



2004

Interorganizational Collaboration: An Examination of Factors That Influence the Motivation for Participation in a Collaborative Partnership of Homeless Service Providers

Jan Marva Ivery
Virginia Commonwealth University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Social Work Commons](#)

© The Author

Downloaded from

<https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/etd/1010>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at VCU Scholars Compass. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of VCU Scholars Compass. For more information, please contact libcompass@vcu.edu.

Approval Sheet

School of Social Work

Virginia Commonwealth University

This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Jan Marva Ivery entitled Interorganizational Collaboration: An Examination of Factors That Influence the Motivation for Participation in a Collaborative Partnership of Homeless Service Providers has been approved by her committee as satisfactory completion of her dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Chairperson – F. Ellen Netting, Ph.D., School of Social Work

Melissa Abell, Ph.D., School of Social Work

Kevin Allison, Ph.D., Department of Psychology

Timothy Davey, Ph.D., School of Social Work

Kia J. Bentley, Ph.D., Director Ph.D. Program, School of Social Work

Frank R. Baskind, Ph.D., Dean, School of Social Work

F. Douglas Boudinot, Ph.D., Dean, Graduate Studies

Date

© Jan Marva Ivery, 2004
All Rights Reserved

Interorganizational Collaboration:
An Examination of Factors That Influence the Motivation for
Participation in a Collaborative Partnership of Homeless Service Providers

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University

by

Jan Marva Ivery
M.S.W. University of Pittsburgh, 1997
B.A. Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 1995

Director: F. Ellen Netting, Ph.D.
Professor, School of Social Work

Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia
May 2004

Acknowledgements

This dissertation could not have been completed without the assistance and support of many individuals. I wish to extend sincere thanks to Dr. Ellen Netting, my chairperson. Your support, encouragement, endless chocolate supply, and unfailing belief in my ability to succeed made this dissertation possible. I have learned so much from your knowledge, insight, and expertise in macro social work practice. It has been a pleasure working with you.

I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Melissa Abell, Dr. Timothy Davey, and Dr. Kevin Allison. Dr. Abell, your comments and suggestions strengthened my methodology and produced a better dissertation. Thank you for your time and expertise. Dr. Davey, your knowledge of issues related to homelessness and service providers in the Greater Richmond was invaluable to this study. Dr. Allison, I have enjoyed working with you in the community and appreciate your contribution to my committee.

To the faculty and my colleagues in the School of Social Work, thank you for your assistance and encouragement. Special thanks to Dr. Ann Nichols-Casebolt, Dr. Humberto Fabelo, Randi Buerlein, Kristin Garrell, Candace Tam, and Gwen Taylor for all that you have done for me as I have moved through the program. I have enjoyed working with all of you.

Without the cooperation of Reginald Gordon and Marc Leslie at Homeward, this study would not have been possible. Their support of the project and willingness to give me access to their documents and organizational partners is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank Homeward's organizational partners for participating in the study. I wish you all the best as you continue to work together in the spirit of collaboration to improve service delivery to homeless persons.

Finally, but most importantly, I would like to thank my family and friends for being there for me during this process. To my parents, your support, love and encouragement has meant more to me than you will ever know. You planted the seeds of hard work, determination, education, and social responsibility in my life at an early age. I am proud to be your daughter. To Carla, you are the best sister a person could ever have. Thanks for the greeting cards, care packages, and phone calls to check on the status of my sanity during the hectic times. To my niece Christine, thanks for keeping me in your thoughts. To Ray and Margaret Gross, it has been a comfort to know that you have been there for me if I ever needed anything.

Dr. Sylvia Barksdale, you have been a wonderful mentor and you have prepared me well for what lies ahead professionally. To Sally Brocksen and Alex Vega, I could not have made it through the program without your friendship, sense of humor, and study groups. I wish you both well in your future endeavors. Special thanks to Pam Berry, Cassandra Ford, and Tamara Temoney, you have been wonderful friends and I am fortunate to know you.

Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	iv
List of Figures.....	v
Abstract.....	vi
Chapter 1 Rationale for the Study.....	1
Problem Statement.....	1
Scope of the Problem.....	2
Factors Associated with Homelessness.....	4
Homeless Population Characteristics.....	7
Responses to Homelessness.....	8
HUD’s Continuum of Care Approach to Homelessness.....	11
Homelessness in Richmond, Virginia.....	14
The Continuum of Care in Richmond: Homeward.....	16
Previous Studies of Homeward.....	24
The Research Project.....	26
Chapter 2 Literature Review.....	30
Dimensions of Collaboration.....	30
Community Capacity.....	34
Interorganizational Collaboration.....	35
Theoretical Context.....	36
Community Practice Models.....	43
Rothman’s Models of Community Practice.....	44
Weil and Gamble’s Models of Community Practice.....	47
Community-Based Development.....	50
Interorganizational Collaboration Models.....	52
Characteristics of Successful Collaborative Partnerships.....	53
Research on Collaboration.....	56
Motivation for Collaboration.....	60
Applicability of the Literature.....	62
Chapter 3 Methods.....	66
Developing a Sampling Frame.....	67
The Two Phase Approach.....	68

Advantages and Disadvantages of Survey and Focus Group Research.....	70
Phase One: The Survey.....	72
Instrumentation.....	72
Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire	76
Survey Data Collection.....	78
Data Analysis.....	80
Phase Two: Follow-Up Survey and Focus Groups.....	86
Follow-Up Survey.....	86
The Focus Groups.....	87
Data Analysis.....	89
 Chapter 4 Findings.....	 90
 Phase One: The Survey.....	 90
Univariate Analysis.....	90
Sample Demographics.....	90
Relationships with Partners.....	92
Leadership.....	93
Organizational Structure.....	93
Benefits and Drawbacks of Participation.....	94
Involvement of Key Stakeholders.....	95
Challenges.....	96
Open-Ended Responses.....	97
Bivariate Analysis.....	98
Multivariate Analysis.....	101
Phase Two: The Follow-Up Survey and Focus Groups.....	103
Follow-Up Survey.....	103
Focus Groups.....	107
Study Limitations.....	118
Quantitative Component.....	118
Qualitative Component.....	121
 Chapter 5 Discussion and Implications.....	 123
Simultaneous Tight and Loose Coupling.....	128
Barriers and Challenges to Partnering.....	131
Benefits for Partners.....	133
The Influence of the External Environment.....	136
Implications for Homeward's Model of Collaboration.....	137
Implications for Social Work Research.....	143
Implications for Social Work Practice.....	146
Implications for Social Policy.....	149
Vita.....	227

Appendix A

List of Tables

Table	Page
A1 Organizational Participation.....	163
A2 Organizational Role in Partnership.....	164
A3 Frequencies of Ratings for the Relationships with Partners Dimension of Collaboration.....	165
A4 Frequencies of Ratings for the Relationships with Partners Dimension of Collaboration.....	166
A5 Comparison Rating of Organization Size and Perception of Relationship with Partners.....	167
A6 Frequencies of Ratings for the Leadership Dimension of Collaboration.....	168
A7 Comparison Rating of Organization Type and Frequency Rating of Homeward's Ability to Combine the Perspectives, Resources, and Skills of Partners into the Planning Process.....	169
A8 Frequencies of Ratings for the Organizational Structure Dimension of Collaboration.....	170
A9 Frequencies of Ratings for Experienced and Expected Benefits of Participation.....	171
A10 Frequencies of Ratings for Experienced and Expected Drawbacks of Participation.....	172
A11 Frequencies of Ratings for the Relationship Between Benefits and Drawbacks of Participation.....	173

A12	Frequencies of Ratings for the Relationship Between Benefits and Drawbacks of Participation.....	174
A13	Standard Regression Analysis of Participation Benefits to Predict Participation	175
A14	Frequencies of Ratings for the Involvement of Stakeholders Dimension of Collaboration.....	176
A15	Comparison Rating of Organization Size and the Extent to which the Involvement of Different Partners Impacts Homeward's Planning Process.....	177
A16	Frequencies of Ratings for the Involvement of Stakeholders Dimension of Collaboration.....	178
A17	Frequencies of Ratings for the Internal Challenges Dimension of Collaboration.....	179
A18	Comparison Rating Between Organization Size and Perception of Difficulty Motivating Partners.....	180
A19	Comparison Ratings Between Organization Type and Perceptions of the Extent to which the Inequitable Distribution of Funds Impacts Homeward's Efforts.....	181
A20	Frequencies of Ratings for the External Challenges Dimension of Collaboration.....	182
A21	Comparison Ratings of Organization Type and Perception of the Extent to which the Resistance of Key Stakeholders to Goals and Activities of Partnership Impact Homeward's Efforts.....	183

Appendix B

List of Figures

Figure	Page
B1 Homeward Continuum of Care Committee Structure.....	185
B2 Organization Characteristics of Sampling Frame.....	187
B3 Organization Characteristics of Survey Respondent Organizations.....	188
B4 Services Provided by Survey Respondent Organizations.....	189
B5 Organizational Characteristics of Non-Partner Organizations.....	190
B6 Organizational Characteristics of Follow-Up Survey Respondents.....	191
B7 Focus Group Benefits and Drawbacks of Participation.....	192
B8 Hypothesized Influences on Partner Motives to Participate and Level of Participation.....	193
B9 Influences on Organizational Motivation for Participation.....	194

ABSTRACT

INTERORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION: AN EXAMINATION OF FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE MOTIVATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP OF HOMELESS SERVICE PROVIDERS

By Jan M. Ivery, Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2004

Major Director: F. Ellen Netting, Ph.D., Professor, School of Social Work

This project was a mixed methods study that examined the collaboration dimensions of Homeward's planning process and the factors that motivate organizations to participate. The study examined the collaborative strategy used by an organization called Homeward located in Richmond, Virginia. Homeward is a broker organization (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal, 2001) that was created in 1998 to mediate and nurture relationships among partnering organizations in order to facilitate the collaborative process required by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to receive Continuum of Care funding. During the quantitative component of the study, a survey was sent to Homeward's partners (n = 44) to identify partner perceptions of Homeward's leadership, organizational structure, benefits and drawbacks of participation, and relationships with partners. The follow-up survey and focus group in the qualitative component explored themes related to organization affiliation with Homeward, benefits and drawbacks of participation, relationships with partners, challenges that impact the ability of Homeward to facilitate collaboration, and strategies to involve key stakeholders. The findings from both methods have provided an overview of how Homeward's

collaborative process is perceived by its partners and have raised issues that may impact Homeward's partner recruitment and retention efforts in the future. Implications for Homeward's model of collaboration include developing an organizational structure that will support the existence of both loosely and tightly coupled systems under the auspices of a single collaborative effort for long-term planning.

Chapter 1: Rationale for the Study

Problem Statement

Homelessness is a pervasive social problem in the United States. Although multiple strategies are being used to address the problem, it is often difficult for one group or organization to provide all of the services needed by different segments of the homeless population. Most communities have found that in order to address a social problem as complex as homelessness, it is often necessary to form partnerships with other groups and organizations in order to expand their ability to develop an effective and efficient system of service provision. Collaborative alliances (Bailey & Koney, 2000) have been identified as a strategy to mobilize organizations and expand their service delivery during a period of increased competition for fewer resources. Collaboration, coalition building, cooperation, and coordination are terms often used to describe the process of organizations and communities working together to affect change. Each of these concepts will be examined in this study.

This study examined the collaborative strategy used by an organization called Homeward located in Richmond, Virginia. Homeward is a broker organization (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal, 2001) that was created in 1998 to mediate and nurture relationships among partnering organizations in order to facilitate the collaborative process required by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to receive Continuum of Care funding. The collaborative process used by Homeward to partner with other groups and organizations that work with, serve, and advocate for homeless persons is the focus of this study. Specifically, this project sought

to identify the motives for participation and the perceptions of Homeward's collaborative process among a diverse group of organizations.

Chapter one provides a national and local overview of homelessness and responses to the problem, a description of the Office of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Continuum of Care approach to homelessness, Homeward's structure and process, and a brief description of the research study. Chapter two reviews relevant collaboration and social work community practice literature in order to explore models of community practice and collaboration, characteristics of successful collaborative partnerships, and motives for participation. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological plan used for collecting and analyzing data. Chapter 4 presents the findings from the data collection and Chapter 5 explores those findings within the larger context of community social work practice.

Scope of the Problem: Homelessness in the United States

Multiple Definitions

During the 1990s, the national incidence of homelessness in the United States was estimated to range from 300,000 to a staggering 3.5 million homeless persons (Burt, 2001, p. 1; Glisson, Thyer, & Fischer, 2000, p. 1). Burt estimates that on any given day, at least 800,000 people are homeless, including 200,000 of whom are children in homeless families (2001, p. 1). Homelessness is a term used to describe a spectrum of housing needs and refers to the state of being without a place of residence. According to the Stewart B. McKinney Act, the first and only federal legislation to address

homelessness in the United States (National Coalition for the Homeless, 1999a), a homeless person is a person who:

Lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence and....has a primary night time residency that is: a) supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations, b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. (42 U.S.C. 119, Subchapter I, Section 11302).

This definition of a homeless person is limited because it only describes individuals that are without shelter and/or are in danger of losing their place of residency. Although this definition is often used as a starting point to discuss homelessness, it is criticized for its limited scope of circumstances that are considered to constitute a “homeless” situation. In an attempt to broadly define homelessness in a way that will accurately describe the conditions faced by homeless persons, researchers have expanded the definition used in the McKinney Act to include a variety of living conditions in their research studies. For example, Timms & Balazs (1997) consider people living in crowded households and/or unsatisfactory conditions, the involuntary sharing of housing accommodations, imminent release from an institution, living in accommodations for homeless people, and not having shelter and/or sleeping in or on the streets or in parks to be homeless. Burt (1996) acknowledges the difficulty of developing a shared definition

of homelessness by writing, “There is no right answer; there can only be agreement on convention.” (p.16)

In response to the challenge of developing a single definition, a number of categories have been developed to establish general criteria to determine who is included and excluded from the definition of homelessness when attempts are made to accurately assess the magnitude of homelessness in the United States. According to Burt (1996), components of the homeless and at-risk for homeless population include: 1) adults, children and youth sleeping in places not meant for human habitation; 2) adults, children, and youth in shelters; and 3) adults, youth, and children at imminent risk of residing on the streets or in shelters. Operational definitions of homelessness usually include screening procedures to identify the homeless from the non-homeless (Burt, 1996). Unfortunately, screeners can vary from study to study and can make it difficult to compare homeless rates across studies. For example, a person may be considered to be homeless in one study if they have no home or permanent place to stay while another study may describe a person as homeless if they have stayed a night in a shelter during a specified time period.

Factors Associated with Homelessness

Since the 1980s, there has been a widespread increase in the number of persons considered to be homeless. As scholars and researchers began to examine the causes for the increase in homelessness, personal limitations and structural barriers emerged as factors that contributed to the higher rates. Mental illness, substance abuse, and the inability to sustain relationships have been identified as individual causes of

homelessness (Koegel, Burnam, & Baumohl, 1996; Wright, 2000). A conservative perspective viewed homeless persons as a segment of the population who were lazy and needed “tough” policies to make homelessness less attractive by increasing the legal sanctions against homelessness and re-institutionalization of persons with mental illness and substance abuse. A more liberal perspective viewed homelessness as the result of the mental health and substance abuse systems’ inability to treat their clients. This view argued that individual limitations were treatable and as a result, advocated for improved, community-based rehabilitation programs (Koegel et al., 1996).

In contrast to the belief that homelessness is caused by individual factors, the structural explanation argues that homelessness is a “function of the way our society’s resources are organized and distributed” (Koegel et al., 1996, p. 25). This explanation of homelessness posits that the rise of poverty and the simultaneous decrease in the availability of low-cost housing has resulted in too few housing units for a growing number of people living in poverty (Koegel et al., 1996; Main, 1996; Wright, 2000). The removal of institutional supports for people with severe mental illness and racial, ethnic, and class discrimination have also been identified as structural factors that contribute to homelessness (Burt, 2001). Fewer employment opportunities and the declining value of public assistance programs have been identified as factors attributed to the increasing poverty rates. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless (1999b), despite a growth in wage earnings, it has not been enough to account for years of declining and stagnant wages. Since 1997, the minimum wage has remained \$5.15 although housing costs have continued to rise. In its annual report, *Out of Reach 2003*, the National Low

Income Housing Coalition (LIHIS) (2003, p. 2) reports that the national median two bedroom housing wage (the hourly wage a worker must earn in order to afford a two bedroom home) is \$15.21, almost three times the minimum wage. In the state of Virginia, the housing wage is \$15.79. Although a person may be employed, their wages may not be enough for them to afford housing. As a result, when people are forced to choose between paying for housing, food, medical care, and other necessities, housing is often dropped because it absorbs a higher proportion of income (National Coalition for the Homeless, 1999b).

In addition to the increased number of persons experiencing poverty and the declining number of affordable housing units, fewer poor families are receiving public assistance. When Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in 1996, the number of persons eligible and the length of time they could receive assistance was decreased. Since the implementation of welfare reform, welfare caseloads have dropped. Although this may suggest that the number of people achieving economic self-sufficiency has increased, former recipients have found it necessary to receive benefits again after the initial decline in welfare rolls. Results from the National Survey of America's Families (NSAF) show that more than a fifth of families leaving welfare have returned (Loprest, 2002, p. 1). Most of the recipients had minimal formal education and were only able to secure low-paying jobs that could not financially support them and their families. As a result, they needed to receive public assistance in order to make ends meet.

In 2002, the US Conference of Mayors sponsored a survey of US cities and found that the lack of affordable housing was the most frequently reported reason for homelessness. Low paying jobs, a weakening of the economy, substance abuse, mental illness, domestic violence, unemployment, poverty, prison release, limited life skills, and changes and cuts in public assistance programs were also identified as causes of homelessness (US Conference of Mayors, 2002).

Homeless Population Characteristics

Various studies (Burt, 2001; Burt, et al., 1999; Glisson, Thyer, & Fischer, 2001; National Coalition for the Homeless, 1999; US Conference of Mayors, 2002) have found that most single homeless adults are men although the ratio of males to females is inconsistent in recent studies. The 2002 U.S Conference of Mayors' (2003) survey found that single men comprise approximately 41 percent of the homeless population while findings from the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients (Burt et al., 1999, p. 4) found that 77 percent were men. Families with children are among the fastest growing sub-group of the homeless population. It is estimated that families with children comprise 41 percent of people who become homeless (US Conference of Mayors, 2002, pp. ii). Although African Americans comprise 12% of the total US population, homelessness is disproportionately represented within this racial/ethnic group. Research indicates that African Americans account for 40 to 60 percent of the nation's homeless population, depending on location (Burt, 2001, p. 2; Glisson, Thyer, & Fischer, 2001, p. 1; US Conference of Mayors, 2002, pp. ii). Within the homeless population, there are subgroups comprised of individuals with chronic mental illness,

substance abuse problems, HIV disease, and families with small children (Glisson, Thyer, & Fischer, 2001). Substance abuse has been identified as the primary individual factor that has been linked to homelessness (Jainchill, Hawke, & Yagelka, 2000).

Approximately two-thirds of homeless persons are substance abusers. In addition, one-third to one-half suffers from severe mental illness and rates of mental illness have been found to be higher among women than men (Jainchill, Hawke, & Yagelka, 2000, p. 1).

Interventions to address the needs of homeless persons have been designed to meet the multitude of problems facing this population, particularly mental illness and substance abuse. Research has shown that in order to be effective, interventions should focus on meeting subsistence and safety needs of clients and provide structure, support, and protection (Drake & Mueser, 1996). Programs should be designed to integrate mental health and substance abuse interventions through intensive case management and in group settings, provide services to families as well as individual clients, develop culturally relevant services, and long-term interventions. Due in part to the transient lifestyle of the homeless population, homeless people often have difficulty participating in treatment or rehabilitation until their basic living needs have been met. As a result, programs to address recovery and rehabilitation issues need to be longitudinal in order to allow time for clients to achieve stability so that they will be able to complete treatment (Drake & Mueser, 1996).

Responses to Homelessness

Given the complexity of addressing the needs of the homeless population, different, although complementary, services are necessary in order to serve this diverse

population. Government agencies, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, and individuals are among those entities that provide assistance to homeless persons. In an effort to increase the understanding about providers of homeless assistance and the characteristics of homeless persons that use those services, the 1996 National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients was conducted by the US Census Bureau and analyzed by the Urban Institute (Burt et al., 1999).

The study estimated that there are about 40,000 homeless assistance programs in the United States at 21,000 service locations (Burt et al., 1999, p. 1). Food pantries were the most frequently identified type of program followed by emergency shelters, transitional housing, soup kitchens and other distributors of prepared meals, outreach programs, and voucher distribution programs. Other types of programs include physical and mental health programs, alcohol and drug abuse programs, HIV/AIDS programs, drop-in centers, and migrant housing. Most (49 percent) programs were located in urban areas, 32 percent in rural areas, and 19 percent in suburban areas (Burt et al, 1999, p. 9).

Aron and Sharkey (2002) found that an analysis of the same data showed that faith-based programs are playing an increasing role in the provision of homeless assistance programs. These programs represent a range of social service organizations that have religious characteristics. Church congregations and 501 (c) 3 organizations are included in this organizational classification. According to Sider and Rolland Unruh (2004), FBOs contain elements that “serve to create a religious environment, convey religious values, communicate a religious message to clients, or engage clients in religious activities.” (p. 111). The term “faith-based organization” is a broad term used

to describe social welfare and educational institutions as well as church congregations that provide services to individuals and communities.

Aron and Sharkey's (2002) analysis revealed that faith-based organizations (FBOs) run a third of all programs and administer a greater portion of programs in urban areas and in the south compared to other regions of the country. Unlike secular programs that may focus on a specialized service area, faith-based providers were more likely to only provide food and clothing services. Most FBOs relied on client self-referral to access services instead of referrals from other agencies. Although the number of faith-based organizations that provide services to homeless persons appears to be increasing, it is not clear if they are integrated into the organizational networks of agencies that provide specialized services to this population.

In addition to direct services to address the pressing needs of homeless clients, providers and consumers have often worked together to organize and advocate for the increased funding and improved services for the homeless population. Advocates and activists began developing coalitions to coordinate services and developed improved systems of care for homeless persons during the 1980s (Hambrick & Rog, 2000). Organizations such as the National Coalition for the Homeless and The Low-Income Housing Coalition were created to pressure members of Congress to pass legislation that would best serve the interests of the homeless community, foster a network of assistance providers within and across states, and provide information to the general public about current issues and basic facts about homelessness.

HUD's Continuum of Care Approach to Homeless Services

In 1987, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Act, later named the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, to provide federal funding for homeless assistance programs such as emergency shelters and food programs. During the early years of the program, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) did not require submission of a comprehensive plan to address homelessness. Instead, funds were awarded through a non-competitive process and were distributed to communities based on a formula to determine eligibility. When communities applied for the funds, very few were committed to developing a systemized approach to service provision and continued to function independently (Burt, 2002).

In 1994, HUD developed a competitive funding process, called the Continuum of Care Process to “encourage a coordinated, strategic approach to planning for programs to assist individuals and families who are homeless” (HUD, Office of Community Planning and Development, 1996, p. 3). Specifically, HUD defines a Continuum of Care as a “community plan to organize and deliver services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency.” It includes actions steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness (HUD, 1996). The key elements of the approach are strategic planning, data collection systems, and an inclusive process that involves clients and service providers. The fundamental components of the system are 1) outreach, intake, and assessment; 2) emergency shelter; 3) transitional housing; and 4) permanent housing and permanent supportive housing. The outreach, intake, and assessment component identifies an individual’s or family’s

services in order to connect them with the appropriate resources. Emergency shelter is intended to provide a safe alternative to living on the streets. Transitional housing provides supportive services such as recovery services and life skills training, to help clients develop the skills necessary for permanent housing. The final component, permanent housing, works with clients to obtain long-term, affordable housing (HUD, 1996).

HUD's model of the Continuum of Care planning processes is comprised of five steps: 1) organizing an annual Continuum of Care planning process; 2) conducting a needs assessment; 3) determining and prioritizing gaps in the Continuum of Care Homeless System; 4) developing an action plan comprised of both short-term and long-term strategies to address service gaps; and 5) identifying action steps to implement the plan. Although the steps are presented as distinct stages, the process of developing a Continuum of Care System is fluid.

During the first stage, a community-based planning process is established that is inclusive of stakeholders (such as service providers, clients, formerly homeless persons, local governments, and the business community) and facilitates communication. At this time, roles and responsibilities are defined, geographic areas are identified, the goals of the planning process are clearly articulated, and a timetable is established.

After the structure and processes of the group have been established, a needs assessment is conducted in order to identify existing needs and gaps in services. In order to assess the community's current capacity to serve homeless persons, strategies for collecting data are decided upon and appropriate methodologies for collecting data are

selected. Once the data have been collected, the information is compiled and presented to the group for validation of the findings and consensus on the limitations that may emerge from the data.

In an effort to engage the larger community in the prioritization of service groups, the planning group needs to establish a community-process for determining priorities based on identified unmet needs. Although HUD does not specify strategies to involve the community in the prioritization of needs, findings are presented to groups through strategies deemed appropriate by the local initiative. For example, Homeward mailed a survey to its partners and stakeholders in order to receive their opinion on the needs assessment findings (Leslie, 2003).

During the fourth stage of the process, short and long-term strategies to address priority needs are established in an action plan. At this point, action steps, delegation of responsibility for achieving the action steps, and timelines for completion are articulated. The desired outcome of this stage is the vision statement of the group and a formal, written plan for the development of the Continuum of Care System. Once the action plan had been formally adopted, the final stage is to establish the process for on-going oversight, monitoring, and accountability during implementation. In addition, the criteria used to determine recipients of Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Project funds are defined at this point.

HUD's Continuum of Care System has been implemented in over 300 communities throughout the United States (HUD, 2002). Richmond, Virginia is one of the cities that has developed a Continuum of Care System and is the focus of this research

study. Specifically, HUD's stages of development are reflected in the Richmond approach through a broker organization called Homeward.

In the sections that follow, I will focus on the historical development of responses to homelessness in Richmond, followed by a review of how Homeward emerged. Last, I will focus on the collaborative efforts of Homeward and the importance of understanding Homeward's process, and the diverse motivations and organizational characteristics of Homeward's multiple partners.

Homelessness in Richmond, VA

Initial Responses

Like other cities during the 1980s, Richmond experienced a marked increase in the number of homeless individuals and families. Initial studies of the problem of homelessness in Richmond highlighted the need for centralized services for the city's low-income and homeless residents. In 1984, the Central Richmond Association sponsored an impact analysis for a proposed Richmond Street Center, a clearinghouse of services for homeless persons. The needs assessment reached the following conclusions:

- 1) Street people¹ are not a homogenous group, but come rather from a diversity of backgrounds,
- 2) They possess a variety of characteristics and a variety of needs,
- 3) Their population seems to be growing and the make-up of their population seems to be changing,
- 4) Many of the needs of the street people are not currently being met,

¹ Street people is the term used to refer to homeless persons in the 1984 impact analysis report and does not reflect the contemporary language used to describe this population.

- 5) The presence and behavior of some street people in the downtown retail core has resulted in many problems for merchants and may be detrimental to the future development of this area,
- 6) There is a general lack of education about the street people problem on the part of much of the general public (Moon, 1984, p. 2).

When the impact analysis was published, most of the homeless population resided in the downtown area and their presence was perceived to have a negative effect on the business community because of loitering, crime, and debris. It was anticipated that the Street Center would provide services such as a drop-in center, emergency shelter, counseling, and referral services (Hutchinson et al., 2000) and reduce the number of homeless persons visible on the street. Although the city acknowledged the need for centralized and comprehensive services for homeless persons, it was unable to develop a system to address the unmet needs of the population in a location that was accessible to clients yet viewed as non-threatening to business and residential communities.

