



SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH
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Evaluation of the Community Leadership Project 2.0

Mid-Point Report

September 2015

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Community Leadership Project 2.0

Mid-Point Evaluation Report Executive Summary

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Social Policy Research Associates

The Community Leadership Project (CLP) is a collaborative effort between the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to build the capacity of small, community-based organizations (community grantees) serving low-income people and communities of color in the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Coast, and the San Joaquin Valley regions of California.

Now in its second phase, [CLP 2.0](#) is specifically investing in increasing the sustainability of nearly 60 community-based organizations by focusing on common outcomes in three areas: resilient leadership, adaptive capacity, and financial stability. CLP 2.0 is characterized by integrated and intensive support for community grantees in the form of multi-year general operating support, self-directed capacity building, coaching and mentoring, and a structured menu of leadership development and technical assistance options. These supports and opportunities are provided through partnerships with five regranting intermediaries and five technical assistance (TA)/leadership intermediaries.

Resilient Leadership

- Unified sense of purpose and trust across organization
- Leaders with abilities and relationships to serve the target community
- Opportunities to *share* leadership and *develop* leaders

Adaptive Capacity

- Clear strategic goals and plan
- Ability to mobilize resources to tackle challenges
- Flexibility to shift with changing environments
- Ability to improve performance based on self-reflection and evaluation data

Financial Sustainability

- Share financial health responsibilities
- Appropriate systems to reliably track and report financial information
- Data-driven approach to financial management and decision-making
- Clear and effective business model

Social Policy Research Associates ([SPR](#)) has been serving as the evaluator for CLP 2.0. Our overall goals for the evaluation are to: (1) inform improvements in CLP 2.0 implementation; (2) share lessons with the philanthropic field on effective capacity-building strategies for small organizations working in low-income communities and communities of color; and (3) assess the impact of CLP 2.0 on community grantees. This mid-point evaluation report is intended to summarize capacity-building progress taking place across the CLP 2.0 community grantee cohort, as well as to reflect on CLP 2.0 implementation thus far.

Analysis of Capacity-Building Goals

At the beginning of CLP 2.0, community grantees' organizational capacity was measured using a 66-item organizational assessment tool. Baseline results indicated that organizations brought essential strengths to engage with communities of color, as well as in their leadership capacity. The three areas identified as lowest capacity included fundraising and resources, technology and infrastructure, and evaluation.

At the start of the CLP 2.0 grant, community grantees needed the most help with:



Fundraising and
Resources



Technology and
Infrastructure



Evaluation

Based on the assessment results, community grantees worked with their respective regrants to complete organizational development action plans. An analysis of the plans found that each community grantee articulated an average of three organizational development goals spread across the three CLP target outcome areas. More specifically, 70% of the action plans had at least one goal focused on resilient leadership (usually board or staff development); 80% of the plans had at least one goal focused on adaptive capacity (often operations, strategic planning, or communications); and 80% of the plans had at least one goal focused on financial stability (often overarching fund development plans).

Summary of Capacity-Building Activities

Community grantees are making progress towards their organizational development plans through a range of capacity-building activities and supports provided by regrants and their funded consultants, as well as by the CLP TA/leadership intermediaries. CLP regrants are serving as front-line support to their community grantees—assisting with the assessment of capacity-building needs, developing organizational development action plans, fostering peer support networks, providing direct capacity-building support, and brokering external capacity-building resources from CLP TA/leadership intermediaries and others.

CLP TA/leadership intermediaries have also been providing key services to community grantees and other community-based organizations serving low-income people and communities of color. These activities ranged from individualized organizational assessments in technology, to a cohort-based training series on strategic planning. Across all TA/leadership intermediaries, the average number of touchpoints with community grantees (by grantor) ranged from 1.4 to 6.4 from 2013 to 2014. By the end of 2014, 15 of the 54 community grantees (27%) had no reported participation in any of the CLP TA/leadership intermediary opportunities.



73% of community grantees have received some kind of technical assistance from a CLP 2.0 provider.

Evaluation feedback from a sample of TA/leadership intermediary activities suggests that the vast majority of community grantee participants benefited from their participation, with most of the minor constructive feedback focused on format rather than on content. A review of evaluation forms across 16 events found that 187 out of 188 participants either agreed or strongly agreed that the overall content of the trainings was useful and relevant to their work. The evaluations further indicated that participants were prepared to move forward with specific action steps after the training. Regrantors' feedback on CLP TA/leadership offerings was generally more critical of the timing and usefulness of content than participants' evaluation feedback.

Emerging Outcomes

While it is too early to assess the ultimate outcomes of the CLP 2.0 portfolio, each regrantor reported that at least 29 percent of their community grantees can already be categorized as "success stories" given their accomplishments to date. On the other end of the spectrum, three community grantees have shut their doors by the CLP 2.0 midpoint. Regrantors, TA/leadership intermediaries, and community grantees have also reported important areas of traction and emerging outcomes in their work.

Within the financial stability outcome area, all regrantors emphasized their grantees' traction in fund development in terms of revenue diversification as well as in financial management/systems. Within the resilient leadership outcome area, two regrantors in particular reported that their community grantees had realized significant progress on their board development efforts, such as strategic board recruitment, strengthened board governance, clarified roles/responsibilities, and an ability to integrate board leadership into grantee organizations. Also within the resilient leadership outcome area, two regrantors highlighted grantee progress in developing infrastructure and systems, particularly with regard to office space and technical infrastructure, and described the larger positive implications for community exposure, programming, and ability to meet target population needs.

Implementation Findings

CLP 2.0 implementation has been marked by greater upfront investments of regrantors' time to improve grantee selection, increased intensity in regrantors' individualized interactions with grantees, and more efforts at coordination between the regrantors and TA/leadership intermediaries to improve the appropriateness of TA services offered to the community grantees. A number of key implementation findings have emerged thus far.

1 Challenges emerged with the timing and alignment of CLP TA/leadership intermediary offerings. Regrantors noted that it has been difficult to ensure an appropriate fit due, in part, to the pre-establishment of TA/leadership intermediaries' work plans prior to grantee assessment. Because of the start-up activities of CLP 2.0 and the limited capacity of the grantees to engage, a number of regrantors reported that the timing and sequence of program offerings made it very difficult for community grantees to access TA resources in the first year. Several of the regrantors also questioned the relevancy and ultimate value of the TA topics for the type of grantee organizations in CLP 2.0. Regrantors reporting

spending some amount of time determining how the services could meet their grantees' needs.

- 2 Fit, flexibility, and customization of capacity-building services continue to be of paramount importance.** While developing group learning opportunities has been valuable for fostering peer sharing among similar organizations, individualization was key to finding the “sweet spot” of supporting organizations working with low-income people and communities of color. Regrantors stressed the need to better adapt TA/leadership intermediaries' tools for a CLP 2.0 audience, in part, by first getting to know the community grantees better.
- 3 Even those community grantees assessed as “ready” to participate in CLP struggled with capacity issues.** Despite coming up with a refined set of selection criteria to ensure grantee readiness to participate in CLP 2.0 and providing general support, regrantors and TA/leadership intermediaries reported many community grantees with limited ability to participate in capacity-building opportunities.
- 4 Intermediaries need to build their own readiness to work with community grantees working with low-income people and communities of color.** Given the real-world survival challenges facing organizations working with low-income people and communities of color, regrantors/intermediaries are turning the definition of “readiness” on its head by asking themselves if they have been adaptive enough in their approaches to working with these organizations and their realities.
- 5 Geographic and cultural nuances of CLP community grantees have required deep contextual knowledge and skills.** Regrantors emphasized the importance of providing TA and other interventions in a culturally responsive manner. The issue of finding qualified TA providers who specialized in nonprofit work in the San Joaquin Valley is still a concern.
- 6 Regrantors' intensive and multi-faceted roles have been crucial to community grantees' success.** Many of the regrantors reported how their relationships with the community grantees have evolved over time to go beyond what is typical, involving more in-depth engagement. Regular check-ins helped to keep community grantees on track but many regrantors noted that deeper-level discussions and coaching were often needed. As part of their multi-faceted role, some regrantors are playing an important coaching role for executive directors.

Emerging Promising Regrantor Approaches

In addition to key approaches that have been a hallmark of CLP since its inception (such as combining general support with capacity building), a number of other approaches have been lifted up by the regrantors. The evaluation will continue to track these practices to see if they are effective in building grantees' long-term sustainability.



