# INSIGHTS FROM INSIDE THE BLACK BOX OF DEVOLUTION:

## Inducement Meets Entrepreneur

### *The Case of the Compassion Capital Fund and High Risk Youth Services in Boston*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Introduction**

Beginning in January 2002, the Compassion Capital Fund (CCF) Demonstration Program provided an opportunity for intermediary organizations to apply for and receive funding directly from the federal government through a competitive process (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, n.d.).[1]  The Demonstration Program aims to induce intermediaries to develop a localized system of social service delivery through faith-based and secular community-based organizations (FBCOs) by providing intermediaries with funding to encourage them to help the federal government change ". . . the obstacles and opportunities" (Stone, 2002, p. 266) FBCOs face in accessing public funds.[2]  CCF is part of a reform agenda in democratic governance, the calls for which date back to the late 1970s (Berger & Neuhaus, 1996).  Those reforms are often referred to as devolution, a strategy that heralds reliance on active community organizations and an engaged citizenry as the best means to alleviate social problems and frequently enjoys bipartisan support as it assures a more compassionate, socially just, civic-centered governance (Hoover, 2000; Kettl, 2002).

The ultimate promise of devolution is that channeling federal resources to grassroots organizations will enhance inclusive and democratic decision-making and, in the case of social service provision, deliver more effective services to those in need.  However, devolution also comes with a set of management and accountability challenges (Boris & Steuerle, 1999; Salamon, 2002).  Those challenges are not necessarily eliminated when funding is provided through an intermediary organization.

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[1] It was the only new funding stream associated with the federal Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (FBCI) at that time, but now CCF also includes the Targeted Capacity-Building Program, which provides capacity-building funding of $50,000 directly to FBCOs, and the Communities Empowering Youth Program, which provides multi-year grants to build the capacity of coalitions working to serve at-risk youth.

[2] While the term inducement may connote coercion in some cases, it is not used in that way here.  Rather, it is seen as an incentive - a form of indirect governance, meaning that the federal government is limited in its ability to impact outcomes (Stone, 2002). CCF provides an opportunity structure for the intermediary to access funds to implement the project it proposes.

This paper draws on case study evidence from the partnership of organizations that has received CCF Demonstration Program funds in Boston since 2002, known as the Boston Capacity Tank (BCT), to illustrate the argument that in order to overcome existing institutional norms and power structures, intermediaries need to demonstrate entrepreneurial characteristics (Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Clemens & Cook, 1999; Levy & Scully, 2007).[3]  Furthermore, this paper shows that those entrepreneurial characteristics must reflect a normative commitment to inclusive democracy and be combined with the functional capacity to act on that commitment. Those intermediaries can then act as principled entrepreneurs, using three dimensions of power strategically to pursue ". . . integrated strategies across these dimensions in an attempt to reconfigure the field and gain a measure of advantage within a complex web of relations" (Levy & Scully, 2007, p. 986).  The argument put forth herein is informed by the literatures on devolution, institutional entrepreneurship, and networks.

### The Problem:  Living up to Devolution's Promises

The literature that discusses the implications of devolution for democratic governance primarily takes one of two positions – either favorable for bringing democracy closer to the people, keeping tax money nearby, enhancing accountability, and encouraging citizen input at the local level *or* unfavorable, concerned with inconsistencies, inequities in funding and access often associated with local implementation, and complicated accountability trails (Hall, 2000; Salamon, 2002; Sanger, 2003; National League of Cities, 2005).  When FBCI entered the devolution debate, the discourse related to concerns for equity, effectiveness, and accountability,

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[3] The partnership consists of four agencies:  the Black Ministerial Alliance (BMA), the Boston TenPoint Coalition, Emmanuel Gospel Center, and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay.  Together these four organizations formed the Boston Capacity Tank (BCT) in 2002 as a program of the BMA, an endeavor first supported by a three-year, $6 million CCF Demonstration Program Grant.

particularly regarding separation of church and state, was intensified (Kennedy & Bielefeld, 2006; DiIulio, 2007).[4]

At the heart of devolution's democratic promise is that it will lead to greater community involvement, be more inclusive, and reach marginalized groups. That promise is met by two types of challenges, management and accountability, each of which has functional and normative components. The management challenges include coordinating funding and service delivery mechanisms, facilitating communications, and ensuring that the project is performing in a manner that is effective, efficient and sustainable. The accountability challenges are related to ensuring transparency and that constitutional norms are upheld. While the functional components of these challenges are frequently discussed in the literature, the normative components receive less attention (Boris & Steuerle, 1999; Kettl, 2002; Smith & Ingram, 2002). The normative components arise from contradictions between the intermediary's community-centered mission and administrative functions and the federal government's equity-centered oversight and accountability requirements. In public policy, equity refers to fairness in the distribution of public resources. Public officials are expected to allocate resources for services in a way that is fair, so that those who need services can access them (Smith, 1999, p. 188).[5] However, when funding is provided through an intermediary, that organization has to reconcile its commitment to its constituent organizations with that of the community as a whole. One reason that the debates around devolution remain unresolved is because there is a lack of understanding as to how intermediary actors, and faith-based organizations in particular, can

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[4] This paper does not address the details of the debates over FBCI and federal funding of FBOs, but the dissertation of which it is a part, does. The chapter is in draft form at this time, but is available from the author upon request.
[5] For a comprehensive yet easily digestible discussion of equity issues in public policy, see Stone (2002), pages 39-60.

address the challenges that accompany devolution while remaining true to their missions, especially in contested and complex service delivery environments (Stone, 2002, pp. 266-174).

After providing an overview of the data and methods and a brief case description, this paper offers a grounded discussion of devolution's challenges and argues that the actions the Boston Capacity Tank has taken are best understood as entrepreneurial responses to those challenges. The final section offers generalized conclusions and policy recommendations for the federal government, intermediaries and evaluators that can be applied to FBCI and other instruments of devolved governance.