The need for a cohesive and comprehensive plan to address the needs of homeless persons continued into the 1990s. In 1990, The Richmond Better Housing Coalition and The Greater Richmond Coalition for the Homeless released a report that outlined the program and policy recommendations necessary to adequately serve the homeless community. The report concluded that emergency shelter, infirmary services for displaced services, treatment for chemically dependent people, eviction prevention, affordable housing, single room occupancy housing options, transitional housing, housing for persons experiencing mental illness, hospice for low-income people with HIV/AIDS,

and public bathrooms were ten program areas that needed to be addressed. In addition, policy issues related to zoning, code enforcement, financial assistance, public education, child protection services, and involuntary commitment as they relate to homeless persons were also identified as areas of need. Although this report further illustrated the complexity of homelessness and the need for a comprehensive response to address the needs of homeless persons, services continued to be fragmented and inconsistent in the City of Richmond and the surrounding counties.

During a point-in-time count (a specific day in which the Homeward staff contacted all programs that house homeless persons and recorded the number of homeless single men, single women, mothers, fathers, and children who slept in the program the previous night) in 2004, it was estimated that approximately 1398 persons were without a home in the Richmond area (Leslie, 2004a, p. 2). Homeless statistics for the Richmond area reflect the national gender composition of the population. Of the 1398 individuals considered to be homeless most were men (803) while 195 were single women, five were men in families, 150 were women in families, and 245 were children in families (Leslie, 2004, p.2). It was also reported that approximately 593 were unsheltered, 395 were in emergency shelters and 410 were in transitional housing, (Leslie, 2004, p. 2).

The Continuum of Care in Richmond: Homeward

Since the 1980s, the Greater Richmond area has experienced an increase in the number of individuals and families who are without shelter. Earlier efforts to develop the infrastructure to support a planned, systematic, comprehensive approach to homeless service provision were not successful. In response, Homeward, a non-profit organization

was created in 1998 at the recommendation of the Richmond Homeless Task Force to coordinate the homeless service delivery system in Greater Richmond. The Richmond Homeless Task force was established in the mid-1990s by the mayor of the City of Richmond to address the homeless situation in the city after new zoning policies prevented service providers from moving into the downtown area where most of the homeless population resided. The task force determined that in order to address the needs of homeless persons, a new system of care was necessary. As a result, Homeward was established as the organization to initiate the development of the new system (Saady, 2000). Homeward brings together homeless service providers; local governments; the faith, academic, and business communities; homeless and formerly homeless individuals; and concerned citizens to develop a system of service delivery to the homeless population.

Original funding for Homeward came from the Access to Community Care and Effective Services and Supports (ACCESS) Demonstration Grant from the Richmond Behavioral Health Authority and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The ACCESS Demonstration grant was administered by the US Department of Health and Human Services to assess the impact of the integration of fragmented services in treating homeless persons with serious mental illnesses in nine states from 1993-1998. Communities that received funding were required to develop plans that included interagency coalitions, services located at a common site, linked information systems, uniform application and intake forms, cross-trained staff, and flexible funding approaches (DHHS, 2003).

Homeward currently receives funding from local governments, United Way Services, foundations and individual and corporate donors (Homeward, 2002a, p. 4). Since Homeward is a regional effort, its service area includes Richmond, Henrico, Chesterfield, and Hanover. Its mission is to “reduce homelessness by initiating creative solutions and coordinating regional resources and services” and its community goal is to: “create effective, efficient, compassionate, and flexible regional system to help prevent people from becoming homeless and to return those who experience the crisis of homelessness to self-reliance” (Homeward, 2002a, p.4). The organization is staffed by four full-time and one part-time staff members who meet weekly and a twenty-one member board that meets regularly (Homeward, 2002b).

Homeward has worked to position itself as the expert and authority on homelessness in the Greater Richmond area by serving as the central location for information about homelessness. In its role as a broker organization, it is “specifically engaged in mediating, promoting, and nurturing instrumental relationships among organizations in a community, or between them and organizations outside the community.” (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal, 2001, p. 126). In its own words, Homeward is the “regional, homeless coordination organization” (Homeward, 2002b, p.1) that plans and facilitates the Continuum of Care process by sending meeting reminders, posting project updates on their website, and writing and disseminating the minutes from each meeting. In addition, the organization collects and disseminates data about the homeless population and the efficiency and effectiveness of the service delivery system. Homeward also provides technical assistance to the funding community when

they make decisions pertaining to homelessness, monitors funding announcements, assists service providers in preparing grant proposals, and develops public awareness campaigns to dispel myths and stereotypes about homeless persons.

The Planning Process: The Role of Collaboration

Of the three types of collaborative alliances outlined by Bailey and Koney (2000), Homeward's structure closely resembles a consortium because of its role as a convener of an alliance of organizations working together to address homelessness while maintaining the independence of the individual organizations. Similar to other consortia, Homeward was established as a component of a funding mandate to decrease fragmentation among homeless services providers. However, unlike other consortia, Homeward does not have a formal agreement with partner agencies to work together. Instead, organizations are considered to be a partner based solely on their function as a service provider to homeless persons.

An evaluation of 25 Continuum of Care processes across the United States found that ten of the communities studied did not have the formal authority to hold agencies accountable. According to HUD's definition of a consortia, five of those ten were considered to represent a consortia since the key component of these processes was voluntary cooperation (HUD, 2002, pp. 17-18). Interestingly, HUD's definition of a consortia differs from the one used in the literature because HUD considers collaborative alliances without a formal agreement to be a consortia. In the other five communities, either the county government or a provider board or council served as the facilitator of the process. The lack of a formal process for an organization to become a partner may

have implications for how these collaborative relationships are defined. Without an established set of criteria to determine what organizations are partners and their associated roles and responsibilities, it may be a challenge for these types of relationships to face issues related to expectations for participation, accountability, and conflicts of interests that may arise.

In order to prepare the application for Continuum of Care funding to HUD, Homeward initiated a problem solving process that seeks to promote service and system integration, partnering with local government, and incorporating the concerns of local citizens in the Continuum of Care Plan for the Greater Richmond area. The organization also provides consultation, information, and resources to officials responsible for developing policies that affect homelessness (Homeward, 2002a). Over 194 organizations are considered to be partners in the process because of their contact with the homeless community at various stages of service provision. However, only 136 are considered to be active partners because of the way Homeward defines “partner”. Homeward does not want to exclude any entity that provides services to homeless persons from the Continuum of Care system in their efforts to be inclusive of the different types of services that currently exist and range from food pantries in small churches to the more formal, established social service programs that serve this population. According to Homeward staff, any organization that has requested information from them, attended an event or meeting, or has planned an event with them is included on their contact list as a partner even though the number of organizations that

consistently participate in meetings and on subcommittees is much smaller (Leslie, 2004).

In March 2001, Homeward publicly launched its five-year plan to combat homelessness and move the Richmond community toward the development and implementation of a Continuum of Care system of service delivery. The milestones of the plan are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Year One (2001-2002): | Launch the vision; comprehensive assessment of current system including money, services, staffing and asset mapping; address immediate priorities of 24/7 access, lack of case managers, and stable funding for Homeward. |
| Year Two (2002-2003): | The Healing Place and expanded mental health programs |
| Year Three (2003-2004): | Centralized intake and a homeless management information system at every site. |
| Year Four (2004-2005): | Service partner reorganization, aftercare, follow-up, mobile outreach. |
| Year Five (2005-2006): | Integrate systems and mainstream programs and services (2002, p. 9). |

An important component of the Continuum of Care process and collaboration is the involvement of key stakeholders in the planning process. During the first year of the process, an assessment of existing services and unmet needs was conducted in order to identify priority areas of the Continuum of Care System. In order to accurately assess the complex needs of the homeless population and to develop a plan to address their identified needs, different groups were established to organize and analyze the collected data. Although HUD provides guidelines for designing local Continuum of Care

processes, it is up to the local initiative to determine how to implement the guidelines.

As a result, communities have a lot of latitude in developing their organizational structure. According to Leslie (2003), Homeward designed its current process based on:

1) how they envisioned such a process could work in the Greater Richmond area in spite of their large partner network; and 2) feedback they received from other communities that had implemented a Continuum of Care planning process.

The planning process is implemented through Homeward Networks, Workgroups, Task forces, the Homeward Board, and the United Way Homeless Action Council. Participation in these groups provides a mechanism to incorporate the perspectives of service providers, local governments, the faith community, the business community, local universities, neighborhoods, and homeless and formerly homeless individuals in the decision-making process. Figure B1 describes each workgroup and its specific focus. The workgroups serve as a way for organizations to become involved in Homeward's planning process by identifying issues and strategies used to address needs within each area. In an effort to involve organizational leaders and their staff in developing the Continuum of Care system, workgroups were created that utilized the expertise and experiences of executive directors and agency staff. The workgroups also provided organizational representatives with the opportunity to assume leadership roles within the collaborative. These groups evolve over time and may be disbanded once a need has been met or new groups may form in response to emerging issues.

Although HUD funding has been identified as a motive for initiating the collaborative process, Richmond leaders and homeless service providers have determined

the need for a comprehensive, flexible, regional system to help prevent people from becoming homeless and return those who experience homelessness to economic self-sufficiency (Saady, 2000). In order to develop the system, it is necessary for the partners to work together and leverage their resources in order to sufficiently address myriad of issues that are often faced by homeless persons. Homeward's partners represent a diverse range of services and resources accessed by the homeless community. They have been able to work together to advance a shared vision of developing a comprehensive homeless services system in the Greater Richmond region. While their diversity may serve as a strength of the process, it may also pose a challenge for Homeward to develop effective recruitment and retention strategies to actively engage all partners because of the differences in their organizational structure and/or service domain. As a part of an on-going assessment of their planning process to develop the Continuum of Care funding application, it is necessary for Homeward to examine the strengths and weaknesses of their process and what motivates partner participation as they work to increase the number of partners who actively participate in this collaborative effort.

Homeward's problem solving process has been recognized as one of the top five processes in the nation by HUD (Homeward, 2002a). Therefore, Homeward is interested in understanding the motivators for participation and the perceived strengths and weaknesses of their broadly-based partnership as a part of an on-going evaluation of their efforts to promote collaboration. Disciplines such as social work, public administration, and community psychology have identified components and factors that appear to be indicators of successful collaborative partnerships in communities. The ability to

effectively assess the collaboration process among homeless service provider organizations in Greater Richmond has been identified as an area for further empirical research.

Previous Studies of Homeward

As Homeward continues into year three of the plan to end homelessness, the organization is interested in assessing the effectiveness of its ability to foster collaboration among its 136 partner agencies. An earlier study (Hutchinson, 2002) explored the willingness of partners to collaborate. The study found that homeless service providers in Richmond value collaboration and are willing to participate in practices that involve case management and community planning but are less likely to participate in efforts to share and integrate services. The survey's findings are limited because a sizable percentage of service providers did not respond to the survey. Small churches comprised the largest group of non-respondents and the results indicated the need for further research in order to understand their perspective of the collaboration process and identify motivating factors for organizations that are not as active as others in the Homeward process.

Hutchinson (2002) found that the respondents generally believed that collaboration is a viable way to achieve organizational goals. Consistent with findings from Snavelly and Tracey (2000), the research upon which the Homeward study was based, the researchers found that only a few of the larger organizations currently engaged in more complex collaborative activities such as joint budgeting and were more likely to share information and clients. Directing clients to other agencies, using case management

with other agencies, and providing services to referred clients were identified as three collaborative strategies that were most likely to be used to enhance the efficiency of service delivery.

The collaboration literature has identified communication as an integral component of a successful collaborative partnership. As expected, organizations in the sample that supported the statement “Collaboration helps to break down communication barriers” were those who had previously pooled financial resources with other organizations to provide services and had adopted assessment strategies with other organizations (Hutchinson, 2002). Thus, it appears as though organizations that have had a positive experience with collaboration are likely to engage in additional opportunities to work collaboratively with others.

In addition to attitudes toward collaboration and the types of services that were likely to be shared among organizations, incentives that promoted participation in the Homeward process were briefly discussed. The researchers found that HUD’s Continuum of Care process encourages collaboration because it is a requirement for funding (Hutchinson, 2002). Although funding has been identified in earlier research as a motive for participation in collaboration, it is not always the only one. Unfortunately, the study did not examine other environmental factors, such as perceived competition for limited resources, as possible motives for participation in Homeward’s process.

Several weaknesses were identified within the Hutchinson (2002) study. Most importantly, the term collaboration was not clearly defined and a commonly used definition was not agreed upon by the respondents. For example, referral, which can be a

service function of a collaborative relationship, was at times used to describe collaboration. The researchers also noted that many of the non-respondents were smaller churches which provide homeless services, even though serving the homeless may not be their primary focus. The researchers suggested that churches' input may have significantly changed the results of the study. This is an important observation because although they found that organizational factors such as size, type of services provided and whether or not it is faith-based had little impact on their attitudes and practices related to collaboration, the inclusion of that group of partners may highlight the importance of organizational characteristics as motives for collaboration. Since FBOs are increasing their role in service delivery to homeless persons, it is important to have their feedback about the collaboration process.

The Research Project

This research project sought to build upon earlier assessments of Homeward's collaborative process and explore in greater depth the factors that influence the participation of partners in the Homeward planning process and their perceptions of the process. Hutchinson (2002) identified the need for future research that explores, in more detail, the way service providers collaborate and why some providers are not active participants in the collaboration process. The findings also suggested there is a need for more targeted research in order to access the non-respondents, primarily the smaller churches, in order to understand the different organizational needs of providers in the collaboration process. It is anticipated that the data obtained from those providers will provide Homeward with feedback that may highlight outreach and recruitment needs that

may need to be addressed in order to increase the number of partners who are active participants in the process.

The literature identifies a number of factors that are necessary for successful collaboration. A history of collaboration, leadership, favorable external conditions that support collaboration, inclusiveness, vehicles for communication (within and outside of the group), and a shared vision and purpose are among the factors that have been identified as contributors to a successful collaborative partnership. The shared vision and purpose that emerges is often used to direct the efforts of the group as they work together to develop the goals, objectives, and actions of the partnership. Although their motives for participating in the process may vary, it is generally assumed that they go through a formal process that indicates their commitment to active participation and a shared vision. Thus, regardless of their motives, the partners believe that the benefits from their participation will outweigh the costs they may incur.

Homeward's collaboration process differs from those generally reviewed in the literature because the partners do not formally become participants in the process to develop a coordinated response to address issues related to homelessness and develop the Continuum of Care funding application. Instead, organizations are considered to be partners based upon their area of service delivery as it fits within the continuum of care model to provide comprehensive, community-based services to homeless persons. Although the Hutchinson study briefly explored the motives for participation, it did not provide substantial insight into the diverse motivations of the partners to participate in a process they did not formally join. In addition, a specific group of providers (smaller

churches) were not included in the sample and insight into the differences between them and the other partners may contribute to a better understanding of what motivates different types of organizations to participate in a collaborative process.

This study reported here identified motives for participation in Homeward's process among agencies with different organizational characteristics. In addition, the partners' perception of the process in areas that have been found to influence the success of collaborative partnership are assessed in order to determine if there is a relationship between how positively they view the process given their level of participation.

Collaboration and its characteristics, processes, and outcomes have been examined throughout the literature. Although a single definition does not exist, there is a general consensus that collaboration refers to relationships with two or more parties working together to achieve common goals and mutual benefit from their participation. Elements pertaining to the structure of the collaborative (such as decision-making, leadership, and membership), the purpose of the group (clearly established goals and objectives), support (financial and staffing), leadership, and the external (political, social, and economic) environment have been identified as factors that can either facilitate or hinder the collaborative process. Motives for participation vary from the possibility of greater access to additional resources to making connections that will enable an organization to reach an underserved segment of the population. As researchers continue to focus on the relationship between the process and outcome, different configurations of collaborative relationships will continue to emerge. Chapter 2 will explore various

dimensions of collaboration and the empirical research that has been conducted to examine different types of collaborative alliances.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to frame the collaborative process used by Homeward within the larger context of community and interorganizational practice. In order to do this, it is important to identify theories that guide various planning processes, the models that emanate from these theories, and the empirical literature that seeks to test these models. This review has contributed to an understanding of the different dimensions of collaboration, the identification of factors that contribute to successful collaborative partnerships and insight into the motives of partners to become and stay involved in the planning process.

Different Dimensions of Collaboration

Although scholars and practitioners recognize the utility of developing inter-organizational collaborative partnerships, there is no consistent definition of what is meant by the term “collaboration”. Most definitions focus on the condition that participants work together to achieve mutually beneficial goals that they could not otherwise achieve on their own. Gray’s definition (1989) is often used as a basic definition in the literature (Borden & Perkins, 1999; El Ansari & Phillips, 2001; Takahashi & Smutny, 2001). According to Gray:

Collaboration is a process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible.....the objective of collaboration is to create a richer, more

comprehensive appreciation of the problem among the stakeholders than any one of them could construct alone (p. 5).

Austin (2000) discusses collaboration as partnerships that involve equal partners working together toward satisfying mutually beneficial self-interests as reflected in the following characteristics: 1) moderate degree of dissimilarity between or among partners, 2) the potential for mutual satisfaction of self-interests, 3) sufficient selflessness on the part of each partner to assure the satisfaction of self-interests by all involved. It is assumed that participants share equal power and influence in the decision-making process. Powell et al., (1999) describe the collaborative setting as “organizational and interorganizational structures where resources, power, and authority are shared and where people are brought together to achieve common goals that could not be accomplished by a single individual or organization independently.” (p. 37)

Brownstein (2002) and Mullen and Kochan (2000) argue that relationships across disciplines and professions are important components of collaboration. In their discussion of organizational partnerships, Mullen and Kochan describe the function of partnerships as “support groups [that] link individuals across institutional or professional status domains to aid them in their work responsibilities and to provide support for professional development” (p. 184). In contrast, El Ansari and Phillips (2001) add a structure and time orientation component to their definition of partnerships, a term often used interchangeably to describe collaborative relationships. Partnerships are “formal, multi-purpose and long-term alliances or community organizations of individuals or groups to

achieve common goals and can be homogeneous or heterogeneous, can stimulate social change and people empowerment, and can concentrate on advancing shared vision or problem solving.” (pp. 352-353) In addition to achieving mutually beneficial goals, Rich, Giles, and Stern (2001) suggest that collaborative partnerships can also aid in the development of a sense of shared responsibility and concern among its members. As participants begin to feel connected to one another, a sense of community and willingness to participate in civic affairs often occurs and the participants are likely to become involved in other community initiatives.

The term coalition has also been used to describe the processes of organizations working together. Coalitions are groups that involve multiple sectors of the community to address local issues. These groups are broad in their representation and focus their attention on multiple dimensions of the selected issue in a citizen influenced, if not citizen driven, planning process (Wolff, 2001). However, unlike collaboration, coalitions are focused on an issue during a specified time period until the group’s goals have been met.

Cooperation, Coordination, and Collaboration

Cooperation, coordination, and collaboration are terms often used interchangeably to describe the process of organizations working together to achieve a common goal. According to Bailey and Koney (2000) cooperation is the most basic type of arrangement in which organizations may choose to work with one another. Cooperating organizations generally share information that will support each organization’s activities. Coordination characterizes a relationship in which independent groups may co-sponsor events and

activities without a high level of service integration. Collaboration is the process in which participants work together to develop common strategies to achieve jointly determined goals while maintaining their organization's autonomy. Bailey and Koney argue that the distinguishing feature among these concepts is the extent to which parties work together based on a continuum of processes that move from a minimum (cooperation) to a maximum (collaboration) degree of organizational integration.

Reilly (2001) also identifies the differences among the three terms. Instead of focusing on the extent to which organizations work together, he defines the formality or structure of the relationship as the determining factor that distinguishes the terms from one another. Cooperation is usually an informal relationship that exists without a formal structure and the purpose of the relationship is to share information. Organizations that coordinate their activities have a modest amount of structure and role differentiation in their joint activities. Collaboration is the most formal arrangement because it requires comprehensive, long-term planning to achieve a shared vision. In addition, Reilly views collaboration as the riskiest endeavor for organizations because each organization contributes its own resources and reputation to an effort that is not guaranteed to be successful.

In order to capture the multiple dimensions of collaboration, collaboration will be broadly defined in the proposed study as a “fluid process through which a group of diverse autonomous actors (organizations or individuals) undertakes a joint initiative, solves shared problems, or otherwise achieves common goals.” (Abramson & Rosenthal, 1995, p. 1479)

Community Capacity

Despite the challenges associated with developing a comprehensive definition of collaboration that captures its various dimensions, collaboration is a strategy used to build community capacity. According to Rubin and Rubin (2001), capacity is comprised of three components, 1) knowledge; 2) a set of skills that are useful in the change process; and 3) the belief that the effort will be rewarded or successful. Chaskin, Brown, Venkatech, and Vida (2001) specifically describe community capacity as:

The interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of that community. It may operate through informal social processes and/or organized efforts by individuals, organizations, and social networks that exist among them and between them and the larger systems of which the community is a part. (p. 7)

Descriptions of community capacity vary in their focus although a few consistent dimensions can be identified. In his definitional framework, Chaskin (2001) discusses four consistent factors of community capacity. He identifies the existence of 1) resources; 2) networks of relationships; 3) leadership; and 4) support for processes that engage community members in problem-solving and action as common elements of community capacity.

Interorganizational Collaboration

Chaskin et al. (2001) identify leadership development, organizational development, community organizing, and interorganizational collaboration as four strategies used in capacity-building initiatives. Interorganizational collaboration “builds the organizational infrastructure of communities through the development of relationships and collaborative partnerships on the organizational level.” (p. 25) It is also used to describe the process of bringing independent organizations together for specific purposes and outcomes while maintaining their own autonomy (Abramson & Rosenthal, 1995). Although organizations may differ in size, purpose, and mission, they contribute to the overall functioning of a community. Organizations may serve in a variety of roles such as, but not limited to, producers of goods and services, linkages to resources and opportunities, brokers of external resources, developers of human capital, creators and reinforcers of community identity, and advocates for power and resource distribution. Community development requires the participation of multiple organizations that can serve in the above roles because it is almost impossible for one organization to independently address all segments of a community during the change process. Organizational collaboration involves making connections between informal and traditional agencies in a community. Informal organizations, such as soup kitchens affiliated with churches, tend to lack legal tax status and rely on in-kind donations. In contrast, traditional organizations tend to be older and have diverse funding sources such as private donations and government contracts (Smith, 2002). Regardless of their tax

status, degree of formality, or size, these organizations form an organizational community that can be used to expand the scope of available resources by working together.

Organizational collaboration can be used as a single strategy or a combination of strategies to facilitate partnerships that will strengthen community capacity. Establishing broker organizations to convene participants and supporting network development among existing organizations have been used to create community linkages. In addition, creating mechanisms for communication, planning and implementation among organizations, and supporting partnerships based on specific tasks are also strategies commonly used (Chaskin et al., 2001). In an era of diminishing resources and the demand for increased efficiency and accountability in social service delivery systems, organizations are faced with the challenge of doing more with fewer resources. As communities become more interdependent, it has become increasingly important for them to develop the capacity, or ability to function, in an ever changing social, economic, and political environment. In order to so, communities have found it necessary to develop partnerships and to collaborate with others in order to develop and strengthen the local infrastructure's ability to problem solve.

Theoretical Context

Although the non-profit literature is filled with research that has separately examined factors that impact the process, motivation for participation, and outcomes of collaborative relationships, a single theory has not been developed to articulate the relationship between the three components (Gray & Wood, 1991). In social work and

other social sciences, organization ecology and exchange theories have been used to examine interorganizational relationships.

Organization Ecology

Building upon the basic concepts of systems theory, organization ecology identifies organizations, populations, and communities of organizations as the basic elements of analysis (Baum, 1996; Hannan & Freeman, 1977). Open systems models of organizational analysis assume that organizational functioning is influenced by internal (staffing, funding) and environmental (the economy, political climate) factors (Thompson, 1967). According to Scott (1981), “organizations are not closed systems, sealed off from their environments, but are open to and dependent on flows of personnel and resources from outside their own system.” (p.22) A key assumption of organization ecology is that organizations exist within the context of other related organizational forms. Organizational forms are the specific configurations of goals, boundaries, and activities that emerge in response to environmental conditions. These forms may change as new ones are created to eliminate older, ineffective, forms. For example, if an organization provides a service that is duplicated by another organization, it may decide to either stop providing that particular service or it may alter the way that it is delivered. Within an open system, organizations develop areas of specialization that contribute to the overall functioning of the system. As organizations alter their form, they create a niche for themselves within the environment. Niches are the “distinct combinations of resources and other constraints that are sufficient to support an organization.” (Aldrich, 1979, p. 28) Niches also reflect the organization’s influence on

its environment and may cause another organization to alter its form (McKelvey & Aldrich, 1983). Niches are often used to describe the particular roles and/or services an organization provides within a community or service area. For example, in their discussion of the niches FBOs fill, FBOs may be preferable to secular service providers because members of a religious group may prefer to receive services from institutions that mirror their faith, a community may lack resources that are only provided by a FBO, or clients may perceive them as better equipped to provide specialized services such as hospice care or pastoral counseling (Wolpert & Seley, 2003).

Populations are formed when a set of organizations who are engaged in similar activities and resource utilization coexist in the same environment. As these organizations become integrated into a population, the environmental opportunities and challenges that affect a single organization have an impact on other organizations within a population (Baum, 1996). Within these communities, organizations vary considerably in their structure and vulnerability. Some organizations may be more stable than others while others may have tighter, less-open boundaries or a greater dependence on the environment for survival. According to organizational ecology, certain types of organizations are more likely to survive environmental conditions while others will die out (Blumberg, 1987).

In an effort to explain organizational change, ecological theories examine the nature and distribution of resources in organizations' environments because:

environmental pressures make competition for resources the central force in organizational activities, and the resource

dependence perspective focuses on the tactics and strategies used by the authorities in seeking to manage their environments as well as their organizations. (Aldrich, 1979)

Variation, selection, and retention are three dimensions of the organizational change process. Variation within and between organizations is a necessary component of organizational change because the increased exposure to new ideas can influence the external environment and promote the creation of new organizations and partnerships. As organizations receive new input (such as information and skills) they are better able to adapt to the changing dynamics of the external environment and are better equipped for survival. Organizations whose characteristics are compatible with environmental constraints are “positively selected and survive while others either fail or change to match environmental constraints.” (Aldrich, 1979, p. 29). When organizations are able to adapt to their environment and respond to new policies, service needs, or identify emerging opportunities to create or expand their niche, they are more likely to be able to sustain themselves. For example, if the funding community favors organizations that are more bureaucratic and formalized in their structure, they will be more likely to fund projects proposed by these organizations over smaller, more progressive, grassroots organizations. If a small grassroots organization is able to articulate how they can fill a service need and demonstrate their capacity to meet the funding requirements, they may be more likely to receive funding than similar organizations that were not able to carve out their niche. Variation and selection address the way in which organizational forms are developed; retention provides mechanisms for maintaining the selected organizational form (Aldrich,

1979). In order for organizations to survive environmental conditions, they may decide it is necessary for them to become part of an interorganizational network in order to accumulate increased organizational power that will alter the distribution of resources and the terms. For some organizations, pooling their resources and developing relationships with organizations in a community or population is the best way for them to become integrated into the community, or population, extend their organization's influence, and create a niche for themselves that will enable them to provide a service to a segment of the general population.

According to Aldrich (1979), interorganizational networks are “generally loosely coupled, hierarchically differentiated, integrated by the actions of linking-pin organizations, and probably unstable.” (p. 340). Loosely coupled systems are multi-level systems in which the subsystems maintain their independence and are linked through a limited number of direct connections. Linking-pin organizations possess overlapping ties to different components of the network and are able to integrate those ties to form a system. These organizations perform three primary functions in which they: 1) serve as communication channels between organizations; 2) provide general services to one another by transferring information, staff, clients, or other resources from one part of the network to another; and 3) serve as models to be imitated by others, or use the dependence of others on themselves to direct the activities of action sets and organizations.

Within interorganizational networks, power can be derived from an organization's position in the network or external sources such as prestige within the larger community

(Blumberg, 1987). Regardless of the source, organizations will likely vary in their ability to influence their environment and the actions of the other organizations in the network. When networks exhibit unequal distributions among its components, exchange transactions are likely to occur as organizations weigh the cost and benefits of their participation within a network or collaborative partnership as they seek to achieve their agency's goals.