Assessing grantee readiness for capacity building as part of the selection and capacity-building action planning process.



Developing a shared leadership model within grantee organizations to take on capacity building work as well as a partnership model between community grantees and regrantors to develop appropriate and effective capacity-building experiences.



Developing peer-sharing networks to build strong “communities of practice.”



Partnering with TA providers to customize and strengthen the support provided to community grantees

Considerations Going Forward

Considerations for the remainder of CLP, exit grants, and the final evaluation report include: further coordination and learning exchange between regrantors and TA/leadership intermediaries; discussing how funders can best support TA/leadership intermediaries’ efforts to adapt to community grantees’ needs; thinking through how community grantees are poised for sustainability after the end of CLP 2.0 and the intensive supportive roles provided by their regrantors; continuing to track community grantee accomplishments and lessons by organizational size and budget; and exploring how the capacity of TA/leadership intermediaries has been bolstered by working with regrantors and grantees serving low-income people and communities of color.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Community Leadership Project (CLP) is a collaborative effort between the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to build the capacity of small, community-based organizations (community grantees) serving low-income people and communities of color in the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Coast, and the San Joaquin Valley regions of California.

Now in its second phase, CLP 2.0 is specifically investing in increasing the sustainability of nearly 60 community-based organizations by focusing on common outcomes in three areas: resilient leadership, adaptive capacity, and financial stability. CLP 2.0 is characterized by integrated and intensive support for community grantees in the form of multi-year general operating support, self-directed capacity building, coaching and mentoring, and a structured menu of leadership development and technical assistance options. These supports and opportunities are provided through partnerships with five regranting intermediaries and five technical assistance (TA)/leadership intermediaries listed to the right.¹

CLP 2.0 Regranting Intermediaries

- ***Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA)***
- ***Funders for Rural Equity (FFRE)***—a partnership of California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) and Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC)
- ***Central Coast Collaborative (CCC)***—a partnership of Community Foundations for Monterey County, Santa Cruz County, and San Benito County
- ***Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment***
- ***Silicon Valley Community Foundation***

CLP 2.0 Technical Assistance (TA)/Leadership Intermediaries

- *CompassPoint*
- *LeaderSpring*
- *Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF)*
- *Rockwood Leadership Institute*
- *ZeroDivide*

¹ As described in the CLP 2.0 Baseline Report (2014), CLP 2.0 aims to provide a integrated and intensive system of financial and capacity-building support to a smaller number of community grantees than in CLP 1.0. With a streamlined number of community grantees as well as intermediaries (target of 60 vs. 100 grantees, and 10 vs. 27

The CLP 2.0 Evaluation

Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) has been serving as the evaluator for CLP 2.0. Our overall goals for the evaluation are to: (1) inform improvements in CLP 2.0 implementation; (2) share lessons with the philanthropic field on effective capacity-building strategies for small organizations working in low-income communities and communities of color; and (3) assess the impact of CLP 2.0 on community grantees.

This mid-point report is intended to summarize capacity-building progress taking place across the CLP 2.0 community grantee cohort, as well as to reflect on CLP 2.0 implementation thus far. The report is informed by a wide range of data sources, as captured in Exhibit 1 below.

Exhibit 1. Data Sources for the CLP 2.0 Mid-Point Report

	Activity	Who	When
Document Review & Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CLP community grantee organizational development action plans, which outline plans and action steps for the remainder of the CLP 2.0 grant period. 	54 community grantees	Submitted between July and August 2014
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CLP regrantor and TA intermediary reports, which document intermediary activities and progress from the start of the CLP 2.0 grant period. 	10 regrantors and TA intermediaries	Submitted December 2014
Observation & Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Grantee convening held in Stockton, which included opportunities for intermediary representatives and community grantees to reflect on their experiences thus far. 	Attending community grantees, intermediaries, and funders	December 2014
Evaluation Results Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation form summary results from a sample of CLP TA/leadership trainings led by CompassPoint, Rockwood, and Nonprofit Finance Fund. 	Sample of 188 community grantees	Calendar year 2014 data
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with representatives from all CLP intermediaries conducted by telephone. 	Representatives from regranting and TA intermediaries (respondents listed in Appendix A)	Conducted May 2015
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with 15 CLP community grantees who are being profiled as case studies throughout our evaluation. 	Representatives from 15 CLP case study organizations (respondents listed in Appendix A)	Conducted October 2014 – March 2015

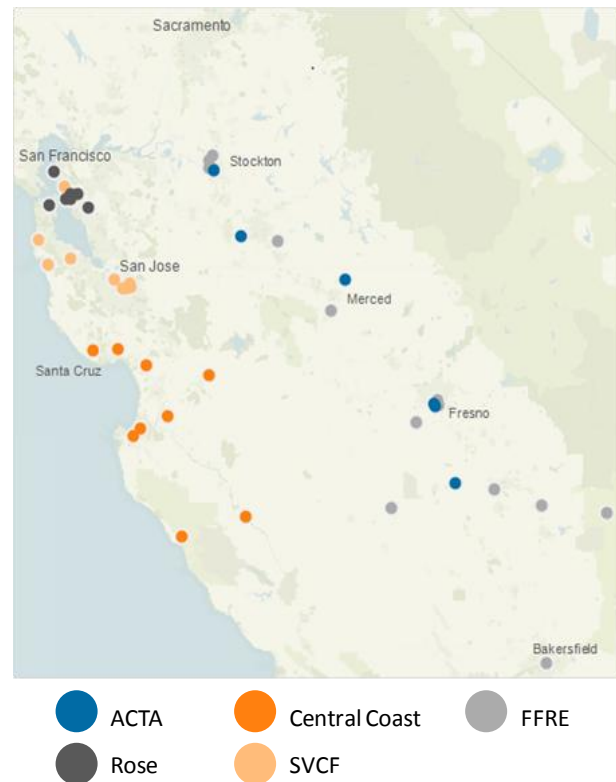
intermediaries), CLP 2.0 was expected to facilitate increased coordination and collaboration, with important implications for a larger sense of CLP community.

Overview of this Report

The remainder of this report is comprised of three chapters. **Chapter 2** captures CLP 2.0 community grantee progress to date. We first provide a summary of capacity-building goals articulated by community grantees soon after the launch of this second phase, then summarize capacity-building activities that have taken place through the end of 2014, highlighting key findings and emerging outcomes. **Chapter 3** provides an analysis of CLP 2.0 implementation to date, including challenges and promising approaches. Finally, **Chapter 4** provides some considerations for ongoing implementation of the current phase, CLP 2.0 close-out efforts currently underway, and future philanthropic efforts in this area.

II. COMMUNITY GRANTEE PROGRESS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

The 57 funded CLP 2.0 community grantees are a diverse group of community-based organizations located as far north as San Joaquin to as far south as Bakersfield. Although the majority of community grantees have been operating between five and 20 years, over 25 percent are more established and have been in existence more than 20 years, while 10 percent have been around less than five years. Most grantees are clustered in the middle of the CLP 2.0 targeted budget range with the average organizational budget being just under \$300,000 per year. Across all community grantees, 82 percent are led by individuals of color and the majority (70 percent) reported serving multiple ethnic groups.²



An assessment of CLP 2.0 community grantees' organizational capacity³ was administered at the beginning of the initiative. Baseline results indicated that organizations brought essential strengths in their capacity to connect and engage with communities of color, as well as in their leadership capacity to carry out their funded work. The three areas identified as lowest capacity

² Note there are currently 54 community grantees as three have closed their doors. See Appendix B for a detailed list of community grantees

³ Organizational capacity was measured using an assessment that consisted of 66 items organized into nine dimensions of organizational capacity: (1) vision and planning; (2) evaluation; (3) fundraising and resources; (4) budgeting, accounting, and reporting; (5) board; (6) organizational leadership; (7) staff; (8) technology and infrastructure; and (9) community engagement.

within the cohort included fundraising and resources, technology and infrastructure, and evaluation.⁴ Within those areas, grantees reported being particularly challenged in developing and implementing fundraising plans, diversifying sources of funding, using data to make programmatic decisions, accessing evaluation expertise, and in all areas of technology and infrastructure.

Analysis of Capacity-Building Goals

Based on the results of their organizational assessment, each community grantee worked with their respective regrantor to complete an “organizational development action plan” by December 2013. An analysis of the plans of the 54 grantees that completed them found that each grantee articulated an average of three organizational development goals that they wanted to accomplish through CLP 2.0. These goals were spread across the three CLP target outcome areas of resilient leadership, adaptive capacity, and financial stability.