### *Overview of Data & Methods*

The research presented herein is part of a dissertation that employs a single embedded case study design and triangulates data from four sources, including thirty-six key informant interviews, document retrieval, archival records, and participant observation. A single case study design is appropriate because this is a relevatory case that applies a unique conceptual framework, which appears in Appendix E (Yin, 2003, pp. 39-45). This case study was not designed with the intent of replicating a typical case. Indeed, during the development of the research design and early stages of the research itself, it became clear that the BCT was a success story according to many observers. Once the study gauged that feelings of its success were widespread, it aimed to uncover what happened in this case and determine if key lessons could be extrapolated and generalized. One of its ultimate aims is to construct a grounded explicative model for understanding how intermediary organizations can overcome the problems often associated with devolved governance, especially where FBCOs are involved (Clarke & Primo, 2007). This paper does not present that model but does lay the groundwork for its development.

The interview protocols that appear in Appendix B were used to guide each conversation; they are not intended to be rigid survey instruments, but to help the investigator ensure that she gleaned certain information from each of the conversations. With the permission of interviewees, each interview session was recorded and transcribed. In keeping with Institutional Review Board regulations, the identity of many of the interviewees must be kept confidential. All in-text citations refer to interview codes; see Appendix A to identify non-confidential informants. The interviews were coded and analyzed using NVIVO7 qualitative software. The NVIVO7 software was also used to code and analyze notes from participant observation sessions as well as the documents and archival records that could be imported using the software. This data was combined with information from archival records and other documents, including but not limited to newspaper articles, website materials, and organizational publications, to produce the analysis that follows. A more detailed discussion of the data and methods, including study limitations, appears in Appendix C.

## Case Overview[6]

When the first CCF Demonstration Program grant opportunity was announced in 2002, the field of high risk youth services was not clearly defined in Boston; rather, it was a loose connection of organizations (see Figure D-1). In the six years that have passed, a defined field of high risk youth services has emerged, reinstitutionalizing the broader field of at-risk youth services of which it is a part.[7] Rooted in a belief that failing to fund black churches is tantamount to failing to fund services for the black community, the current configuration (which extends far beyond black churches) grew out of an integrated set of strategic and principled

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[6] Additional information to supplement this overview appears in Appendix D.
[7] Institutionalization is a dynamic and multi-dimensional process that involves norms and patterns of behavior, rules systems, interorganizational relationships, and funding streams, among other things (See Powell & DiMaggio, 1991).

entrepreneurial responses to what many regarded as a controversial federal funding opportunity, the Compassion Capital Fund Demonstration Program (Interviews I-1, I-4, I-8, I-14, I-16, I-20, O-2 & O-12).

The BMA distributes and administers funds and coordinates the network through two programs it houses, the BCT and High Risk Youth Network (HRYN).  FBCOs access funding and technical assistance through BCT, the intermediary agent, which, in 2005 created the HRYN to fill the role of network coordinator for the field of high risk youth service providers in the city.[8]  While presented as distinct units of the BMA for the purpose of clarity in this case description, these units are closely linked, with the HRYN's budget and staffing falling under the BCT (see Figures D-2 & D-3).

Although technically a program of the BMA, the BCT operates as a partnership of four organizations – the BMA, the Boston TenPoint Coalition, the Emmanuel Gospel Center and the United Way (see Figure D-3).[9]  Each of the four partner organizations plays an important role in the program's implementation and success.  As lead agency in the partnership, the BMA does the bulk of the coordination, oversight, support, administration, financial and compliance work.  In addition, the BMA carries out the same additional responsibilities as its strategic partners, which include participation in quarterly Oversight Committee meetings, monthly BCT partner meetings, and monthly HRYN and steering committee meetings.  Each of the partners offers workshops and individualized technical assistance every year.

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[8] The terms intermediary agent and network coordinator are used to distinguish two bundles of functions required for an effective network.  The intermediary agent generates and redistributes funding and other resources while the network coordinator facilitates communications and coordination among network members.  Their roles may overlap, they both may be formal entities or the network coordinator may be less formally organized, but they are functionally distinct (Provan & Milward, 2001).
[9] The United Way of Massachusetts Bay (UWMB) changed its name to the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley (UWMBMV) in 2007, but will be referred to as the United Way throughout this paper.

The United Way received the year one CCF funding. One critical component of the grant application was that it would mentor the BMA and help it gain the capacity to implement the federal grant – and the BCT program it spawned – in future years. The mentorship was so successful that the BMA took over as lead agency in year two and assumed responsibility for administering the grant in year three (Interviews I-8 & I-13). That first award was for a total of $6 million over a three-year period ($2 million each year).[10] Since then, the BMA has gotten two other Demonstration Program awards to help support the BCT – one for $1.4 million over the seventeen-month period October 2005 – February 2007 and another for $1.5 million over three years beginning in 2008 ($500,000 each year). In addition, the BCT has received CCF funding through the Communities Empowering Youth program, $750,000 over three years, beginning in 2006 ($300,000 in 2006; $225,000 in 2007; $225,000 in 2008) and has increased its revenues from local foundations, as well as state and city agencies.

The purpose of the BCT is to help FBCOs increase their capacity to deliver services to high risk youth and their families. From 2002 – 2006 the Boston Capacity Tank granted nearly $3 million in subawards to 72 different FBCOs. Included in that amount is $262,000 granted in 2006 to support cluster grants for groups of organizations working collaboratively (BCT, 2006; BCT, n.d.).[11] In keeping with BCT policy, all of this funding has been distributed nearly equally among faith-based and secular CBOs. In addition to these cash awards, the number and frequency of technical assistance, training and networking opportunities, offered is vast. [12]

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[10] In keeping with federal requirements, the United Way provided a $1 million match in each of years one and two and the BMA provided the $1 million match in year three.

[11] The BCT did not grant subawards in 2007 because it did not have a Demonstration grant in that year; it had a $300,000 CCF Communities Empowering Youth grant, but that goes to support a pre-named cluster or organizations.