Exchange Theory

Exchange theory assumes that individuals, groups, and organizations will choose among alternatives from which they expect to receive the most profit or benefit. Rewards of their effort may be in the form of economics, status, or attention (Blau, 1974).

Resource dependence/independence theories clearly articulate the exchange involved in an interorganizational collaboration. These theories posit that even though organizations seek to maintain their independence from other organizations, they will develop interorganizational relationships in order to achieve stability in an uncertain and changing environment. However, a constant challenge is the ability of organizations to decide when it is in their best interests to preserve their self-interests or work toward collective goals (Bailey & Koney, 2000; Chaskin, et al., 2001; Gray & Wood, 1991; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

According to Cook et al. (1983), an exchange network is a “specific social structure formed by two or more connected exchange relations between actors”(p.277). Within the network, it is assumed that: 1) there is a set of either individual or collective actors; 2) valued resources are distributed among the actors; 3) there is a set of exchange

opportunities among all actors in the network; 4) exchange relations, or exchange opportunities, exist among the actors; 5) exchange relations are connected to one another in a single network structure (Ritzer, 2000). As exchanges occur between and among partners in a network, they become connected as the exchanges have an impact on other relationships that become interconnected and interdependent within a larger system.

Power and dependence are two key concepts of exchange theory. Emerson (1972) defined *power* as “the level of potential cost which one actor can induce another one to accept” and *dependence* as “the level of cost an actor will accept within a relationship.” (p. 64). As actors become engaged in exchange relationships, the level of dependence of one actor on the other emerges as a motive for remaining within the relationship in order to attain individual or collective goals if cost of doing so is less than the benefit. According to Emerson (1962), “The dependence of actor A upon actor B is 1) directly proportional to A’s motivational investment in goals mediated by B; and 2) inversely proportional to the availability of those goals to A outside of the A-B relationship” (p. 32). The actor with less dependence on the other has increased power and influence over the other actor in the exchange because of their ability to effect the goal attainment of others.

When organizations work together in order to advance a shared vision or problem-solve, the organizational characteristics (such as size, age of the organization, services provided, etc.) of the individual partners may influence their role, participation and level of influence in the collaborative process. For example, larger organizations are more likely to collaborate with other agencies because they have more resources (such as

available staff) than smaller organizations (Foster & Meinhard, 2002). If smaller organizations perceive the process as a way to advance their goals, they may continue to participate because the benefit of achieving their goals will outweigh the cost of their dependence on the other organizations. Collective influence, access to additional resources, and the exchange of information and knowledge are potential benefits gained from interorganizational collaboration. Possible costs to an individual agency for these benefits may include the loss of some autonomy and control, the time and resources (such as staff time off from performing the task of their individual organization) necessary to coordinate the effort, and potential damage to reputation if the collaboration is not perceived as successful (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal, 2001; Huxam, 1996).

The Application of Organizational Ecology and Exchange Theories to Community Practice Models

Organizational ecology and exchange theories have been used in community practice to assess the relationships between groups, organizations, and institutions within communities. The models may differ in the intended targets for change and the strategies and tactics used but they consistently emphasize the relationship between the environment and its populations. There is an underlying assumption that a collective effort is the preferred strategy to initiate and sustain changes in the environment. It is anticipated that such efforts will increase a community's ability to manage and cultivate new resources that will increase its capacity to problem solve.

Community Practice Models

Social work macro practice is a broad term used to describe change strategies directed at the community and organizational level of intervention and/or within the

political arena (Netting, Kettner, & McMurtry, 2004). Specifically, community practice is a term that “encompasses the processes, methods, and practice skills for organizing, planning, development and change.” (Weil, 1996, p. 5) Organizing relates to bringing people together to improve social conditions and working toward achieving social justice while planning refers to technical processes used to design service integration, resource allocation, and policy formation. Development interventions seek to implement social, economic, and sustainable development initiatives to improve living conditions and protect the environment while social change encompasses a variety of strategies ranging from coalition development to political action campaigns (Weil, 1996).

According to Hardina (2002), practice models are frameworks used to understand and develop responses to social problems. Community practice models contain the following components: 1) a theoretical framework for understanding social change; 2) an intervention approach; and 3) probable outcomes associated with using the approach (p. 45). These models determine the strategies and tactics used to address the identified target of the change. In the following section, interorganizational collaboration will be framed within the context of social work community practice models.

Rothman's Models of Community Practice

Although community organization has long been recognized as a social work method, it was not clearly conceptualized and researched until the 1960s. Rothman's seminal work (1970) was significant to the development of community organization as a method because he created a typology that defined community practice models. He articulated the differences between strategies, tactics, and the intended targets of change

often used in community practice. A strategy is an organized plan to initiate and implement a change process aimed at a specific target. Tactics are the activities used to move through the change process and the intended targets of change are the persons, systems, or institutions that are the foci of the action plan. Rothman's three part model of locality development, social action, and social planning has served as a foundation for contemporary community practice and has been used as the basis for training community organizers.

Locality development is a model of "community change that may be pursued optimally through the broad participation of a wide spectrum of people at the local community level in goal determination" (Rothman, 1970, p. 21). Citizen participation, consensus, and local leadership development are key concepts associated with this approach as residents work together to solve problems and build a sense of community. In contrast, social planning uses the expertise of outside professionals to use technology and complex analyses to navigate large bureaucratic organizations and government to guide the community change process. Achieving established goals and objectives through a rational, problem-solving approach is the focus of this model. The third approach in Rothman's original typology, is social action that "presupposes a disadvantaged segment of the population that needs to be organized, perhaps on alliance with others, in order to make adequate demands on the larger community for increased resources or treatment more in accordance with social justice or democracy." (p. 22) This model seeks to redistribute power and resources within a community to those who

have been excluded from decision-making process as well as to change the formal structure of institutions and organizations that discriminate or oppress certain groups.

Although Rothman presented his models of practice as distinctive approaches, he acknowledged that there will often be overlap between models and the mixing and phasing of strategies and tactics drawn from each of the three is likely. As students and practitioners applied his original framework to the complex social, political, and economic issues facing today's communities, they identified gaps in his three phase model. In response to those critiques, Rothman later expanded his typology of models (Rothman, 1996). He described bimodal and trimodal mixtures "situations consisting of relatively strong leanings toward two [or three] intervention strategies" (p. 47). Development/action, action/planning, and planning/development are the three combinations of his original models that may be more appropriate in today's ever changing community dynamics.

Development/action intervention models promote socialization and strengthening relationships among members while at the same time, using those connections and networks to mobilize and organize for social action. Examples of this blend include feminist organizing and Freire's style of organizing (Rothman, 1996). The action/planning intervention model is used to describe "groups [that] are essentially geared to social change, but they incorporate data-based reports and policy analysis in their work" (p. 50). While interventions in this mode continue to re-distribute power and resources, they adopt more sophisticated strategies that will enable them to influence policy-making processes. Rothman describes organizations such as Ralph Nader's Public

Citizen Organization and The Children's Defense Fund as examples of interventions in this category (1996). Planning/development models seek to develop long-term community capacity by involving a cross-section of the community initiatives that will develop economic and social infrastructures of the community. The United Way, enterprise/empowerment zones, and the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise are used as examples of this type of blended model (1996).

Interorganizational collaboration appears to be an example of what Rothman describes as a "trimodal mixture". Rothman uses community welfare planning councils as an example of the trimodal mixture of locality development, social planning, and social action. The activities of the council, which include bringing agencies together to share information and provide networking opportunities, develop and implement programs and policies to improve service delivery, and lobbying and advocacy activities illustrate how his three complimentary models can be integrated. Rothman's attempt to further expand his original typology of community practice does address the complex nature of community change processes and the relationships between individuals, groups, and organizations as they mobilize their resources and skills for change. However, a limitation of his typology is its inability to move beyond blending of the original practice models and expanding them to account for the more recent social, political, and economic challenges facing diverse communities.

Weil and Gamble's Models of Community Practice

In response to the limitations of Rothman's models to explain the variability of community interventions, Weil and Gamble (1995) developed a framework of eight basic

models of community practice. Their framework attempted to develop models of practice based on the type of organizations that were in existence during the mid-1990s instead of the type that existed during the 1950s and 1960s when Rothman developed his original typology. Neighborhood and community organizing, organizing functional communities, community social and economic development, social planning, program development and community liaison, political and social action, coalitions, and social movements comprise the current models of practice described by Weil and Gamble (1995). Similar to Rothman's typology, Weil and Gamble identify the desired outcome, system target for change, primary constituency, scope of concern, and primary social work roles (p. 580) of each model. When comparing their model to Rothman's, neighborhood community organizing, functional community organizing, and community social and economic development may be viewed as an expansion of locality development. Each of these three models emphasize using more advanced skills to achieve established goals and promoting and supporting citizen participation, local leadership development, and capacity building. Previous models of locality development have tended to exclusively focus on developing the capacity of the local community to foster relationships and solve their problems without developing external linkages. In their framework, Weil and Gamble expand locality development to include activities that link local communities with external ties in response to the interconnectedness between communities in the United States and abroad.

Weil and Gamble's models of social planning and program development and community liaison appear to be based on Rothman's model of social planning. Social

planning's focus is to "bring rationality to the human services, social planning, and service integration processes"(Weil & Gamble, 1995, p. 586). Social planning is a strategy that utilizes specialized skills and expertise to create coordinated systems for service delivery. Program development and liaison "is to design and implement new or improved services that has been assessed as needed by a community population"(p. 587). Both models require the professional expertise of social workers to develop plans for change. Unlike the earlier models of social planning in which the social worker was viewed as the expert, these models utilize strategies that will involve the perspectives of consumers and community members in the planning process as they assess needs, develop, implement, and evaluate programs or initiatives.

Rothman's social action model is often viewed as the most radical of the three because of its emphasis on directly challenging the status quo and eliminating inequalities through direct action. This model was developed during the 1960s at the height of social and political change when public protests were a popular strategy in the fight for equality for disenfranchised groups. As the political and social climate became more conservative during the 1980s and 1990s, the relevance and sustainability of these strategies was questioned. In response, it became necessary to refine the tactics used to initiate structural and institutional change. In their model of political and social change, Weil and Gamble articulate the need to develop leadership and organizing skills in order to identify a problem, target appropriate entities that can solve the problem, and develop and implement a plan of action that will influence the policy making process

(Rothman,1996). As in the original model, community members are the leaders in their efforts while social workers are involved as a partner in the process.

In addition to the political and social action model, Weil and Gamble have included coalitions and social movements as components of their framework that have been drawn from the social action model. The coalition model of practice seeks to expand the power of local groups by developing a diverse, broad representation of interests that can collectively work together to initiate change.

Regardless of the intervention model used in community practice, the relationships between individuals, organizations, and institutions have been central to their success and sustainability. These relationships are often built upon the need to work together in order to develop an infrastructure to address problems and provide a mechanism for building a sense of community or belonging among its residents.

Community-Based Development Approaches

Community-based development seeks to address poverty in low-income communities by investing resources and creating partnerships to increase the economic, social, and political potential of neighborhoods (Accordino, 1997). It is also the process of strengthening bonds within neighborhoods, building social networks, and establishing organizations to provide a long-term capacity for problem solving (Rubin & Rubin, 2001, p. 3). Throughout the literature, there has been a combination of problem-based and strength-based approaches to community development.

Historically, community-development strategies have been created based on the deficit model of communities, utilizing a top-down approach to planning. Within the

context of interorganizational collaboration, most organizations work together to mobilize resources to solve community problems instead of nurturing the potential of their residents or locality to thrive. For example, Gray's definition (1989), discussed earlier, focuses on existing problems instead of the existing assets and unknown potential or value of a community.

Although the problem-based approach to development is still used, there has been a shift in how communities and their existing resources are valued and incorporated into the planning process. In 1993, Kretzman and McKnight developed a guide for working with low-income communities that focused on existing strengths instead of a deficit model of planning. Their model of intervention, referred to as capacity-focused development assumes that communities possess local resources, or assets, that can be used to initiate and sustain long-term development initiatives. While deficit models focus on the deficiencies and limitations of communities, capacity-focused development seeks to draw on the strengths of communities to address their problems. Kretzman and McKnight argue that capacity-focused development is an improved approach because: 1) development initiatives are most successful and sustainable when the community is invested in the effort; and 2) external assistance to local communities is limited, thus emphasizing the need to utilize internal resources for survival.

Characteristics of capacity-based development are: 1) the assets, instead of the deficiencies, of the community and its residents are central to the development strategy; 2) the process is internally focused and relies on the capacities of local residents, associations, and institutions; and 3) it is relationship driven and the linkages between

residents and institutions are continuously built, strengthened and maintained (Kretzman & McKnight, 1993). In their framework, Kretzman and McKnight describe strategies for identifying and engaging individuals, civic associations, cultural organizations, religious institutions, schools, libraries, the police, and the business community.

Interorganizational Collaboration Models

Collaboration often refers to a process while collaborative alliances are used to describe the forms they may take (Bailey & Koney, 2000; Gray, 1989; Gray & Wood, 1991). Consortia, networks, and joint ventures are three examples of collaborative alliances.

Consortia are alliances in which organizations work with one another in order to pool their resources in order to achieve a long-term goal. In general, consortia are not legal entities but they serve as a formal agreement among agencies to combine resources. These alliances may be formed in an effort to coordinate services or mandated as a requirement for funding. Consortia are often led by a single organization that manages the process and has a significant amount of control over resources.

The second type, *networks* are “integrated service systems that seek to improve service delivery by deepening or broadening the scope of services available to their consumers” (Bailey & Koney, 2000, p. 120). Networks are often described as either horizontal or vertical. Participating organizations in horizontal networks provide similar services while vertical network participants offer different services. Networks are often formed out of financial or legal necessity and are bound by legal agreements such as articles of incorporation and by-laws that establish their relationship within the network

while maintaining the organization's own identity and function in areas not relevant to the network.

The third example of a collaborative alliance is a joint venture. *Joint ventures* occur when two or more organizations form a new, legal entity. Although the term can be used to generally describe consortia or networks, joint ventures exhibit a more formal structure than the other two alliances. Joint ventures are often time-limited and specific in their scope of services. These alliances are characterized by equal ownership, joint board governance, and the participation of a few partners. Although member organizations become integrated in their function and services, they do not completely merge into one organization (Bailey & Koney, 2000).

Consortia, networks, and joint ventures are examples of collaborative partnerships that can develop between organizations. The needs of the participating organizations, available resources, and the external environment influence the type of collaborative relationship selected, the degree of service integration, and the parameters that define the relationship. Although the structure of these partnerships may differ, scholars have identified characteristics, both internal and external to the participating organizations, that contribute to the successful attainment of the group's goals.

Characteristics of Successful Collaborative Partnerships

Regardless of how collaboration is defined, preconditions or factors have been identified as characteristics of successful collaborative partnerships. Collaboration is a decision-making process that involves two or more organizations. In general, the partners are interdependent, solutions are reached by dealing with differences, decision-making is

owned by all partners, each organization assumes collective responsibility for its future direction, and the process is fluid and emerges over time (Gray, 1989). Essential components of collaborative partnerships include equity and representativeness among partners, resources that will facilitate the process, the ability of partners to balance their responsibility to and self-interests of their individual organizations and the partnership, a clear reason or purpose for the collaborative effort, commitment, communication, and skilled leadership (Austin, 2000; Austin, et al., 2001; Chrislip & Larson 1994; Gray 1989; Johnson, 2003; Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 2001; Wolff, 2001).

Communication among partners is critical to developing trust and mutual respect. An environment that encourages the honest and open exchange of information and constructive criticism will enable groups to more effectively move through a problem-solving process with multiple perspectives and diverse opinions (Austin, 2000). Open communication can be used to minimize “turf” issues and inform the partners of the organizational culture (mission, values, rules and regulations) of the individual organizations that comprise the collaborative partnership (Johnson, Zorn, KaiYung Tam, LaMontagne, & Johnson, 2003) as the level of trust increases. In addition to developing channels for communication within the group, it is also important to communicate with the larger external community. Promoting the efforts of the group to funders, politicians, citizens, consumers, and other segments of the community legitimizes the group’s purpose. It also can serve as a motivational strategy to sustain member participation as documentation of their achievements is publicized.

Although Wolff uses the term coalition interchangeably with collaboration, he specifies nine dimensions that are critical to successful coalitions and can be applied to collaborative partnerships: 1) the readiness of the community to collaborate; 2) the early development of a common vision and mission (intentionality); 3) an organizational structure that will enable the group to achieve its goals and increase its capacity for decision-making; 4) the ability to affect change and provide evidence of achieved goals and objectives to group members, funders, and the general community; 5) the involvement of a broad and diverse cross-section of the community; 6) leadership that can guide the direction of the group toward goal achievement while simultaneously sustaining participation; 7) a level of adequate funding to support the effort; and 8) human relationships, both internal and external that the group will use to bring people together for a problem-solving process (2001).

Disciplines such as social work and community psychology have conceptualized the structure of collaboration and the various dimensions that contribute to the success of collaborative partnerships. Typologies and collaboration continua are plentiful in the literature, describing the differences in purpose and structure of these relationships as well as the existing factors that promote their overall functioning. Scholars have empirically examined the relationships between concepts such as leadership, communication, shared vision, and organizational capacity to better understand what combination of factors lead to effective outcomes.

Research on Collaboration

External and Internal Factors

In a study of factors that contributed to the success and effectiveness of forty-one social change coalitions, Mizrahi and Rosenthal (2001) found similar internal and external factors that contributed to the members' multiple perceptions of success. In their study, qualitative and quantitative methods were used to obtain data from forty-one social change coalitions in the metropolitan New York/New Jersey area. During the first stage of data collection, the researchers conducted three focus groups with 70 past and current coalition organizers and leaders. At the second stage, Mizrahi and Rosenthal developed a 600-item survey instrument that integrated the focus group findings with existing theory and concepts. The instrument was comprised of mostly closed-ended questions and was administered as an interview to the same 70 past and current coalition organizers and leaders. The structure and process of the group, leadership, resources, decision-making, strategy, and commitment were identified as factors internal to the coalition that affected its success. External factors included the issue that mobilized the group, the timing of the group's formation, and the political climate.

Mulroy (2003) focused on the influence of community dynamics on a community partnership of seven nonprofit organizations in Boston, Massachusetts. The partnership was developed as a demonstration project to change the way child maltreatment services were implemented by shifting to a focus on preventative services from the existing public agencies that have traditionally responded to the problem. The twenty-seven month field study used direct observation and fifty-six interviews with key informants to collect data.

Annual reports from the participating agencies for a five year period and the demonstration project's quarterly reports, meeting agendas, public relations materials, and census information were among the documents reviewed. Uncertain funding streams; the contracting for services by the government; different, and sometimes conflicting, child welfare policies; federal grant requirements; and changing neighborhood demographics emerged as challenges facing the partnership. External environmental challenges related to seeking and securing funding to implement programs contributed to internal tension between the executives in the partnership because of competition for limited funds, and perceived relationships with organizations that appeared to place some partners at an advantage for securing contracts for services. In addition to these constraints, existing child welfare policies based on public mandates were challenged by creation of the partnership. The partnership was an attempt to provide an alternative to a system of service delivery that had been deemed ineffective but remained the intervention philosophy of the local Department of Social Services. Mulroy also found that since community participation was central to the partnership, it was a challenge to balance the dual purpose of community engagement and achieving the established outcomes within the five-year timeframe of the grant.

In a study of the Healthy Families America Initiative, a national child abuse prevention model, Fountain (2002) explored the collaboration characteristics of local initiatives in the state of Virginia. Key informant interviews (n = 29) were conducted to identify the factors from the literature that were relevant to Healthy Families. Based on the interviews and the literature, a survey instrument was developed and was

administered to 416 key informants in 32 sites. Findings revealed that the characteristics of partners and the connections among them influenced their decision to participate in collaborative efforts. An existing level of trust among partners, organizational capacity, a sense of interdependence, a history of collaborative relationships within the community, and anticipated funding were among the pre-existing factors that contributed to the successful development of a Healthy Families site.

Thompson, Minkler, Bell, Rose, and Butler (2003) examined the factors that facilitated the well-functioning of a Healthy Start program. Healthy Start is a national initiative that utilizes community-based consortia to develop programs aimed at reducing infant mortality. The authors reported findings from an ethnographic, multi-site case study in nine U.S. cities. Key informant interviews, focus groups, observations of consortia or subcommittee meetings, and project reports were used to collect data. Flexibility in developing the local structure of the consortia, support from local organizations and institutions, adequate resources, incentives for both consumer and community partners to participate, and identification with the program and its mission were among the factors that positively contributed to the overall functioning of the consortia. The authors emphasized the need for clear role definition, a strategic plan to engage community members and local institutions in the process, and on-going outreach efforts, program monitoring, and evaluation to ensure that the group remains on task and is prepared to respond to external and internal challenges.

Harbert, Finnegan, and Tyler (1997) explored factors that facilitated or inhibited interagency collaborative efforts of an initiative formed to address the needs of children.

A 50-item questionnaire was administered to members of a committee that represented 28 agencies and organizations in the areas of social service provision, health, education, and safety, and economic security. During the first administration, 33 members representing 28 organizations responded. The survey was administered a second time 11 months later when the number of organizations increased to 52, and 31 members responded. The process and outcomes were assessed through a review of documents such as minutes, the statement of goals, objectives, and strategies, subcommittee reports, the work plan, and the action plans.

Results were examined within the context of six broad areas considered critical to successful interorganizational collaboration: environment, membership, process, communication, and resources. The researchers found that most of the six factors of successful collaborations were present. Over time, communication appeared to have improved. However, difficulties emerged in two areas; membership and process/structure. The findings indicated that there was not a high level of mutual respect, understanding, and trust among group members. An examination of the collaborative process itself, revealed that the group was not progressing as planned with its action plan. Although the communication of the group appeared to have improved over time, the size of the group increased from 33 members to 52. This suggests that while members were able to discuss the vision, goals, and objectives of the group, it was a challenge to maintain feelings of trust and mutual respect as organizations continued to join in the effort. These results indicate that in order for interorganizational collaboration efforts to remain inclusive of key stakeholders and facilitate an open process, there must be regular

assessment of the ever changing dynamics of the groups as participants are added or removed in order to maintain an environment that supports diverse perspectives working toward shared goals.

Motivation for Collaboration

As organizations compete for fewer resources and seek to address an increased demand for services, collaboration can be used to resolve conflicts and advance shared visions. Collaboration has been utilized as a strategy for conflicting parties to explore the possibility of working toward a situation in which parties benefit by working together instead of engaging in an adversarial relationship. In contrast, collaborative efforts established to advance shared visions recognize the limitations of individual agencies to affect change and seek to build relationships with agencies that share the same vision in order to expand resources and broaden its impact on the selected issue (Gray, 1989).

In an effort to understand the motives for participation, researchers have explored the organizational characteristics and environmental factors that initiate and sustain involvement in interorganizational relationships. In a study of 645 organizations in Canada, Foster and Meinhand (2002) hypothesized that collaboration is a function of organizational characteristics, the external environment, and attitudes toward collaboration and competition. Telephone interviews were conducted with 645 presidents or executive directors using a 120-item questionnaire containing open-and close-ended questions that addressed organizational size, structure, perceptions of the external environment and its impact on the organization, motives for collaboration, attitudes of the organization, collaboration obstacles, and interorganizational activity.

Size and age of organization were found to be significant; small organizations were less likely to engage in formal interorganizational activities. When perceived environmental impact was added to the regression model as a mediating variable, it emerged as a strong influence on an organization's motivation for collaboration. These findings suggest that when organizations perceive environmental factors as a threat to their individual stability, they are more likely to be motivated to collaborate with others. The smaller organizations in the study did not determine external factors as a threat to their existence or ability to provide services and as a result, did not feel motivated to participate in interorganizational activities.

In a study described earlier, Mulroy (2003) discussed the influence of community dynamics on a collaborative partnership of organizations working together to develop a child maltreatment model that focused on preventive services. In an earlier study of this partnership, Mulroy and Shay (1998), explored the motivations and rewards of interorganizational collaboration. They were interested in identifying the motivations for initial agency participation and factors that sustained the collaborative process in an interorganizational model to prevent child maltreatment. Data collected included direct observations of meetings of the organizational process and 56 in-depth personal interviews with steering committee members, project staff, and highly involved residents. The role of the organization in the planning process was an influencing factor in the decision to initially participate in the project. Organizations that were invested in developing the project to be used as a model for others to replicate were highly motivated to participate because involvement assisted them in extending their mission,

implementing the vision, and was consistent with their strategic plans for the future. Other organizations were motivated by the possibility of increased funding that could be used for additional resources that would expand service delivery. For others, the ability to partner with organizations that shared similar service philosophies and could provide links to segments of the community they could not reach was the primary motivating factor for participation.

Mulroy and Shay found that people sustained their participation because they felt they were successful in achieving the goals and objectives of the project, agency expectations were met, the personal and professional needs of the participants were met, and the strong leadership and support of the project staff minimized the investment of time. Although participants may have been initially motivated by the benefits they felt could be gained by their individual organization, advancing a shared vision, and successfully achieving the established goals and objectives of the project sustained their participation.

Applicability of the Literature

Throughout the literature, there is an underlying assumption that organizations make a conscious decision to actively participate in a collaborative process. In such instances, organizations are given the opportunity to formally commit their support to a project. When organizations are mandated by funding requirements to collaborate, the participating organizations usually formally join a group instead of automatically becoming part of the group simply based on their service domain. The collaboration literature is rich with descriptions of groups that have formed when individual

organizations decide to work together. Homeward is an example of the type of organization that serves as the broker organization that convenes its “partners” to develop a grant for HUD Continuum of Care funding but does not require its partners to formally commit their participation or clearly define roles, expectations, and contributions of each organization. Unfortunately, there is little published about organizations that do not formally join a partnership but are considered as participants by the broker or sponsoring organization. This point raises the question of whether these types of groups fit the general description of collaboration or if they represent a different type of arrangement for working together.

In a previous assessment of Homeward’s planning process, Hutchinson (2002) identified the need for future research that explores, in more detail, the way service providers collaborate and why some providers are not active participants in the collaboration process. The researchers also suggested that there is a need for more targeted research in order to access the non-respondents, primarily the smaller churches, in order to understand the different organizational needs of providers in the collaboration process. It is anticipated that the data obtained from those providers will provide Homeward with feedback that may highlight outreach and recruitment needs that need to be addressed in order to increase the number of partners who are active participants in the process.

The collaboration literature identifies a number of factors that are necessary for a successful collaborative partnership. Leadership, an efficient and effective organizational structure, favorable external conditions that support collaboration, inclusion of key

stakeholders, vehicles for communication (within and outside of the group), and a shared vision and purpose are among the factors that have been identified. The shared vision and purpose that emerges is often used to direct the efforts of the group as they work together to develop the goals, objectives, and action of the partnership. Although their motives for participating in the process may vary, it is generally assumed that they go through a formal process, such as signing a formal agreement or establishing bylaws (Bailey & Koney, 2000), that indicates their commitment to active participation and the shared vision. Thus, regardless of their motives, the partners believe that the benefits from their participation will outweigh the costs they may incur. Yet, Homeward's process is not yet so formalized.

In their discussion of communal relationships, Fabricant and Fisher (2002) suggest that developing formal relationships through the use of contracts or other agreements may create hierarchical relationships that emphasize order instead of participation in the process. Thus, in a situation similar to Homeward, formalized agreements of membership may serve as a barrier to achieving sustainable and fluid relationships among the partners. They propose that membership may in fact be recognized when an understanding of the exchange benefits of organizational investment and potential gain are defined because "membership is distinctive in part because of reconfigured understandings of exchange that emerge over time" (p. 9). From this perspective, membership is a fluid process, always subject to time. At this point in Homeward's development, it is unknown if the absence of a formal membership has

influenced members' motives to participate or their perceptions of the planning process, compared to other, more formalized, collaborative alliances.