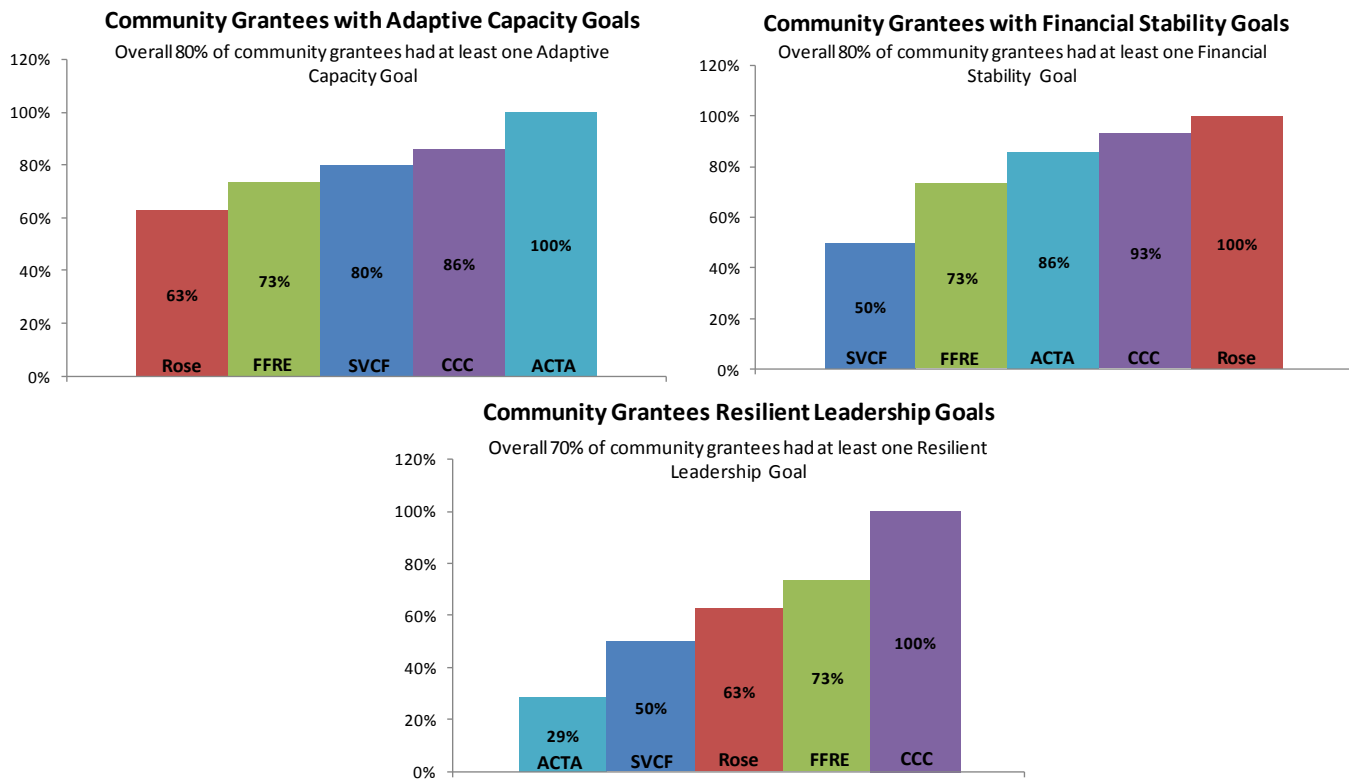
- **70% of the action plans had at least one goal focused on resilient leadership (38 plans).** Articulated goals within resilient leadership fell into two major categories: board development (31) and staff development (11). There were a few organizations (6) who viewed their staff and board development as inherently integrated.
 - **Board development** goals included action steps such as increasing the number of board members, defining board governance structure, organizing and holding board retreats, and providing on-going training for the board.
 - **Staff development** goals most often included intentions to recruit and hire new staff members for needed positions, conduct assessments of staff roles, responsibilities, and workloads, or team-building and staff training activities.
- **80% of the action plans had at least one goal focused on adaptive capacity (43).** Goals and action steps here were the most diverse, encompassing three main areas: operations and capacity (34); strategic planning (15); and communications (15). Adaptive capacity was also the area most cross-cutting in nature, with programmatic and other adaptive capacity goals often interrelated with those in financial sustainability. For example, a programmatic goal focused on increasing performance attendance was integrally tied to financial stability goals related to developing a donor database.

⁴ See Chapter 3 of the *Evaluation of the Community Leadership Project 2.0: Baseline Report*, submitted by Social Policy Research Associates, May 2014.

- The **operations and capacity** category was characterized by goals such as increasing programmatic capacity (e.g., through streamlining or creating new programs), obtaining or improving physical space (e.g., updating office technology), and updating administrative structure to improve organizational efficiency (e.g., implementing or updating policies and procedures manuals).
- **Strategic planning** goals had organizations developing short- and long-term plans that could be approved by their boards. Generally, these plans laid out specific steps for community grantees to achieve their goals of financial stability, operations and capacity, engaging the community, and clarifying their mission and values.
- **Communications**-related goals were relatively clear-cut, such as telling the story of the organization, improving visibility of the organization, implementing marketing strategies which included creating or updating a website, and engaging the community and constituents.
- **80% of the action plans had at least one goal focused on financial stability (43).** Most goals here included some type of overarching fund development planning with specific action steps and a timeline to be approved by community grantees' boards. As part of their plans, many grantees hoped to improve their messaging or ask appeals, the diversity of their funding streams, and/or their technology including donor databases and budget software. Often community grantees recognized the need to conduct a financial assessment of their organization and review, revise, and implement specific budgeting practices.

When examining capacity-building goals by regrantor, we see differences in focus areas. Exhibit 2 below shows each regrantor's cohort and the percent of community grantees with at least one goal related to each of the three CLP outcome areas. The majority of each regrantor's cohort (ranging from 63% to 100%) had at least one goal related to adaptive capacity. At least half of each regrantor's cohort also had one or more financial stability goals, and between 29-100% of each regrantor's cohort had at least one goal related to resilient leadership. An initial analysis by regrantor suggests that community grantees' capacity-building goals are aligned with the strengths of their respective regrantor; this will be an area of inquiry that will be pursued in our final analysis.

Exhibit 2. Analysis of Articulated Capacity-Building Goals by Regrantor



Summary of Capacity-Building Activities

Midway through the implementation of CLP 2.0, many community grantees are making progress towards their organizational development plans through a range of capacity-building activities. In this section, we provide a summary of documented support thus far by (1) regrantors and their funded consultants, and (2) through the CLP TA/leadership intermediaries.

Regrantor Activities

CLP regrantors are serving as front-line support to their community grantees—assisting with the assessment of capacity-building needs, developing organizational development action plans, fostering peer support networks, providing direct capacity-building support, and brokering external capacity-building resources. The table below summarizes some of the key activities reported by regrantors through the end of 2014.

Exhibit 3. Summary of Regrantors' Activities Reported Through December 2014

Alliance for California Traditional Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convened three Community of Practice events, which offered workshops and presentations focused on generating revenue, grassroots fundraising, strategies for soliciting donations, and accessing loan and consultant services. • In partnership with NFF, held a customized financial management training for ACTA grantees; curriculum was revised to incorporate culturally resonant stories and metaphors. • Individualized work with community grantees to identify capacity-building needs and advise and connect them with resources in areas of constituent building, facilities, equipment, technology and materials, programming, staff and communications.
Central Coast Collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized work with community grantees, including coaching and brokering connections with capacity-building resources to support implementation of their capacity improvement plans. • Engaged CCC mentors to provide one-on-one training on topics such as board recruitment and working with consultants. • Grantees participated in two regional convenings. • Offered resources to participate in additional local and national trainings.
Fund for Rural Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted regular meetings and coaching with grantees that took the form of two to four 90-minute sessions a year that reflected on meeting capacity-building goals and navigating through emerging barriers. • Tailored capacity-building offerings, such as developing fundamentals of financial management program with NFF and Financial Management Services that included trainings and follow-up coaching support. • Held online trainings on (1) identifying and working with consultants and (2) grant reporting. • Held a CLP Grantee Convening, which this year focused on the financial stability outcome area.
Rose Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held quarterly peer luncheons of community grantees; peer sharing included a discussion of choosing a database and maintaining a work-life balance. • Invited CLP grantees to the Rose Foundation's Annual Grassroots Convening, focused on strategic fundraising. • Held an all day CLP Cohort Convening that included a reality grantmaking panel with local funders that conducted an in-person review of pre-submitted proposals as well as an interactive workshop on branding. • Conducted quarterly check-in calls with grantees, including direct follow-up support.
Silicon Valley Community Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted one retreat and five communities of practice gatherings on topics of interest collectively identified by community grantees, such as storytelling or financial literacy. • Hosted an in-depth financial seminar with NFF and Rose grantees. • Technical assistance support provided from SVCF's marketing and communications team on topics such as crafting a narrative of impact that is shared via the foundation's social media tools. Currently producing a video of CLP grantee work to be used in future marketing. • Exposure to online fundraising, crowd sourcing, and new donors through interactions with SVCF staff and foundation-wide "Silicon Valley Gives" trainings.