[12] Organizations that wish to receive individualized technical assistance through BCT must meet specific eligibility requirements, which parallel the eligibility requirements for cash awards. Eligible FBCOs deliver direct services to youth, have at least one paid staff member or clear plans to hire someone at 25% time, and in order to receive cash awards, and must be enrolled in a BCT technical assistance program. In accordance with CCF guidelines, applicants

Funded through the BCT, the creation of the HRYN in 2005 marked the first time BCT or the CCF partners took proactive steps to transform the institutional framework of high risk youth service provision (E. Bass, personal communication, February 12, 2007). The HRYN's mission is to ". . . strengthen the connections between existing programs, [so that] those programs will provide better services for youth and will better help them achieve lasting results in their lives" (High Risk Youth Network, 2006). According to attendance records, 185 separate agencies participated in HRYN meetings from February 2005 – February 2008. HRYN attendees include some of the FBCOs that receive funding and technical assistance through the BCT, but it also includes other intermediary and networking organizations, state and city agencies, as well as FBCOs that deliver services but do not receive BCT support. Though the primary geographic boundaries for the HRYN and BCT overlap, with a focus on the city of Boston and substantial representation from the neighborhoods of Dorchester, Mattapan, Roxbury, and the South End, the HRYN also actively involves organizations that serve communities like Charlestown and Cambridge. The activities of the HRYN are meant to be network-driven; active members are encouraged to come to consensus on the priorities and actions for the group in any given year and carry them out, with some support from the HRYN steering committee and staff.

## Inducement Meets Entrepreneur

This section illustrates BCT in its role of principled entrepreneur, overcoming dominant institutional actors and power structures while addressing devolution's management and accountability challenges. Given space limitations, the discussion is grounded in the issue of

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are not required to be 501(c)3 organizations. However, the BCT was granted an exception to this rule in the first grant cycle, and required all applicants to be 501(c)3s, to comply with United Way grant guidelines. Only clusters are eligible to apply for cash awards in 2008.

fragmentation in the funding and service delivery environments for high risk youth services in Boston. Fragmentation, rooted in powerful state and city funding agencies and the nonprofit organizations they regularly fund, is widely considered an institutional constraint to change, one that is often compounded in devolved funding environments (Scott et. al., 2006).

*Strategic Responses to Devolution's Challenges*

Strategic entrepreneurial actions are rooted in three sources of power: (1) discourse, which includes semantics as well as shared meanings and norms that foster an awareness among actors that they are engaged in a common enterprise, (2) material resources, which includes the ability to raise and distribute funding and other resources, as well as control over associated decision rules, and (3) interorganizational relations that aim to build the capacities of organizations that can support new or changed institutional arrangements (Levy & Scully, 2007). Though these elements have been distilled for analytic clarity, neither the challenges nor the sources of power are observed as distinct phenomena. Rather, they are interconnected, sometimes as a matter of unavoidable fact and sometimes as the result of a strategic deployment of power.

Fragmentation in the service delivery and funding environments, which results in what is commonly referred to as a siloed approach to service delivery, presents several examples of devolution's challenges. For example, while silos may be most evident at the level of state and city funding and service delivery agencies, which are divided into "distinct" areas like health, education, or juvenile justice, they also manifest themselves in Boston's neighborhoods and impact how organizations understand community need (Interviews I-15 & I-17). Some see Boston's neighborhood structure as further exacerbating the problem of fragmentation, especially for youth services, due to the difficulties youth have travelling between

neighborhoods, in part because of transportation problems, but also because of safety issues (Interviews I-20, O-1 & O-5).  A related challenge results from competition among organizations for limited funding, which oftentimes makes staff, especially those with fundraising responsibilities in addition to programmatic ones, reluctant to share their ideas or cooperate on service delivery, resulting in continued fragmentation (Interview I-15).

The fragmentation of services and neighborhoods is intensified by vast communications gaps, both within and across groups, for instance, between secular and faith-based providers, or among the various Catholic Parishes in the city (Interview O-10).  The black churches also experience communications gaps – some made worse by theological differences, or by cultural and linguistic differences (Interview O-12).  The issues of cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity have been particularly salient in the recent manifestation of the high risk youth problem, which is both qualitatively and demographically different than it was in the 1990s. Some of the changes are related to socio-economic conditions, which have coincided with demographic changes, including an influx of immigrants into the city.  Many of these individuals are from Africa, Asia and Latin America and arrive with limited English language skills or other abilities to live in the United States.  Neither city or state agencies nor the traditional nonprofits tasked with resettling these families were able to adequately address the myriad of problems teen immigrants faced (Interviews O-1, O-5, O-9, O-10 & O-14).  The dominant institutions failed them, as they had failed generations of inner city African-American youth before them.

Sustainability issues for FBCOs are real, particularly for faith-based and secular organizations not closely tied to churches – the sustainability concerns of which they speak are about organizational survival, even for well-known organizations that have been in the community twenty or more years (Interviews O-1; O-2; O-5; O-7; O-8 & O-9).  The equity

challenge is particularly acute in a devolved and fragmented service delivery environment where federal grants are awarded on a competitive basis (to some organizations in some cities and states but not others). It is exacerbated when that funding is allocated through intermediaries to build the capacities of small FBCOs, which necessarily have narrowly defined service areas and a small number of clients, generating concerns about preferential treatment for those that are insiders to funded networks. The specific challenge in this case is to ensure that youth, no matter their ethnic, racial or religious background or their neighborhood of residence, have access to a range of services that contribute to their positive development.

Furthermore, the fragmented funding structure has lead to a sort of vertical accountability that drives much of the accountability regime, and spills over into the service delivery environment, where FBCOs report to the agencies that fund them and often interact with only those organizations (Interview I-21). Vertical accountability structures such as these are likely to be narrowly focused on program outcomes rather than on the bigger scale of community impact to which FBCOs contribute, further aggravating the communications and coordination problems inherent in fragmented fields.

A first step to achieving coordination rests in defining the field, which helps service delivery organizations and funders clarify the purpose of coordination (Interview I-19). HRYN defines high-risk youth as being ". . . between the ages of twelve (12) and twenty-one (21) and are court involved, truant, gang-involved, a chronic substance abuser, homeless, pregnant or a parent" (High Risk Youth Network, 2006). This definition represents a strategic use of discourse to carve out a distinctive service and funding niche – one not disconnected from actual community needs, but one that had not been previously defined as such. The discourse is strategic not only in its ability to increase the visibility of the problems network members

11

address and to generate funding for the work they do, but also because it has been developed in a way that does not further fragment the field. For example, HRYN has an inclusive membership policy, across many dimensions and in its interpretation of who serves high risk youth; it is a membership policy that demonstrates a fine balance between clear focus and inclusion (Interview I-20, O-6 & O-8). Also, because HRYN is not rigid about which organizations participate in the network, it appears to have mitigated some disagreement among network members as to the validity of the term high risk youth and, as a result, there is field-wide acceptance of, if not agreement on, the term (Interviews I-10, I-15, I-21, O-2, O-3, O-4, O-7, O-8, O-10, O-11, O13 & O-14).