This study examined the process of Homeward's collaboration and explored the motivations for participation and perceptions of the process by its members. Homeward is responsible for facilitating the development of the local Continuum of Care planning process to coordinate local services to the homeless and decrease fragmentation and duplication. Homeward's collaborative process is unique because organizations are automatically considered partners if they provide services to homeless people without formally becoming a member of the process. Given the broad definition of a service provider, the partners represent a wide scope of organizations such as FBOs, congregations, homeless shelters, food pantries, health services, local governments, and other organizations that may come into contact with the homeless population. While organizations may have been identified as participants in the collaboration, they may not necessarily perceive a need or motivation to become involved in the group since they never formally committed to participate.

Chapter 3: Method

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the organizational characteristics of Homeward's partners and their perceptions of the planning process that may influence their motivation to become active participants in the process. Analysis will be focused on answering the primary research questions: *1) Is there a relationship between organizational characteristics and how partners perceive Homeward's planning process? and 2) Do perceptions of Homeward's planning process influence partner motivation and level of participation?*

This project explored the relationship between organizational characteristics, partner perceptions of Homeward's process, motives, and level of participation. The following hypotheses were tested:

- 1) Organizational characteristics such as size, age, type of organization, and type of services provided will influence how positively or negatively partners perceive Homeward's planning process.
- 2) Organizations that participate in Homeward's planning process and perceive their participation as beneficial will have a higher level of involvement than those that do not.
- 3) Organizations that positively perceive Homeward's planning process will have a higher level of involvement than those that do not.

Study Design and Methods

Developing a Sampling Frame

During the summer of 2004 the researcher consulted with the primary contact person at Homeward to develop the list of organizations that would be recruited to participate in the study. The decision was made to include all organizations, regardless of tax status or structure, that provide services to the homeless population in the sampling frame. Since Homeward does not have a formal system of identifying partners, developing a list of partners proved to be a challenge. Initially, the researcher asked Homeward to include the representative from each participating organization on the list. Although Homeward was able to identify the organizations that are considered to be a partner in the Continuum of Care system, it was not always possible to identify a single individual at each organization since Homeward may have been in contact with more than one person over time. In an effort to identify a specific person at each organization, Homeward was asked to include the person who has most actively participated in the planning process and would be able to draw upon those experiences in order to best respond to the questionnaire.

Since level of participation is a key variable in the study, the organizations on the list were divided into categories of high, medium, and low participation for a visual representation of the diverse levels of participation among partners in a single partnership. Originally, the categories were supposed to be used to stratify the list of organizations for the targeted recruitment of organizations that may have been less likely to respond. Organizations were placed in the categories by Homeward staff based on

Homeward's documentation that reflected organizational representation at meetings, subcommittee participation, and event attendance.

Presently, there are 136 organizations considered to be partners in the development of the Continuum of Care system for the Richmond area. The sampling plan used in the study was different than the proposed plan. The original sample was supposed to be stratified and randomly selected from Homeward's partner list. Earlier research had indicated a need for targeted outreach to small and faith-based organizations (Hutchinson, 2002) and as a result, it was hoped that those organizations could be disproportionately represented in the sample. However, given the small size of the sampling frame and a concern about the potential high nonresponse rate among these organizations, the decision was made to include all partners in the sampling frame.

Two-Phase Approach

After the sampling frame was constructed to identify Homeward's partners, pre-study data-gathering consisted of informal conversations with Homeward's staff and collection of various materials produced by Homeward. Staff members shared their experiences with collecting data from their partners, the dynamics of their relationships with participating and non-participating organizations, and strategies for involving organizations in the planning process. Materials were read for context, including Homeward's business plan, their community report, the Continuum of Care service provider directory, and previous studies that explored Homeward's planning process (Homeward 2002a; Homeward 2002b; Hutchinson, 2002; Saady, 2000). No formal

agreements to participate were found, but these documents revealed a core group of organizations that have been the most active in the planning process.

A two-phase study was selected in order to gain a full perspective on Homeward's collaboration. A cross-sectional survey and focus group design was used to collect observations on Homeward's collaborative partners. Phase one, the survey, was administered during the fall of 2003. Phase two, the follow-up qualitative survey and focus groups, was used during the spring of 2004. Previous studies that have examined dimensions of collaboration have used a variety of methods such as surveys, focus groups, and interviews to collect data (Foster & Meinhard, 2003; Fountain, 2002; Harbert, Finnegan, & Tyler, 1997; Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 2001; Mulroy, 2003; Mulroy & Shay, 1998;). The survey design was appropriate for collecting data from Homeward's 136 active partners because it provided an opportunity for partners to indicate how they perceive Homeward's process for developing a comprehensive, better coordinated service delivery system of care for homeless persons. These perceptions assessed to what extent Homeward's planning process exhibits the factors that contribute to successful collaborative relationships. In addition, the survey was used to collect information on the motives for participation and levels of involvement that can be used to explore potential relationships between organizational characteristics, partner perceptions of the planning process, and levels of involvement in the collaborative. Although the design was used to assess the perspective of individual organizations, it actually reflects representatives' perspectives of the process since the survey was only administered to the person identified as the organizational representative on Homeward's partner list. The surveys

were sent to the representative because it was assumed that they would have the most knowledge about Homeward and be able to respond accordingly to the survey questions.

Focus groups were appropriate for this study because they captured different perspectives and points of view about the preliminary data from Homeward's partners. Focus group participants were able to express their feedback about the study's findings and discuss their motives for participation and perceptions about the effectiveness of the planning process.

Advantages of Survey and Focus Group Research

Surveys are useful for describing the characteristics of large populations, analyzing multiple variables simultaneously to explore different relationships, and developing standard definitions for concepts that will be measured (Babbie, 1990; Rubin & Babbie, 2001). They are appropriate for collecting data from samples that are geographically diverse and difficult to assess at one time. When questionnaires are used, the potential for interviewer bias is eliminated because the instrument can be administered individually or in a group setting without interaction between the researcher and respondent. Since level of personal contact is minimized, it is possible to obtain more accurate answers to items that may be personal or sensitive in nature.

Focus groups have been used to collect qualitative data from participants to assess program needs, test new ideas, improve existing programs, and develop survey questions (Krueger, 1994). Focus groups are useful because they allow the facilitator to probe and explore unanticipated topics that may arise during the discussion. Since focus group discussions take place in settings with more than one person, they also capture the

dynamics of the interaction between the participants. In addition, focus group results tend to have high face validity because the results come from the comments of the participants themselves and have not been limited to standardized responses (Krueger, 1994).

Limitations of Survey and Focus Group Research

Although this design can be helpful in assessing the current perspectives of the partners, it is limited by its ability to allow for the analysis over time that may provide insight into how current motivations and perceptions may change as organizations remain involved with Homeward's process. A survey may accurately measure feelings or attitudes in multiple settings when the responses are standardized but is limited by its ability to capture the range of perspectives and experiences of respondents (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). In an effort to allow respondents the opportunity to provide in-depth responses or address issues that may not have been asked, space was available on the questionnaire to allow respondents to make any additional comments they may have about the planning process and/or their motives for participation.

A clear advantage of focus groups is the ability to probe unanticipated topics or further explore themes and ideas in greater depth. It is also a limitation because the researcher has less control over the responses and the discussion is influenced by the social interaction of the participants. An inexperienced facilitator can limit the ability of the focus group to generate useful and accurate data if he/she is unable to probe when necessary and move the discussion forward if conversation has stalled or has become repetitive. It is important to note that data from the participants can vary based on the characteristics of the group. For example, if tensions or disagreements arise among the

participants, the participants may not feel comfortable expressing themselves or sharing their experiences with the other participants and be less likely to contribute to the discussion. As a result, the focus group may not provide. Therefore, it can be a challenge to accurately capture the context of the discussion during the data analysis and to avoid making premature conclusions (Krueger, 1994).

Phase I: The Survey

Instrumentation

The *Questionnaire for Organizational Partners*, a 68-item instrument developed by the Center for the Advancement for Collaborative Strategies in Health (Weiss, Anderson, & Lasker, 2002), was selected for this study (Appendix E). Although the questionnaire was originally designed to obtain information from partners in collaboratives that promote health and well-being, its content is relevant to components of Homeward's process. The questionnaire allows researchers to assess the degree to which partners believe the planning process exhibits factors identified in the literature that promote successful collaborative efforts. The instrument developers acknowledge the multiple definitions of collaborative alliances by using the term *partnership* to “encompass all of the types of collaboration (e.g. consortia, coalitions, and alliances) that bring people and organizations together to improve health.” (p. 683) when referring to the overall collaborative effort. In the instrument itself, collaboration is defined very broadly as “how the partners work together” (p. 9).

The questionnaire is based on the results of pilot studies with 815 informants in 63 partnerships. The questionnaire is comprised of eleven dimensions of partnership measured as:

1. Background information including the type of the organization, length of involvement in the partnership, and type of services provided.
2. Relationships in the partnership: 5-items that focus on the relationships between the people and organizations currently involved in the partnership scored on a four-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.”
3. Leadership: 10 items that assess the effectiveness of the partnership on a five point scale ranging from 0 (poor) to 4 (excellent).
4. Administration and Management of the Partnership: 10 items that assess the effectiveness of the partnership in managing the planning process on a five-point scale ranging from 0 (poor) to 4 (excellent).
5. Partnership resources: 10 items that explore the extent to which the partners feel the partnership has the adequate resources needed to work effectively and achieve its goals on a three-point scale ranging from 0 (has none or almost none of what it needs) to 2 (has all or most of what it needs).
6. Benefits of partnership: 12 items that identify the benefits organizations can receive from participating in the partnership on a three-point scale ranging from 1 (does not expect to receive) to 3 (already received).

7. Drawbacks to participation in the partnership: 8 items that identify the drawbacks to participation in the partnership on a three-point scale ranging from 1 (already experienced) to 3 (does not expect to experience).
8. Collaboration: 20-items that explore how the partners work together. Nineteen of the items are scored on a four-point scales ranging from 0 (not at all) to 3 (a lot), 0 (strongly disagree) to 3 (strongly agree), 0 (not at all satisfied) to 3 (very satisfied). One item is scored on a four-point scale ranging from 0 (very unsuccessful) to 3 (very successful). These questions assess the organization's roles and responsibilities within the partnership, the use of partner resources, the involvement of key stakeholders, satisfaction with partner relationships, organization influence, and how the group's plans have been implemented.
9. Partnership efficiency: 3 items that assess how well the partnership achieves its goals on a four-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). These questions assess how much respondents agreed or disagree with the partnership's use of financial resources, in-kind resources, and time.
10. Non-financial resources: 6 items that explore the sufficiency of nonfinancial resources on a three-point scale ranging from 1 (the partnership has almost none or none of what it needs) to 3 (the partnership has all or most of what it needs). These questions assess partnership sufficiency of resources skills and expertise, data and information, and connections to the target population and government agencies.

11. Partnership challenges: 20 items that assess the extent to which the partnership experiences partner-related challenges ranging from 1 (not at all) to 4 (a lot). The questions assess the partnerships' capacity to respond to internal and community-related challenges such as its ability to recruit, retain, and motivate essential partners, history of cooperation and trust among partners, and resistance of key people and organizations to the goals of the partnership.

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was conducted to establish empirically that each scale measured the appropriate construct. The analysis used data collected from 815 individuals in 63 partnerships that participated in The National Study on Partnership Functioning (Weiss, et.al, 2002). Five subscales were developed from the eleven dimensions in the questionnaire during factor analyses. Principal components factor analyses with promax rotation supported the formation of the following scales: partnership synergy, effectiveness of leadership, effectiveness of administration/management, adequacy of resources, and partnership efficiency. Additional analysis of the internal partnership challenges scale revealed that it measured two separate constructs: difficulties related to governing the partnership and problems with partner involvement. As result, the scale was divided into two separate scales. Thus, seven subscales were developed from the factor analysis for use in the questionnaire.

Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

Validity

The content validity of the instrument was assured through a review of the literature on partnerships and analysis of existing measures used in studies and evaluations of partnerships. The researchers who developed the tool worked with an interdisciplinary panel of individuals who have extensive experience. After the questionnaire was developed, two rounds of cognitive interviews were conducted with individuals currently involved in partnerships (Weiss, et al. 2002).

Reliability

Cronbach's coefficient alpha was the statistic used to test for reliability. The criterion for acceptable internal consistency reliability is generally .70 or greater. Seven subscales have coefficient alpha coefficients of .75 or greater (Weiss, et al. 2002).

Scale	Coefficient Alpha	Number of Items	Question Numbers
Synergy	.93	9	40-48
Leadership	.97	10	16a-16j
Administration/Management	.94	10	19a-19j
Efficiency	.82	3	37-39
Nonfinancial Resources	.83	6	25b,25e-25i
Partner Involvement Challenges	.85	3	54c, 54e-54h, 54k
Community Related Challenges	.83	3	54a, 54b, 54d

The partnership synergy subscale is comprised of 9 items (questions 40-48) that assess the involvement of diverse partners and its effect on the partnership's ability to implement its plans. The leadership subscale is comprised of 10 items (questions 16a-16j) that assess different aspects of leadership such as the ability to motivate people to

become involved in the partnership, fostering respect and openness among partners, and resolving conflict. The administration and management subscale contains 10 items (questions 19a-19j) that measure the ability to coordinate communication, apply for and manage grants, and evaluate the progress and impact of the partnership. Three items (questions 37-39) that measure the partnership's ability to make good use of partner resources comprise the efficiency subscale. The adequacy of resources subscale contains 6 items (questions 25b,25e-25i) that provide respondents the opportunity to assess the partnership's ability to use financial and non-financial resources, such as data and information, money, and skills and expertise. Six items (questions 54c, 54e-54h, and 54k) are included on a subscale about the difficulties governing the partnership. These items were created to assess internal challenges facing the partnership such as relationships among partners, obtaining resources, and moving the partnership from planning to action. The problems with partner involvement subscale contain 3 items (questions 54a, 54b, and 54d) that address the recruitment, retention, and motivation of partners. The final subscale, problems related to the community, contains 3 items (questions 55b, 55d, and 55e) that assess the lack of incentives to motivate people and organizations to participate, a history of mistrust among partners, and the resistance by key people and organizations to the goals of the partnership (Weiss et al., 2002).

Test-retest reliability was assessed over a 4-week period on a subsample of 110 respondents in 26 partnerships. The respondents were given a shorter questionnaire that excluded the descriptive information. The test-retest reliability of a scale is considered to be acceptable at .70 or above. However, as the authors note, intraclass correlation

coefficients between .60 and .70 are considered acceptable in exploratory work in which the constructs are being tested.

One subscale (effectiveness of administration/management) had an intraclass correlation coefficient of .90. Five subscales (partnership synergy, leadership, efficiency, difficulties governing the partnership, problems with partner involvement, and problems related to the community) had coefficients of .60 or greater. One subscale, adequacy of resources, had a correlation coefficient of less than .50. Due to the low correlation coefficient of the adequacy subscale, three questions (25a, 25c, and 25d) were removed from the final analyses and the scale was re-named “nonfinancial resources.” The revised interclass correlation coefficient was not reported in the findings (Weiss et.al., 2002).

Scale	Interclass Correlation Coefficient
Synergy	.73
Leadership	.66
Administration/Management	.90
Efficiency	.77
Nonfinancial Resources	Not reported
Partner Involvement Challenges	.74
Community Related Challenges	.83

Survey Data Collection

During the summer of 2003, the questionnaire was pilot tested with two key informants for feedback about the survey instrument in Richmond, Virginia. One key informant was a doctoral student in the Department of Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University and has participated in and facilitated collaborative

partnerships. The other key informant was an administrator in a non-profit organization and currently participates in a collaborative partnership of human service providers. Since both individuals have been involved with collaborative partnerships, they have had experiences that were relevant to the items contained in the survey. Neither person suggested any changes to the original instrument. In early October 2003, study approval was granted by the VCU Institutional Review Board (IRB). Phase I of the data collection process took place between late October 2003 and December 2003.

Questionnaires were mailed using the tailored design method created by Dillman (1978, 2000) in order to achieve a higher response rate. The tailored design method is a series of survey procedures, based on exchange theory, that are designed to create respondent trust and perceptions of increased rewards and decreased costs associated with participating in research studies. Recruitment took place as described below:

Initial Contact: In late October, one week before the questionnaires were mailed, personal phone calls were made to the partner organizations by the researcher to inform them that they would be receiving the survey. A standard script for the phone calls that was approved by the VCU IRB was used during each contact (Appendix C). The decision was made to make personal calls instead of mailing a letter, as suggested by Dillman, based on Homeward's previous experience collecting data from their partners. They found that when personal calls were made prior to the mailing of a survey, they achieved a higher response rate (Leslie, 2003). Due to the high number of calls that were required, voicemail messages were left with organizations that had answering machines or voicemail capability. Three phone call attempts were made to organizations that did

not answer before they were mailed the survey without the pre-notice phone call. Seven organizations could not be reached by the third attempt and received the survey without the pre-notice phone call.

Second Contact: One week after the phone calls were made, the questionnaires were mailed in two waves to all of Homeward's 136 partner agencies that had been reached by phone or voicemail. On October 27th, 86 questionnaires were mailed, and the remaining 50 were mailed on October 29th. Each packet included a cover letter, the questionnaire, and a stamped, self-addressed, return envelope. Organizations were assigned a number that was printed on the questionnaire and return envelope to track responses.

Third Contact: Two weeks after the initial contact (November 11) a postcard thank you/reminder was sent to all respondents, serving as a thank you to those who responded and a reminder to those who had not responded .

Final Contact: Five weeks after the initial contact (November 25) a second letter and replacement questionnaire was sent only to those that had not responded ($n = 86$). According to Dillman, the fourth contact should occur four weeks after the initial contact. However, due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the final contact was mailed one week later so that the organizational representatives would receive the questionnaire after the holiday when they may have been more likely to complete it.

Data Analysis

SPSS Version 11 was used to score and analyze data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the data analysis. Frequencies on sample demographics and

responses were run to provide a descriptive overview. Univariate descriptive statistics were examined to ensure that the data from the surveys were entered correctly into the data set and the categories were appropriately labeled. Missing data and “not applicable” responses were coded as 99 and 88 respectively and were initially excluded from analysis. However, to reduce the amount of missing data in three subscales (relationships with partners, leadership, and administration) mean substitution was used. The average score in each domain was calculated for each case and the mean was substituted for the missing data. For cases that did not respond to any of the items, they remained coded as missing data. Normal distributions and outliers for each item were examined through frequency histograms and boxplots. One continuous variable, organization revenues, had several outliers and was re-coded into a categorical variable to reflect organization size as small, medium, and large. Since Homeward’s partners represent large government agencies, non-profits, and small organizations, the revenues varied greatly from less than \$130,000 per year to over 55 million. As a result, it was necessary to collapse the values into three broader categories to reduce the influence of outliers.

Homeward’s organizational partners represent different levels of participation within the planning process. Homeward’s current structure is flexible and it allows partnering organizations to become involved on specific tasks and/or when their expertise and skills are needed. As a result, Homeward’s partner participation may vary over time. Ten of Homeward’s organizational representatives indicated that they had devoted 0 hours to Homeward activities during the three months prior to the date they completed the survey. Independent bivariate and multivariate analyses were conducted that included

and excluded these organizations to determine if their low participation level had an impact on significance relationships between the key variables. The exclusion of these organizations did not make a difference, therefore they are included in the final analyses.

The “benefits of participation” variable was created by adding the number of benefits respondents indicated they had received from their involvement with Homeward. The possible number of benefits received ranged from 0 to 12. The “importance of benefits” variable was formed by re-coding the scale responses into two categories of important and not important. The “exchange of benefits and drawbacks” variable was created by re-coding the scale responses into two categories of benefits exceed the drawbacks and drawbacks exceed benefits.

As discussed earlier (Sider & Rolland Unruh, 2004), the term “FBO” is used to describe formal organizations and church congregations that provide services to individuals and communities. Homeward’s partner list includes representation from both types of organizations. It is unclear if these organizations differ in how they perceive Homeward’s planning process and the factors that influence their participation. Since Hutchinson (2002) identified FBOs as a subgroup that were not adequately represented in an earlier study, they have been highlighted in the bivariate analysis. Instead of including these organizations in a single category, they have been separated into two categories for this study: FBOs and congregations. Organizations that have 501 (c)3 status and have a mission related to their faith and/or are affiliated with a religious denomination were identified as FBOs. Organizations such as the Salvation Army and United Methodist

Family Services are examples of these types of organizations. Churches that do not have separate social services programs with 501 (c)3 status were identified as congregations.

Relationships with partners, leadership organizational structure, benefits and drawbacks of participation, involvement of key stakeholders, internal and external challenges, and communication are the collaboration dimensions examined in the bivariate analysis. Tests and measures of association or correlation appropriate for levels of measurement were used to examine relationships between variables and significance was acceptable at the .05 level. Crosstabulations were used to explore relationships between organizational characteristics, such as size and type, and ratings of individual items that measured partner relationships, leadership, administration, benefits and drawbacks of participation, involvement of key stakeholders, internal and external challenges, and communication. Gamma was the correlation coefficient used to determine the strength of significant relationships. Bivariate analysis also examined the association between the number of benefits obtained and level of participation. The correlation between three subscale ratings (relationships with partners, leadership, and administration) and level of participation were also explored during the bivariate analysis. Pearsons r was the correlation coefficient used to determine the strength of significant relationships. Multiple regression analyses were used to determine the relationship between organizational characteristics, partner perceptions of Homeward's process, motives, and level of participation.

Foster & Meinhard (2002) postulated that certain organizational characteristics will predispose an organization to collaborate more formally with others. According to

organizational ecology, organizations vary in their structure and vulnerability and some organizations would benefit more by partnering with larger, more resourceful organizations in order to expand their influence on the organizational environment (Blumberg, 1987). For example, larger organizations may be desired partners in a collaborative relationship because they have more resources to share with others and older organizations may be more likely to participate because they have established deeper networks than younger organizations. Organizations that either have a leadership role in the collaborative process and/or would benefit from participating have been found to be more likely to collaborate and positively view the process. Organizational size for 501(c)(3) organizations and government agencies were assessed by the financial information (revenues) contained on the IRS form 990 filed during 2001 and 2002 and fiscal year budget reports. Organization size for 501(c)3 organizations and government agencies was categorized as follows. If revenues were less than \$500,000, the agency was considered small, those with revenues of \$501,000-\$999,999, were considered medium, and if revenues was \$1 million or more, then they were categorized as large (Foster & Meinhard, 2002). For this study, organization size for congregations was categorized as follows. If the number of members was less than 100, the congregation was considered small, those with members between 101 to 400 were considered medium, and if the number of members was more than 400, then they were categorized as large (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 2003).

As described earlier, a number of factors that influence the success of collaborative partnerships have been identified. Research has also shown that the

structure and process of the group, leadership, resources organizational capacity and a previous history of collaboration can influence the partners' motivation and level of involvement in collaborative efforts (Fountain, 2002; Harbert, Finnegan, & Tyler, 1997; Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 2001). According to Weiss et al. (2002), the culmination of those factors should lead to a state of partnership synergy, "the degree to which a partnership's collaborative process successfully combines its participants' perspectives, knowledge, and skill (p. 683)". Partners are more likely to become and/or stay motivated to participate in collaborative partnerships if they perceive that their participation results in benefits for their individual organizations as well as collective goals.

The Regression Models

In this study, three regression models were used to examine the relationship between organizational characteristics, perceptions of the planning process, and level of participation. The first model assessed the relationship between organizational characteristics and participation. Variables that measured organization age, size, and type were included in the model to predict participation. The second model examined the relationship between the benefits gained from participating and levels of participation. Variables that measured the number of benefits obtained, how benefits compare to drawbacks, and the importance of benefits to the organization were included in the model. The third model assessed the relationship between subscale ratings (relationships with partners, leadership, and administration) and participation. Participation was measured by the number of hours each representative reported they devoted to Homeward's activities during the past three months.

Phase II: Follow-Up Survey and Focus Groups

Follow-Up Survey

During the first phase of the study, 19 organizations indicated that they did not consider themselves to be partners with Homeward even though they are included on Homeward's partner list. This unanticipated finding raised questions about how these organizations would characterize their relationship with Homeward, what benefits and drawbacks they may have experienced as a result of their "unofficial" affiliation, and to what extent would they want to become more involved in Homeward's planning process. A short, six-item survey comprised of open-ended questions was sent to these organizations to collect this additional information. The respondents were asked the following questions:

Is your organization familiar with Homeward's work with the homeless population in the Greater Richmond area?

Homeward has identified your organization as one of its partners. However, your organization does not consider itself to be in partnership with Homeward. How would you describe your relationship?

What factors have influenced your organization's decision to not be active in Homeward's planning process?

What benefits do you think your organization could receive from being active with Homeward's planning process?

What drawbacks do you think your organization may experience as a result of being active with Homeward's planning process?

To what extent would your organization like to become involved with Homeward?

The Focus Groups

Prior to the start of the second phase of data collection, the study was granted approval by the VCU IRB after the focus group questions, informed consent, recruitment materials, and the follow-up survey were submitted in late February 2004 as an amendment to the original application (Appendix E). The original data collection plan anticipated that it may be a challenge to get the smaller organizations to respond and the focus groups would be used to obtain in-depth responses about partnership experiences that would not emerge from the survey data. After preliminary analysis of the quantitative data, focus group questions were to be developed to capture a more in-depth understanding of partner motives for participation. The focus groups were to also serve as an opportunity to get feedback from the participants about the study's preliminary findings. However, due to the low response rate (37%), the decision was made to conduct two focus groups with organizations identified by Homeward as organizations with high and medium levels of participation that did not respond to the survey. These organizations were targeted because it was assumed that since they were identified as high and medium level participants, they would have some knowledge of the planning process and could discuss their experiences, unlike those that had been identified as low level participants. Most of the organizations that do not consider themselves to be partners were in the low level participant category and the follow-up survey was a way to get their perspective about how they characterize their relationship with Homeward and the benefits and drawbacks they may experience if they were partners.

A list of the organizations that did not respond was forwarded to Homeward staff to confirm that the appropriate persons were on the list as the organization's representative. Two weeks prior to the focus groups, phone calls were made to 28 organizational representatives to invite them to participate in one of two focus group discussions. A standard recruitment script identifying the researcher, the purpose of the focus group, and the date, time, and location was used (Appendix D). As a result, 6 agreed to participate and one representative indicated that she was interested in participating but would not be able to commit herself until the day of the focus group because of another appointment. The two focus groups were conducted with 4 participants. One participant was not able to participate because she was sick and the other confirmed participant did not attend or call to say she would not be able to attend. Each focus group was held in Homeward's boardroom at the local United Way and lunch was provided. The first focus group was held on March 15th with 1 participant. Although 3 partners had confirmed their attendance in advance, only 1 person showed up. The focus group questions were presented to the partner and those responses are included in the analysis. The second focus group was held on March 17th for one hour and fifteen minutes with 3 participants. Written consent was obtained from the participants before the discussion began. The focus group responses were audio-taped and later transcribed. The focus group participants were asked the following questions:

1. What are the benefits and drawbacks your organization has experienced as a result of participating in Homeward's planning process?
2. How do you perceive the relationships among partners?
3. How do you perceive the overall effectiveness of the planning process?

4. What challenges may have an impact on the ability of the partnership to carry out its work?
5. Homeward does not currently have a formal process for identifying and engaging partners. From your perspective, how does the lack of structure influence partner motivation and participation?
6. What strategies do you think can/should be used to involve more partners in the planning process?

Data Analysis

The follow-up survey and focus group data were analyzed qualitatively. The open-ended responses were entered into a word processing software program, grouped by question, and analyzed using an open coding process. Open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) is the process of locating themes and assigning initial labels to these themes during an initial review of the data. Paragraphs were selected as the recording unit for analysis and were identified and categorized.

Chapter 4: Findings

The findings are divided into two sections: quantitative findings from the mailed questionnaire and the qualitative findings from the follow-up survey and the focus groups. This mixed methods approach to exploring Homeward's process provided an opportunity to better understand the types of organizations that are involved with Homeward, their perceptions of the effectiveness of the process, the relationships among partners, the benefits and drawbacks they have experienced as the result of their participation, and the challenges that impact the work of Homeward and its partners.