In addition to direct support, regrantors connected community grantees to a range of consultant services (beyond CLP TA/leadership intermediaries) to support capacity-building endeavors. In

most cases, these consultants provided tailored organizational consulting services such as developing specific fundraising, audience development, and/or strategic plans for the community grantee. In some cases, community grantees also retained communication consultants to support organizational messaging, branding, or web development.

TA/Leadership Intermediary Activities

Per their workplans, CLP TA/leadership intermediaries have also been providing key services to community grantees and other community-based organizations serving low-income communities of color. These activities ranged from individualized organizational assessments in technology, to a cohort-based training series on strategic planning.

**Exhibit 4. Summary of TA/Leadership Intermediaries' Activities
Reported Through December 2014**

CompassPoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held a series of seven Nonprofit Strategy Clinics attended by a cohort of eight CLP community grantees; a subset of six created full theories of change to guide organizational decision-making. • Offered a Digital Storytelling Workshop, which was attended by two CLP community grantees. • Provided implementation support consulting to four community grantees, primarily in the form of Board and leader retreats and trainings
LeaderSpring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with 42 nonprofit executive directors to strengthen their leadership and organizational effectiveness through LeaderSpring's competitively awarded Fellowship Program. One CLP community grantee was a part of the 2014 East Bay cohort.
Nonprofit Finance Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided four Financial Leadership Clinics attended by 19 CLP community grantees across four regrants. NFF also had individualized follow-up engagements with select grantees. • Held three Capitalization Planning Workshops with Rose, ACTA, and in the Central Valley. • Worked directly with CLP regrants to support their efforts to build financial capacity of their community grantees.
Rockwood Leadership Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held seven 5-day intensive residential Art of Leadership retreat trainings; 14 CLP community grantee leaders participated in a session and completed a 360 degree Leadership Assessment in advance of their participation. • As a follow up to the Art of Leadership program, professional coaching was provided to 7 CLP community grantees.
ZeroDivide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted an Online Technology Assessment with 69 leaders from 40 community grantees to assess organizational technology needs and priorities. • Selected 29 CLP grantees from all five regrants to be a part of two Technology Capacity Building cohorts, 26 of whom received onsite technology assessments and follow-up reports. All cohort participants were also given accounts to access online training on a wide range of technology education topics through short videos. • Implemented a six-part #TechThursdays webinar series on critical technology solutions, open to all CLP grantees and attended by 31 CLP leaders. • Provided individual advising services to a small number of community grantees.

Exhibit 5 on the next page reflects our ongoing documentation of community grantees that have

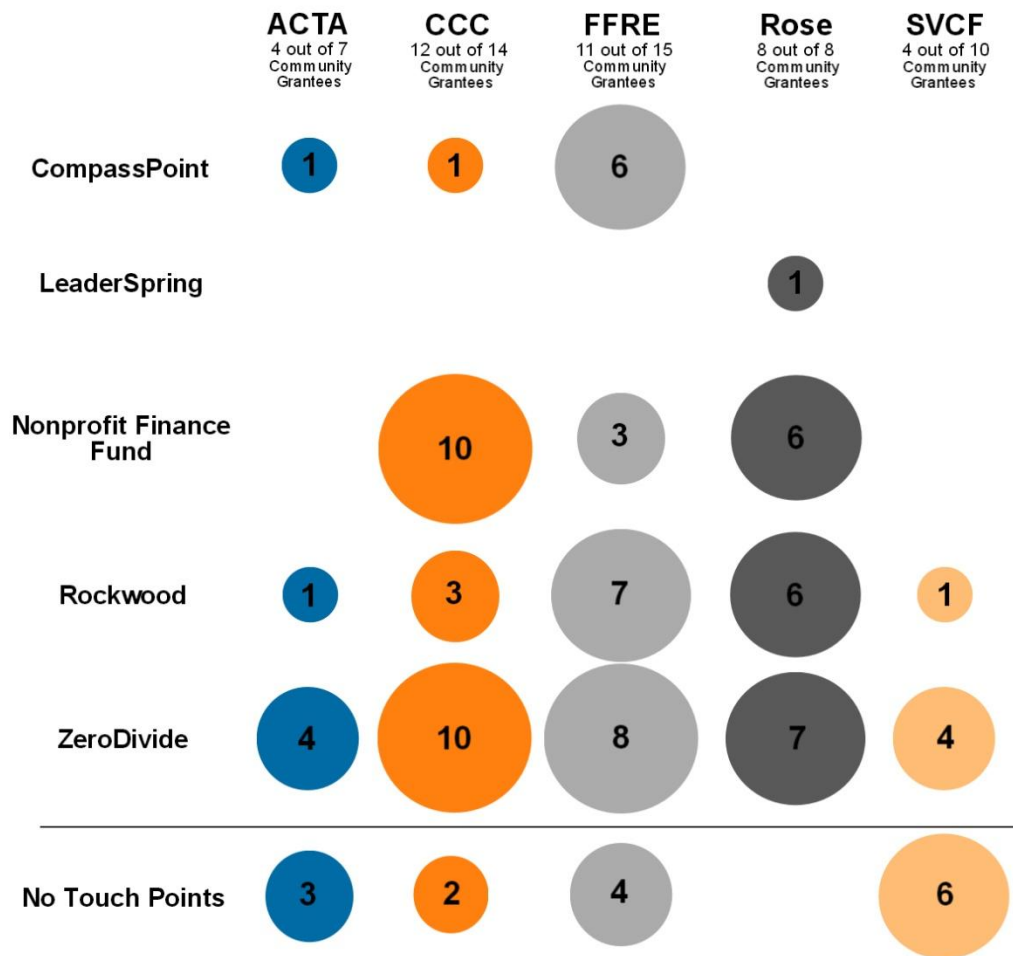
taken advantage of available TA/leadership intermediary resources. These counts are only through the end of 2014 and exclude instances where a TA/leadership intermediary provided training as part of a regrantor convening.⁵

Notably, by the end of 2014, 15 of the 54 community grantees (27%) had no reported participation in any of the formally offered CLP TA/leadership opportunities (although they may have participated in a CLP TA training as a part of a regrantor convening). The average number of touch points between community grantees and TA/leadership intermediaries (from 2013-2014) ranged from 1.4 among SVCF community grantees to 6.4 among Rose community grantees.

While we will continue to track touchpoints for the remainder of CLP 2.0, at this point, the trends that we see in the exhibit below are at least partially attributable to timing (e.g., NFF had their fourth Financial Clinic targeting SVCF grantees in 2015, so it is not captured here) or geographic targeting (e.g., CompassPoint's focus is exclusively in the Central Valley and LeaderSpring is focused on the Bay Area). We did further analysis of the community grantees that have had no touch points with any TA/leadership intermediary through 2014, and could not identify any discernable trends by organizational location, budget size, or focus area.

⁵ Please note that counts for this exhibit were drawn from TA/leadership intermediary interviews and narrative descriptions in intermediary reports; inconsistency in reporting sometimes made it challenging to isolate specific counts of individual CLP organizations that took advantage of trainings or other opportunities.

Exhibit 5. Number of Community Grantees that have Engaged with a TA/Leadership Intermediary through 2014, by Regrantor and TA/Leadership Intermediary⁶



Evaluation feedback from a sample of these TA/leadership intermediary activities⁷ suggests that the vast majority of community grantees benefited from their participation, with most of the minor constructive feedback focused on format and pacing, rather than on the *content* of the trainings. A review of evaluation forms across 16 events found that 187 out of 188 participants either agreed or strongly agreed that the overall content of the trainings was useful and relevant

⁶ Note: The CLP 2.0 regrantors all have varying number of community grantees and the numbers listed are not scaled. Chart numbers represent the actual number of community grantees who accesses the specified technical assistance provider. Additionally, some community grantees received services from multiple technical assistance providers and thus were counted multiple times in this chart.