As a result of that inclusive membership policy, a number of organizations report that their involvement with the HRYN and BCT has increased not only the number of connections, but also the diversity of those connections. Diversity in this case takes many forms, including racial, ethnic, and religious. This appears to be particularly true for FBOs, who report having increased connections and awareness with secular organizations they otherwise would not have known or with whom they would not have had the opportunity to work (Interviews I-9, I-15 & O-3). These increased connections help otherwise disconnected FBCOs see that they are engaged in a common enterprise, which reinforces the formal field definition and helps thwart fragmentation.

Even in a defined field, coordinating services is challenging, especially where the organizations that need to engage in the coordinated activities are small, struggling with minimal resources, and operating on the basis of different values, service areas, and target populations. Even among organizations ideologically committed to coordinating activities, there is a need 'to make coordination pay' (Interview I-10). To that end in 2006, BCT started to award cluster

grants to build the capacity of groups of two or more FBCOs already working collaboratively; in

the 2008- 2010 grant cycle, all awards will be for that purpose. This is an example of how BCT

strategically uses its material power to encourage collaboration without creating a false

environment of 'collaboration for collaboration's sake.' FBCOs that are part of clusters report in

interviews that they are more likely to share their funding prospects and plans with partner

organizations than with other organizations with whom they work in less formalized ways.

Those organizations also report leveraging their capacities and physical resources with one

another in order to maximize impact (Interviews O-13 & O-14). These cooperative

arrangements work to restructure the field, to reflect a more coordinated and equitable service

delivery environment.

A coordinated leveraging of resources can also help small FBCOs address sustainability

concerns. In fact, evidence suggests that a near-universal norm has emerged in the field that sees

collaboration as necessary not only for effective service delivery but also for sustainable

organizational capacity-building and fundraising (Interviews I-17 & I-19). The HRYN is

working to develop a matrix of organizations and services organized according to six core assets

for youth development (see Appendix D) and will soon embark on a related neighborhood level

mapping project. This approach reflects the diversity of the HRYN membership and the various

needs of Boston's inner city youth – a strategic and cutting-edge response to a highly complex

environment where organizations are struggling to break through existing silos.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Especially in an area as controversial as FBCI, where one intent is to 'level the playing

field' for faith-based organizations, focusing only on the functional roles intermediaries play in

devolved service delivery is insufficient to gauge their effectiveness. A more comprehensive

approach ought to include an assessment of an intermediary's normative characteristics and its functional capacities to overcome institutional inertia and dominant actors, as identified in this paper. While this analysis focuses explicitly on the case of CCF Demonstration Program grants and high risk youth services in Boston, the lessons apply to FBCI and devolved service delivery more generally. The main conclusions and recommendations follow.

First, the *federal government's* role in this policy strategy is crucial for three primary reasons: its ability to raise and distribute substantial funds, its oversight functions, and the potential it has to share best practice models and facilitate organizational and institutional learning among grantees across the country. The federal government should continue funding to intermediaries that demonstrate success not only in improving capacity of organizations, but also in facilitating a networked approach to service delivery that upholds inclusive democratic norms. A networked approach has the potential to overcome concerns about the inconsistencies and inequities of devolved service delivery. At the same time, especially where funding to FBOs is involved, federal oversight plays an important role in ensuring constitutional accountability and fostering public legitimacy.

Second, in order to overcome the functional and normative challenges of devolved service delivery, the roles of intermediary agent and network coordinator both must be filled – and need to be connected. Intermediaries that exhibit both the functional and normative characteristics of the principled entrepreneur will be able to live up to the norms of equity and accountability that are at the heart of the American system. Intermediary agents and network coordinators committed to realizing devolution's promises can strategically use three sources of power (discourse, funding and organizational relationships) to reinstitutionalize a service field in accordance with inclusive democratic norms. Without a network coordinator intermediaries are

likely to face challenges in developing effective service delivery networks and corresponding accountability regimes that include a diverse group of FBCOs.  One way that network coordinators can foster a greater sense of public accountability is by instituting a regime of self-regulation informed by general and field-specific codes of conduct (Ebrahim, 2003).

Third, public managers and independent evaluators should develop a consensus around a more appropriate set of performance measures and success indicators for intermediaries that are rooted in networked approaches to service delivery.  For example, one indicator of success might include a multi-dimensional measure of network sustainability, which includes several components that fall outside of the scope of traditional performance indicators (e.g., the retention of skilled personnel and institutional knowledge at the level of the local network).

Finally, political fights over which types of organizations ought to be funded to deliver services detract from the real challenges and contradicts what practionners have long known and researchers are increasingly confirming – that it takes a whole range of organizations with different characteristics, networked together, to deliver services in a way that meets the needs of communities and the people who live there.  When done in a principled way, a networked service delivery model may be the closest approximation to meeting human needs in a way consistent with life's challenges – whether individual, institutional or environmental in nature.  It is a model rooted in communities that also bridges across neighborhoods, demographic groups and with government agencies.  It is not, and ought not to be, privatized, but strives toward achieving the multiple promises of devolved democratic governance – inclusion, equity, accountability and effectiveness – which requires the financial support and oversight of the federal government.

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## List of Interviews

*The following is a list of people interviewed who were not guaranteed confidentiality. All fifteen interviewees coded O-1 through O-15 have been guaranteed confidentiality in accordance with Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements; all are staff at FBCOs. In addition, eight of the interviews listed below are identified as confidential, upon the request of the interviewee and in keeping with IRB regulations. All are representatives of organizations involved in or familiar with the Boston Capacity Tank and the High Risk Youth Network.*