Phase I: The Survey

Univariate Analysis

Since 19 respondents indicated through phone, email, or in memo/letter that they do not consider themselves to be a partner, they were excluded from the sample population. Once the organizations were removed, 117 organizations comprised the final sampling frame (Figure B2). Questionnaires were completed by representatives in 44 organizations for a response rate of 37%. The respondent organizations represented the range of services provided to the homeless population. Most (34.1%) of the respondents identified their organizations as faith-based. Within this category, 22.7% ($n = 10$) were FBOs and 15.9% ($n = 7$) were congregations. Advocacy, community-based organizations, medical facilities, community development corporations, and government agencies were the organizational types that responded. (Figure B3) Housing, MH/MR, food distribution, and meals programs were the most frequently listed services partners provide to the homeless population. (Figure B4) More than half (54.5%) of the

respondents represented large organizations. In addition, these organizations were also older, established organizations with an average age of 45.1 years ($SD = 51.8$) and a median age of 21.5 years.

Most of the respondents (56.8%, $n = 25$) represent organizations that are considered to be highly involved in the planning process by Homeward staff. Organizations in the low participation category represented 25% of the respondents ($n = 11$) and 18.2% ($n = 8$) were organizations with medium levels of participation. As a group, the respondents have been involved with Homeward in some capacity for multiple years. A large percentage, 77.3% ($n = 34$) indicated that they have been involved with Homeward for three years or longer and 13.6% ($n = 6$) have been active for a period greater than one year but less than three (Table A1). Similarly, most have been their organization's representative for three years or longer (61.4%) or longer than one year but less than three years (22.7%). Although many of the organizations have been involved with Homeward for some time, their representation at meetings does not appear to be consistent. Very few indicated that they have attended all of the meetings they have been invited to attend during the past three months (6.8%, $n = 3$) while others indicated that they have attended "most of them" (38.6%, $n = 17$), "some of them" (13.6%, $n = 6$), "a few of them" (20.9%, $n = 9$), and "none of them" (18.6%, $n = 8$). Slightly more than half (54.5%, $n = 24$) reported that they provide either informal leadership in the partnership. The average number of hours spent on tasks and activities related to the partnership is 6.4, ($SD = 10.9$). Most (45.5%, $n = 20$) have been given authority by their organization to commit resources while others report having partial (36.4%, $n = 16$) or no authority

(15.9%, $n = 7$). For the majority of the organizational representatives, participation in Homeward's partnership is not a part of their job description/responsibilities (63.6%, $n = 28$). (Table A2)

Dimensions of the Collaborative Process

Relationships with partners, leadership, organizational structure, benefits and drawbacks of participation, involvement of key stakeholders, internal and external challenges, and communication are among the factors that have been found to influence the success of organizational partnerships. Each of these dimensions, as individual items and subscales, was explored in the analysis.

Relationships with Partners

Respondents generally agreed that their organizations are perceived positively and the other partners appreciate their contributions. Some respondents ($n = 16$) indicated that they are concerned that some partners will not fulfill their obligations and that the organization they represent does not have as much influence as other partners in partnership activities ($n = 13$) (Table A3). When asked to rate their satisfaction with the way people and organizations work together, their organization's influence, and role in the partnership, most reported they were either very (31.1%, 40.9%, 43.2% respectively) or somewhat satisfied (38.6%, 29.5%, 31.8% respectively). The representatives are also very or somewhat satisfied with Homeward's plan for achieving its goals and the way plans have been implemented. (Table A4) The average score for how the partners work together is 6.63.

Leadership

Taking responsibility for the partnership; inspiring/motivating people to participate; getting people involved; communicating the vision of the partnership; and developing a common language within the partnership were areas the respondents gave positive ratings. Fostering respect trust and inclusiveness in the partnership; creating an environment where differences can be voiced; and combining the different perspectives and skills of organizations were also identified as leadership strengths. Resolving conflict among partners and helping the partnership look at things differently were rated slightly lower. Overall, 56.8% ($n = 25$) are very satisfied with the leadership of the partnership and 29.5% ($n = 13$) are somewhat satisfied. (Table A6) The average score for leadership is 24.6 ($SD = 10.54$).

Organizational Structure (Administration, Management, and Communication)

Coordinating communication among partners, organizing activities, preparing materials to inform partners, performing secretarial duties, and maintaining databases emerged as strengths. Coordinating communication with people and organizations outside of the partnership, and evaluating the progress and impact of the partnership were rated lower. It should be noted that some of the missing data may be due in part to diverse participation levels. Although missing data were evident in other sections of the questionnaire, the items in this section have a greater number of “don’t know” responses. This may be due in part to the fact that some organizations have not been as active in the planning process are unable to answer questions since they may have a limited knowledge of how Homeward’s planning process is implemented. The partners report that they are

generally comfortable with the way decisions are made, support the decisions that have been made, and believe that decisions are made in a timely manner. Overall, 52.3% ($n = 23$) are very satisfied with the administration and management and 29.5% ($n = 13$) are somewhat satisfied. (Table A8) The average score for leadership is 24.6 ($SD = 8.89$, $n = 41$).

Benefits and Drawbacks of Participation

The organization representatives were asked to indicate the number of benefits and drawbacks of participation they have experienced or anticipated experiencing. Twelve possible benefits were listed on the questionnaire and the average number of benefits experienced by the representatives was 7.5 ($SD = 3.6$). Enhanced ability to address an issue important to their organization, acquisition of new knowledge and/or skills, and a heightened public profile are benefits partners have experienced from their participation. The increased use of their organization's expertise and services and an increased awareness about the community were also benefits frequently mentioned by the respondents. The respondents identified the development of valuable relationships, enhanced ability to meet clients, the ability to have a greater impact on the issue, and making a contribution to the community as other benefits their organizations have received from their participation. Acquisition of additional funding, the enhanced ability to affect public policy and the ability to meet performance goals were among the benefits partners were the least likely to have received. These benefits, in addition to heightened public profile, were identified as the least expected benefits. (Table A9)

The average number of drawbacks experienced by the representatives was 1.54 ($SD = 2.3$) Diversion and time from other priorities/obligations (36.34%, $n = 16$) and frustration/aggravation (34.1%, $n = 15$) were the two most frequently mentioned drawbacks. (Table A10) Given the limited drawbacks of participation experienced by this group, it is not surprising that most (50%, $n = 37$) are not at all concerned about drawbacks their organization has experienced. Respondents rate the importance of benefits they experience as the result of participating as “extremely important” (36.4%) or “very important” (43.2%) and believe that the benefits greatly exceed (50%, $n = 22$) or exceed the drawbacks, (27.3%, $n = 12$). (Tables A11, A12)

Involvement of Key Stakeholders

When asked to rate the extent to which the involvement of different partners has led to new ways of thinking, 40.9% ($n = 18$) felt it had contributed “a lot,” followed by those that felt different partner involvement contributed “some” (36.4%, ($n = 16$)). In addition, the involvement of different partners has enabled the partnership to connect multiple services, programs, or systems to some degree (38.6%, $n = 17$). The respondents also felt the ability to involve members of the target population in the priorities of the partnership (38.6%, $n = 17$) and obtain support from entities (people, organizations) that can hinder or help the work of the partnership, has contributed “some” to new ways of thinking. Representatives generally agree or strongly agree that Homeward makes good use of partners’ time and resources. The representatives also agree that Homeward has developed common goals that are understood by all, engages diverse partners,

communicates how its actions are tied to local problems, and documents the impact of its actions. (Tables A14, A16)

Challenges

Difficulties obtaining non-financial resources (25.0%, $n = 11$) was rated as having “some” (25.0%, $n = 11$) to “a lot” (20.5%, $n = 9$) of impact on the partnership. Problems with moving from planning to action were also rated as having “some” (20.5%, $n = 9$) to “a lot” (13.6%, $n = 6$) of impact. Respondents identified some challenges associated with recruiting partners (34.1%, $n = 15$), motivating partners (29.5%, $n = 13$), and retaining essential partners (27.3%, $n = 12$). Relationships among partners (22.7%, $n = 10$), problems with the decision-making process (22.7%, $n = 10$), and difficulties obtaining financial resources (25.0%, $n = 11$) were also identified as having some impact on Homeward’s efforts. The extent to which problems with the decision-making process impact Homeward’s partners was evenly rated as having some impact (22.7%, $n = 10$) and no impact at all (22.7%, $n = 10$). The inequitable distribution of funds was rated evenly as having some (15.9%, $n = 7$) to a little (15.9%, $n = 7$) influence on Homeward’s partnership (Table A17)

Lack of incentives to motivate people and organizations to participate (27.3%, $n = 12$), the resistance of key people to the goals and activities of the partnership (27.3%, $n = 12$), and the existence of multiple partnerships within the community (27.3%, $n = 12$) were identified as challenges with little impact in Homeward’s collaborative effort. Programs with categorical funding or program requirements (18.2%, $n = 8$), competition for resources (27.3%, $n = 12$), and little history of trust or cooperation among people and

groups in the community (22.7%, $n = 10$) were identified as challenges that have some impact. The unwillingness of government agencies to grant needed control or authority to the partnership (18.2%, $n = 8$), and legal or regulatory barriers were challenges also identified as having some impact on the work of the group (15.9%, $n = 7$). (Table A20)

Open-Ended Responses

The participants were given the opportunity to respond to open-ended questions about the most valuable resources their organizations have contributed to the partnership. These open-ended questions asked the representatives about the benefits their organizations have received or expect to receive from participation, and drawbacks they have experienced or expect to experience. They were also provided with space to list factors that have hindered Homeward's ability to implement its plans and any other thoughts or comments they wanted to share about their experiences in the partnership.

Partnering organizations bring a variety of assets to the planning process such as support, experience, creativity, knowledge, and a willingness to collaborate. Expertise in their service areas, experience, management and leadership skills, in-kind resources (such as staff, meeting space), enthusiasm, time, and willingness to work together are among the most valuable resources the partners feel their organizations contribute to the partnership. Improved coordination and quality of services, peer support, and a better understanding of homeless issues are other benefits organizations have received or anticipate receiving as a result of their participation.

The relationship with the local United Way (the organization where Homeward's offices are located), infrequency of meetings and insufficient meetings, internal resistance

of organization's own staff to work collaboratively, and the sharing of financial resources were identified as drawbacks the organizations have experienced as a result of their experience. Trust, poor communication within organizations and between organizational representatives and staff in individual agencies, lack of resources (such as finances and staff) to support the partnership itself, and federal regulations were included as factors that have hindered the partnership's ability to carry out its work. These factors were also identified in the focus group discussion.

Bivariate Analysis

Organizational characteristics are hypothesized to influence how organizations perceive Homeward's planning process. Crosstabulations between organizational characteristics (size and type) and scaled ratings of individual items that assessed relationships with partners, organizational structure, involvement of key stakeholders, internal and external challenges, and communication were analyzed. Two individual items yielded statistically significant results: concern that the organization they (the respondents) represent will be taken advantage of by the other partners and the extent to which the involvement of different partners has impacted Homeward's planning process. The relationship between organization size and concern that the organization the respondents represent will be taken advantage of by other partners is a moderate, negative association ($p = .04$, $r = -.47$). The two respondents who indicated concern about their organization's relationship with the other partners were representatives from small and mid-size organizations (14.3% and 9.1%, respectively). However, this finding should be

interpreted with caution because of the small representation ($n = 2$) of organizations in these categories. (Table A5)

The moderate relationship between organization size and perception of the involvement of diverse partners in Homeward's planning process ($p = .01$, $r = -.55$) is negative. Small and mid-size organizational representatives were more likely to report that the involvement of different partners has led to new and better ways of thinking has contributed "a lot" (83.3% and 60%, respectively), to Homeward's planning process. Interestingly, the respondents representing large organizations felt that the involvement of different partners has only had "some" impact (61.9%). (Table A15)

One item that assessed Homeward's leadership (the ability to combine the perspectives, resources, and skills of partners in the planning process) and three items that assessed the impact of challenges facing the partnership (difficulty motivating partners, resistance of key stakeholders to Homeward's goals and activities, and the inequitable distribution of funds) emerged as findings that are trending toward significance. These variables had significance levels less than .10 but greater than .05, the level of acceptance for this study. However, given the exploratory nature of the study and the problems with the sampling frame and small sample size, the results are included in the analyses. Although these findings should be interpreted with caution, they are included in the analysis in an effort to avoid a Type 2 error by expanding the significance.

The relationship between organization type and the frequency rating of Homeward's ability to combine the perspectives, resources, and skills of partners into the

planning process is trending toward significance ($p = .08$, $r = -.22$). This is a moderate, negative relationship and revealed that respondents who represented church congregations tended to rate Homeward lower on its ability to incorporate the partner's assets and skills into the planning process. (Table A7). The relationship between organization type and perceptions of the extent to which the inequitable distribution of funds impacts Homeward's efforts trends toward significance ($p = .09$, $r = .38$). This is a moderate, positive relationship and suggests that respondents who represent government agencies were more likely to rate the inequitable distribution of funds as having a "some" (60%) impact on the Homeward's efforts than other organizational types. (Table A19)

At the .10 level of significance, the relationship between organization type and frequency ratings of the extent that resistance of key stakeholders to goals and activities of partnership impacts Homeward's efforts trends toward significance. This is a moderate, positive relationship ($r = .40$) and suggests that respondents who represented FBOs were more likely to rate the resistance of key stakeholders as having a "some" (50%) impact on the Homeward's efforts than other organizational types even though most of the respondents felt that the resistance had "a little" impact. (Table A21). The relationship between organization size and the extent to which the difficulty motivating partners impacts Homeward's efforts resistance of key stakeholders to goals and activities of partnership impacts Homeward's efforts ($p = .07$, $r = -.46$) trends toward significance. Respondents from small and mid-size organizations were more likely to report "a lot" (25% and 22.2%, respectively) and "some" (25% and 66.7%) challenges with motivating partners than representatives from large organizations (Table A18).

Partner perceptions of benefits received from participation and the effectiveness of the planning process are hypothesized to be motivating factors that influence organizations to participate in Homeward's planning process. Bivariate analysis revealed that there is not a statistically significant relationship between the number of benefits obtained from organizational involvement and participation. However, the analysis did reveal a statistically significant, moderate relationship between how partners perceived relationships among partners and participation ($p = .03$, $r = .33$). It is not surprising that the organizational representatives who perceived themselves as having positive relationships with other partners are likely to be more involved with Homeward's planning process.

Multivariate Analysis

Standard multiple regression was used to examine relationships between organization characteristics, perceptions of the effectiveness of the planning process, and benefits received from participation. For each of the analyses, participation was the dependent variable and was measured by the number of hours devoted to Homeward activities during the past three months. The variables included in the multivariate regression analysis were organizational characteristics, three subscale scores, and three benefit variables. One of the organizational variables (age) is a continuous variable while the other two (size and type) are categorical variables that have been re-coded into dummy variables in which 1 indicated an affirmative response on the item. The three subscale scores that assess partner perceptions of relationships with partners, leadership, and administration are continuous variables. One of the benefits variables (number of

benefits received) is a continuous variable while the importance of benefits and exchange between benefits and drawbacks were originally coded as ordinal variables. These variables have been re-coded as dummy variables in which 1 indicated an affirmative response on the item so they would be treated statistically as a continuous variables.

A standard multiple regression analysis was performed on participation with organizational characteristics as predictors. A test of the full model with the predictors against a constant only model was not statistically significant. A standard multiple regression was performed on participation with subscale ratings of relationships with partners, administration, and leadership as the independent variables. A test of the full model with the predictors against a constant-only model was not statistically significant.

A separate regression analysis was performed on participation as the dependent variable with the importance of benefits to the organization, the number of benefits experienced, and the exchange between benefits and drawbacks as the independent variables. A test of the full model with the predictors against a constant-only model was statistically significant, $F(3, 34) = 3.833, p = .018$, indicating that the variables reliably predicted participation. The variance accounted for by the model was moderate, $r^2 = .25$. The adjusted r^2 for the model was .19. Two variables, the number of experienced benefits and the importance of benefits contributed significantly to the prediction of participation. (Table A12) The beta weights for these variables suggest that the number of benefits experienced by the organization ($\beta = .37, p = .03$) has the greatest influence. The slope coefficient revealed that for every unit increase in the number of benefits experienced by the representatives' organization, the number of hours devoted to

Homeward-related activities increased by 1.17 hours. Interestingly, as the importance of the benefits received by the respondents' organizations decreased, the number of hours devoted to Homeward activities increases ($\beta = -.50, p = .02$). A possible explanation for this finding is that organizations may have been motivated to initially participate because of the benefits the individual organization received or expected to receive. However, as organizations remain involved in the planning process, the importance of individual organizational benefits may shift towards other types of benefits that are advantageous to homeless persons and the task environment. Given the moderate predictive ability of the multiple regression analysis, the perception of organizational benefits appears to be a motivating factor for participation.

Phase II: Follow-up Survey and Focus Groups

Follow-up Survey

During the first phase of the study, 19 representatives of organizations indicated that they did not consider themselves to be partners with Homeward even though they are included on Homeward's partner list. (Figure B5) A short, six-item survey comprised of open-ended questions was sent to these representatives to collect additional information about how they would characterize their relationship with Homeward, the benefits and drawbacks they may have experienced as a result of their "unofficial" affiliation, and to what extent would they want to become more involved in Homeward's planning process. Eleven surveys were completed for a response rate of 57%. (Figure B6) When asked "Is your organization familiar with Homeward's work with the homeless population in the Greater Richmond area?" most ($n = 8$) responded yes, 2 indicated they

were not familiar with Homeward and one representative did not respond. In terms of the organizations' relationships with Homeward, they varied in how they described their affiliation with Homeward and the extent to which they wanted to become involved. For some, staff changes influenced the organization's relationship with Homeward:

Unknown as to how we relate...I am a new director with my organization and just do not know of the existing relationship with Homeward. I am sure we have some connection, but just not officially.

I was not active myself with Homeward for two years because my position had changed. I am now back in the same position and am willing to work closely with Homeward.

Others reported that although they serve a segment of the homeless population, working with homeless persons was not their primary service domain and/or they become involved with Homeward only when they are needed to provide services or share their expertise. For example:

Our organization provides pro bono legal services to Richmond city residents. To that extent, Homeward may have an opportunity in the future to refer an individual for legal services. That is probably the extent of our affiliation.

I get their stuff and remain open to future collaboration.

Three respondents indicated that they had minimal involvement with Homeward that is limited to receiving their newsletter and participating in the annual point-in-time count of homeless persons. Only one representative identified their organization as one of Homeward's partners:

We actually are one of Homeward's partners. Information and clarity about how to partner with the agency is important. We thought you had to be invited....it turned out that all you had to do was join the fund development partners group. This goes to a central problem with Homeward...lack of clarity and communication.

Since motivation is a key concept of the study, the representatives were asked what factors influenced their decision to not be active in the planning process. Of the 10 persons who responded, one shared that although the organization would like to participate, they were not sure how they might fit in the overall process. For other respondents, their lack of participation was attributed to being involved in service areas that may not include the Greater Richmond area or do not specifically work with homeless persons. Having the time and capacity to participate in the process were also identified as factors that have limited their participation. One respondent indicated that their organization had never been asked to participate in Homeward's efforts. Another respondent shared that their organization has not been more active because they do not see a direct benefit from their participation.

The organizations' representatives were asked to identify potential benefits and drawbacks they anticipated experiencing as the result of their participation. Of the eight who responded, information about available services, opportunities for joint ventures, increased influence, coordination of services, and the use of their organization's skill and expertise were identified as benefits the organizations felt they could receive from being active with Homeward. One respondent wrote:

Develop[ing] an understanding of network of support services available for individuals experiencing homelessness that would better allow us to hook up those individuals we serve in need of these

services.....opportunities for joint ventures to identify funding.....support services for children with experiencing developmental delays, disabilities....support the mission of [name of organization] to educate [the] community and integrate services to improve the quality of life for individuals with mental retardation and other disability conditions.

Five respondents identified drawbacks they expected to experience as a result of their involvement. Most of the drawbacks were all related to the capacity of their organization to participate; “none, except for the time commitment involved,” “a drain on time,” and “expectations for a small congregation with many needs within the congregation and the immediate community.” One respondent wrote: “I don’t think we’d experience any, the big problem would be finding the time to participate.” One representative expressed concern about how involvement with Homeward may impact their organization’s mission because “our program does not focus on homelessness [and] we could get lost in missions outside of our agency’s scope of work.” Three respondents did not indicate any potential benefits or drawbacks they anticipated their organizations would experience. These organizations also did not respond when asked to what extent they like to become more involved with Homeward. Without additional feedback from these organizations, it is difficult to assess whether or not their limited involvement with Homeward is directly tied to the perception that although they may not experience any drawbacks from participation, it is not worth the time and effort to receive any minimal benefits from becoming more involved with Homeward.

Among the seven organizations that responded to the question “To what extent would your organization like to become involved with Homeward,” one would like to

meet with Homeward to “pool our information” and the other five are open to the possibility of working with Homeward at some point, although none of the respondents were specific about how they wanted to work with Homeward or how involved they would like to become in the planning process. Only one organization reported that they were not interested in becoming involved with Homeward at this time.

Homeward’s current structure for engaging partners is a fluid one in which partners are able to become involved when they are needed to fill a service gap. For some, this is an advantage because they are able to remain affiliated with Homeward but do not have to commit their time to the effort for a sustained period. Other organizations may be interested in becoming more involved but because of the informal structure for defining what organizations are partners, their contribution may not always be clear to them and result in their lack of participation or frustration with the complexity of the planning process. These themes and others that are related to how partners work with one another, motives for participation, and challenges that impact Homeward’s ability to engage key stakeholders and achieve their outcomes were discussed in greater depth during the focus group component of the study.

Focus Groups

The focus group participants represented organizations that have been categorized as having a high or medium levels of involvement with Homeward but did not respond to the survey during phase one of the study. Representatives from a church congregation, a community-based organization, a government agency, and a health care organization participated in the discussion. As discussed earlier, the focus group questions were

developed after examining the preliminary results of the quantitative component of the study. The questions addressed partner perceptions of the following collaboration dimensions: benefits and drawbacks of participation, relationships among partners, overall effectiveness of the planning process, and the challenges that impact Homeward's ability to carry out its work. In addition, the focus group participants discussed the influence of Homeward's structure on partner participation and strategies for involving stakeholders in the planning process.

Benefits and Drawbacks of Participation

The focus group participants felt that the opportunity to network with other service providers and to share information was a benefit their organizations had experienced from being involved with Homeward's planning process (Table B5). Homeward has also been credited with providing organizations with data, research, and other information that has informed them about the demographics of the population and their changing needs. Due to multiple issues facing homeless persons, the participants agreed that it is impossible for one organization to effectively serve this population. They felt that Homeward has played a critical role in bringing groups together that may not have interacted or worked with one another in the past.

I think it was a learning experience. It was exposure to another group of people, another framework of references that we now have that we didn't before...opened up relationships with organizations that while we were aware of them, we didn't have much interaction with them.

They are having a Summit next week...the more we connect with one another and once you get to one of those meetings, you meet all of these other folks that [are]doing service for individuals that are either homeless [or] potentially homeless.

We have to work together and there are pieces that we can bring to the table that organizations cannot. Clearly we cannot do this alone.

They [Homeward] are there to provide, just for me, an individual church, a structure, an organization, information, [and] resources that they have already collected so I don't have to go out and do it again...and then bring me into the fold and what I can do is provide the same things but also resources.

Communication, understanding the complex nature of Homeward's planning process, the challenges of working with organizations that represent different service areas, and the time involved with participating emerged as drawbacks of participation. Communication between organizational representatives and the staff of their organizations was identified as a drawback of participation that at times led to confusion over roles and responsibilities to the partnership. For example, one representative shared his organization's experience with having a designated representative who did not regularly attend meetings or follow through on the tasks necessary for their agency to implement a component of a program under Homeward's auspices. In that situation, relationships within that organization were strained because of the limited communication among the primary staff persons responsible for the project.

The focus group participants recognize the benefits their organizations have received from participating. However, Homeward's complex planning process was mentioned as an initial drawback of participation. One participant shared her initial frustration with the time it took to understand how the different components worked together to form a complete system, why her organization was considered to be a partner, and how her organization fit under Homeward's umbrella as an affiliate. However, over

time, the connections between organizations became clearer. As the roles of organizations were being defined within the Continuum of Care system, one participant recalled being frustrated with the process of working with organizations from other services areas because of their different perspectives on the issue.

It was a mixed process but it was not something that surprised us...it was a learning experience. You're dealing with individuals that have not focused on [type of] issues traditionally with our organization who has not really traditionally focused on homeless issues. So there was that conflict...certainly we have homeless clients and we're dealing with clients that are underprivileged and in difficult situations but it is a little different. We are not [involved] in that Homeward environment, [the] homeless environment. It was a give and take kind of situation where we wanted more control than what was reasonable given the population we are dealing with, so I think it was just an eye opener.

Although the focus group participants welcomed the opportunity to work with others, tensions would arise over issues related to the interaction of different segments of the homeless populations. For example, one organization had reservations about providing services for elderly and homeless persons in the same location because of concern about how the two groups would interact in light of issues such as substance abuse history and criminal backgrounds of some of the homeless persons. The issues were eventually resolved but in the words of one participant "we had heartburn over that situation, maybe too much so, maybe we were too concerned."

Time was also identified as a drawback that organizations experienced as a result of their participation. Focus group members did not consider it to be a serious drawback but the time involved with understanding the complexity of the process and attending meetings were time consuming, especially during the early stages of the process. As time progressed and as group structure evolved into its current form, the issues related to the

amount of time spent by individual organizations on tasks related to Homeward's activities were perceived to have lessened.

Relationships Among Partners

As reported earlier, the participants agree that networking and interacting with other service providers is a benefit of their participation. When asked about the relationships with partners, it appears as though the organizations that work closely together within Homeward's structure have positive relationships. According to one participant, "People seem to be getting along fine. The process seems to be working much more efficiently than in the beginning, which I hope[d] would be the case."

However, when the discussion shifted to the dynamics of the relationships among the organizations in the Greater Richmond area that serve homeless persons, issues of mistrust, competition, and closed networks were identified.

There are still agencies that are resistant to coming under a partnership or collaboration or whatever Homeward wants to deem it and want to continue to duplicate those services because they are getting funding, that funding pays their staff, that funding pays for their offices and their existence, their being, so why would they want to give that up? These are powerful things.

I don't think they [the organizations] are as open as they should be. I think it is a lot of closed mouths...[they say] I'm just going to deal with you specifically, and I'm not going outside of that circle so to speak because you're giving me what I need, you're giving me the monies I need and I am going to stick with you and build that bridge when [they] should actually go outside that circle and try to get what you need to get, don't stick with just what's working, you gotta go outside.

I think, this is my personal opinion now, that homeless groups tend to be very individual and different in their approach and so there is an inherent conflict that comes with it when they try to work together...what you have [are] differences in how you approach situations. But for the most part,

like I said, [things] seem to be running much more smoothly....the relationships they have seem to be working well.

On the surface, focus group findings reveal that Homeward's partners appear to be effective in accomplishing the established goals and objectives of the group. However, there is an underlying feeling that the true motives and agendas of participating organizations may not be as open as they should be. It is unclear to what extent the dynamics between agencies within the Greater Richmond area impact the motives and willingness of organizations to become active and remained involved in collaborative efforts facilitated by Homeward.

Effectiveness of the Planning Process

The participants agree that Homeward's process has improved over time and Homeward's staff has done a good job of managing the complexity of this collaborative effort. Homeward's staff was credited with effectively managing administrative tasks such as the dissemination of the newsletter, performing follow-up tasks between meetings and facilitating group dynamics.

I think that, to put it bluntly, they [Homeward] have their act together. They know how to approach this and they know which individuals should play which roles. They have come a long way.

I think that obviously this is a different approach and it certainly takes time, it's an evolution and it's at a better stage now than it was 5 years ago. In the past every agency was a separate entity and everyone did this and this and this and to bring all of this together....I believe that Homeward has done an amazing thing.