⁷ SPR only reviewed available evaluation data from CompassPoint, LeaderSpring, and Nonprofit Finance Fund that used the CLP evaluation form template and included the item “the overall content of the session was useful and relevant.” ZeroDivide did not hold trainings during the review period and Rockwood Institute did not pose this question to participants in their evaluation form. Note that LeaderSpring evaluation data includes non-CLP community grantee organizations.

to their work. The evaluations further indicated that, as a result of their participation, participants were prepared to move forward with specific action steps after the training—the most common categories of action steps (reported by at least 15 respondents) included:

- (1) Sharing what they learned with others organization (“*Train my staff on some of the skills I’ve learned in the training*”);
- (2) Directly implementing some of the tools that they gained (“*I plan to build a budget using the templates*”);
- (3) Revisiting/revising organizational structures or systems (“*[We will] revisit our database in relation to QuickBooks. Develop a cash flow document; prepare budget to actuals in a different way*”); and
- (4) Integrating learning into existing strategic planning processes (“*We plan to work with staff board and core leaders on problem statement and TOC over 3 meetings in the next month*”).

Regrantor feedback on CLP TA/leadership offerings was generally more critical than what is reflected in the participant evaluation feedback above. The next chapter is dedicated to implementation findings specifically related to CLP capacity-building support—including some of the opportunities and challenges that have presented themselves thus far.

Emerging Outcomes

While it is too early to assess the ultimate outcomes of the CLP 2.0 portfolio, each regrantor reported that between 20-50 percent of their community grantees can already be categorized as “success stories” given their accomplishments to date. On the other end of the spectrum, three community grantees had shut their doors by the CLP 2.0 midpoint. The work of the community grantees in between these two points is still evolving, with some regrantors emphasizing that their grantees’ progress is not linear—rather it is characterized by fluctuations between progress and setbacks.

Nevertheless, at the CLP 2.0 midpoint, regrantors, TA/leadership intermediaries, and community grantees have also reported important areas of traction and emerging outcomes in their work.⁸ These key areas are fund development and financial management (in support of the financial stability outcome area), board development (in support of resilient leadership), and infrastructure and systems (in support of resilient leadership).

⁸ These areas of traction were gleaned from intermediary interviews and annual reports, as well as check-in interviews with the 15 case study grantees.

Fund Development & Financial Management

Within the financial stability outcome area, all regrantors emphasized their grantees' traction in fund development in terms of revenue diversification (e.g., new funders), as well as in financial management/systems (e.g., establishing an "audit-ready financial system"). Regrantors and Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) also highlighted grantees' increased understanding of: (1) basic financial literacy and accounting concepts, and (2) the need for board and staff members alike to play an active fund development role in their organizations. Two regrantors described progress in fund development specifically in relation to grantees' increased ability to articulate the organization's value to the community (i.e., communications and messaging skills).

Case study grantees provided numerous concrete examples of progress in fund development and financial management:⁹

- Program and organizational budget increases
- Increase in membership dues
- Increase in funds from individual donors
- Successful campaign to raise thousands of dollars to support programming
- Increase financial stability via increased number of multi-year grants
- Increase in financial stability via modification of existing for-profit service terms
- Development of a revenue-generating product
- Launch of a revenue-generating store
- Strengthened knowledge of organization's financial health
- Creation of an organization-wide culture of fund development responsibilities.

Board Development

Within the resilient leadership outcome area, two regrantors in particular reported that their community grantees had realized significant progress on their board development efforts, such as strategic board recruitment, strengthened board governance, clarified roles/responsibilities, and an ability to integrate board leadership into grantee organizations. Traction in this area is particularly notable given community grantees' description of board-related challenges at the annual CLP convening in December 2014. In discussing their "success story" grantees to date, one of these two regrantors noted a common thread in that relatively successful grantees have

⁹ As reported by SPR at the December 2014 CLP 2.0 grantee convening in Stockton, the case study grantees' most frequent areas of focus for CLP 2.0 are strengthening financial stability and increasing/diversifying funding sources. Other key areas for the case study grantees are increasing board financial capacity, strategic plan development/implementation, infrastructure and system development, and increasing programmatic capacity.

been able to build strong, active, and engaged boards. Likewise, the second regrantor identified a common theme among their strongest grantees as “strong leadership and synergy with the board.”

Case study grantees described the following examples of progress in board development:

- Increase in board membership
- Completion of board membership
- A larger and more engaged board “with distinct and valuable areas of expertise”
- Increased board involvement in fundraising efforts.

Not specific to *board* leadership, regrantors, TA/leadership intermediaries, and/or case study grantees also described increases in individual leadership skills (including confidence level, community engagement, and better understanding to prioritize self-care practices).

Infrastructure and Systems

Also within the resilient leadership outcome area, two regrantors highlighted grantee progress in infrastructure and systems, particularly with regard to office space and technical infrastructure (e.g., phone system, software, etc.), and described the larger positive implications for community exposure, programming, and ability to meet target population needs. Among the TA/leadership intermediaries, ZeroDivide felt that an area of significant progress was grantees’ understanding of technology as a critical core capacity for achieving social impact.

Case study grantees cited the following examples of progress in infrastructure and systems:

- Technology infrastructure upgrades and strengthening
- Improvements in IT infrastructure that have led to daily operational efficiencies
- More strategic thinking on how to use social media to promote work
- New building purchased
- Construction of new building started
- Opening of new computer lab
- Opening of first office
- New website launched
- New database established with a donor management system.

Other Areas of Traction

Progress in the areas above—most notably fund development and infrastructure—has positive implications for grantees’ ability to serve their community populations. For example, with additional funds and/or space, some grantees have been able to expand their programming (e.g.,

new housing program, greater number of preschool children served, services extended to another part of the region, new facilities/equipment to better meet the needs of a target population).

Regrantors, TA/leadership intermediaries, and/or case study grantees also described areas of progress outside the core categories above that have helped strengthen their organizational health and sustainability:

- Robust **peer networks** and community of practice among grantees
- **Hiring of key staff members** that led to a more manageable workload or allowed organizations to launch new work (e.g., developing marketing strategies)
- Grantees that became **501(c)3 organizations**, or that have strong potential to do so
- **More positive view of organization** in community (e.g., “being taken more seriously,” or having “a more professional” image)
- Increased **understanding of the complexity of organizational change**
- Increased **fluency with capacity-building frameworks** and tools
- Better **understanding of organizational strengths, challenges**, and areas for improvement

III. IMPLEMENTATION FINDINGS

We've been more hands-on in CLP 2.0 because of what we learned the first time on [the importance of] engaging more than a typical grantmaker might. It's a lot to expect [an organization] to take this on. When you're looking at the geography of the organizations, the base level capacity of the leadership, the goals of the project, you basically have to make it clear that a higher touch is going to be more successful.

- CLP 2.0 Regrantor

CLP 2.0 implementation has been marked by greater upfront investments of regrantors' time to improve grantee selection, increased intensity in regrantors' individualized interactions with grantees, and more efforts at coordination between the regrantors and TA/leadership intermediaries to improve the appropriateness of TA services offered to the community grantees. The positive feedback and emerging outcomes reported in Chapter 2 affirm the value of this approach. Based upon the implementation of CLP 2.0 thus far, a number of key findings have emerged as well as some considerations for the remainder of the initiative and beyond.¹⁰

Finding #1: Challenges emerged with timing and alignment of CLP TA/leadership intermediary offerings.

As indicated in Chapter 2, community grantees' access and usage of CLP TA/leadership intermediaries' services varied tremendously. Regrantors noted that it has been difficult to ensure an appropriate fit due, in part, to the pre-establishment of TA/leadership intermediaries' work plans prior to the grantee selection and assessment process. One regrantor reflected, *"It would have been better to recruit the TA providers once we knew what [our grantees] actually needed."* Subsequently, the regrantors, who wanted their grantees to take advantage of the array of CLP TA/leadership intermediary services offered, reported spending some amount of time determining how the services could meet their grantees' immediate and longer-term learning and capacity-building needs, and most importantly, how TA/leadership intermediaries could better

¹⁰ At the mid-point, SPR has collected and analyzed data on the relationship between the regrantors and the community grantees and the TA/leadership intermediaries, which is the focus of this chapter. In addition, community grantees had targeted capacity-building grants to purchase individualized TA, as well as general operating support. The final evaluation report will focus on the outcomes and lessons of this component in detail.

meet the community grantees in terms of where they are developmentally. Regrantors identified the reasons for some important missed opportunities, which are described below.