| Interview Code | Interviewee Information | Interview Date |
|---|---|---|
| I-1 | Marilyn Lasky, Program Specialist, Community Programs, Administration for Children & Families, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Region I | May 8, 2007 |
| I-2 | Laurita K. Crawlle, Director, Community Impact, United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley | May 8, 2007 |
| I-3 | Marilyn Anderson Chase, Assistant Secretary, Executive Office of Health & Human Services, State of Massachusetts & former Senior Vice President, United Way of Massachusetts Bay | May 21, 2007 |
| I-4 | Mark V. Scott, Director of Mentoring Partnerships, Big Brothers Big Sisters | May 17, 2007 |
| I-5 | Confidential | May 29, 2007 |
| I-6 | Confidential | May 11, 2007 |
| I-7 | Reverend Ray A. Hammond, Chairman, Boston TenPoint Coalition | June 25, 2007 |
| I-8 | Confidential | May 8, 2007 |
| I-9 | Jeffrey Bass, Executive Director, Emmanuel Gospel Center | May 10, 2007 |
| I-10 | Confidential | May 11, 2007 |
| I-11 (joint interview) | Thomas Campbell, Program Manager, Compassion Capital Fund, Office of Community Services, Administration for Children & Families, US Department of Health & Human Services and | June 6, 2007 |
| | Carol Apelt, Special Assistant to the Director, Office of Community Services, US Department of Health & Human Services | |
| I-12 | Confidential | June 29, 2007 |

| Interview Code | Interviewee Information | Interview Date |
|---|---|---|
| I-13 | Ellen Bass, Director, Boston Capacity Tank | April 30, 2007 |
| I-14 | Nzinga Misgana, Program Director, New Roots Providence | June 29, 2007 |
| I-15 | Confidential | October 9, 2007 |
| I-16 | Gregory G. Groover, Pastor, Charles Street AME Church & Co-Chair BCT Oversight Committee | October 15, 2007 |
| I-17 | Swapnil Maniar, Director, Massachusetts Youth Violence Prevention Program, Massachusetts Department of Public Health | January 15, 2008 |
| I-18 | Sixto Escobar, Assistant Program Director, Partners for Community | December 27, 2007 |
| I-19 | David Wright, Executive Director, Black Ministerial Alliance | January 29, 2008 |
| I-20 | Confidential | February 5, 2008 |
| I-21 | Kathy Hamilton, Youth Policy Coordinator & Team Leader, Youth Transitions Task Force, Boston Private Industry Council | February 8, 2008 |

# APPENDIX B

## Interview Protocols

### *For Federal and State Government Officials*

1. What are the primary aims of federal FBCI?

2. What are the primary goals of CCF? Demostration Program Grants in particular?

3. Does it appear that CCF is fully institutionalized at HHS? Do you think its funding stream is likely to be sustained in the long-term, at least at some level?

4. How are funding decisions made by the peer review panel? Is there a checklist of certain criteria that must be met? Is it a consensual or majority rules decision-making process?

5. What are the funding limits, in terms of dollar amounts, time limits and other decision rules?

6. Beyond providing funding and technical assistance to small CBOs/FBOs, what do you see (or foresee, or hope) will happen to the infrastructure or network of organizations that receive funds, either directly from HHS or through the intermediary organizations?

7. How do you envision these organizations or this new institutional network sustaining itself in terms of service delivery capacity and financial sustainability?

8. How do the offices of the White House OFBCI and HHS/CFBCI interact – and how do they interact with grantees? Specifically in terms of oversight and accountability?

9. What sorts of reporting requirements are there? Are there sanctions for organizations that do not make a good faith effort to meet their stated goals? Is there any federal oversight of the organizations that receive the subawards?

10. How do the offices of the White House OFBCI and HHS/CFBCI interact with the state government in MA in the arena of high-risk youth services? Are any efforts made to coordinate federal grant initiatives with state level priorities in the area of high risk youth services?

11. What have you seen in terms of institutional outcomes – can you identify newly emerging norms (either generally or in the specific case of MA)?

### *For Staff/Volunteers at Intermediary Organizations*

1. Why did your organization apply for the CCF Demonstration Program Grant? (was it something they already wanted to do and needed funding for anyway, did they see it as a new opportunity, were they approached by others in the community, or at state/federal level and encouraged or invited to apply)?

2. What did/does the Grant fund (a specific program, a set of activities, etc.)?

3. How did you develop the goals and objectives you wanted to achieve with this funding? Was it a staff-based process? Did it include board members and/or other volunteers? Did it include other high-risk youth service providers? If so, how? Did it include clients themselves or their parents? If so, how? Others from the community? If so, how?

4. How do you decide the RFP process and make funding decisions for the subawards you grant? How do you solicit applications?

5. How do you measure the degree to which you are or are not meeting the goals and objectives you have identified? Do you need to report your progress to any oversight body (CCF, board of directors, some other entity)?

6. How has CCF funding or technical assistance changed (or not changed) the way you work? For example, have you instituted new management practices, fundraising strategies, public outreach, or other activities? Has it increased your capacity to deliver services? Has it created a new or different substantive area of focus (e.g., coordination, grantmaking and technical assistance as opposed to service delivery)?

7. What changes have you observed (or documented) in the community of high-risk youth service providers in Greater Boston since 2002 (first CCF awards)? For example, are there more/fewer service providers than before? Are new/different organizations engaged? Are relationships among the organizations collaborative, competitive, ambivalent?

8. How do you cooperate with other organizations, and on what?

9. What organizations did you work with before receiving CCF funding? After funding?

10. Are you concerned about the long-term sustainability of your programs? In other words, do you know how you will fund and/or staff these programs when CCF money goes away?

11. Are you any more or less involved in the political arena? For example, do you (or your volunteers) advocate for continued/increased funding for CCF or high-risk youth services at the local, state or federal level? Are you engaged in other areas of political involvement?

12. Do you have any sense (or documentation) that the number and/or diversity of high-risk youth being served has increased? Is there a sense that they are better (or worse) served now that before CCF?

13. Did the Boston Capacity Tank get established at BMA solely for the purpose of administering CCF funds and related programs?

14. How did the High Risk Youth Network emerge? Specifically, whose idea was it and how is it funded? What does it staff and volunteer base look like, in terms of size, level of professionalization (education, formal training, etc.), diversity, etc.

### *For Staff/Volunteers at small CBOs/FBOs in the field*

*Questions 1-11 will be essentially the same for intermediaries as for CBOs/FBOs*

12. How many times have you applied for grants under the CCF umbrella through UWMB or BMA? Did you receive all of the money you requested? Were you ever denied entirely?

13. Do you participate in the technical assistance/training programs offered through the Boston Capacity Tank?

14. Are you involved with the High Risk Youth Network? If so, what is the nature of your involvement? How did you get involved? If not, why not?