Internal and External Challenges

Issues related to communication, external resistance to collaboration, and the competition (real and perceived) for funding were identified as challenges that impact the

ability of Homeward to achieve its goals. Communication challenges were identified on two levels: between partnering organizations and within individual organizations. In order to facilitate communication between organizations, it is not enough to disseminate general information. The participants highlighted the need to keep information (such as contact information) updated and in an easy to use format, such as a provider list with specific contact persons identified. It was noted that while transferring information to organizations through newsletters, email alerts, and resource guides are strategies to improve interorganizational communication, there are challenges within organizations that may make this difficult. Staff turnover in organizations was identified as one challenge that impacts both levels of communication. Staff turnover in homeless service organizations makes it difficult to always have the most updated contact and program information about services. Related to this point is the concern that when staff that have been attending Homeward meetings leave their organization, there may be a communication gap between the old and new staff person about their organization's role with Homeward.

Communication within individual organizations at the administrative and program levels was also identified as a challenge that may impact the ability of Homeward to carry out its work. Some participants felt that the discussions and issues raised in Homeward's meetings are not always communicated to programmatic directors and staff. In some instances, the information that is shared between executive staff and others is perceived to be "filtered" and that information is shared on an as needed basis.

If you have enough trust in me to put me in this department then you should bring me in there and say "What do you think of this, this, and

this?" That's the way it is supposed to be, the way I thought it was supposed to be.

In instances where there is a communication gap between the executive director or representative that commits to an activity within a meeting but does not share this information with appropriate staff, this breakdown in communication may lead to other issues. The level of satisfaction with contacts at individual organizations can contribute to the overall quality of relationships between partners and may influence their interest in working with one another on future projects. As participants shared their perceptions of the type of effective leadership within organizations that facilitated this type of information sharing, the conversation turned to issues related to partner organizational capacity.

Every one of those agencies that has a strong executive director and leader [is] a successful agency and usually those attributes are that they are not autocratic, they are interested in their staff. They share, they don't micro manage, they get the folks on board that are the best and they let them do their work and provide them with the tools to do it....I don't know if Homeward or if part of what Homeward is doing could help strengthen partner agencies so that they can do the job....I don't know if there are internal things that can help strengthen them.

The participants were not sure if Homeward should have a role in increasing the organizational capacity of its affiliated organizations so that they can become better partners in the process to improve service delivery to homeless persons.

Motivation and Participation

Organizations are motivated to participate if they feel that they will receive benefits that are advantageous to their organization and will help them meet their goals.

From the perspective of one participant:

There has to be that continued energy.....you have to keep that momentum and there has to be outcomes that are positive coming out of it, for all of the partners. Each partner needs to have a success rate in order for it to continue to thrive. As soon as they are not helping me anymore, then it may help them but I'm going to be less interested in going to meetings and putting that effort into writing intake criteria. Right now it's good, it's a good partnership, a good balance. I'm getting something, they're getting something, win-win.

When relationships among partners were discussed earlier, the participants touched on the issue of motives for participation. For some organizations, it is the perception of Homeward's role as a potential source of funding that has brought them to the table. As part of an example about an organization that was initially resistant to working collaboratively with others, one participant stated:

[Name of executive director] being there [at the organization] is really making a difference too but there is a difference in the types of services they are trying to provide from there.....that was [facilitated] by Homeward with that little nudge "we need you to do this and if you don't, we can't work with you." Therefore if Homeward is getting all of the funding there are folks that are looking for the grants and can't get a grant [without working with Homeward]. That's pretty powerful stuff.

Participants were told that during the quantitative component of the project, 19 organizations that had been included on Homeward's partner list indicated that they did not consider themselves to be formal partners with Homeward. Since Homeward does not currently have a formal process for engaging partners it was not clear if this lack of structure for formalizing partner relationships impacted the motivation and participation. Focus group members indicated that among the organizations that are active in the process, there is a sense that there is a level of commitment, even if it is not formalized, to the partnership. The participants agreed with the following statement from one of their members:

The structure they have in place meets the needs of the partners and the folks we are trying to serve. If you put a structure in like the federal government nothing would ever happen and you would never get anything done. So, I think it would be counterproductive so in my view is that what they have in place works.

Since Homeward's partners and affiliates represent local and state government, faith-based organizations, and nonprofit organizations, a variety of organizational cultures are working together in a single process. For example, one participant that represents a church congregation felt she would not want to participate in a process that had many rules and regulations. She felt that an advantage of working in a church is that "there are no bureaucracies and I answer to the big guy and then to my rector and then to my board." In contrast, a participant representing a government agency indicated that his organization would not have a problem working with regulations. At this point in Homeward's development, it appears as though the current structure meets the needs of its diverse partners.

Strategies for Involving Stakeholders

Focus group participants indicated that networking and improved communication are the two primary strategies for involving stakeholders in the process. If Homeward is having difficulty with getting an organization to participate, it may be necessary for them to identify more than one person within the organization to become involved in order to assure that the organization is represented.

Some of them [organizations] are diverse and large and if you are having problems with one person or one group, go to somebody else or go up higher in the organization and then drill it down to the right folks. Are they doing it right now? I don't know. They [Homeward] were pulling their hair out with [issues related to the organization] for a long time until they got in touch with me and I'm not sure how they did it.

Communicating the mission and purpose of Homeward was identified as a way to get key stakeholders involved. It was suggested that the complex nature of Homeward's process can pose a challenge for some organizations to understand how they fit into the Continuum of Care system, especially if serving homeless persons is not their primary focus. Once organizations understand how they can contribute and what benefits they may be able to receive, they may be more likely to participate. One participant indicated that she has attended one of Homeward's monthly trainings that are targeted to the general public and provides an overview of homelessness in the Greater Richmond area and the issues related to dealing with homeless persons.

Interestingly, one participant felt that organizations should only be involved when their expertise and skills are needed to focus on a specific component. When probed about the potential role of partners with limited involvement to develop the Continuum of Care, the participant responded:

To be quite frank, I'm not sure they need to [become involved]. I think when we were first developing the concept there were too many people at the table and out of that was a lot more conflict that there needed to be. I think the core agencies are the ones that need to work together and as long as they don't alienate those agencies that need to provide that support service, I think it's fine.

Homeward's partners generally agree that the current informal partner structure works for the organizations that provide services to the homeless population but they differ on the extent to which loosely affiliated organizations should be encouraged to become more active.

Limitations

While the study provided insight into the collaboration components of Homeward's planning process, the findings are impacted by the selected methodology. Each component and its limitations are addressed below.

Quantitative Component

Sampling Frame

The sampling frame was drawn from Homeward's partner list that was comprised of 136 organizations that have had some contact with Homeward since it was established in 1996. Organizations that work closely with Homeward to develop programs, such as the client intake system, are included on the list as well as organizations that have only attended single events, worked with Homeward on a specific task for a limited time, or only receive their monthly newsletter. A limitation of the sampling frame is that the criteria for determining what organizations are partners was established from discussions with Homeward staff instead of organizational self-identification as a partner. As a result, all of the organizations on Homeward's list do not consider themselves to be partners. Although 19 organizations let the researcher know that they did not consider themselves to be partners with Homeward, it is difficult to determine how many other organizations would describe their affiliation with Homeward as another type of relationship other than a partnership. It is unknown to what extent this impacted the low response rate (37%) since the sampling frame contained fewer organizations than originally described. Thus, some of the organizations that did not respond to the survey may in fact not be formal partners with Homeward.

Due to initial concerns about a low response rate, the decision was made to include all of Homeward's partners to form a convenience sample. Since the sample was not randomly selected, the generalizability of the results is limited to describing the collaboration experience of Homeward and may not represent other collaborative partnerships. However, the findings yielded valuable information about Homeward's experiences with facilitating a collaborative process with diverse organizations with varying levels of involvement that may be useful for other efforts with similar characteristics.

The Survey Instrument

The survey instrument (Weiss et al., 2002) was selected for the study because it assessed the multiple dimensions of collaboration that contribute to successful partnerships. The comprehensive nature of the survey may have prevented organizations with limited understanding of and participation in Homeward's planning process from responding because they did not have the experience of working with Homeward to draw upon for their assessment. Since the respondents' knowledge about Homeward's collaboration is influenced by their level of involvement, the results primarily reflect the perspective of the organizational representatives that have been the most active.

The survey instrument is also limited by the language used to describe collaborative partnerships. Although the authors (Weiss, et.al., 2002) broadly defined collaboration as "how partners work together" (p.683), Homeward's partnering organizations do not appear to use the terms "collaboration," "partnership," or "partners" to describe their relationships with one another. The survey instrument

contains these terms throughout the questionnaire and does not differentiate between them. It is implicitly assumed that the responding organizations are familiar with these terms. Given the informal structure Homeward currently has in place for identifying partners and the issues associated with defining what organizations are partners, it may have been a challenge for the organizations on their contact list to respond if they do not consider their organizations to be part of a formal collaborative effort.

The findings are also limited by the unit of analysis. Although the organization is the unit of analysis, the organizational representative is the data source and provides only one perspective. One representative from each organization on Homeward's partner list was identified as the person to receive the survey. As a result, the data do not reflect the perceptions of multiple organizational members. The partnering organizations may have different perceptions of collaboration that have not been captured.

Homeward's assistance with recruitment for the study was an advantage because the researcher did not know the organizational representatives and their support provided legitimacy for the project. However, their involvement may have also been a limitation if Homeward's partners were reluctant to be completely honest about their experiences because of concerns of how the results may impact their relationship with Homeward. Since Homeward is the broker organization that facilitates the planning process and is perceived as a resource for funding, the partner organizations may not have felt comfortable criticizing the collaborative effort. Although the steps taken to maintain confidentiality were clearly described at each phase, some organizations may have been

hesitant to honestly reveal how they perceive their experiences if they thought their responses may jeopardize their role within Homeward's structure.

Qualitative Component

Focus Groups

Focus group participants were selected from non-respondent organizations that were highly to moderately involved with Homeward. It was assumed that representatives from these organizations have had enough interaction with Homeward to address questions related to Homeward's effectiveness and the challenges that impact their work. The findings are limited because they only reflect the experiences of organizations that have been involved and not organizations that are more loosely affiliated with Homeward.

Two focus groups were scheduled to take place. One organizational representative participated in the first focus group. The focus group questions were presented to the participant for feedback and were incorporated into the overall analysis. Three representatives participated in the second focus group and engaged in a rich discussion about their experiences working with Homeward. The focus group findings are limited because the analysis is based on the perspectives of only four organizational representatives.

The location of the focus groups may have been a limitation for this phase of the study. In an effort to select a central location for the focus groups, they were conducted in the building where Homeward's offices are located. The discussions took place in a closed boardroom on a different floor from where Homeward's offices are located.

Representatives from Homeward were not present at any time. Although the representatives appeared to freely discuss their experiences, it is unclear if they were uncomfortable discussing the negative aspects of Homeward's structure and process in such close proximity to their offices.

The results of this study should be examined within the context of the methodological limitations that have been described. Despite the limitations that have been discussed, the results have provided insight into a collaborative process that does not reflect the collaboration models generally found in the literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

This project was a mixed methods study that examined the collaboration dimensions of Homeward's planning process and the factors that motivate organizations to participate. During the quantitative component of the study, a survey was sent to Homeward's partners ($n = 44$) to identify partner perceptions of Homeward's leadership, organizational structure, benefits and drawbacks of participation, and relationships with partners. The follow-up surveys and focus group in the qualitative component explored themes related to organization affiliation with Homeward, benefits and drawbacks of participation, relationships with partners, challenges that impact the ability of Homeward to facilitate collaboration, and strategies to involve key stakeholders. An earlier study of Homeward's efforts (Hutchinson, 2002) was limited by the low response rate of small and faith-based organizations. Although large organization represented half of the sample, over one-third of the respondents identified their organizational type as faith-based. In addition, one of the focus group participants represented a church congregation. This study was able to include the perspectives of these types of organizations in the analysis. The findings have provided an overview of how Homeward's collaborative process is perceived by its partners and have raised issues that may impact Homeward's efforts in the future.

Collaboration is an important component of Homeward's structure and process used to develop a comprehensive, coordinated system of care for homeless persons within the Greater Richmond area. Recognizing the multiple needs of the homeless population, Homeward has included all organizations that provide services to any

segment of this population on its partner contact list. An initial review of Homeward's partner list does not reveal any variation in participation levels among partners.

However, when asked, Homeward is able to differentiate among its partners and categorize them as high, medium, and low participants. Even with this categorization, there is no way to assess how the partnered organizations perceive their affiliation with Homeward and what it means for their levels of participation. In fact, the process of conducting this research revealed that the representatives of some organizations listed as partners do not even consider themselves to be partners with Homeward. Nineteen potential respondents either returned their questionnaire or called the researcher to say they have had limited involvement with Homeward and were not familiar enough with Homeward's activities to respond to the questions. Therefore, this study has revealed the complex nature of relationships among partners with varying degrees of participation.

Hutchinson's study (2002) explored the willingness to collaborate and the extent to which homeless service providers were interested in participating in collaborative partnerships. Hutchinson identified the need for future research that provided more information about the way and the reasons why collaboration is resisted. This study expanded Hutchinson's findings by exploring in greater detail the how partners perceive Homeward's planning process and the factors that motivate partners to become involved with Homeward's process and the reasons why some organizations have not been active.

Hutchinson (2002) found that while the organizations generally expressed interest in collaboration, the respondents were less likely to take part in highly integrated partnerships that share resources with other organizations. Of the organizations that

reported an interest in developing integrated collaborative partnerships, most were large organizations. Large organizations represented half of the respondents in the current study and appear to be more active in Homeward's planning process. However, analysis revealed that for some small organizations and congregations, issues related to capacity limited their involvement. Although organizations may have interest in participating in Homeward's process, issues related to time, staffing, and understanding their role in the overall system of care may limit their involvement. Hutchinson's (2002) findings also indicated that organizational characteristics such as size, type of services provided, and whether or not it is a faith-based did not have an impact on an organization's interest and willingness to collaborate. Although the findings from this study revealed some differences on individual items that assess Homeward's process, organization characteristics did not have a statistically significant impact on partner perceptions or participation. However, findings from the follow-up survey suggest that among the nonrespondent organizations, organizational characteristics may have a greater influence on participation in Homeward's planning process.

The findings from this study reflect some consistency with the existing collaboration literature. Administrative structure, leadership, positive relationships among partners, and identification with the project's mission are dimensions that contribute to successful partnerships (Austin, 2000; Austin et al., 2001; Canada, Foster, & Meinhard, 2002; Chrislip & Larson, 1994; Johnson, 2003; Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 2001; Thompson et al., 2003; Wolff, 2001). Homeward's high ratings on the leadership, administration, and relationship dimensions suggest that Homeward exhibits these

characteristics. Homeward's structure for managing this collaborative partnership appears to be an appropriate strategy for facilitating the annual Continuum of Care planning process. These factors have made it possible for the partnership to continue functioning despite the magnitude of the problem of homelessness and the large number of organizations in the task environment.

External and internal challenges that impact the ability of the partnership to achieve its goals and objectives have also been identified in the literature. Issues related to obtaining funding and other resources, relationships with partners perceived to have an advantage for securing funding, and communication are among the challenges facing Homeward that have also been studied by other researchers (Harbert, Finnegan, & Tyler, 1997; Mulroy, 2003). Thus, it appears that despite different geographic locations and issues, certain challenges are common to collaborative efforts.

Organizational motives for participation in collaborative partnerships have also been examined in the collaboration literature. This study's findings support conclusions drawn from Fountain (2002) and Mulroy and Shay (1998). Both of these studies concluded that the connections between organizations and the resulting opportunities to network and share information influenced respondents' decision to become and remain active in partnerships. Organizational representatives in both phases of the study revealed the importance of developing and maintaining relationships with other organizations that are also serving the homeless population.

This study does not support the findings of Canada, Foster, & Meinhard (2002). In their study of organizations in Canada, they found that the size and age of an

organization were significant predictors of participation in interorganizational relationships. However, this study did not reveal a significant relationship between organization characteristics and participation. This inconsistency may be attributed to the fact that most of the organizations represented in the sample are large organizations and there was not enough variation in size among the respondent organizations.

One study by Thompson et al. (2003), found that flexibility in developing the local structure of the consortia was a factor that positively contributed to the overall functioning of a community-based partnership. An interesting finding from this study was the potential influence of Homeward's process for identifying and engaging partners to participate. Currently, Homeward does not have a formal process for identifying what organizations are considered to be formal partners. According to Homeward, any organization that provides services to the homeless population is considered to be a partner within the Continuum of Care planning process, even if the organization does not consider itself to be a partner in the traditional use of the term. For some respondents, the current structure is an appropriate strategy to develop the annual plan because some organizations may resist a more formal structure for involvement. These organizations appreciate the flexibility of a structure that provides them with opportunities to become involved when they are needed to fill a service gap. This flexibility does not require them to commit the time and resources of their organizations for long-term planning if they do not have the capacity to do so. In contrast, this flexible structure can be perceived as a lack of clarity about the requirements for becoming a partner. Follow-up survey results suggest that some organizations are interested in becoming involved but

may not understand how their organization can contribute, especially if serving the homeless population is not their primary service domain. In addition, these organizations may not know the best way to play an active role in the process and become an official “partner.” This finding suggests that there may be a need for Homeward to develop a process that will not only recruit and engage organizations to become active in the planning process but will also allow Homeward to remain connected to organizations that are considered to be peripheral or loosely coupled.

Simultaneous Tight and Loose Coupling

Organizational ecology theory posits that organizations within a population vary in their connection with one another. Organizations that are weakly connected to one another are considered to be loosely coupled. Although loosely coupled organizations may interact within the larger community, they are not likely to exhibit a high level of collaboration and integration. In contrast, tightly coupled organizational systems have a greater degree of interaction and are more heavily influenced by the activities of the other organizations within the system (Aldrich, 1979). Homeward’s collaborative process appears to have both tightly and loosely coupled systems under the auspices of a single planning body. At the core of Homeward’s structure are a group of organizations that have been involved with Homeward since its inception. At the periphery of the structure are the remaining organizations that provide services to segments of the homeless population but that do not consider working with homeless persons as their primary service domain. Cooperation, coordination, and collaboration are terms used to describe the process of organizations working together to achieve a certain goal (Bailey & Koney,

2000). Over time, Homeward's planning process has emerged as a partnership that simultaneously exhibits characteristics of all three. A core group of organizations have emerged that are very active in the planning process and represent a tightly coupled "collaboration." These organizations have shared resources and have integrated their services in order to develop projects such as a centralized intake system, a mechanism for connecting homeless persons to services through a single contact person. Other agencies that have been involved with Homeward on the periphery represent "cooperation" and "coordination" due to their more limited involvement with Homeward on a regular basis. Organizations within this loosely coupled system generally share information with one another (cooperation) and may even co-sponsor events with one another (coordination). Although they have indicated a willingness to collaborate, they often do not become active unless their skills and expertise are requested to assist with a specific project or component of the Continuum of Care system. The current structure allows these organizations to serve in a supportive role to the partnership by filling service gaps in a specific area. Even among organizations that have been involved for a period of time, there is not a clear understanding or consistent use of the term "partner." In the words of one survey respondent:

I had considerable difficulty with this questionnaire since I am not sure of what you include as "partner". In my experience, [a] partnership is a considerabl[y] more formal relationship than the cooperation and collaboration that has formed much of my work in Homeward activities. I have answered it as though anyone we have worked with in any capacity for any reason or for any length of time is a "partner."

It is no surprise that the organizations who are closely tied to Homeward were more likely to participate in the study. Although organizational characteristics such as size, age, and type were not found to be predictors of participation, representatives from mid-size and large organizations comprised the majority of the sample. These organizations have been involved with Homeward for a period of time and appear to have developed relationships with one another. Both the quantitative and qualitative data suggest that these organizations place a high value on relationships between organizations serving the homeless population. The respondents feel positive about their relationships with other providers and Homeward's ability to lead a process that nurtures the development of these interorganizational connections.

Interestingly, Homeward's ability to resolve conflict is rated slightly lower than other dimensions. It is unknown how many partners would agree with this rating due to the low response rate. However, the participants in the focus groups may provide clues about conflict among organizations. Opportunities to develop relationships among organizations that do not primarily serve the homeless population may be difficult if these organizations do not perceive themselves as part of the service delivery system. As a result, they may not have the capacity or interest to establish these relationships. Thus, when these organizations are needed to fill a service gap tensions may arise between organizations if they have had limited interaction with one another and may not understand the nature and structure of partnering organizations' missions. It appears that Homeward continues to include peripheral organizations as partners because they fit into the organization community that works with homeless persons. Although their role may

be small, excluding these organizations would ignore components of the service delivery system and would not accurately reflect the scope of available services for this population. It would also fail to recognize the incredible number of groups that touch the lives of homeless persons in the Richmond community.

Barriers and Challenges to Partnering

A barrier identified in developing and maintaining relationships with Homeward is on-going leadership and staff transitions within partner agencies. This barrier was evident during the development of the sampling frame. When the researcher conducted the pre-survey calls, incorrect contact persons and phone numbers, as well as incomplete information, was discovered during the attempts to reach organizational representatives. It is a challenge to maintain an up-to-date information system, given the number of organizations and multiple staff changes. Homeward has used strategies such as asking more than one person to represent an organization, maintaining updated lists of representatives, and including a broad cross-section of organizations and individuals on their mailing list to keep the community informed of its efforts.

Despite the challenges involved with developing and maintaining relationships with diverse organizations, Homeward's partners highly rate the leadership and administration dimensions. As Homeward moves into the fourth year of its plan to end homelessness, the organization's ability to manage this complex collaborative effort has improved. During the early years of its existence, Homeward was charged with developing a structure to engage multiple organizations in a planning process to develop an annual application for Continuum of Care funding. Homeward had to learn through

experience what is the most effective and efficient way to accomplish this task. Focus group participants recalled the time, effort, and frustration associated with the early stages of the process when organizations first became familiar with Homeward and began working with organizations with which they may not have been in contact prior to Homeward's effort. Presently, Homeward is perceived as an organization with the credibility and expertise to manage this effort. Yet, the ability to communicate with people and organizations outside of the partnership and evaluating the progress and impact of Homeward's efforts were rated lower. The findings do not reveal to whom partners feel Homeward should be communicating their efforts. Homeward staff and the study participants acknowledge that there are organizations and individuals who are not involved in the process but serve a segment of the homeless population. Homeward has taken steps to communicate the work of the partnership through its monthly newsletter to both service providers and segments of the general public. It is unknown to what extent communicating with these organizations and other entities (such as foundations and corporations) may increase the visibility of Homeward and provide additional resources for the partnering organizations to expand their efforts.

Homeward has published materials that identify the milestones and achievements of their efforts. However, the respondents do not rate Homeward as highly on their ability to evaluate the progress and impact of the group's efforts. This finding may be attributed to the nature of planning itself. Even though Homeward documents its progress toward achieving established goals, the partners may not feel as though the group is accomplishing as much as it has because planning efforts can take time to show

tangible results. Some partners may feel that they have consistently been attending meetings but have not seen the impact of their work.

Benefits for Partners

The benefits organizations receive from participating influence motivation and contribute to continued participation. The findings reveal that organizations that have received benefits from their involvement are more likely to remain active over time. Increased networking opportunities and the ability to use their organization's skills and expertise to have a greater impact on the issue by working with other organizations were identified in both phases of the study as benefits of participation. The representatives who responded perceive their organizations as independent components of a system working together to address issues related to homelessness. This perception is consistent with a central theme found in the collaboration literature. Most definitions of collaboration are based on the idea of organizations sharing resources and power to achieve common goals that could not be accomplished by a single organization (Austin, 2000; Gray, 1989; Powell et al., 1999; Rich, Giles, & Stern, 2001). For most of the representatives, their organizations have experienced the advantages of working collaboratively with other service providers instead of independently. Two primary drawbacks, diversion and time from other priorities and frustration, were consistently mentioned throughout the study. Although the focus group findings are based on a small number of participants, the findings suggest that the degree to which organizations experienced these drawbacks may be related to their connection to the process. For example, one focus group participant felt that her participation with Homeward was a

win-win situation because she was contributing her expertise to developing a central intake system that would improve her organization's ability to match clients with appropriate services. In her situation, any drawbacks related to time were minimized by the benefits her organization receives or anticipates receiving. Most of the survey respondents appear to hold a similar perspective. The importance of the benefits they experience as the result of participating and the belief that the benefits exceed the drawbacks experienced were both rated very high. Among the organizational representatives who responded to the follow-up survey, their organization's capacity to participate limited their involvement. For these organizations, the exchange of time and resources for potential benefits is not enough of an incentive to participate, especially if serving homeless persons is not their primary service domain. In contrast to the more involved organizations, the drawbacks appear to outweigh the benefits of participation for inactive organizations.

The involvement of key stakeholders dimension revealed inconsistent findings in both components of the study. The quantitative component revealed that persons who responded considered Homeward's ability to motivate partners a strength despite the challenges Homeward staff have had with motivating and retaining key partners. Later in the questionnaire, a subset of items asked the respondents about challenges facing the partnership. Motivation and retention were both identified as challenges. This inconsistent perception about the involvement of key stakeholders also emerged in the qualitative data when the role of organizations with limited involvement was discussed. The focus group participants recognized that there are stakeholders within the homeless

service provider system who are not active with Homeward. However, they had two different perspectives about how to involve these organizations. Some participants suggested continued outreach by communicating Homeward's mission and purpose as a way to assist organizations in understanding how and where they fit in the process. They also felt that identifying multiple contacts within an organization was a way to reach stakeholders who are not involved. Other participants do not view the absence of these organizations as a limitation. Instead, they believe it is possible that these stakeholders do not need to be actively involved until they are needed. It is unknown how many other partner organizations share these views and what impact these perspectives may have on motivation and participation. These findings suggest that the participating organizations themselves may not be clear about what organizations are key stakeholders and whether or not targeted recruitment strategies are needed to increase involvement. Even if key stakeholders are identified, they will need to determine if those organizations should remain in their peripheral role or be approached about becoming active at some point.

When the focus group participants discussed Homeward's informal structure for identifying organizational partners, they agreed that what Homeward has in place works well with the organizations involved in the partnership. They felt that a more formal structure may deter organizations from participating if they had to officially "join" Homeward in order to participate. The current structure makes it possible for organizations to become involved when there is a need for either the organization or the partnership to mobilize. As long as organizations feel they are receiving benefits from the participation, they are likely to remain involved. However, the informal nature of the

structure may pose a challenge to motivate, recruit, and retain essential partners if they do not have to formally to commit to a process in which they may not always receive benefits for their organization.

The Influence of the External Environment

Related to issues of partner motivation, recruitment, and retention is the organizational environment in the Greater Richmond area. Mistrust, the resistance of organizations to participate in collaborative partnerships and competition for funding were discussed within the context of challenges that impact Homeward's efforts. Based on comments by the focus group participants, these two challenges appear to be interrelated because of the need for organizations to maintain their niches, perhaps even their survival, within the human service delivery environment. As a result, organizations continue to work independently in order to receive funding and other resources to address issues related to homeless persons. Regardless of the strategies Homeward uses to recruit new partners, organizational attitudes toward collaboration will make it difficult for Homeward to recruit organizations that remain resistant to the idea of working with other organizations. In an earlier study, Hutchinson (2000) found that Homeward's partners are open and receptive to the idea of working collaboratively to serve homeless persons. Other than anecdotal accounts, it is difficult to assess how receptive organizations outside of Homeward's network of core agencies are toward working with one another since a formal survey of these organizations has not been conducted. The current economic and political climate has increased competition among organizations for fewer resources. The collaboration literature has identified the ability of partners to balance their responsibility

to and self-interests of their individual organizations as a factor that contributes to successful partnerships. For some organizations in the Greater Richmond area, this may be a challenge for them to balance these roles. As long as the competition for funding and other resources exist, it is likely that some organizations will continue to resist collaboration and remain independent of the Continuum of Care System despite Homeward's efforts to involve them.