The sequencing and timing of TA resources were challenging, particularly in the first year of CLP 2.0 when new community grantees were just gearing up.¹¹ Coming into CLP 2.0, the TA/leadership intermediaries had well-developed curricula or programs ready to deploy. However, the grantees were not prepared to take advantage of these early opportunities. Due to the start-up activities of CLP 2.0 and the limited capacity of the grantees to engage, a number of regrantors reported that the timing and sequence of program offerings made it very difficult for community grantees to access those precious TA resources in the first year. At least three of the TA/leadership intermediaries concurred that the first year should have been spent differently. Rather than hitting the ground running with outreach and program enrollment, more time could have been spent first on communication and building awareness of the value of TA/leadership intermediaries' services (in collaboration with regrantors). This may have mitigated the "consultant fire hose" feeling among community grantees. In addition, a slower-paced first year would have allowed individual TA/leadership providers to better understand the starting places of the community grantees.

The TA offerings were not necessarily adjusted or relevant to the community grantees, particularly those that are small organizations. It was not only an issue of timing, some regrantors also questioned the relevancy and ultimate value of the TA topics for CLP 2.0 grantees. Following is representative feedback from the regrantors:

The CLP TA offerings didn't necessarily make sense; particularly for organizations in our cohort, [given] their organizational size. They really needed much more technical support to set up the nuts-and-bolts of their systems, such as Quick Books.

The main problems arose when consultants provided advice that would be appropriate for larger groups but are not usable for our smaller grantees, or when there is significant lag time between assessment and recommendations.

The degree to which grantees participate in CLP activities seems related to their perception of their value rather than the amount of time or resources they have.

Some TA/leadership intermediaries acknowledged that CLP 2.0 was a process of learning how to make their content and opportunities more relevant to small organizations. Different approaches

¹¹ Among the 57 CLP 2.0 community grantees, 35 were new to the initiative.

were taken toward realizing this aim. For example, Rockwood came to better understand the particular challenges of grassroots leaders devoting five days to the Art of Leadership training and built in flexibility for them to attend alternate sessions. ZeroDivide ultimately decided to partner with Ideaware on developing webinars rather than in-person trainings given community grantees' time and transportation constraints, as well as Ideaware's expertise with technology "on the ground in grassroots organizations." ZeroDivide has also been working with LeaderSpring to "test run" the webinars focused on leadership and technology.

Other TA/leadership intermediaries worked to ensure relevancy to community grantees by maintaining a flexible, open stance during trainings and responding to emerging needs. As one TA/leadership intermediary explained, *"I can't think of an actual pivot [we made] because we were never fully committed to a game plan for each session. We were going into it with a high-level outline for each session. There were no hard pivots, but we knew there would be a lot of pivots in terms of how groups responded or needing more time in certain places."*

Finding #2: Fit, flexibility, and customization of capacity-building services continue to be of paramount importance.

We know from research¹² that one important factor that determines whether grantees succeed in their capacity-building efforts is the consultant fit. Furthermore, our CLP 1.0 evaluation underscored the critical importance of consultants and others adopting a flexible and customized approach to building the capacity of organizations working with low-income communities and communities of color.¹³ A few regrants indicated that some of their community grantees specifically opted not to engage the services of TA/intermediaries in part due to a lack of fit.

While developing group learning opportunities has been valuable for fostering peer sharing among similar organizations, individualization was key to finding the "sweet spot" of supporting community grantee organizations. One regrantor elaborated on the importance of forming a learning community while also addressing the specific needs of each community grantee:

¹² C.f. Kibbe, Barbara and Fred Setterberg. *Succeeding with Consultants: Self-Assessment for the Changing Nonprofit*. New York, NY: The Foundation Center, 1992.

Block, Peter. *Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used*, 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, 2000.

¹³ For findings and lessons from CLP 1.0, please see: *Building Together: A Final Report of the Community Leadership Project Regranting Strategy* (June 23, 2014), Social Policy Research Associates; *Learning Together: A Final Evaluation Report for the Community Leadership Project's Technical Assistance Strategy* (July 8, 2012), Social Policy Research Associates; and *Leading Organizations to Benefit Low-Income People and Communities of Color: Findings from the CLP Leadership Strategy* (December 17, 2013), Leadership Learning Community & Social Policy Research Associates.

We bring them together as a group at the beginning because they all needed to get up to a certain baseline, and they needed to get to know each other so they could do some networking with each other. But from there on, each one's got their own path, their own sweet spot. For example, there's a group who will say, 'I want to hire a fundraising consultant.' Then I say, 'Great, I got a list of fundraising consultants.' But when I look at it, none of those fundraising consultants will work for that group. It just is not a good fit. So then I have to go out and do more research. It's that individualized of an approach.

Regrantors emphasized repeatedly that a one-size-fits-all approach is not effective. They cited the examples of two CLP TA/leadership intermediaries' tools and curricula, which—while likely effective in their broader work with nonprofits—needed to be adapted to CLP community grantees. Specific feedback indicated that these tools and curricula did not take into account community grantees' varied level of understanding of technology or financial concepts, or inaccurately assumed certain levels of organizational infrastructure that were not yet in place. Further, the regrantors stated that the TA/leadership intermediaries needed to take into account not only the size and type of organization (e.g., direct service provider versus advocacy organization), but also where the grantees are located and their organizational culture. One regrantor noted that the normal “checklist for a mainstream organization” is not applicable to any of their community grantees:

To me, one of the big challenges is navigating in a system that doesn't accept our values. So if you say to somebody, 'If you're a nonprofit, you do A, B, and C, then you should go to your local county/community foundation.' There are very few of those resources in the [San Joaquin] Valley, and those that are there, don't have a history of supporting people that look like me.

Due to these reasons, regrantors believed strongly that there needed to be much greater effort to customize TA services. One regrantor in particular felt that TA/leadership intermediaries needed to spend more time getting to know each of the community grantees and working with them to build the best training:

Content providers just generally need to know who their audiences are, and that we have organizations that are doing very different things. They have very different kinds of structures. Some are multigenerational. Some are groups that have gathered around the vicinity for a dance form. You've got English speakers, non-English speakers.

Some regrantors found that they had to greatly advocate on behalf of their grantees in order to get the TA/leadership intermediaries to appropriately customize their services:

An ongoing adjustment has been to be the super squeaky wheel with the TA providers. That's something [we as the regrantor] have just been a bulldog on, to really, really push the TA providers and say, 'Look. This is

exactly what our grantees need. You can't just do what you've got on the shelf. You've got to meet our people where they are.'

Despite the critical feedback, regrantors also referred to a few successful examples. NFF served as a prime example of a TA/leadership intermediary that responded and adapted to community grantees' needs over the course of CLP 2.0 in partnership with regrantors. For example, working with ACTA, NFF revised their curriculum to bring in culturally relevant examples that would resonate with community grantees in the Central Valley. The Rose Foundation noted NFF's responsive and nimble approach in adapting their trainings for groups much smaller than their normal clientele, stating: *"The training was well received, and especially useful to [one grantee], who was in the process of setting up an accounting system for the first time."* NFF also reflected on their experience in adapting their training to be more culturally resonant to CLP community grantees:

When we talk about savings, we usually say, 'Have three months of cash on hand.' For a smaller group in the community, maybe they will have a lot less cash on hand but they know if they are in trouble, they can count on community support and them coming out and bringing three dollars for a potluck. You can't really quantify community support but it is a real safety net, particularly in the Central Valley.

Finally, FFRE partnered with NFF and Fiscal Management Associates (FMA), to develop a framework for an additional financial TA offering that included a needs assessment, general content focused on financial management fundamentals for all grantees, and one to three hours of one-on-one coaching to address specific grantee needs. Grantee evaluations and reports from FMA indicate that grantees greatly benefited from training that drilled down to a financial system components level (e.g., internal controls, QuickBooks, organizational, program, and grant budgets).

Finding #3: Even those community grantees assessed as "ready" to participate in CLP struggled with capacity issues.