15. Do you work collaboratively with other high-risk youth service providers (joint programs, referrals, etc.)? Do you ever find yourselves competing with these organizations, either for funding, volunteers, staff or other resources? If so, how do you handle the competition or resolve tensions that may arise from it?

16. Do you share components of service delivery with other organizations? Has this changed with new funding?

17. Have you ever applied for a CCF Targeted Capacity Building or CEY Grant, directly through ACF? Why or why not? If yes, did you get funded?

18. Are you concerned about the long-term sustainability of your high-risk youth service programs? In other words, do you know how you will fund and/or staff these programs when CCF money goes away?

***For Intermediary Organizations in Central and Western MA and other networking organizations in Greater Boston***
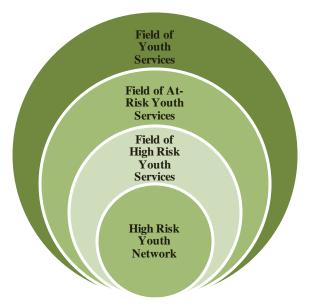
*Questions 1-6 and 10-11 will be essentially the same for as for the Greater Boston intermediaries*

7. Have you looked at examples (best practices) of other organizations that have received CCF funding in the past? Have you incorporated any of their practices, ideas or "lessons learned" into your planning process or planned programs? Specifically, have you looked to the group of organizations in the Greater Boston area (UWMB, BMA, HRYN, etc.) as a model for you to replicate? Have you met formally with their staff or volunteers, or participated in any of their public workshops or meetings? Have you reviewed their planning and/or evaluation processes, either in regard to program/service delivery or the RFP process?

8. What is your vision for the future of high-risk youth services in your community? What role do you see your organization playing in that vision?

9. What challenges have you faced (or do you anticipate) in your community as you implement this program? For example, do you think there will be resistance among existing providers? Will there be political contestation? Will this increase competition for other resources in the community, such as funding or volunteers? Will it foster greater collaboration among service delivery organizations?

**Data & Methods**

The single embedded case study design that underlies this research uses institutional analysis as its lens.  Part of a larger field of high risk youth service organizations in Boston and nested in the slightly broader field of at-risk youth services, the High Risk Youth Network (HRYN) is conceptualized as the institution under study (See Figure C-1).  This approach helps address two methodological concerns, one about defining the field, since there is an accepted working definition of high risk youth put forth by HRYN, and the other having to do with level of analysis and specificity problems that accompany multilevel institutional analysis (Scott & Meyer, 1991).

**Figure C-1:  Locating the Field**



In order to construct the case using an embedded design, this research took place in three phases from March 2007 – February 2008, though work amongst each of the phases overlapped so that data collection and analysis were iterative in nature.  The data presented in this paper triangulates data from four research sources:  key informant interviews, document retrieval,

archival records, and participant observation.  The investigator engaged in participant

observation at more than a dozen meetings targeted toward the high risk youth service

community, including the monthly High Risk Youth Network meetings and other events, which

are open to the public, hosted by the Boston Capacity Tank and High Risk Youth Network,

between November 2006 and March 2008.  In addition, the researcher attended some closed

meetings to which she was invited, including a BCT Oversight Committee meeting in October

2007.

Thirty-six semi-structured interviews were conducted from May 2007 – February 2008

using three types of sampling criteria – exhaustive, purposive and convenience.  One advantage

of using a semi-structured interview format is that, while it guides the conversation, it also

creates an atmosphere where those being interviewed are more comfortable talking about

sensitive issues like faith, funding and areas of contention in the field.  Due to Institutional

Review Board (IRB) regulations, the identity of the FBCOs and their staff members must be kept

confidential (interviews coded O-1 through O-15).  Interviewees of the intermediary

organizations had the right to choose whether or not to remain confidential.  Government

officials are identified throughout.  Only those organizational identities associated with non-

confidential interviewees are identified in Appendix A (interviews coded I-1 through I-21).

An exhaustive sample was used for the BCT and four CCF partner agencies, with at least

one senior staff person at each organization being interviewed.  Access to these agencies and the

appropriate staff was secured in cooperation with BCT Program Director and the Executive

Director of the BMA.  Purposive samples from two levels of analysis were used with three aims

in mind.  First, at the institutional level, purposive sampling was used to select ten key

informants, including federal government officials at the Administration for Children &

Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C. and Boston, MA, members of the HRYN Steering Committee, and members of the Boston Capacity Tank Oversight Committee.  The goal of these ten interviews was to help inform the investigator's understanding of the institutional context, both in terms of how the federal FBCI offices work in Washington, DC, how they relate to Boston, and in terms of the degree to which federal officials and key state and local level actors see CCF as an opportunity structure that can serve as an impetus for institutional transformation, how they envision that transformation happening, and how they have actually experienced it.  They were selected because of their familiarity with the history, strategy and intent of the project, the broader context of FBCI and CCF, and/or their familiarity with the field of high risk youth services in Boston.

Second, at the organizational level, purposive sampling was use to select seventeen FBCOs where a key staff person, identified by the BCT Director, was interviewed.  The criteria used to select the organizations helped ensure that there were a range of organizational characteristics represented, including faith-based and secular (as defined by BCT); large and small organizations (large meaning an annual budget of $1 million or more); newly established (new) or with a presence in the community of more than twenty years (old); and FBCOs that had received multiple grants, one grant, or no cash grants (only technical assistance) from the BCT.  Of the seventeen organizations identified, two could not be reached.  One small FBO that has been in existence for more than twenty years and received multiple years of BCT cash support and technical assistance ceased its social services programs.  One large CBO that has been in the community for less than twenty years and was a first-time BCT grantee did not respond to repeated requests for an interview.  While IRB regulations prevent the disclosure of the remaining fifteen organizations' names, their general characteristics are as follows:  six are FBOs

and nine are CBOs; two are large (one FBO and one CBO) while thirteen are small; six are new in the community and nine are old. Four are first-time BCT grantees and two have never received BCT grants. They are located in four Boston neighborhoods that represent BCT's service area: Dorchester, Mattapan, South End/Lower Roxbury and Jamaica Plain. Table C-1 provides more information about each organization.