Implications for Homeward's Model of Collaboration

An unexpected finding from the research study was the number of organizations that indicated that they do not consider themselves to be partners with Homeward even though they are included on Homeward's partner list. Survey respondents and focus group participants both referred to themselves as partners and affiliates of Homeward. The term "affiliate" suggests that although there is some identification with Homeward's efforts, their organizations remain independent entities under the framework of a coordinating body. In discussions with Homeward staff, the organizations they work with are referred to as "partners" even if they do not identify themselves as partners. However, the relationships between Homeward and their partners are not formalized through by-laws or memoranda of agreements. Instead, organizations are encouraged to work with Homeward to improve service delivery when opportunities become available and if they are interested. To some organizations, Homeward is perceived as a connection to funding resources and the possibility of obtaining funding motivates them to become involved. For other organizations, they become involved with Homeward because of Homeward's connections to other organizations, access to the data and

information Homeward has collected about the homeless population, and the benefit of being associated with an organization that has credibility and legitimacy in the community.

At this point in Homeward's strategic plan, it is not clear if developing a more formal structure, or establishing criteria that would specifically define which organizations are partners would serve as a benefit to the process. Findings from the focus groups and discussions with Homeward suggest that given the culture of service delivery in the community, formalizing the process may deter those organizations that are resistant to collaboration because of their concern that their involvement would compromise their independence, identity, and competitiveness for resources. Yet, it will be important for Homeward to regularly assess the relationships and level of involvement of organizations over time to determine if it may be in the partnership's best interest to establish a more formal structure for sustainability.

Homeward has designed its program goals to work toward ending homelessness in the Greater Richmond area by 2006. If this goal is achieved, there will no longer be a need for Homeward to exist. However, in the event that homelessness is not eradicated by 2006, the need for a comprehensive, coordinated system of care will still be needed to serve homeless persons. Thus, a mechanism needs to be in place that will continue to support the relationships among organizations that have been developed. It will also be necessary to identify and nurture new connections between organizations in anticipation that the needs and services available to homeless persons may change over time. Homeward currently has the advantage that they have a core group of organizations that

have become accustomed to working with one another. The organizational representatives have had experience developing activities and projects despite the challenges associated with collaboration. Since this group has been involved for some time, they demonstrate a commitment to the process and can provide stability and continuity to Homeward's efforts. While the presence of this core group can provide stability to the overall partnership, long-term planning should explore what will happen in 2006 and beyond, if the problem of homelessness still exists for this system of care.

An element of exchange exists in this and other collaborative partnerships. As long as an organization perceives that it is receiving benefits from participating, they will be more likely to continue their involvement. Due to ever changing organizational dynamics, what partners perceive as benefits and drawbacks of participation may also change and influence participation over time. Although the core group of organizations are currently active and invested in the process the possibility exists that, at some point, their benefits may no longer exceed the drawbacks of participating.

This study revealed the impact of leadership transitions in partner organizations on participation. As organizations face leadership and staffing transitions, changes in the organization's overall mission and programmatic focus, and in some cases, mergers and demise, will impact levels of participation. A review of Homeward's partner contact list reveals that the contact persons associated with each organization are often senior or management staff such as the executive director or program director. Since Homeward was asked to identify only one representative from each organization for inclusion in the sampling frame, it is unknown if they specifically invite only the organization's

leadership to serve as their primary contact person. For organizations with a small staff, it may be easier for the activities of the partnership to be communicated to program staff. However, it may be more of a challenge for large organizations to maintain a system of communication when one person is responsible for representing the opinions, perspectives, and interests of an entire organization.

In order to ensure that the necessary components of the system continue to function, Homeward will need to continue to recruit new organizations to become involved. It will be critical for Homeward to provide opportunities for their affiliated organizations to provide feedback about their individual organization's needs, emerging trends and issues facing the homeless population, and their perception of how their work with Homeward is moving the partnership toward achieving their goals. Homeward's partners are generally satisfied with Homeward and their strategies for facilitating the planning process to develop the application for Continuum of Care funding. However, in order to gauge the interest its partners have in on-going and new projects, regular process evaluations, similar to their annual count of homeless persons, will assist them in identifying when things are on track with their partners so that they can remain effective and relevant over time.

During the second phase of this study, follow-up surveys were mailed to organizational representatives who indicated they did not consider their organizations to be a partner with Homeward. This project only identified 19 organizations that fit into this category. Given the low response rate, it is unknown how many other organizations would not consider themselves as part of a partnership with Homeward and did not take

the time to return the questionnaire with a note to that effect. If Homeward decides at some point to formalize their partnership structure, it may be helpful for them to ask the representatives on their contact list to assess how they would characterize their relationship with Homeward, what factors have influenced level of participation, and to what extent would they want to become more involved in Homeward's planning process. By collecting this type of feedback, Homeward will be better able to identify organizations that may be interested in becoming more involved in Homeward's activities and develop appropriate strategies for engaging and retaining these organizations as partners. It is also a method to gain feedback directly from representatives.

As Homeward continues to expand the types of organizations that become involved with and support their activities, it will be important for them to educate new partners and supporters about their purpose, process, and strategy. This study revealed that although organizations are satisfied with Homeward's leadership and have experienced minimal drawbacks, communicating the vision of Homeward will be instrumental to involving key stakeholders. Study participants expressed how the complex nature of Homeward's process and its connections with other organizations may be overwhelming to new organizational representatives and appear to be time consuming. In an effort to educate the public and service providers about the homeless population in the Greater Richmond area, Homeward currently sponsors workshops to provide this information. It may be helpful for new partners to receive this information as part of a

formal orientation to the process so that their organization's role and how they fit in the overall system may be clear to them from the beginning.

The organizational representatives also indicated that the relationships and networking opportunities between partners were benefits of participation. They identified challenges that emerged when organizations from different service domains worked together and had to develop an understanding of each organization's culture and approach to providing services. In addition to providing an orientation for new partners about Homeward and its strategy for developing the Continuum of Care application, an overview of the types of organizations involved should be included. While an understanding of how organizations work together will come with time and interaction with one another, it may be helpful to provide new partners with a context for understanding the dynamics of the partnership.

This project expanded Hutchinson's findings about the willingness of homeless services to collaborate with one another by exploring perceptions of Homeward's planning process and the factors that influence organization participation. Future research of Homeward's process should be undertaken that explores how organizations conceptualize the term "partner" and assess if it is necessary develop a new structure for involving organizations that will remain flexible but will clearly define what it means to be a partner. This study has revealed multiple levels of participation and ambiguity about what organizations consider themselves to be partnering organizations. An advantage of Homeward's flexible planning process is that organizations are not required to formally commit themselves to become partners and are able to participate when they have the

capacity to do so and/or needed to fill a service gap. It also makes it easier for Homeward to manage the process by working closely with a smaller group of organizations that want to be active instead of trying to involve over 100 organizations to develop the annual plan. A disadvantage of this type of process is that it is a challenge to identify what organizations are partners and how different organizations can contribute to the overall effort, particularly if serving the homeless population is not their primary focus.

Discussions with the organizational representatives on Homeward's provider contact list may be helpful in understanding how organizations define collaboration and partnership. Key informant interviews and/or focus groups can be used to obtain feedback about the best way to structure a process that involves organizations with different capacities and affiliate statuses.

Implications for Social Work Research

Social work researchers can contribute to the collaborative literature by conducting studies that explore collaborative partnerships that represent diverse organizational forms. As part of that research, attention must be given to the methodological issues associated with conducting research about community partnerships within an organizational system comprised of varying levels of participation. As discussed earlier, an up-to-date information system is critical for identifying potential participants. Organizational leadership and staff transitions may make it a challenge to track representatives but it is critical to identify a contact person for the overall operation of the collaborative effort as well as for research to ensure that the appropriate person responds.

Collaborative partnerships take place within the context of the larger community. Gaining access to partnering organizations through a key informant will assist with identifying organizations on their contact list. The researcher in this study remained in close contact with a member of Homeward's staff throughout the project. Homeward's staff person emerged as a cultural informant because he was able to provide insight into the dynamics of the relationships among partners and serve as a guide when problems arose. For example, when the application to the VCU IRB was being developed, initial feedback from a reviewer suggested that a separate letter from Homeward should be sent to organizations prior to the start of the study to lend their support for the project. This initial letter was to be followed by a letter from the researcher that would describe the purpose of the study and obtain informed consent. However, based on Homeward's experiences collecting data from their partners, the organizations would feel overwhelmed by mailings and would not likely respond to the survey if they felt they were receiving too many mailings. In response to this feedback from Homeward about how to recruit participants, pre-survey phone calls, rather than sending letters, were made to organizational representatives.

This study reflected the challenge of adapting survey measures for use with diverse populations. The survey used during phase one was selected for its comprehensive assessment of collaboration dimensions and its demonstrated validity and reliability. However, as discussed in the limitations section, it may have been too specific for organizations that have not been closely tied to Homeward's planning process as indicated by the amount of "don't know" responses to items related to the

administration of the partnership. It is impossible to know what impact the length of the questionnaire had on the low response rate.

The focus groups provided an opportunity to obtain an in-depth understanding of Homeward's partnering organizations. As expected, greater insight into the process was generated from the discussion than from the quantitative component of the study. For this study, it may have been best to have conducted the focus groups during phase one in order to develop a better understanding of the varying levels of participation among the organizations on Homeward's provider contact list. Having this knowledge earlier in the project would have assisted the researcher in making decisions about the instrument's utility for studying Homeward's organizational partners. In addition, the focus groups could have been used to obtain feedback about the instrument to determine how the questionnaire could be altered to accurately capture the collaboration experiences of Homeward's organizational representatives.

The collaboration literature is full of conceptual writings that have identified factors that contribute to successful partnerships, motives for participation, and the internal and external challenges that impact the overall functioning of collaborative relationships. It is important for other researchers to understand that collaborative partnerships rarely exist as the pure forms found in the literature. In fact, they may, like Homeward, represent simultaneously tightly and loosely coupled systems. In order to better understand the collaboration environment within a local community, it is important to develop insight into the type of relationships and levels of involvement that exist under the auspices of a single partnership prior to data collection. In order to advance the

current knowledge of collaboration, additional research must be undertaken to work toward developing consistent definitions of collaboration, developing and empirically testing measures to assess collaborative outcomes and processes, and expanding the scope and understanding of how collaborative relationships are categorized and configured.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Individuals, organizations and networks of associations are three levels of intervention that contribute to the capacity of a community to address social problems. According to Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal (2001), community capacity at the organizational level is evident when organizations are able to perform their functions effectively and efficiently. Often, organizations have found it necessary to develop interorganizational partnerships to increase access to resources, address problems that a single agency cannot solve alone, and expand their scope of political power and influence. Intervening at the organizational and community levels of change is appropriate for social workers because of the profession's history of community action, planning, and development. Social workers are equipped with skills that enable them to identify problems and targets for change, facilitate the development of relationships between different segments of a community to work together for common goals, and develop appropriate strategies and tactics to initiate change. Social work community practice models (Rothman, 1970; Weil & Gamble, 1995) have been developed to assist students and practitioners to select appropriate strategies and tactics based on the intended target for change and the desired outcome. Interorganizational partnerships are

included in these models as a strategy for increasing community capacity and influencing the social, economic, and political environment.

Social work community practice models implicitly assume that when organizations form collaborative partnerships, all of the organizations possess the capacity to participate. Yet, this study revealed that even when organizations may be interested in participating, they may lack the time and understanding of their role within the partnership to become involved. In addition, changes in organizational leadership and limited communication between organization representatives to the partnership and staff influenced the extent to which some organizations were involved. Community associations may want to be intentional in considering that partners come in different types at different levels. According to Mandell (2003), collaborative efforts can be more effective if the expectations of the partnership and the realities of the interorganizational environment are congruent. When social problems, such as homelessness, require system-wide changes, it may be difficult to determine the number and type of members that need to be involved and the extent of their involvement. Cooperative relationships lend themselves to a limited degree of involvement among partners and allow organizations to become active when it is convenient for them without a major impact on the overall effort. Coordinated efforts are more formal relationships, but for the most part, organization membership remains limited and the organizations continue to function independently. For these types of efforts, the costs and risks of involvement are offset by the benefits the organizations receive. Complex collaborative efforts require a long-term commitment of time and resources on the part of the individual organizations. When

organizations such as Homeward facilitate collaborative efforts that bring multiple, diverse organizations together to focus on a single issue, the constraints and challenges facing the partnering organizations may not be considered.

For example, Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, Lounsbury, Jacobson, and Allen (2001) have identified four levels of collaborative capacity that represent core competencies needed for a successful collaborative effort: 1) member capacity; 2) relational capacity; 3) organizational capacity; and 4) programmatic capacity. Member capacity refers to the ability of partner organizations to perform needed tasks and work collaboratively with other organizations. The authors have found that collaborative partnerships whose member organizations possess certain skills/knowledge sets are more likely to achieve their desired outcomes. These competencies include the ability to resolve conflict and communicate with other organizations, the ability to create and build programs, knowledge of the target community, and a clear understanding of member roles and responsibilities. The authors discuss the importance of developing member abilities to participate through opportunities such as technical assistance, training, or orientation. They argue that increasing member capacity is a strategy for helping participants become “valued, knowledgeable participants and for increasing their own sense of participatory competence.”(p. 5)

Organizational partners may come to a collaborative effort with different skill/knowledge sets and levels of commitment, motivation, and time. As a result, it may be important to have multiple types of affiliate statuses so that everyone can be involved with different expectations. This has implications for the relationships between

organizations and within partnering organizations. For broker organizations like Homeward, it will be necessary for them to work with organizations to develop an organizational structure that will enable organizations with a limited capacity for intense involvement to remain connected to the effort. It is also important for administrators within partnering/affiliated organizations to be aware of their organization's readiness to engage in collaborative partnerships. As part of the readiness to assess collaboration, the level of commitment the organization is willing to give to the collaborative effort, the person/persons who will serve as the organization's representative needs to be identified, a mechanism for communicating the decisions made by the partnership to the individual organization should be established, and examination of the relationship between potential benefits and drawbacks that may be experienced from their participation should be considered.

Implications for Social Policy

HUD has implemented the Continuum of Care funding initiative to develop community-driven, comprehensive, coordinated human service delivery systems to better serve the needs of the homeless population. A key component of this funding initiative is the requirement that applicants demonstrate collaboration among organizations that touch the various aspects of the lives of homeless persons. Since collaboration among these organizations is required by HUD for funding, it is imperative that Homeward identifies every group and organization that is involved with homeless persons, whether they are actively involved or not. Homeward staff has discussed the challenges of keeping track

of newer, grassroots organizations that are formed to serve homeless persons and may not be part of the formal human service delivery system.

As faith-based organizations expand their role in service delivery to the homeless population (Aron & Sharkey, 2002), they are viewed as an important component of the service delivery system. This study suggests that FBOs are becoming more active with Homeward's planning process. An earlier study of Homeward (Hutchinson, 2002) had difficulty recruiting organizational representatives from small and faith-based organizations. Interestingly, FBOs represented a third of the sample in this study. Although it is impossible to identify the sole cause for the increased number of participants who represent FBOs in this study, it is likely that their increased role and presence in the service delivery system have contributed to the level of involvement with Homeward. With the push toward faith-based services, including faith-based organizations in the Continuum of Care becomes politically astute and may expand future funding opportunities for Homeward and its partnering organizations.

In an effort to expand local resources and improve human service delivery efficiency, social policies will often mandate collaboration as a requirement for funding. Yet, these policies often do not provide specific guidelines on to how to implement the collaboration component at the local level. For example, HUD does not require a specific type of partnership and local planning bodies have great latitude in establishing their organizational structure. It can be an advantage for community groups to have the flexibility to develop collaborative relationships within the context of their environment as they see fit. However, a disadvantage of this approach is that for communities without

a history of collaboration or the knowledge and skills necessary to facilitate the process, it may be difficult for them to initiate and sustain relationships between organizations. Thus, it will be important to policymakers to achieve a balance between providing communities with enough flexibility to develop collaborative partnerships that are conducive to addressing social problems with broad guidelines for implementing social policies at the local level.

References

References

- Abramson, J. S., & Rosenthal, B. B. (1995). Interdisciplinary and interorganizational collaboration. In *Encyclopedia of social work* (19th ed., Vol. 2, pp. 1479-1489). Washington, DC: NASW Press.
- Accordino, J. J. (1997). *Community-based development: An idea whose time has come*. Community Affairs Office, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond.
- Aldrich, H. E. (1970). *Organizations and environments*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Aron, L.Y & Sharkey, P. T. (2002). The 1996 National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients: A comparison of faith-based and secular non-profit programs. *The Urban Institute*. Retrieved March 1, 2003 from
- Austin, J. E. (2000). *The collaboration challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Austin, M. J., Martin, M., Carnochan, S., Goldberg, S., Duerr Berrick, J., Weiss, B., & Kelly, J. (1999). Building a comprehensive agency-university partnership: a case study of the Bay Area Social Services Consortium. *Journal of Community Practice*, 6, 89-106.
- Babbie, E. (1990). *Survey research methods*. (2nd ed.). California: Wadsworth.
- Bailey, D. & Koney, K .M. (2000). *Strategic alliances among health and human services organizations: From affiliations to consolidations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Baum, J. A. C. (1996). Organizational ecology. In Clegg, S.R., Hardy, C., & Nord, W.R. (eds.). *Handbook of Organization Studies* (pp77-114). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Baumohl, J. (Ed.). (1996). *Homelessness in America*. Phoenix: The Oryx Press.
- Blau, P. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. New York: Wiley.
- Blumberg, R. L. (1987). *Organizations in contemporary society*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Borden, L. M. & Perkins, D. F. (1999). Assessing your collaboration: a self evaluation tool. *Journal of Extension*, 73, 1-5.

- Brownstein, L. P. (2002). Index of interdisciplinary collaboration (instrument development). *Social Work Research, 26*, 113-127.
- Burt, M. (2001). What will it take to end homelessness? *The Urban Institute*
Retrieved April 10, 2003 from <http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=310315>
- Burt, M. B., Aron, L. Y., Douglas, T., Valente, J., Lee, E., & Iwen, B. (1999). Homelessness: Programs and the people they serve. Summary report: Findings of the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients. Retrieved December 14, 2002 from <http://www.huduser.org/publications/homeless/homelessness/>
- Burt, M. R. (1996). Homelessness: Definitions and counts. In Baumohl, J. (Ed.), *Homelessness in America* (pp. 15-23). Phoenix: The Oryx Press.
- Chaskin, R. J. (2001). Building community capacity: a definitional framework and case studies from a comprehensive community initiative. *Urban Affairs Review, 36*, 291-323.
- Chaskin, R. J., Brown, P., Venkatesh, S., & Vidal, A. (2001). *Building community capacity*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Chrislip, D. D. & Larson, C. E. (1994). *Collaborative Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cook, K. S., Emerson, R. M., Gilmore, M. B., & Yamagishi, T. (1983). The distribution of power in exchange networks: Theory and experimental results. *American Journal of Sociology, 89*, 275-305.
- Department of Health and Human Services. (2003). *Homelessness: Programs for the Homeless: People with Serious Mental Illnesses*. Retrieved February 20, 2003 from <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/Homelessness/about.asp>
- Drake, R. E. & Mueser, K. T. (1996). Alcohol-use disorder and severe mental illness. *Alcohol Health & Research World, 20*, 86-94.
- El Ansari, W. & Phillips, C. J. (2001). Interprofessional collaboration: a stakeholder approach to evaluation of voluntary participation in community partnerships. *Journal of Interprofessional Care, 15*, 351-368.
- Emerson, R. M. (1962). Power dependence relations. *American Sociological Review, 27*, 31-40.

- Emerson, R. M. (1972). Exchange theory, part II: Exchange relations and networks. In J. Berger, M. Zelditch, Jr., & Anderson, B. (eds.). *Sociological theories in Progress* (pp. 58-87). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Fabricant, M. & Fisher, R. (2002). Agency based community building in low income neighborhoods: A praxis framework. *Journal of Community Practice, 10*, 1-22.
- Foster, M. K. & Meinhard, A. G. (2002). A regression model explaining predisposition to collaborate. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 31*, 549-564.
- Foster-Fishman, P. G., Berkowitz, S. L., Lounsbury, D. W., Jacobson, S., & Allen, N. A. (2001). Building collaborative capacity in community coalitions: A review and integrative framework. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 29*, 241-262.
- Fountain, S. (2002). *A case study of community collaboration characteristics in Healthy Families America sites*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Commonwealth University.
- Glisson, G. M, Thyer, B. A., & Fischer, R. L. (2001). Serving the homeless: Evaluating the effectiveness of homeless shelter services. *Journal of Sociology and Welfare, 28*, 89-98.
- Gray, B. (1989). *Collaborating: Finding common ground for multiparty problems*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gray, B., & Wood, D. J. (1991). Collaborative alliances: Moving from practice to theory. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 27*, 3-22.
- Hambrick, R. S. & Rog, D. J. (2000). The pursuit of coordination: The organizational dimension in the response to homelessness. *Policy Studies Journal, 28*, 353-364.
- Hannan, M. T. & Freeman, J. (1977). The population ecology of organizations. *American Journal of Sociology, 82*, 929-964.
- Harbert, A. S., Finnegan, D., & Tyler, N. (1997). Collaboration: A study of a children's initiative. *Administration in Social Work, 21*, 83-107.
- Hardina, D. (2002). *Analytical skills for community organization practice*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hassett, S., & Austin, M. J. (1997). Service integration: Something old and something new. *Administration in Social Work, 21*, 9-29.

- Homan, M. S. (1999). *Rules of the game: Lessons from the field of community change*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.
- Homeward. (2002a). *Homeward: Business and operation plan to solve the problem of homelessness in Greater Richmond*. Retrieved December 12, 2002 from <http://www.homeward-richmond.com/pdf/plan.pdf>
- Homeward (2002b). *2002 Greater Richmond Continuum of Care: Community report*. Richmond, VA: Homeward, United Way of Richmond.
- Hutchinson, J. R. (2002). *Homeless services provider collaboration survey: A survey of service providers in the Greater Richmond Metropolitan Area*. Richmond, VA: Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Political Science and Public Administration.
- Huxham, C. (Ed.). (1996). *Creating collaborative advantage*. London: Sage.
- Itzhaky, H. & York, A. S. (2002). Showing results in community organization. *Social Work, 47*, 125-131.
- Jainchill, N., Hawke, J., & Yagelka, J. (2000). Gender, psychopathology, and patterns of homelessness among clients in shelter-based TCs. *American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse, 26*, 553-570.
- Johnson, L. J., Zorn, D., Kai Yung Tam, B., LaMontagne, M., & Johnson, S. A. (2003). Stakeholder's view of factors that impact successful interagency collaboration. *Exceptional Children, 69*, 195-110.
- Koegel, P., Burnam, M. A., & Baumohl, J. (1996). In Baumohl, J. (Ed.), *Homelessness in America* (pp. 24-33). Phoenix: The Oryx Press.
- Kretzman, J. P. & McKnight, J. L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications.
- Krueger, R. A. (1994). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mandell, M. P. (2002). Types of collaborations and why differences really matter. *The Public Manager, 31*, 36-41.
- Moon, S. (1984). *Richmond Street Center Location/Impact Analysis*. Unpublished report.

- Leslie, M. (2004a). *Statistics on the population of persons who are homeless in Greater Richmond, VA*. Unpublished report.
- Leslie, M. (2004b). *Personal communication*.
- Leslie, M. (2003). *Personal communication*.
- Loprest, P. (2002). Who returns to welfare? *New Federalism: National Survey of America's Families: The Urban Institute, Series B. No. B-49*. Retrieved April 10, 2003 from <http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=310548>
- Main, T. J. (1996). Analyzing evidence for the structural theory of homelessness. *Journal of Urban Affairs, 18*, 449-457.
- McKelvey, B., & Aldrich, H. (1983). Populations, natural selection, and applied organizational science. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 28*, 101-128.
- Mizrahi, T., & Rosenthal, B. (2001). Complexities of coalition building: Leader's successes, strategies, struggles, and solutions. *Social Work, 46*, 63-78.
- Mullen, C. A. & Kochan, F. K. (2000). Creating a collaborative leadership network: An organic view of change. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 3*, 183-200.
- Mulroy, E. A. (2003). Community as a Factor in Implementing Interorganizational Partnerships: Issues, constraints, and adaptations. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 14*, 47-67.
- Mulroy, E. A. & Shay, S. (1998). Motivation and reward in nonprofit interorganizational collaboration in low-income neighborhoods. *Administration in Social Work, 22*, 1-17.
- National Coalition for the Coalition for the Homeless. (1999a). *The McKinney Act*. Retrieved December 13, 2002 from <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/mckinneyfacts.html>
- National Coalition for the Coalition for the Homeless. (1999b). *Why are people homeless?*. Retrieved December 13, 2002 from <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/causes.html>

- National Coalition for the Coalition for the Homeless. (1999c). *Who is homeless?*. Retrieved December 13, 2002 from <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/who.html>
- National Low Income Housing Coalition. (2003). *Out of reach 2003*. Retrieved March 1, 2004 from <http://www.nlihc.org/oor2002/introduction.htm>
- Netting, F. E., Kettner, P. M., & McMurtry, S. L. (2004). *Social work macro practice*. (3rd ed). Boston, Allyn & Bacon.
- Pfeffer, J. & Salanik, G. (1978). *The external control of organizations: A resource dependence perspective*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Powell, J., Dosser, D., Handron, D., McCammon, S., Evans Temkin, M., & Kaufman, M. (1999). Challenges of interdisciplinary collaboration: a faculty consortium's initial attempts to model collaborative practice. *Journal of Community Practice*, 6, 27-48.
- Reilly, T. (2001). Collaboration in action: an uncertain process. *Administration in Social Work*, 25, 53-74.
- Rich, M. J., Giles, M. W., & Stern, E. (2001). Collaborating to reduce poverty: views from city halls and community-based organizations. *Urban Affairs Review*, 37, 184-204.
- Ritzer, G. (2000). *Modern sociological theory*. (5th ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Rothman, J. (1970). Three models of community organization practice. In Cox, F. M., Erlich, J. L., Rothman, J., & Tropman, J. E., (Eds). *Strategies of community organization: A book of Readings*, pp 20-36. Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers.
- Rothman, J. (1996). The interweaving of community intervention approaches. *The Journal of Community Practice*, 3, 69-99.
- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2001). *Research methods for social work*. (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Rubin, H. J. & Rubin, I. S. (2001). *Community organizing and development* (3rd ed.). New York: Macmillan Publishing.
- Saady, L. L. (2000). *Understanding the Homeward Process: Framing homelessness in a multi-organizational environment*. Unpublished master's thesis, Virginia Commonwealth University.

- Scott, R. W. (1981). *Organizations: Rational, natural, and open systems*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Seley, J. E. & Wolpert, J. (2003). Secular and faith-based human services: Complementaries or competition. In *The Role of Faith-Based Organizations in the Social Welfare System: 2003 Spring Research Forum -Working Papers* (pp. 117-127). Washington, DC: The Independent Sector.
- Snider, R. J., & Rolland Unruh, H. (2004). Typology of religious characteristics of social service and educational organizations and programs. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 33, 109-134.
- Smith, S. R. (2002). Social Services. In Salamon, L.M. (ed.). *The State of Nonprofit America* (pp.149-185). Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press.
- Snaveley, K., & Tracy, M. B. (2000). Collaboration among rural nonprofit organizations. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, 11, 145-165.
- Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Takahashi, L. M. & Smutny, G. (2001). Collaboration among small community-based organizations: strategies and challenges in turbulent environments. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 21, 141-153.
- Thompson, J. D. (1967). *Organizations in action*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Thompson, M., Minkler, M., Bell, J., Rose, K., & Butler, L. (2003). Facilitators of Well-Functioning Consortia: National Healthy Start Program Lessons. *Health and Social Work*, 28, 185-195.
- Timms, P. & Balaza, J. (1997). Mental health on the margins: mental illness and homelessness. *British Medical Journal*, 315, 536-540.
- U.S. Conference of Mayors (2002). *A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities*. Retrieved April 11, 2003 from <http://usmayors.org/uscm/hungersurvey/2002/onlinereport/HungerAndHomelessReport2002.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development. (2002). *Evaluation of Continuums of Care for Homeless People*. Retrieved March 23, 2003 from http://www.huduser.org/Publications/pdf/continuums_of_care.pdf

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development. (1996). *Continuums of care for states*. Retrieved April 11, 2003 from <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/library/coc/cocstates.pdf>
- Weil, M. (Ed.). (1996). *Community practice conceptual models*. New York: Hawthorne Press.
- Weil, M. & Gamble, D. (1995). Community Practice Models. In *Encyclopedia of social work* (19th ed., Vol. 2, pp. 577-594). Washington, DC: NASW Press.
- Weiss, E. S., Anderson, R. M., & Lasker, R. D. (2002). Making the most of collaboration: exploring the relationship between partnership synergy and partnership functioning. *Health Education and Behavior*, 29, 683-698.
- Wolff, T. (2001). A practitioner's guide to successful coalitions. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 29, 173-191.
- Wood, D. J., & Gray, B. (1991). Toward a comprehensive theory of collaboration. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 27, 139-162.
- Wright, T. (2000). Resisting homelessness: Global, national, local solutions. *Contemporary Sociology*, 29, 27-36.