Despite coming up with a refined set of selection criteria to ensure grantee readiness to participate in CLP 2.0, regrantors and TA/leadership intermediaries reported many community grantees with limited ability to participate in capacity-building opportunities. One TA/leadership intermediary observed that despite interest and appetite, grantee leaders' limited time and scheduling commitments made it difficult to participate in the TA/leadership intermediary services:

Because the organizations are smaller and have less capacity, many interested leaders were not able to make the time commitment to apply to the program and two withdrew the day of the program due to work and personal scheduling conflicts.

Additionally, two other TA intermediaries specifically cited the importance of creating space within trainings for community grantees to do work as part of “class time” rather than as part of homework.

Regrantors also learned that **even community grantees who were ready to engage in capacity building and realized considerable progress in the first phase of CLP, could not be considered safe from setbacks.** Success in previous capacity-building efforts did not necessarily mean organizational leaders needed less support and checking in during CLP 2.0. In fact, they sometimes faced a new host of challenges as they began to grow bigger. One regrantor discussed a seemingly successful community grantee in CLP 1.0 that had to close its doors. After much reflection, the regrantor shared some insights on what might have gone awry. Winning larger grants and scaling up required attention to building out organizational infrastructure, board support, and shared leadership to prevent executive director burnout—growth requirements which were not met.

Finding #4: Intermediaries need to build their own readiness to work with community grantees serving low-income communities of color.

Given the real-world survival challenges facing organizations working with low-income communities of color, regrantors turned the definition of readiness on its head. One regrantor urged **intermediaries to be adaptive in their approaches and ready to work with organizations and their realities.** Another regrantor expressed the belief that many community grantees *are ready* and the question should really be, “*Are the TA services ready to adjust to the needs of the community grantees?*”

Undoubtedly, part of this readiness is the sense of humility, learning orientation, and listening skills described by three of the TA/leadership intermediaries. This allowed the intermediaries to position themselves not as experts with a set agenda, but rather as facilitators of community grantees’ expertise with a shared commitment to their success. As one TA/leadership described, “*We get that we’re not the experts of their issue. We facilitate their expertise while facilitating leadership and management competence. We don’t always get how it plays out in their organization. We have humility and a learning orientation. We engender trust because of our cultural humility.*”

Finding #5: Geographic and cultural nuances of CLP community grantees have required deep contextual and cultural knowledge and skills.

More strongly than in past interviews, regrantors emphasized the importance of providing technical assistance and other interventions in a culturally responsive manner. Despite the efforts of some TA/leadership intermediaries to increase their offerings and establish a presence in the San Joaquin Valley, **the issue of finding qualified, culturally competent TA providers who specialized in nonprofit work in the San Joaquin Valley was still raised as a concern.**

Central Valley regrants expressed some concerns that more locally-based CLP 2.0 TA/leadership services could not be offered in the region, a situation exacerbated by a lack of alternatives. The Central Valley regrants made the following observations:

All the TA providers that we're contracted with were around the Bay Area. While they did some trainings, it was a "drive-through." It's a different perspective than actually finding TA providers who are local.....Finding relevant capacity-building tools and TA providers has been one of the challenges.

* * *

There is a real lack of experts to help support nonprofits in the Central Valley, and even looking for consultants or who has the know-how around financial management, it's challenging. It is very challenging. Our organizations really struggle to find people who can build those [executive director] roles.¹⁴

It is important to note, that at least a couple of TA providers made efforts to have a presence in the Central Valley as well as scheduled their trainings on weekends. CompassPoint held all its trainings in Central Valley, and NFF had multiple financial clinics in the three regions.

Culturally relevant TA services require that all training components reflect the cultural context of community grantees and leaders. Following are specific reflections offered by regrants and their consultants:

A lot of these [community grantee] groups are always thinking about articulation [of their work] with multiple voices. When they are being spoken to or being worked with, they appreciate it when that's recognized and when the facilitators themselves or the person doing the workshop can implement those kind of multiple voices in the workshop. Think about who are we talking to, at what time, and what does it sound like when we're talking to this one group as compared to another group.

* * *

There is a need to have TA providers who are really listening to the community grantees. Middle-class consultants have blind spots and need to think about how to support the changes needed for organizations serving low-income communities. They need to pay attention to the way organizations operate as a grassroots organization. It has nothing to do with best practices or being effective. As a white, middle-class consultant, being aware I have blind spots.

¹⁴ Note however, that this particular regrantee reported working on many adaptations that allowed their grantees to take advantage of the CLP TA providers.

Finding #5: Regrantors' intensive and multi-faceted roles have been crucial to community grantees' success.

As discussed in previous evaluation reports, many of the regrantors have had to adapt their funder-grantee relationship over the course of CLP. That is, many of the regrantors reported how their relationships with the community grantees have evolved over time to go beyond what is typical, involving more in-depth engagement. One regrantor in particular noted:

Definitely, there was a lot of thinking about what our role was going to be going into every [grantee] meeting. In each year of the grant, particularly for organizations that didn't participate in CLP 1.0, we were more aware that the first year was more about letting them explore a little bit more, and then the second year was about keeping them on track and accountable. Each year we're trying to think about what our coaching was like and measuring that against what the organizations were ready for or the executive directors were ready to receive from us as well.

This regrantor continues to explain that this new, deeper type of funder/grantee relationship is new to the community grantees as well. It takes time for them to open up about their challenges:

The other thing is that because [grantees are used to] a typical funder relationship, it takes some time for them to adapt to something different. Because when your funder comes in for a site visit, you're putting your best face forward, and you're saying, 'Here are all the ways that I've met and even surpassed the expectations of the deliverables.' But here, it's [more]: 'I want to explore challenges because you want to explore the points of tension with you,' and they need to have a comfort level and opening up about those.

Communicating with the community grantees at least once a month is just a starting place.

Regular check-ins helped to keep community grantees on track but many regrantors noted that deeper-level discussions and coaching were often needed. One regrantor noted that doing a quick check-in with each community grantee and seeing how they are doing are different things altogether. In the beginning, just checking in was enough, but over time "checking in" turned into facilitating conversations because the check-ins were not getting to the depth that the organization needed. One regrantor explained as follows:

What has changed over time is my level of involvement, moving from 'How things are going?' to actually facilitating some sessions and discussion with their board and team to go deeper into some issues.Even before they engage a consultant, they were really needing somebody to sit down for some extended period of time to really work through an issue and come to a decision about how to move forward with it.

As part of the multi-faceted role that regrantors have assumed, a few are playing an important coaching role for the executive directors of their community grantees. In the case

of one regrantor, hiring a consultant to do regular check-ins and administration has allowed more senior regrantor staff to work with community grantees one-on-one on more substantial topics:

Hiring [a consultant] to do quarterly check-in calls, organizing the peer luncheons, and the annual convenings, has freed me up. So she does the check-in calls. She types up notes; I read the notes; and then we talk about them.....What I am trying to identify is where I could do some one-on-one coaching with the groups. [This] has been really successful. Individualized. We've really, really gone for an individualized approach with each of the grantees.

* * *

Some [community grantees] are more frequently [communicating]; some are using me a lot more, some call me on a regular basis just to talk through issues. I'm kind of playing a coach role. For others I'll come in and do a little training."

Regrantors are playing mediating role between community grantees and TA/leadership intermediaries. Providing community grantees with financial resources is a starting point. Regrantors emphasized the need to work closely with community grantees to identify their specific needs and either provide the consulting themselves or else provide support by identifying external TA providers and acting as a mediator:

We go into this thinking, 'Okay, we'll give them money, help them identify a consultant they can use to hire, and we'll bring them together to train together, and we'll see what we can do to get as much mileage as we can out of the TA that's being provided through CLP. The adjustment along the way has been to continue to do all that, but to get really clear about where [our team] is the best consultant for the group. We can use our own staff members' skills and background, and the relationship that we've already got with the grantees to really spend time in their office in the role of a consultant, but doing stuff that I don't think we could have got a consultant to do.

* * *

With consultants and other TA providers, mentors can play an important role in bridging communication gaps where the "experts" use different terminology and frameworks unfamiliar to the grantees.

Emerging Promising Approaches to Working with Community Grantees

In addition to key approaches that have been a hallmark of CLP since its inception (such as combining general support with capacity building), a number of other approaches have been lifted up by the regrantors. While it is early to present "promising practices" in a definitive manner, a number of approaches have been highlighted by the regrantors and TA/leadership

intermediaries. The evaluation will continue to track these practices to see if they are effective in building the long-term sustainability of the community grantees and the effectiveness of TA providers working in new regions and/or with new groups.

