizers for Anderson Valley, Raisin City, and Woodland assumed leadership roles in assisting with planning, coordination, and implementation of trainings. Recognized by their local communities as co-presenters of the trainings, the community organizers took initiative in ensuring the trainings went smoothly by coordinating site logistics, providing refreshments and childcare, and assisting with facilitation of activities. With new RCAC staff onboard managing the ABCD pilot project grantees, there were some changes to the initial contract deliverables with respect to the role RCAC staff would not have with facilitating trainings. RCAC staff acted as intermediaries between the community organizers and the Consultant with training coordination, and were present at the majority of trainings. Initially, RCAC staff took an active role with co-facilitating the trainings (Anderson Valley and Raisin City, August, 2001). Beginning in September, 2001, RCAC staff acted as the main contact to the communities for the Consultant. Communication between RCAC and the Consultant took place weekly and/or daily when necessary. As the lead contact for the communities, RCAC staff continued to be key contributors to agenda strategies, training plans, and training debriefings.

C. Each community will be responsible for hosting the workshop (i.e., site, food and audio/visual) marketing/recruitment and logistics. Consultant will provide workshop materials for the participants.

All three communities assumed responsibility for securing a site, providing food, and ensuring a community member attended the trainings. They also provided disposable cameras for documenting the trainings. The Consultant provided agendas and handouts in English and Spanish for participants for

each training. *(Please see attachments for a complete set of materials developed for each training/community.)*

III. Build RCAC organizational capacity regarding ABCD Field applications by integrating RCAC Staff into consultation roles as appropriate by providing bilingual technical assistance to local communities in implementing ABCD practices and principles. (July - December 2001).

This objective was realized per changes requested by RCAC staff. As previously noted, in September 2001, Ms. Villones and Ms. Perez-Schwartz expressed that involvement of RCAC staff in facilitating ABCD trainings was inappropriate for their roles as grant managers. They supported a focus on the capacity building of grantee staff, community organizers and agricultural workers.

Key RCAC staff and grantees (except for CHOC) who participated in this pilot project had received introductory trainings to ABCD principles before the contract period. This proved helpful during preplanning meetings and during training delivery. As with the training workshop development, the Consultant met regularly with RCAC staff, (Aaron Stillwell and Sandra Perez-Schwartz, in particular) by teleconference, email, and in person, to discuss and review technical assistance strategies and approaches for each community before and following each training and/or site visit. Some of the topics/issues addressed included:

- The cultural competency and appropriateness of the bilingual translation of ABCD concepts and materials, agenda development, training activities, and training facilitation;
- Background on the communities and grantee partners;
- Encouraging and supporting communities to believe they possess the solutions to community issues;
- Exploring ways to assist communities in discovering, identifying, and mobilizing their strengths/gifts;
- Assisting communities to shift their community issues "needs" based focus to building their community's capacity based upon it's strengths;
- Finding ways to increase agricultural worker confidence in mobilizing their communities around their strengths;
- The importance of continual referral back to community residents for their perspectives and input; and the importance of modeling this open approach with respect to the communities and to grantee partners.

Pilot project communities also received additional technical assistance from RCAC with respect to their grant contracts requirements.

- A. Provide bilingual technical support on topics such as community organizing, conducting asset mapping, and mobilizing local resources. This will be provided via telecommunications (i.e., phone, fax, Internet) and two follow-up site visits in each of the three communities.**

Following the first training, it was determined that the agricultural worker communities were going to require additional ABCD capacity building trainings in order to deliver the important components of ABCD principles. The original thinking with this contract was that the communities would each receive one 6-8 hour training with two follow-up site visits for additional technical assistance. With the agricultural worker communities' work schedules and availability limited, to 2-3 hours at a time, the ABCD trainings were developed into four sessions/segments. Subsequently, each community received trainings and technical assistance during subsequent site visits. A variation to this plan was implemented with the Anderson Valley group who participated in four ABCD training sessions over two consecutive weekends.

In between site visits, communication between the Consultant and the communities was relayed through RCAC staff as specified by RCAC staff. The grantee communities received bilingual technical assistance utilizing limited telecommunications and internet technology before and following the trainings and/or site visits. Anderson Valley and Raisin City did not have easy or dependable access to Internet or fax technologies. In addition, neither community organizer had access to a local office, a local fax machine, or "office phone". In addition, the community organizers (except for CHOC) and the residents had minimal or no technical skill to fully utilize any of the limited communication technologies. For example, they did not know how to send attachments nor how to access attachments received.

