

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATE



Community Development Project Research & Policy Initiative Update



2012



RECENT RESEARCH AND POLICY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Research and Policy Initiative at the Community Development Project is wrapping up another exciting year. We have launched a new website and toolkit on participatory action research and released four new reports in partnership with community groups, on topics including participatory budgeting, consumer fraud targeting immigrants, and mayoral control in public schools. As always, we also continue to coordinate and support a number of coalitions and alliances working to build power in New York's low-income communities.

As a result of our research support, community organizations have seen their social justice campaigns move forward and their organizing work continue to grow. Our trainings have helped increase the capacity of community organizations and furthered leadership development efforts. Reports, education and advocacy tools have aided organizational base-building and increased the presence and profile of community organizations in the media and with government officials.

This update includes information about reports recently published by CDP in partnership with a number of community-based organizations. It also includes information on some of our current and upcoming projects to be completed in the near future.

For more information about our reports or current projects, please contact Alexa Kasdan, Director of Research and Policy at akasdan@urbanjustice.org. Thank you for your continued support of the Community Development Project!

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATE

CDP LAUNCHES A NEW WEBSITE FOR PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

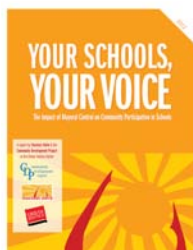


In January, CDP launched the Research for Organizing (RFO) website and toolkit. The site is designed for organizers and community members to build concrete research skills that can be applied to actual research projects they are working on within their organizations. This toolkit includes a comprehensive set of popular education activities, tools, templates, and case studies for organizations to use in every phase of their participatory action research projects. To introduce community organizations to the RFO toolkit, CDP held two workshops, one in June at the New York Foundation and one in October at the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development. Over 50 people from community organizations throughout the city attended the workshops. Participants learned the basics of participatory action research, sampled activities, tools, and case studies from the new toolkit, and toured the new website. The workshops also included panel discussions with organizers who have worked on participatory action research projects with CDP.

Use the Toolkit here: <http://www.researchfororganizing.org>

NEW REPORTS

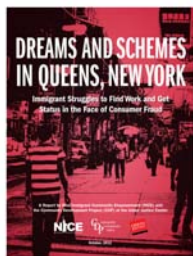
YOUR SCHOOLS, YOUR VOICE: THE IMPACT OF MAYORAL CONTROL ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLS



On October 17th, CDP and Teachers Unite (TU) released a new report, *Your Schools, Your Voice: The Impact of Mayoral Control on Community Participation in Schools*. Using a participatory action research approach, TU and CDP worked with teachers, students and parents to explore the impact of mayoral control on democratic participation in NYC schools. The report is the result of 426 surveys and three focus groups with teachers, parents and students in NYC public schools as well as legislative and policy research. Overall, the report finds that teachers, parents and students want decision-making power in public schools and want an alternative to the current centralized system of mayoral control.

Read the Report here: http://cdp-ny.org/report/your_schools_your_voice.pdf

DREAMS AND SCHEMES IN QUEENS, NEW YORK: IMMIGRANT STRUGGLES TO FIND WORK AND GET STATUS IN THE FACE OF CONSUMER FRAUD



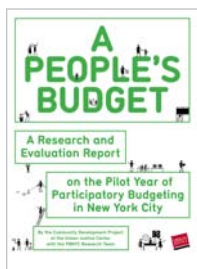
On October 11th, CDP and New Immigrant Community Empowerment (NICE) unveiled a new report, *Dreams and Schemes in Queens, New York: Immigrant Struggles to Find Work and Get Status in the Face of Consumer Fraud*. Every day, immigrants in New York City struggle to find work, support their families and understand their immigration options. In this process, many seek assistance from a variety of services and businesses targeted at immigrant consumers. This report focuses on two of the most prevalent and notorious: immigration service providers (ISPs)/immigration attorneys and employment agencies. The report is the result of comprehensive participatory action research, including an innovative methodology called “mystery shopping” where NICE members posed as consumers in order to track

compliance of businesses with various laws and regulations. The report documents the systemic nature of consumer fraud committed against immigrants and offers solutions for improved laws, policies, and enforcement mechanisms to better protect immigrants. The release was attended by over 80 people including elected and agency officials, community members, academics and the press. The report was covered in various media outlets, including NY Daily News, Associated Press, El Diario, Univision, WFUV Radio, NTN24, NY1, Diario de Mexico USA, NBC Telemundo 47, QueensLatino.com and WBAI radio.

