



Community Development Project Research & Policy Initiative Update

Fall/Winter 2011



Recent Research and Policy Accomplishments

The Research and Policy Initiative at the Community Development Project is wrapping up another exciting year. We released three new reports in partnership with community groups, on topics including public housing, methadone clinics, and zoning in Chinatown. As always, we also continue to coordinate and support a number of coalitions and alliances working to build power in NYC'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.

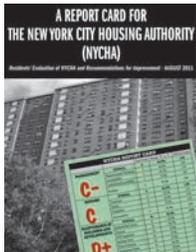
This update includes information about reports recently published by the Research and Policy Initiative in partnership with a number of community-based organizations. It also includes information on some of our current and upcoming projects to be completed in the near future. For more information about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

Alexa Kasdan, Director of Research and Policy,
Urban Justice Center, Community Development Project

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATE

NEW REPORTS AND PROJECTS

A REPORT CARD FOR THE NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY

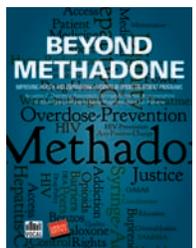


On August 8th, the Community Development Project (CDP), partnered with CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities, Community Voices Heard (CVH), Families United for Racial and Economic Equality (FUREE), Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES), and Mothers on the Move (MOM) to release a new report titled “A Report Card for the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA): Residents’ Evaluation of NYCHA and Recommendations for Improvement.” The report is the result of a year-long, city-wide, participatory research project. CDP’s partner groups collected 1,446 report cards from 71 NYCHA developments that asked public housing residents to “grade” NYCHA on issues related to repairs, maintenance and management. The report includes NYCHA’s grades, research findings and recommendations for NYCHA to improve programs and policies. Read Report: <http://cdp-ny.org/report/nychareportcard.pdf>

“CDP helped GOLES and the coalition plan and implement the Report Card research project and really helped us get the best information. It’s really great when we can partner with CDP because as a community organization, we often don’t have the capacity to do research on our own.”

– Damaris Reyes, Executive Director, Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES)

BEYOND METHADONE: IMPROVING HEALTH AND EMPOWERING PATIENTS IN OPIOID TREATMENT PROGRAMS

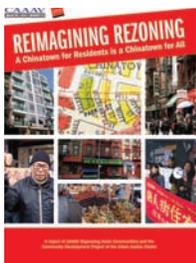


On October 6th, CDP and VOCAL-NY released a new report, “Beyond Methadone: Improving Health and Empowering Patients in Opioid Treatment Programs.” The report examines one of New York’s most stigmatized and marginalized populations and evaluates the performance of methadone programs in meeting the needs of their patients. The report, which is based on over 500 surveys and five focus groups with methadone patients across 29 methadone programs in New York City, found a range of unmet health needs and challenges for methadone patients. The report was released at a policy briefing with VOCAL-NY, advocates, New York Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried– Chair of the Assembly Health Committee and Steven Cymbrowitz—Chair of the Assembly Alcoholism and Drug Abuse committees. VOCAL-NY is now using the report to advocate for systematic improvements for Methadone patients.

Read Report: http://www.cdp-ny.org/report/Beyond_Methadone.pdf

“The reports that VOCAL-NY has done in partnership with CDP are really important and concrete tools that we can use to build our credibility with policy makers, educate our members, strengthen our campaigns and attract media attention.” – Sean Barry, Executive Director, VOCAL-NY

REIMAGING REZONING: A CHINATOWN FOR RESIDENTS IS A CHINATOWN FOR ALL



On December 1st, CDP, in partnership with CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities, released a new report, “Reimagining Rezoning: A Chinatown for Residents is a Chinatown for All.” The report offers an alternative vision for rezoning Chinatown and calls for the creation of a Special Zoning District around the area. “Reimagining Rezoning” is based on extensive community research, including 451 surveys, a canvass of 140 local businesses and in-depth focus groups and interviews. The report highlights the need for protections for residents and businesses and details how rezoning the area can curb harassment and gentrification. The report launch included a presentation about the report’s findings and recommendations and panel discussion about how zoning can be used as a tool to protect low-income communities of color. Panelists included Chinatown community residents, representatives from other New York City communities that have undergone rezoning and experts on zoning and land use. City Councilmember Brad Lander delivered the closing remarks. Read Report: <http://cdp-ny.org/report/CAAARezoning.pdf>