- B. Summarize the findings from the three ABCD communities, at two meetings to be convened by RCAC to share their experiences, identify each other as resources and strategize various approaches to implementing their projects.**

In light several unexpected delays with recruiting communities, scheduling trainings, and accommodating staff changes, one convening for the three communities was held during the contract year. On February 15-16, 2002, RCAC convened the three ABCD communities for a two-day conference and training. The Consultant provided all three communities with documents reflecting their community visions, asset maps, and action plans. The convening agenda was prepared by RCAC staff and the Consultant. The agenda highlighted opportunities for the three communities to share who they were, the gifts of their communities, their challenges, and their lessons

learned. The ABCD communities also shared their perspectives on leadership and participated in a Spanish workshop adaptation of The Right Question Project, a tool used by communities across the nation to address community issues. Convening participants also discovered their "common ground" and strategized ways to carry out their action plans. The communities appreciated the different stages of their projects and were encouraged to utilize each other and the RCAC network as links to statewide resources.

Ten participants and residents of the three grantee project communities attended the February convening. The responses to group discussion questions at the end of the training were very positive:

- Participants were unanimous in feeling the information they had received during the year was useful and were encouraged that they could all learn and *learn together*.
- They all felt their leadership skills had been improved and that they could confidently apply what they had learned.
- Participants expressed that they had more "valor" or bravery and spirit to speak with their community about issues in a positive manner.
- They felt they could approach their community like family and with confidence.
- They developed skill in knowing what is an open ended question and what is a close ended question.
- They expressed an eagerness to support one another, learning new things, providing each other opportunities to be leaders.
- They believed they had learned how to ask for resources and support to achieve their visions.
- When asked if the ABCD training affected the way they perceive their community, they responded that they recognize what leadership means and though they did not believe they could teach their communities exactly we had taught them, they believed they could lead their communities and share what they had learned.
- They expressed that it would be good to have an opportunity to meet other communities who had learned what they had learned and to see the changes and progress which had taken place resulting from this process.

In addition, nine of the ten participants completed individual survey questionnaires. The responses to the survey questions are summarized as follows:

1. Participants were asked about their role in the community and to mark all that apply:

- Four identified themselves as Agricultural Workers;
 - One identified him/herself as an Activist;
 - Six identified themselves as Community Organizers;
 - Two identified themselves as Service providers;
 - Three identified themselves as Other.
2. The average number of ABCD trainings or meetings attended by the convening participants was 3.33 meetings.
 3. All nine of the respondents believed the information was presented in a culturally competent manner.
 4. All nine of the respondents felt their leadership skills had improved.
 5. Asked to choose from three ABCD principles that were most useful for them personally, respondents selected the principles in the following order:
 - Bringing the community together to understand its strengths and challenges (9),
 - Identifying gifts of the community members (5),
 - Identifying and understanding the role of community institutions (4),
 - Developing a community vision (4),
 - Seeking to include members of the community that are not currently involved (3),
 - Identifying and valuing assets within the community (2).
 6. All nine respondents indicated they would be willing to participate in further community building / leadership skills development projects.
 7. All nine respondents indicated the ABCD training affected the way they perceive their community.

C. Gather input and design site visits/group meetings, facilitate meetings as needed and provide materials. RCAC and local sites will be responsible for hosting the meetings (i.e., site, food and audio/visual) marketing/recruitment and logistics.

This deliverable is described in Section II. C.

D. Provide assistance to the communities to document and share their experiences.

During trainings and when providing technical assistance, the Consultant encouraged and provided ideas, models, and templates for the residents to document their visions, action plans, asset maps, and their community "stories" in various ways including posters, photos and photo journals, etc. The Consultant stressed the importance of documenting the progress of the communities steps, small and large, along the way, as a means of "marketing" their visions, plans, and goals. One community was a bit

hesitant to document an action plan. "We have it all up here", said one agricultural worker while pointing to his head. The Consultant explained the value of a written action plan as something to "show" stakeholders and potential partners. ABCD communities were encouraged to display their visions, goals, plans and progress in public places including meeting rooms, halls, offices, etc. The agricultural worker ABCD communities were also encouraged to celebrate their successes, big or little, and along the way to keep their vision alive, reward their achievements, and to inspire others to join in the work.

E. RCAC will identify opportunities for the three local communities to share their experiences, such as the Agricultural Worker conference in 2002.

The Consultant and the three ABCD communities will be sharing at the upcoming Agricultural Worker Conference scheduled for November 8-10, 2002 in San Jose, CA.

IV. Document the process, experiences and lessons learned from working with the three Communities (pre-planning phase, workshops, technical assistance, site visits, group meetings, etc.). Consultant will compile the information into a written report in a format acceptable to RCAC and provide a camera ready and electronic copy to RCAC. RCAC will be responsible for reproduction and distribution for use by other communities as a tool for implementing ABCD in similar communities (February 2002).