**Table C-1: Characteristics of FBCOs Interviewed**

| Secular/Faith-Based | Large/Small | Old/New | BCT Support from federal resources* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Faith-based | Small | Old | $100,000 or more in grants; technical assistance |
| Faith-based | Small | Old | $100,000 or more in grants; technical assistance |
| Faith-based | Small | Old | $100,000 or more in grants; technical assistance |
| Faith-based | Small | Old | $100,000 or more in grants; technical assistance |
| Faith-based | Small | Old | $100,000 or more in grants; technical assistance |
| Secular | Small | Old | $100,000 or more in grants; technical assistance |
| Secular | Large | Old | $100,000 or more in grants; technical assistance |
| Faith-based | Large | Old | $10,000 - $49,999 in grants |
| Secular | Small | New | $10,000 - $49,999 in grants |
| Secular | Small | New | $10,000 - $49,999 in grants; technical assistance |
| Secular | Small | New | No grant; only technical assistance |
| Secular | Small | New | No grant; only technical assistance |
| Secular | Small | New | No grant; only technical assistance |
| Secular | Small | New | No grant; only technical assistance |
| Secular | Small | Old | No grant; only technical assistance |

* Some organizations received support through the BMA and/or BCT that did not come from federal resources, such as Citizen's Bank Summer Enrichment Series or the Victory Generation Program.

In order to assess the diffusion (or contestation) of institutional norms and organizational learning, a convenience sample of six organizations were selected. Two are intermediary organizations in New England new to CCF Funding were interviewed, one faith-based and one secular; a third organization was contacted but refused to participate in the study because they felt that the success of their project and future CCF funding may be jeopardized if they participated. In addition three intermediary network/partnership groups were selected; all three groups are secular, one is a large private nonprofit organization, one is a small private nonprofit organization and the other is the program of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. These interviews shed some light on the degree to which they are aware of the institutional arrangements that have emerged in the Greater Boston area, as well as the degree to which they are expecting to replicate, learn from, cooperate with, or challenge those institutional norms.

*Limitations*

One set of limitations is related to the scope of the study. It is confined to only one service area, which may be limited in its ability to shed light on what might be happening in other service areas, even among the other priority areas that CCF funds (homeless services, healthy marriage initiatives, or programs for service delivery in rural communities). Similarly, by limiting the scope of the study only to organizations that receive assistance through BCT, it is limited in its ability to draw conclusions about the impact of direct government funding on small FBCOs. However, the study does confirm that intermediaries have an important role to play in mediating the relationship between the federal government and small FBCOs. It also documents that, at least in the eyes of key CCF staff, attempts to fund grassroots FBCOs directly were wrought by challenges and not nearly as effective as those funded through intermediaries

(Interview I-11).  At the same time, as the findings in this study support recent findings for workforce development agencies funded through a state-funded initiative and intermediary, it suggests that the conclusions reached herein may be extended to other cases and may be used to generate grounded hypotheses to test in the future (Campbell & Lemp, 2007).  In short some of these factors that seemed to be more serious limitations at the outset of the study may be minimal.

In addition to being confined by service and funding parameters, the sample is also geographically limited in scope.  While Boston provides a good context for studying institutional change in high risk youth services, in part because its history is so well documented, the information gleaned from this study may be of limited usefulness in other cities.  Nonetheless, Boston is often considered to be on the cutting edge for high risk youth services and seems to be moving beyond just a community-based approach to a networked, community-integrated approach to service delivery; the model derived from the research presented herein could be used as a best practice for intermediaries in a number of social service fields in various cities (Interviews I-1 & I-20).

A related limitation has to do with generalizability; single case studies are often criticized for their inability to generate conclusions that apply across time and space.   However, while in many ways this is a relevatory case, some of the conclusions are generalizable, as demonstrated in the conclusion to this paper.  In addition, one purpose of the single relevatory case study design is to understand enough about a particular phenomenon to be able to generate grounded hypotheses that will inform an explicative model about those new phenomena.

**Supplemental Case Description**

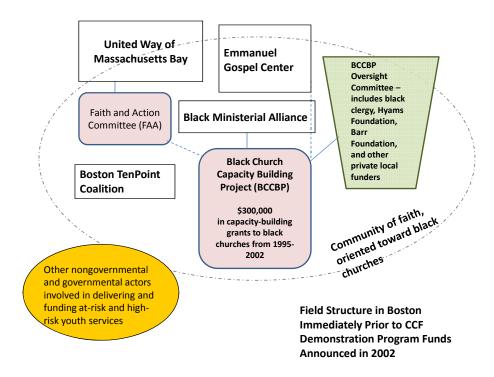**Figure D-1:  Field Configuration, Fall 2002**



Figure D-1 represents the loose connections among the organizations and programs at the center of this research.  Figures D-2 and D-3 on the following page provide an illustration of the current configuration of the field, including much closer and more formalized ties.
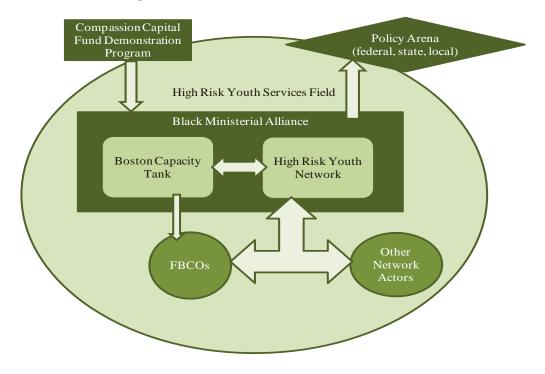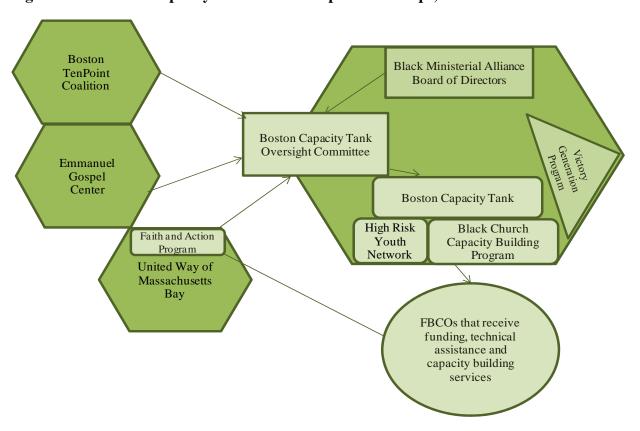
**Figure D-2: Field Configuration, March 2008**



**Figure D-3: Boston Capacity Tank Partnership Relationships, March 2008**

Under the current partnership terms, the BMA conducts fifteen workshops on ten

different topics, which include follow-up technical assistance for participating organizations.