Read the Report here: <http://www.cdp-ny.org/report/DreamsandSchemes.pdf>

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A PEOPLE'S BUDGET: A RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT ON THE PILOT YEAR OF PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN NYC



On September 20th, CDP released a new report, *A People's Budget: A Research and Evaluation Report on the Pilot Year of Participatory Budgeting in New York City*. Participatory budgeting (PB) is a new process for capital budgeting in which voters directly decide how to spend millions of their own tax dollars, a first in New York City and only the second such initiative in the United States. The report details findings about who participated, and the impact PB has had on attitudes towards government, civic engagement and leadership skills. The research is based on over 5,000 surveys, 35 interviews and hundreds of observations. At the release, CDP researchers presented findings from the pilot year and recommendations for future PB processes. Council Member Brad Lander and PB participants discussed the report

following the presentation.

Read the Report here: <http://www.cdp-ny.org/report/pbreport.pdf>

WORKERS' RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS: SOUTH ASIAN IMMIGRANT WORKERS IN NYC



On July 18th, CDP and Desis Rising up and Moving (DRUM) released a new report, *Workers' Rights are Human Rights: South Asian Immigrant Workers in New York City*. This community-based research report chronicles the experiences and stories of undocumented South Asian workers in Jackson Heights, Queens. The research found that South Asian workers are consistently underpaid, on average earn less than industry-wide wages, experience harsh and hazardous working conditions, get little to no benefits, and experience harassment and mistreatment from employers and law enforcement officers. To address these issues, DRUM's report offers recommendations to improve current labor laws and enforcement practices and suggests additional worker protections. The report was released at the DRUM office during a

press conference with DRUM members, advocates, and City Council Member Daniel Dromm.

Read the Report here: http://www.cdp-ny.org/report/DRUM_Worker_Report_WEB.pdf

CURRENT PROJECTS

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN NYC DOUBLES IN YEAR 2



Now in its second year in New York City, participatory budgeting has doubled in size and impact with four new Council members participating in the process – Daniel Halloran (19), Mark Weprin (23), Steven Levin (33), and David Greenfield (44) – have joined the four Council members from last year – Melissa Mark-Viverito (8), Eric Ulrich (32), Brad Lander (39), and Jumaane Williams (45). In total, New Yorkers will directly decide how to spend at least \$10 million dollars in capital discretionary funds.

The Community Development Project co-chairs the steering committee of this initiative and is also coordinating the research and evaluation of the process. The process in New York City is the largest, and only the second, participatory budget initiative in the United States, and serves as a model for further budgeting reforms. CDP is partnering with the Participatory Budgeting Project, Community Voices Heard (CVH), and several other New York City organizations to observe and document the process and develop a report that summarizes the second year of PB and provides recommendations for improvement in the coming budget cycles.

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DEVELOPING A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR NYC GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS WITH BRANDWORKERS



Over the past six months CDP has partnered with Brandworkers International to conduct research on the food manufacturing and distribution sector. This consists of 100 surveys, a literature review, a national survey of legislative and enforcement initiatives pertinent to the industry, and a review of the labor history of food manufacturing and distribution in New York City. In addition to the research, CDP and Brandworkers have developed a Code of Conduct that would hold food manufacturing businesses who receive loans from the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYC EDC) to certain labor standards. The Code of Conduct contains provisions about wages, meal and rest breaks, health and safety, nondiscrimination, just cause termination, and collective bargaining to ensure loan recipients comply with already existing labor laws. CDP and Brandworkers are currently in discussions with the NYC EDC about implementing the Code of Conduct into the new food manufacturers fund's loan application process.

GIS MAPPING AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION WITH CAAAV: ORGANIZING ASIAN COMMUNITIES



CDP is working with CAAAV to create maps that document the impact of the 2009 zoning changes in Chinatown. CDP collected data from the Department of Buildings website and the Furman Center's SHIP database on certain time periods and mapped it to show geographic trends in demolition and new development before and after the rezoning. These maps help CAAAV track the types and extent of development in the Chinatown neighborhood. CDP also partnered with CAAAV to conduct a city-wide issue identification survey to determine issues of importance to Asian communities. CAAAV will use this information in their organizational and campaign development over the next several years.

EVALUATING BRONX HOUSING COURT WITH COMMUNITY ACTION FOR SAFE APARTMENTS (CASA)



CDP is working with Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA) on a campaign to reform Housing Court in New York City to make it easier for tenants to navigate. To support this campaign, CDP and CASA have conducted research, including: 15 judge observations, three focus groups with 20 participants, over 1,000 surveys, analysis of current literature, legal review of implications of legal representation, and secondary data collection. The data from this research will be put in a report that documents the tenant experience and presents concrete proposals for reforming Housing Court.