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATE

RESEARCH FOR ORGANIZING TOOLKIT



CDP spends each day supporting grassroots organizations through the process of conceptualizing, designing, implementing, producing and disseminating Participatory Action Research projects. Through this work, CDP developed a range of trainings, tools and tips to enable community members to become more actively and effectively involved in the research process. In order to share its resources more widely and increase the capacity of more grassroots organizations, CDP developed an online toolkit to synthesize all of the resources it has designed and gathered over the years. 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. The toolkit is designed for organizers and community members to build concrete research skills that can be applied to actual research projects that they are working on within their organization. The toolkit will be available online and in print and is set to be released in January.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROJECT



Four NYC Council members (Brad Lander, Melissa Mark-Viverito, Eric Ulrich, and Jumaane Williams) are allocating \$1 million dollars of their Fiscal year 2012 discretionary budgets for their constituents to directly decide how the money will be spent. The Community Development Project sits on the steering committee of this initiative and is also coordinating the research and evaluation of the process. This experiment in democracy is only the second such initiative in the United States, though participatory budgeting is a best practice of democratic governance used in over 1,200 cities around the world. The New York City pilot is the largest participatory budget in the US, and serves as a model for further budgeting reforms. CDP is partnering with the Participatory Budgeting Project, Community Voices Heard and several other New York City organizations to develop a report that summarizes the first year of PB and provides recommendations for improvement in the coming budget cycles.

NEW IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (NICE)

CDP is working with NICE to document fraudulent and predatory practices of immigrant service providers and employment agencies in Queens. The research is being conducted through a coordinated canvass of all immigrant service providers and employment agencies in Jackson Heights, Elmhurst and Corona, Queens as well as surveys and focus groups with new immigrants that have accessed these services. Research results will be documented in a final report that will be used to support NICE's immigrant consumer justice campaign.

BRANDWORKERS

CDP is partnering with Brandworkers to conduct research about the food manufacturing and distribution sector. While some research has been done to examine the economic impact of the food manufacturing and distribution sector in NYC, there has been little exploration of employment practices and working conditions in this sector. This new research will produce a set of findings and policy recommendations that can strengthen and support Brandworker's Focus on the Food Chain campaign. In addition, this research will produce concrete proposals for how to infuse worker-focused policy into NYC's existing food initiatives.

FIERCE LGBTQ COMMUNITY CENTER VISIONING



On November 12th, FIERCE and CDP held a visioning session with LGBTQ youth to develop proposals for a LGBTQ youth community center in the West Village. At the Visioning session, FIERCE and CDP shared results from a community survey that asked LGBTQ youth about the types of services, programs and activities they need and want. For the visioning session, Hester Street Collaborative built a "pop-up" community center that provided tools and activities for youth to use to creatively articulate their vision. The information and input gathered during the session will be used to help FIERCE develop a concrete proposal and design for the community center.

DAILY NEWS

Residents Give NYCHA Lousy Grades

August 8, 2011 BY CELESTE KATZ

http://cdp-ny.org/media2/nydailynews_8aug11.pdf

The New York Times

4 Council Members, Each With \$1 Million,

Will Let Public Decide How It's Spent

September 13, 2011 BY KATE TAYLOR

http://www.cdp-ny.org/media2/4_Council_Members.pdf

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Cool Arrives in a Slice of Chinatown

December 1, 2011 BY MIKE VILENSKY

http://cdp-ny.org/media2/wsj_1dec11.pdf

Community Development Project, 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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