Please see the attached camera ready document and electronic copy.

V. Evaluation

In addition to the evaluation survey and group question responses summarized from the February 15-16, 2002 convening in section III.B. of this report, a summary of the evaluation plan used for documenting the process and progress of the overall pilot project effort to integrate ABCD in farmworker communities in California is included below. Actual documents demonstrating the evaluation milestones and process, primarily the community visions, action plans and asset maps, are included for each community in the attachments section of this report.

ABCD in Farmworker Communities Pilot Project Evaluation Summary

Theory of Change: Center for Collaborative Planning/Public Health Institute proposed that integrating Asset Based Community Development principles and

practices in trainings for three grantee farmworker communities of the RCAC Agricultural Worker Health and Housing Initiative would:

1. Build capacity within the three separate grantee communities to understand and implement ABCD principles/practices in the planning and development of their respective projects.
2. Enhance the quality of local project efforts through additional, innovative, and locally driven community based strategies.
3. Maximize the recognition and mobilization of local community resources in developing their projects.
4. Increase social capital, described as increased trust between farmworkers and other residents across neighborhoods, decrease isolation and increase collective efficacy, a willingness to intervene for the common good.
5. Influence family health and housing status and social support indicators through increased social capital and utilization of local resources to implement their project plans.
6. Build capacity of RCAC staff to continue and expand the integration of ABCD principles and practices in grantee communities.

Testing Assumptions: In order to test these assumptions, data was collected at each of the milestones for each community during the contract year, compiled and analyzed for content. These documents are included at the end of the section for each community in the attachments to this summary.

Milestone #1 - Community Vision

- Each community developed a common vision reflecting housing and health as common priorities.
- Each community successfully developed an action plan, time line, steps, and assigned tasks.
- Individuals were provided training in interviewing other individuals, associations, and institutions. Each community reported approaching and interviewing other individuals, various associations, and institutions to garner support for their projects.

Data collection: Collection and analysis of vision and action plans; collection analysis, and tallying of RCAC convening evaluations and verbal responses to group questions/discussions during trainings and convening, verbal reports from community organizers.

Milestone # 2 - Asset Mapping

- Numerous individuals' gifts were identified by each community.
- Individual gifts identified are diverse.
- Numerous associations were identified by each community.

- The types of associations are varied, reflecting the individual communities.
- Numerous institutions were identified by each community.
- A broad range of private, non profit and governmental institutions were identified by each community.

Data collection: Asset maps for each community.

Milestone #3 - Asset Mobilizing

- Each community reported successful solicitation of commitments from other residents/individuals, local associations, and institutions. Examples are described in Section II of this report.
- Community members and community organizers participated (either on their own) or with other community members in the solicitation of support from individuals, associations and institutions.
- During the group convening, communities shared that they were continuing to refine their strategies.
- The asset maps created for each community demonstrate how identified associations and institutions can be linked to improved health and housing efforts.

Data Collection: Verbal reports, analysis of reports from community meetings where strategies were discussed; reports of commitments to communities from individuals, associations, and/or institutions. Analysis of plans and maps.

General Reflections

- Relationships have been strengthened and/or built in each community with the grantee agencies, the residents, local associations, and other community stakeholders.
- Opportunities for linkages between the grantee communities and the Consultant's CCP statewide networks of Community Partnerships for Healthy Children and the Women's Health Leadership network have taken place. In addition, CCP has linked the three grantees with the national Right Question Project.
- The fact that agricultural workers themselves are being given an opportunity to see themselves as valuable contributors to their community vision, planning, and community development strategies and to act as community models of this process is innovative and exciting. This is shifting their perception of their communities and themselves as positive change makers and bridge builders. We hope their work ignites other agricultural worker communities with a passion and confidence for building their communities from their strengths.
- Building trust between residents, grantee agencies and other community stakeholders during this planning phase is possible in various situations as demonstrated by the three communities. Sincerity, mutual respect, time,

flexibility, cultural and language appropriateness, open minds, patience, persistence, and commitment are the real requirements.