- **Assessing grantee readiness for capacity building as part of the selection and capacity-building action planning process.** A key commitment of the CLP funders was to ensure a thoughtful, data-driven approach to the development of capacity-building plans. While some regrantors administered the CLP organizational assessment as part of the selection process, all regrantors used the assessment results as a basis for action planning which allowed them to understand community grantees' starting place as well as how to build upon their strengths.
- **Developing a shared leadership model within grantee organizations, as well as a partnership model between community grantees and regrantors, to develop appropriate and effective capacity-building experiences.** Regrantors have encouraged community grantees to create shared leadership teams consisting not only of the executive director but also of staff and board members to create a shared sense of leadership and ownership of the capacity-building work and outcomes. One TA intermediary also underscored the importance of this practice, noting that the community grantees with *greater* variation in their organizational attendees tended to accomplish more during their clinics, which reflect shared leadership and commitment to doing thoughtful work in partnership with colleagues.

Additionally, regrantors have closely partnered with their community grantees to shape the design of capacity-building experiences to ensure a collaborative (versus funder-driven) effort. One regrantor elaborates as follows:

[This approach help us] to be transparent, and authentic, and walk shoulder to shoulder with the organizations who are challenged...I'm providing the support that is necessary to help them get to where they need to be through a different frame. The idea is how can I, as a staff of a foundation, [partner with] the grantees without necessarily driving the process for them?

- **Developing peer-sharing networks.** One important practice and consistent area of strength from CLP 1.0 to CLP 2.0 has been the effort that multiple regrantors have put forth to create strong peer networks, often in the form of "communities of practice." As one regrantor shared:

We worked hard to create an environment where they can collaborate and share best practices for responding to organizational challenges. Our quarterly Peer Luncheon is now an important resource, providing grantees space to learn from our staff and each other. We also increased the number of our grantee convenings in CLP 2.0, and combined with the informal peer luncheons, they helped our grantees to see each other as resources and a peer network.

One TA/leadership intermediary also reflected on the greater importance they now place on peer networks as a result of their CLP 2.0 experience. In thinking through what they would do differently with another round of the initiative, they

noted that they would “*think more about how to do peer coaching because of the value of peer relationships,*” particularly among leaders of color. “*We could have taken more advantage of that, maybe even more than professional coaching.*”

- **Building the capacity of TA providers to support community grantees.** Building the capacity of TA/leadership intermediaries (through customizing their offerings) is potentially an important unanticipated outcome of CLP 2.0. This parallels past CLP evaluation findings on the importance of building the capacity of regrants to work with these types of organizations.

IV. CONSIDERATIONS GOING FORWARD

Although a couple of regrantors are beginning to close out their CLP 2.0 grants in 2015, below we provide some considerations for the remainder of CLP, exit grants, and the final evaluation report.

Remainder of CLP

- Continue to create opportunities for regrantors to communicate/coordinate with the TA/leadership intermediaries and share lessons learned through their intensive interactions.
- At the last CLP grantee convening in December 2015, create the opportunity for dialogue on: (1) how major funders can build more flexibility into the work plans of TA providers to adapt their services to grantees' needs; and (2) ensure that out-of-area TA providers have the time to get to know grantees before finalizing their training curricula or work plans.
- Continue clustering organizations by budget levels to promote dialogue about common challenges and breakthroughs.

Exit Grant Considerations

- Given the intensive and multi-faceted roles of regrantors, how can regrantors build the capacity of grantees to become more independent beyond CLP with regard to activities such as: (1) assessing their own organizational development needs, (2) developing organizational improvement plans in the future, (3) finding and negotiating the hiring of appropriate consultants, and (4) mobilizing the resources that they need to continue capacity-building efforts?

Areas for Learning in the Final Evaluation Report of CLP 2.0

- Continue tracking accomplishments, learnings, and challenges by organizational size and budget.
- Explore how TA/leadership intermediaries' long-term capacities have been built and how their consulting/training practices have been changed through working with the regrantors to better meet the needs of small organizations working with low-income people and communities of color.

- How are the accomplishments and progress of community grantees positioning them for sustainability? What are the primary vehicles of sustainability, including peer networks and other aspects of organizational “social capital” gained through interactions with regrantors and TA intermediaries?

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS

- Maria Luisa Colmenarez and Rudy Garcia from Danzantes Unidos
- Dr. Juan Medina from Kings Regional Traditional Folk Arts
- Isabel Arroyo from El Quinto Sol de America
- Sammy Nunez and Alejandra Gutierrez from Fathers and Families
- Erin Garner-Ford and Amy Davis from ACT Women and Girls
- Dirk Alvarado from Sonrisas Dental Center
- Rigoberto Calocarivas and Paula Worby from the Multicultural Institute
- Antonio Diaz and Chris Selig from PODER
- Mel Mason, Ann Todd Jealous and Regina Mason from the Village Project
- Allyson Tintiangco-Cubale, Antwi Akom, Aekta Shah, Grace Alvarez, Aaron Nakai and Bouapha Toommaly from the Institute for Sustainable Economic, Educational, and Environmental Design
- Mary Anne Hughes from the Community Food Bank of San Benito County
- Angelina Gomez, Ana Villafuert, Judy Sulsona, Maria Eugenia (Gini) Matute-Bianchi, Leticia Mendoza, Emelia Leon from the YWCA of Watsonville
- Julia Liou and Anuja Mendiratta from California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative
- Jackie Byers, Jasmine Jones and Misha Cornelius from the Black Organizing Project
- Frank Delgado from Arte Americas
- Marcela Ruiz, Deirdre O'Shea from California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) and Immigrant Legal Resources Center (ILRC) respectively
- Jerry Yoshitomi, Amy Kitchener, Russell Rodríguez, and Lily Kharrazi from Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA)
- Karla James, Tim Little, and Tina Eshaghpour from Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment
- Mauricio Palma from Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Kaki Rusmore, Terry Teitelbaum, and Judy Sulsona from the Central Coast Collaborative
- Jeanne Bell and Shannon Ellis from CompassPoint
- Renato Almanzor from LeaderSpring
- Rachel Heitler from Nonprofit Finance Fund
- Stacy Kono and Virada Chatikul from Rockwood Leadership Institute
- McCrae Parker from ZeroDivide

APPENDIX B: CURRENT CLP 2.0 COMMUNITY GRANTEES

Current Community Grantees	
Silicon Valley Community Foundation	
Council on American-Islamic Relations	Peninsula Interfaith Action
Institute for Sustainable Economic, Educational and Environmental Design	Sonrisas Community Dental Center
Latinas Contra Cancer	Sunday Friends
Multicultural Institute	Third Street Community Center
Pacifica Resource Center	Veggielution Community Farm
Central Coast Collaborative	
Big Sur Health Center	Loaves, Fishes & Computers
CASA of San Benito County	Pajaro Valley Arts Council
Community Food Bank of SBC	Sol Treasures
Community of Caring Monterey Peninsula	The Alisal Center for the Fine Arts
Community Organized for Relational Power (COPA)	The Village Project
Conflict Resolution Center	Watsonville Law Center
Homeless Coalition of SBC	YWCA of Watsonville
Rose Foundation	
Acta Non Verba: Youth Urban Farm Project	Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice
Black Organizing Project	Movement Generation
California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative	OneFam/ Bikes 4 Life
California Indian Environmental Alliance	PODER (People Organizing to Demand Environmental & Economic Rights)
Alliance for California Traditional Arts	
Arte Americas	Merced Lao Family
Danzantes Unidos	Modesto Cambodian Buddhist S.
Kings Cultural Center - Kings Regional Traditional Folk Arts	Teatro de la Tierra
Little Manila Foundation	
Fund for Rural Equity	
ACT for Women and Girls	Hughson Family Resource Center

Boys and Girls Club of Merced	Merced Organizing Project (MOP)
El Quinto Sol	People and Congregations Together
Faith in Action	San Joaquin Pride Center
Fathers & Families of San Joaquin	West Fresno Family Resource Center
Fresno Barrios Unidos	Westside Family Preservation Services
Fresno Street Saints	WildPlaces
Hmong International Culture Institute	

Closed Community Grantees

Rose Foundation

Ma'at Youth Academy

Oakland Food Connection

Fund for Rural Equity

San Joaquin AIDS Foundation