EMPLOYER AND WORKER DIALOGUES WITH DOMESTIC WORKERS UNITED (DWU) AND JFREJ



CDP has been working with DWU and JFREJ to provide research and documentation support in their efforts to organize and improve standards for domestic workers. Currently, the groups are conducting dialogues between employers and domestic workers in Park Slope and on the Upper West Side. CDP is helping to design research instruments, collect data, document and evaluate the dialogue process.

VOCAL



CDP and VOCAL-NY are developing a report to document the impact of high rent burden on homelessness for people with HIV/AIDS, as part of a campaign to pass state legislation that would impose a rent cap of 30% of income for this population. Research has included collecting over 100 surveys and conducting 3 focus groups targeted towards two distinct populations: people living with HIV/AIDS in the emergency shelter system and those living with HIV/AIDS in independent housing. CDP trained dozens of VOCAL members in survey administration as well as provided training for VOCAL staff to conduct focus groups. Secondary research was used to support findings from the surveys and focus groups. CDP and VOCAL are currently in the process of writing the report which will then be used in VOCAL's campaign to pass legislation that would impose a rent cap for people living with HIV/AIDS.

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RESEARCH & POLICY IN THE NEWS

The New York Times

New York Times – March 30, 2012

Putting In Their Two Cents by Soni Sangha

<http://www.cdp-ny.org/media2/putting-in-their-two-cents.pdf>

DAILY NEWS

New York Daily News – October 11, 2012

Probe reveals rampant ripoffs hitting immigrants by Erica Pearson

http://cdp-ny.org/media2/hydailynews_11oct12.pdf

theguardian

The Guardian – July 19, 2012

South Asian workers in New York City exploited and underpaid, says report by Andrea Palatnik

http://cdp-ny.org/media2/theguardian_19july12.pdf

What Our Community Partners Say about Our Work

Sondra Youdelman, Executive Director, Community Voices Heard

“The CDP Toolkit is an incredibly valuable resource for grassroots organizations doing research. It walks you through the process step by step and provides great case studies, sample tools, and exercises. It’s easy to use and really one of the best things out there!”

Susanna Blankley, Director of Housing Organizing, Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA)

“We really can’t wait for the report about the Bronx Housing Court to come out. We know it will be an invaluable tool that will legitimize our demands, help build our base and strengthen our campaign. It is really fantastic to work with CDP, not just because they help us do the research but because they teach us—staff and leaders—how to do the research.”

Sally Lee, Executive Director, Teachers Unite

“CDP’s support was truly invaluable to Teachers Unite this past year. Their support allowed our small organization to give voice to an unexamined but critical problem in our city’s school system--the lack of democracy and its impact on low-income communities of color. CDP helped us produce a report we’re incredibly proud of—they are a rare resource that lifts up underrepresented voices to make an impact on important issues concerning our city.”

City Council Member Brad Lander (39th District, Brooklyn)

“The outstanding research and evaluation report by the Community Development Project documents the concrete ways in which NYC’s first year of participatory budgeting mobilized a diverse cross-section of New Yorkers, included traditionally disenfranchised residents, created deeper connections to neighbors and government, and strengthened social and political networks in our communities. Thanks so much to UJC and all the research partners for thoroughly documenting this great process.”

Valeria Treves, Executive Director, New Immigrant Community Empowerment

“UJC’s CDP has provided us with concrete tools to realize our vision of member led research. In addition the support in data analysis and the writing process was essential in completing this project.”

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The Community Development Project's Research and Policy Initiative

CDP's Research and Policy Initiative partners with and provides strategic support to grassroots community organizations to build the power of their organizing and advocacy work. We utilize a "participatory action research" model in which low-income and excluded communities are central to the design and development of research and policy. Our work consists of the following:

- **Participatory Action Research Reports:** From start to finish, we work with our community partners to design, administer, analyze and write participatory action research reports. These reports are used by our partners to educate community members, engage elected officials, garner media attention and advocate for socially just policies.
- **Grassroots Policymaking:** With community organizations, we research and develop ground-up policy solutions to problems they identify and document.
- **Popular-Education Curriculum Design and Research Training:** Our trainings and tools assist communities in designing and conducting their own research. We also conduct trainings on a variety of research topics to build the capacity of our partner organizations.
- **Strategic Campaign Research:** We conduct background research and develop fact sheets to provide strategic data in support of organizing campaigns. Our partners use these materials in leadership development and base-building and to educate elected and government officials about specific issues and campaigns.

For more information, please contact

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