Through its consultant pool of more than 30 consultants from 21 Boston area organizations, the

BMA also provides 200 hours in individualized technical assistance and extensive technical

assistance planning to FBCOs.  The Boston TenPoint Coalition offers two workshops with

follow-up technical assistance and provides 300 hours of individualized technical assistance and

customized technical assistance planning to FBCOs.  The Emmanuel Gospel Center offers ten

workshops on seven different topics and provides 300 hours of individualized technical

assistance and customized technical assistance planning to FBCOs.  The United Way is no

longer a formal partner in the BCT and therefore has no clearly articulated responsibilities in the

proposal submitted to the CCF Demonstration Program for funding in each of the years 2008-

2010.  This is not a reflection of bad blood between organizations; in fact they are in the midst of

working out an agreement for a less formal partnership.[13]

As a program of the BMA, formal governance responsibilities fall under the BMA Board

of Directors, but in practice, the BCT is governed by an Oversight Committee.  This group

currently consists of nineteen members, many of whom were also involved in writing the

original grant proposal.  It includes nonvoting members from each of the partner agencies, and

voting members that are affiliated with churches, state agencies, foundations, and other

community organizations; one of the voting members is also a member of the BMA Board of

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[13] The United Way organization is not listed as a formal partner in BCT's funded CCF proposal for 2007-2010, in accordance with CCF guidelines, because it decided to apply for CCF funding to support its work in the Merrimack Valley (funding it did not receive).  An informal partnership still exists and the United Way is still active on the Oversight Committee.

Directors.  The Oversight Committee provides guidance and oversight on BCT policy, strategic

planning, and grantmaking.

The BCT as an intermediary has fairly narrow constituency – the FBCOs that deliver

high risk youth services and are in a position to apply for BCT support to increase their

organizational (or collaborative) capacities.  While the BCT is promoting collaboration through

its cluster grants and offers opportunities for FBCOs to interact through technical assistance and

training sessions, these are informal, rather than intentional, networking opportunities.  In short,

the BCT does what an intermediary is expected to do – it brings federal resources to

organizations and communities that otherwise would not have been able to obtain them.

The HRYN compliments the BCT's work but reaches a wider audience.  Staffed by a

full-time coordinator beginning only in 2008, it was managed by a part-time coordinator in 2006-

2007 and by the steering committee before that.  In addition to its monthly network meetings, the

HRYN also convenes monthly steering committee meetings and, since summer 2007, a

Leadership Group that focuses on advocacy issues.  In addition the network sometimes convenes

community meetings on issues related to high risk youth, like the controversial Safe Homes

Initiative (Cramer, 2008).  In the three years since its inception, 185 youth-serving organizations

have been actively involved with the HRYN, sending a representative to at least one HRYN

monthly meeting, in addition to receiving listserv announcements and/or participating in related

workshops or conferences.  According to attendance records, forty-seven organizations (26%)

sent representatives to five or more of the twenty-five monthly meetings the HRYN convened in

the three years February 2005 – February 2008.

The HRYN Steering Committee is comprised primarily of staff representatives from the

CCF partners, though in 2006, there one network member joined and beginning in 2007, $1,000

annual stipends were made available so that three member representatives could participate and be compensated for their time (E. Bass, personal communication, March 20, 2008). In the summer of 2007, the HRYN developed a Leadership Group in order to get more direct participation by network member Executive Directors; their current focus is on defining an advocacy agenda for the HRYN.

In order to facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of where service inequities are and how best to address them, the HRYN is embarking on a 'comprehensive community initiative' that will identify the youth services available in each of Boston's neighborhoods. It is rooted in six core assets (academic success; economic self-sufficiency; good citizenship/positive community relationships; personal growth and development; increasing healthy and positive relationships; and decreasing high risk behavior), derived from community-centered, youth-engaged research, that youth need in their lives and three types of services (prevention, intervention and post-vention).

The partnership/mentoring model and the size of the grant allowed the BMA to increase its staff size quickly and to build the requisite infrastructure it needed to become an effective intermediary and network coordinator (Interview I-19). The arrangement has impacted power relationships at the state and local level and also influenced the local political environment, which served as a source of contestation in the early days of implementation (Interviews I-8 & I-19). This arrangement also has impacted power relationships among intermediary organizations and FBCOs and has not been without contention at that level as well (Interviews I-20; O-2; O-12). Important lessons can be learned from how they addressed those challenges.

# Conceptual Framework

## Assumptions

Faith-based and community-based organizations deliver more effective, efficient services than do traditional (governmental, nonprofit or for-profit) entities.

Capacity problems can be addressed by providing technical assistance, temporary funding and training to help improve long-term sustainability.

Federal funding of these initiatives will enable FBOs/CBOs to leverage existing volunteer and private donation resources at the local level.

**The Black Box of Devolution: Institutional Change**

## Outputs

**Organizational Outcomes**

**Institutional Impacts**

Increase capacity and long-term sustainability for FBOs/CBOs to deliver services

Greater cost efficiency of program and social services delivery

**UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES**

## Inputs

## Activities

CCF Demonstration Grant Program Dollars, as allotted in Federal Budget

ACF OCS awards CCF Demonstration Grant Program Dollars to Intermediary Organizations

Subawards made by intermediaries to FBOs/CBOs

Foster stronger collaborations with others in community - nonprofits, businesses, etc.

Strengthen institutional infrastructure for social services delivery

CBOs/FBOs eligible to receive that funding in local communities become competitors, not collaborators

CBOs/FBOs sustain expanded capacity but changes in organizational characteristics undermine the qualities that made them successful

FBCI Technical Assistance Programs, available to any interested FBO/CBO

Technical Assistance provided free of charge to any interested FBO/CBO by intermediary organization

Serve increased number of recipients – increase diversity of recipients and service delivery models

Increase effectivness of service delivery, in terms of reaching desired numbers and diversity of people who need services

Incentivize grassroots mobilization to advocate for continuing govt support for new/expanded programs