- Additional indications of increased social capital include the recognition of the importance of contributions to community building from youth and their inclusion in all phases and aspects of a community building effort. All three communities were enthusiastic about inviting and including youth in trainings and planning sessions.
- The success of marketing Sueño Latino's vision at the Mendocino County Fair; the attendance and testimony of Raisin City residents at County Supervisor meetings; and Casa Del Sol's contributions to cleaning up the mobile home park and ensuring the safety of the park residents provide evidence that the grantee communities have the capacity to solve their own problems.
- With respect to the traditional, academically heavy ABCD tools, principles, and practices we learned that with these particular grantee communities we had to break things down to core concepts, acknowledge what the communities "already know" and eliminate the academic "gibberish".
- Providing interactive opportunities and time for agricultural workers to experience and relate to the concepts firsthand was also key.
- Providing trainings and site visits in the agricultural communities on their turf and in their homes was basic to the trust building and acceptance of the Consultant's work and ABCD principles.
- The excitement and enthusiasm of being in the "center" of this effort/project demonstrated by the agricultural workers helped to dispel their frustration at any previous attempts by outside agencies to initiate or impose change.

Data Collection: Analysis of plan and maps; interviews with community residents and RCAC staff, " participation of RCAC staff in trainings.

Additional Observations and Learnings

As stated in previous summaries, we acknowledge the amount of time necessary for RCAC staff, the Consultant, and community contacts to build trust and a working relationship with communities. Communication and the time lapse between communications is a huge factor to consider when working with agricultural worker communities. It would sometimes take several weeks for communication regarding meeting or training times to pass from the community entity to the grantee to RCAC staff and then to the Consultant - before activities could occur. This may have been helped if advanced communication technology were more available to the communities and if they were skilled in how to utilize these communication tools.

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of flexibility required to provide successful technical assistance to agricultural workers. They work 80 to 90 hours per week, six days per week, have limited time to attend meetings, and even fewer adequate chunks of time or availability for intense trainings. In our contract scope

of work we intended the initial community trainings to be one-day intensives. An eight hour intensive for farmworkers is unrealistic. The community organizers, the Consultant, and RCAC staff had to be flexible and willing to work weekends and evenings and provide shorter trainings. This is one reason the additional technical assistance site visits were utilized as opportunities to provide training sessions. If trainings are held during the week, agricultural workers generally do not commit to more than two hours in the evenings. Childcare and a light meal or refreshments should be provided. In Anderson Valley, the weekend trainings were not longer than three or four hours at a time. It worked well to schedule their training sessions on consecutive weekends.

Furthermore, it is important to consider and respect the individual community groups' decision-making processes. Within these three community groups, decisions are made by consensus - requiring a meeting. These meetings are generally held once per month. This affects timelines for trainings, relationship building, and action plans. In addition, there are other dynamics taking place. For example, one community organizer was considering taking the summer off-which would have delayed trainings even further.

The cultural appropriateness and language content of the trainings was developed and implemented around popular education methods with a respect and awareness of even subtle differences in language and culture. Many, but not all of the farmworkers in the three grantee communities are monolingual Spanish speakers. Literal translation of ABCD materials to Spanish was not always useful in the implementation of this contract. It was important to check regularly with participants regarding how well ABCD concepts were understood. The Consultant often asked participants to provide feedback on the appropriateness of words and cultural references during trainings. Providing opportunities and different ways for community members to grasp the concepts in a manner which made sense to them was also successful. The activities implemented during trainings are highly interactive. This requires competency in building a safe and comfortable setting for individuals who are unfamiliar or who have had limited experience with interactive group learning. The Consultant is particularly sensitive and experienced with adult learning models, immigration issues and issues of power in communities of individuals who do not read or write in English and/or Spanish; who may be fearful or culturally uncomfortable speaking before a group; who have had limited opportunities to speak or share their views in a public setting. It is therefore important to not take for granted the most basic learning processes and to allow opportunities and time during the trainings for this learning to occur.

With respect to selecting communities, we recommend that certain criteria be in place before we can "invite" communities to "invite" us. These criteria require time for relationships to be built and include:

- Identification of key contacts who will commit to being their community group's liaison with the community organizer;
- A community organizer who is a respected resident of the community is a big plus and facilitates the trust and relationship building process;
- Clear lines of communication;
- A community that is already engaged at some level whether formally or informally;
- Planning and trainings that take place on the agricultural worker's home turf whenever, wherever possible;
- Diligence and patience on our part to allow the process to happen.

Finally, it is important to honor and respect the experience of the community as early in the planning process as possible by inviting them to the table to contribute their "expertise", "knowing" and wisdom.

Comments

CCP is honored to have had the opportunity of working with RCAC on this very exciting endeavor. We know that grassroots communities can truly benefit from implementing ABCD in their planning and community building efforts. The three grantee communities responded positively to all of the ABCD trainings and we are excited to see their visions, asset maps, action plans, and progress. We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate with RCAC in reaching deeper into agricultural communities and sharing principles and approach of Asset Based Community Development.