Appendices

Appendix A
Survey Data Tables

Table A1

Organizational Participation of Phase One Survey Respondents

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Resident Participation Level		
Category		
High	25	56.8
Medium	8	18.2
Low	11	25.0
 Organization Involvement in Partnership		
Less Than Six Months	1	2.3
From 6 Months to 1 Year	1	2.3
Greater Than 1 Year But Less Than 3 Years	6	13.6
Three Years or Longer	34	77.3
 Length of Time as Organizational Representative		
Less Than Six Months	2	4.5
From 6 Months to 1 Year	2	4.5
Greater Than 1 Year But Less Than 3 Years	10	22.7
Three Years or Longer	27	61.4

Table A2

Organizational Roles in Partnership of Phase One Survey Respondents

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Average Number of Hours (per month) Devoted To Partnership Activities	<i>M</i> = 6.4 <i>SD</i> = 10.86	n/a
Do you currently provide either informal or formal leadership in the partnership?		
Yes	24	54.5
No	20	45.5
How much authority has your organization given you to commit money, staff, or other in-kind resources to the partnership?		
No Authority	7	15.9
Partial Authority	16	36.4
Full Authority	20	45.5
Has the organization you represent given you enough time and resources to fulfill your role in the partnership?		
Yes	35	81.4
No	8	18.2
Is your participation in this partnership included in your job description?		
Yes	14	31.8
No	28	66.7

Table A3

Frequencies of Ratings for the Relationship with Partners Dimension of Collaboration

Variable	n	Strongly Agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
I am concerned that the organization I represent will be taken advantage of by other partners	42	0 (0%)	2 (4.5%)	8 (40.9%)	22 (50.0%)
I believe that other partners appreciate the contribution my organization makes to the partnership	42	10 (22.7%)	29 (65.9%)	1 (2.3%)	2 (4.5%)
I am concerned that some partners will not fulfill their obligations to the partnership	40	1 (2.3%)	16 (36.2%)	19 (43.2%)	4 (9.1%)
I feel that the organization I represent has as much influence as other partners in decisions about partnership activities	40	7 (15.9%)	20 (45.5%)	8 (18.2%)	5 (11.4%)
I have experienced strained relations with other partners due to disagreements or differences in perspective	42	2 (4.5%)	7 (15.9%)	21 (47.7%)	12 (27.3%)

Table A4

Frequencies of Ratings for the Relationship with Partners Dimension of Collaboration

		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	A Little Satisfied	Not At All Satisfied
Variable	n	3	2	1	0
How satisfied are you with the way people and organizations in the partnership work together?	38	15 (31.1%)	17 (38.6%)	4 (9.1%)	2 (4.5%)
How satisfied are you with your organization's influence in the partnership?	38	18 (40.9%)	13 (29.5%)	4 (9.1%)	3 (6.8%)
How satisfied are you with your organization's role in the partnership?	37	19 (43.2%)	14 (31.8%)	2 (4.5%)	2 (4.5%)
How satisfied are you with the partnership's plan for achieving its goals?	37	18 (40.9%)	13 (29.5%)	4 (9.1%)	2 (4.5%)
How satisfied are you with the way the partnership has implemented its plans?	37	16 (36.4%)	14 (31.8%)	5 (11.4%)	2 (4.5%)

Table A5

Comparison Rating of Organization Size and Perception of Relationship with Partners

Variable	Small <i>n</i> = 7	Medium <i>n</i> = 11	Large <i>n</i> = 22
I am concerned that the organization I represent will be taken advantage of by other partners*			
Strongly Agree	-	-	-
Agree	14.3% <i>n</i> = 1	9.1% <i>n</i> = 1	-
Disagree	71.4% <i>n</i> = 5	36.4% <i>n</i> = 4	40.9% <i>n</i> = 9
Strongly Disagree	14.3% <i>n</i> = 1	54.5% <i>n</i> = 6	59.1% <i>n</i> = 13

* $p < .05$, $\Gamma = -.47$

Table A6

Frequencies of Ratings for the Leadership Dimension of Collaboration

Variable	n	Excellent 4	Very Good 3	Good 2	Fair 1	Poor 0
Taking responsibility for the partnership	40	8 (18.2%)	17 (38.6%)	9 (20.5%)	3 (6.8%)	3 (6.8%)
Inspiring or motivating people to become involved in the partnership	40	8 (18.2%)	15 (34.5%)	10 (22.7%)	4 (9.1%)	3 (6.8%)
Empowering people to become involved in the partnership	40	8 (18.2%)	14 (31.8%)	11 (25.0%)	5 (11.4%)	3 (4.5%)
Communicating the vision of the partnership	40	12 (27.3)	14 (31.8%)	7 (15.9%)	4 (9.1%)	3 (6.8%)
Working to develop a common language within the partnership	39	5 (11.4%)	17 (38.6%)	8 (18.2%)	5 (11.4%)	4 (9.1%)
Fostering respect, trust, inclusiveness, and openness in the partnership	40	8 (18.2%)	12 (27.3%)	14 (31.8%)	2 (4.5%)	4 (9.1%)
Creating an environment where differences of opinion can be voiced	40	7 (15.9%)	15 (31.4%)	11 (25.0%)	4 (9.1%)	3 (6.8%)
Resolving conflict among partners	40	8 (18.2%)	4 (9.1%)	11 (25.0%)	6 (13.6%)	4 (9.1%)
Combining the perspectives, resources, and skills of partners	40	6 (13.6%)	11 (25.0%)	12 (27.3%)	6 (13.6%)	4 (9.1%)

Table A7

Comparison Rating of Organization Type and Frequency Ratings of Homeward's Ability to Combine the Perspectives, Resources, and Skills of Partners into the Planning Process

Variable	CBO <i>n</i> = 12	Government Agency <i>n</i> = 8	Hospital /Health <i>n</i> = 3	FBO <i>n</i> = 9	Congregation <i>n</i> = 6	Misc <i>n</i> = 1
Combining the perspectives, resources, and skills of partners*						
Excellent	8.3% <i>n</i> = 1	12.5% <i>n</i> = 1	66.7% <i>n</i> = 2	-	-	-
Very Good	50% <i>n</i> = 6	25% <i>n</i> = 2	-	22.2% <i>n</i> = 2	16.7% <i>n</i> = 1	-
Good	33.3% <i>n</i> = 4	25% <i>n</i> = 2	-	33.3% <i>n</i> = 3	33.3% <i>n</i> = 2	100% <i>n</i> = 1
Fair	8.3% <i>n</i> = 1	25% <i>n</i> = 2	-	11.1% <i>n</i> = 1	33.3% <i>n</i> = 2	-
Poor	-	12.5% <i>n</i> = 1	33.3% <i>n</i> = 1	11.1% <i>n</i> = 1	16.7% <i>n</i> = 1	-

* $p = .08$, $\Gamma = -.22$

Table A8

Frequencies of Ratings for the Organizational Structure Dimension of Collaboration

Variable	n	Excellent 4	Very Good 3	Good 2	Fair 1	Poor 0
Coordinating communication among partners	41	8 (18.2%)	17 (38.6%)	7 (15.9%)	8 (18.5%)	1 (2.3%)
Coordinating communication with people and organizations outside the partnership	39	5 (11.4%)	16 (36.4%)	9 (20.5%)	7 (15.9%)	2 (4.5%)
Organizing partnership activities, including meetings and projects	40	8 (18.3%)	15 (34.1%)	12 (27.3%)	4 (9.1%)	1 (2.3%)
Managing and disbursing funds	23	4 (9.1%)	7 (15.9%)	8 (18.2%)	4 (9.1%)	0 (0%)
Applying for and managing grants	25	8 (18.2%)	15 (34.1%)	12 (27.3%)	4 (9.1%)	0 (0%)
Preparing materials that inform partners and help them make timely decisions	38	8 (18.2%)	12 (27.3%)	10 (22.7%)	6 (13.6%)	2 (4.5%)
Performing secretarial duties	31	6 (13.6%)	9 (20.5%)	12 (27.3%)	3 (6.8)	1 (2.3%)
Maintaining databases	33	6 (13.6%)	9 (20.5%)	12 (27.3%)	6 (15.6%)	0 (0%)
Providing orientation to new partners as they join the partnership	34	6 (13.6%)	8 (18.2%)	13 (29.5%)	6 (13.6%)	1(2.3%)
Evaluating the progress and impact of the partnership	40	8 (18.2%)	8 (18.2%)	13 (29.5%)	13 (22.7%)	1(2.7%)

Table A9

Frequencies of Ratings for Experienced and Expected Benefits of Participation

Variable	n	Received		n	Expect to Receive	
		Yes	No		Yes	No
Enhanced ability to address an issue important to the org	40	30 (62.2%)	10 (22.7%)	10	5 (11.4%)	5(11.4%)
Acquisition of new knowledge and/or skills	41	28 (63.6%)	13 (29.5%)	13	5 (11.4%)	8(18.2%)
Heightened public profile	41	24 (54.5%)	17 (38.6%)	17	4 (9.1%)	13 (29.5%)
Acquisition of additional funding	41	11 (25.0%)	30 (68.2%)	30	5 (11.4%)	23(52.3%)
Increased use of organization's expertise and services	41	26 (59.1%)	12 (27.3%)	12	7 (15.9%)	5(11.4%)
Increased awareness about the community	39	32 (72.7%)	7 (15.9%)	7	3 (6.8%)	4 (9.1%)
Enhanced ability to affect public policy	21	21 (41.7%)	17 (38.6%)	17	6 (13.6%)	11(25.0%)
Development of valuable relationships	40	33 (75.0%)	7 (15.9%)	7	3 (6.8%)	4 (9.7%)
Enhanced ability to meet performance goals	39	18 (40.9%)	21 (47.7%)	20	6 (13.6%)	14 (31.8%)
Enhanced ability to meet client needs	40	29 (65.9%)	11 (25.0%)	11	4 (9.1%)	7 (15.9%)
Ability to have a greater impact than org could have on its own	40	29 (65.9%)	11 (25.0%)	11	7 (15.9%)	4 (9.1%)
Make a contribution to the community	40	32 (72.7%)	8 (18.2%)	7	3 (6.8%)	4 (9.1%)

Table A10

Frequencies of Ratings for Experienced and Expected Drawbacks of Participation

Variable	n	Experienced		n	Expect to Experience	
		Yes	No		Yes	No
Diversion and time from other priorities and obligations	40	16 (36.4%)	24 (54.5%)	20	4 (9.1%)	16 (36.4%)
Less independence in organizational decision-making	38	6 (13.6%)	32 (72.7%)	2	2 (4.5%)	24 (54.5%)
Strained relations within my organization	39	3 (6.8%)	36 (81.8%)	29	2 (4.5%)	27 (61.4%)
Insufficient influence in partnership activities	35	3 (6.8%)	32 (72.7%)	24	3 (6.8%)	21 (47.7%)
Organization viewed negatively due to association with other partners	38	3 (6.8%)	35 (79.5%)	27	4 (9.1%)	23 (52.3%)
Loss of competitive edge	39	4 (9.1%)	35 (79.5%)	28	2 (4.5%)	26 (59.1%)
Frustration/aggravation	39	15 (34.1%)	24 (54.5%)	17	0 (0%)	17 (38.6%)
Insufficient credit given to my organization	39	6 (13.6%)	33 (75.0%)	25	2 (4.5%)	23 (52.3%)

Table A11

Frequencies of Ratings for the Relationship Between the Benefits and Drawbacks of Participation

Variable	n	Extremely Important 4	Very Important 3	Somewhat Important 2	A Little Important 1	Not at All Important 0
Importance of benefits received to organization	44	16 (36.4%)	19 (43.2%)	4 (9.1%)	1 (2.3%)	1 (2.3%)
How concerned is your organization about the drawbacks it experiences from participating	37	1 (2.3%)	3 (6.8%)	6 (13.6%)	5 (11.4%)	22 (50.0%)

Table A12

Frequencies of Ratings for the Relationship Between the Benefits and Drawbacks of Participation

Variable	n	Benefits Greatly Exceed the Drawbacks 4	Benefits Exceed the Drawbacks 3	Benefits and Drawbacks Are Equal 2	Drawbacks Exceed the Benefits 1	Drawbacks Greatly Exceed the Benefits 0
For your organization how have the benefits compare to the drawbacks	37	22 (50.0%)	12 (27.3%)	5 (11.4%)	1 (2.3%)	0 (0%)

Table A13

*Standard Regression Analysis of Participation Benefits to Predict Participation***(N = 38)*

Predictor	B	SE B	β
Experienced benefits	1.17	.515	.367*
Benefits outweigh drawbacks	1.16	6.44	.038
Importance of benefits	-20.5	8.41	-.491*

Note. $R^2 = .25$, Adjusted $R^2 = .19$

* $p < .05$

Table A14

Frequencies of Ratings for the Involvement of Key Stakeholders Dimension of Collaboration

Variable	n	A Lot 4	Some 3	A Little 2	Not at All 1
How much has the involvement of different partners led to new and better ways of thinking?	39	18 (40.9%)	16 (36.4%)	3 (6.8%)	2 (4.5%)
How much has the involvement of different partners enabled the partnership to plan activities to connect multiple services, programs, or systems?	40	14 (31.8%)	17 (38.6%)	8 (18.2%)	1 (2.3%)
How much does the partnership incorporate into its work the perspectives and priorities of the population of interest to the partnership?	38	23 (52.3%)	11 (25.0%)	3 (6.8%)	1 (2.3%)
How much support has your partnership obtained from individuals, agencies, and institutions in the community that can either block the partnership's plans or help them move forward?	37	9 (20.5%)	18 (40.9%)	4 (9.1%)	6 (13.6%)

Table A15

Comparison Rating of Organization Size and the Extent to which the Involvement of Different Partners Impacts Homeward's Planning Process

Variable	Small <i>n</i> = 6	Medium <i>n</i> = 10	Large <i>n</i> = 21
Involvement of different partners has led to new and better ways of thinking*			
A Lot	83.3% <i>n</i> = 5	60% <i>n</i> = 6	23.8% <i>n</i> = 5
Some	-	30% <i>n</i> = 3	61.9% <i>n</i> = 13
A Little	16.7% <i>n</i> = 1	10% <i>n</i> = 1	4.8% <i>n</i> = 1
Not at All	-	-	9.5% <i>n</i> = 2

* $p < .05$, $r = -.55$

Table A16

Frequencies of Ratings for the Involvement of Key Stakeholders Dimension of Collaboration

Variable	n	Strongly Agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
Partnership makes good use of partner's financial resources	37	7 (15.9%)	20 (45.5%)	8 (18.2%)	2 (4.5%)
Partnership makes good use of partner's in-kind resources	39	11 (25.0%)	23 (52.3%)	4 (9.1%)	1 (2.3%)
Partnership makes good use of partner's time	39	10 (22.7%)	22 (50.0%)	6 (13.6%)	1 (2.3%)
Partnership has developed common goals that are understood by all partners	39	6 (13.6%)	24 (54.5%)	9 (20.5%)	0 (0%)
Partnership is better able to carry out its work because of diverse partners	38	11 (25.0%)	22 (50.0%)	5 (11.4%)	0 (0%)

Table A17

Frequencies of Ratings for the Internal Challenges Dimension of Collaboration

Variable	n	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		4	3	2	1
Problems recruiting essential partners	28	3 (6.8%)	15 (34.1%)	3 (6.8%)	7 (15.9%)
Problems retaining essential partners	26	2 (4.5%)	12 (27.3%)	5 (11.4%)	7 (15.9%)
Difficulties with relationships among partners	30	3 (6.8%)	10 (22.7%)	9 (20.5%)	8 (18.2%)
Difficulties with motivating partners	33	3 (6.8%)	13 (29.5%)	10 (22.7%)	6 (13.6%)
Inadequate or changing leadership	34	1 (2.3%)	8 (18.2%)	4 (9.1%)	21 (47.7%)
Inadequate or changing administrative management staff	32	0 (0%)	8 (18.2%)	6 (13.6%)	18 (40.9%)
Problems with the decision-making process	33	2 (2.5%)	10 (22.7%)	11 (25.0%)	10 (22.7%)
Problems with moving from planning to action	35	6 (13.6%)	9 (20.5%)	12 (27.3%)	8 (18.2%)
Difficulties obtaining financial resources	29	9 (20.5%)	11 (25.0%)	6 (13.6%)	3 (6.8%)
Difficulties obtaining non-financial resources	29	3 (6.8%)	9 (20.5%)	11 (25.0%)	6 (13.6%)
Inequitable distribution of funds	21	1 (2.3%)	7 (15.9%)	7 (15.9%)	6 (13.6%)

Table A18

Comparison Rating Between Organization Size and Perception of Difficulty Motivating Partners

Variable	Small <i>n</i> = 4	Medium <i>n</i> = 9	Large <i>n</i> = 18
Difficulties motivating partners			
A Lot	25% <i>n</i> = 1	22.2% <i>n</i> = 2	5.6% <i>n</i> = 1
Some	25% <i>n</i> = 1	66.7% <i>n</i> = 6	33.3% <i>n</i> = 6
A Little	25% <i>n</i> = 1	11.1% <i>n</i> = 1	38.9% <i>n</i> = 7
Not at All	25% <i>n</i> = 1	-	22.2% <i>n</i> = 4

**p* = .07, *r* = -.46

Table A19

Comparison Rating Between Organization Type and Perceptions of the Extent to which the Inequitable Distribution of Funds Impacts Homeward's Efforts

Variable	CBO <i>n</i> = 6	Government Agency <i>n</i> = 5	Hospital /Health <i>n</i> = 1	FBO <i>n</i> = 5	Congregation <i>n</i> = 3	Misc <i>n</i> = 1
Inequitable distribution of funds*						
Not at All	50% <i>n</i> = 3	20% <i>n</i> = 1	-	40% <i>n</i> = 2	-	-
A Little	33.3% <i>n</i> = 2	20% <i>n</i> = 1	100% <i>n</i> = 1	40% <i>n</i> = 2	33.3% <i>n</i> = 1	-
Some	16.7% <i>n</i> = 1	60% <i>n</i> = 3	-	20% <i>n</i> = 1	33.3% <i>n</i> = 1	100% <i>n</i> = 1
A Lot	-	-	-	-	100% <i>n</i> = 1	-

* $p = .09$, $F = .38$

Table A20

Frequencies of Ratings for the External Challenges Dimension of Collaboration

Variable	n	Strongly Agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
Problems with categorical funding or program requirements	22	6 (13.6%)	8 (18.2%)	6 (13.6%)	2 (4.5%)
Lack of incentives to motivate people and organizations to participate	30	4 (9.1%)	7 (15.9%)	12 (27.3%)	7 (15.9%)
Competition for resources or clients in the community	30	7 (15.9%)	12 (27.3%)	7 (15.9%)	4 (9.1%)
Little history of cooperation or trust among people and groups in the community	29	4 (9.1%)	10 (22.7%)	8 (18.2%)	7 (15.9%)
Resistance of key people and organizations to the goals and activities of the partnership	25	2 (4.5%)	8 (18.2%)	12 (27.3%)	3 (6.8%)
Unwillingness of government agencies to grant needed authority or control to the partnership	20	3 (6.8%)	8 (18.2%)	6 (13.6%)	3 (3.8%)
Legal or regulatory barriers	20	3 (6.8%)	7 (15.9%)	5 (11.4%)	5 (11.4%)
Difficulties bringing partners together due to safety issues, long distances, or lack of transportation	28	1 (2.3%)	4 (9.1%)	5 (11.4%)	18 (40.9%)
Existence of multiple partnerships in the community, many of which may involve the same partners	25	3 (6.8%)	4 (9.1%)	12 (27.3%)	6 (13.6%)

Table A21

Comparison Rating of Organization Type and Perception of the Extent to which the Resistance of Key Stakeholders to Goals and Activities of Partnership Impact Homeward's Efforts

Variable	CBO <i>n</i> = 9	Government Agency <i>n</i> = 65	Hospital /Health <i>n</i> = 1	FBO <i>n</i> = 6	Congregation <i>n</i> = 2	Misc <i>n</i> = 1
Resistance of key people to the goals and activities of the partnership*						
Not at All	22.2% <i>n</i> = 2	-	-	16.7% <i>n</i> = 1	-	-
A Little	44.4% <i>n</i> = 4	83.3% <i>n</i> = 5	100% <i>n</i> = 1	16.7% <i>n</i> = 1	50% <i>n</i> = 1	-
Some	33.3% <i>n</i> = 3	16.7% <i>n</i> = 1	-	50% <i>n</i> = 3	-	100% <i>n</i> = 1
A Lot	-	-	-	16.7% <i>n</i> = 1	100% <i>n</i> = 1	-

**p* = .10, *F* = .40

Appendix B

Figures

Figure B1

Participants in the Continuum of Care Planning Process (Homeward, 2002, pp. 2-5)

Type of Group	Description
Homeless Action Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way Services committee • Includes 26 volunteer members • Represents financial institutions, local businesses, foundations, service providers, homeless and formerly homeless persons • Makes decisions about programmatic outcome measurements and the allocation of over 2.2 million dollars in funds donated to the United Way.
The Executive Directors Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprised of eighteen executive directors of local homeless providers and related agencies • Meets monthly to review and evaluate programs • Provides feedback to Homeward about areas of concern within the human service delivery system.
The Homeless Services Providers Network (HSP) and the Family Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprised of direct service staff • These two groups meet monthly to share opportunities for collaboration and coordination among the partners.
The Child Services Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprised of homeless service providers' staff • Meets monthly to establish contacts and learn about local resources relevant to children in transition.

In addition to the networks, four workgroups have been established to manage all volunteer, community-driven activities. Within each workgroup, task forces focus on specific activities that support the general function of the workgroup

Prevention and Support Workgroup

- Meets quarterly
- Works to create an efficient and effective system to prevent homelessness to meet the needs of those in life crisis, and to return those in crisis back to health and self-sufficiency.

Housing Workgroup

- Meets bi-monthly
- Assess the current inventory of housing options and establishes, strengthens, and initiates permanent housing solutions for the homeless population.

Creativity and Awareness Workgroup

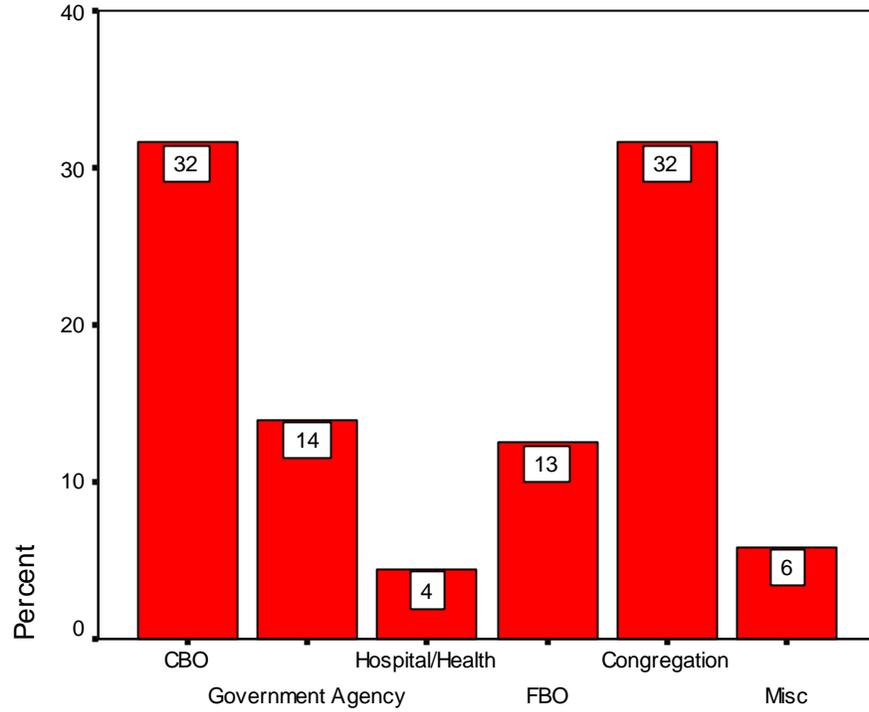
- Meets monthly
- Develop creative outlets for people who are experiencing homelessness and educates the public about the life crises of people living in Greater Richmond.

Evaluation and Linkage Workgroup

- Assesses the methodologies of data collection, quantifying the community's homeless services gaps and needs, improving the breadth of community participation and awareness of the Continuum of Care planning process
- Establishes a local review process that is inclusive and promotes the evaluation and effectiveness of proposed and existing programs.

Figure B2

Sampling Frame Organizational Characteristics by Type*
(N = 136)



CBO = Community-Based Organization

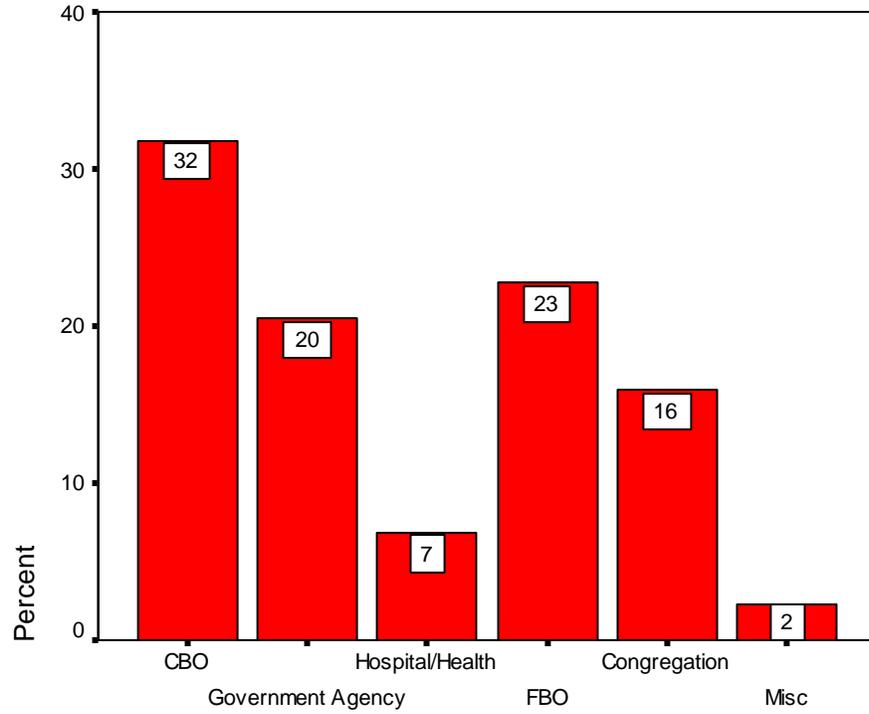
FBO = Faith-Based Organization

*Organization representation is presented as a percentage of the total number by category

Note: *Misc* category includes a community development corporation, housing organizations that do not fit in any of the other categories, and for-profit organizations

Figure B3

Respondent Organization Characteristics by Type*
(N = 44)



CBO = Community-Based Organization

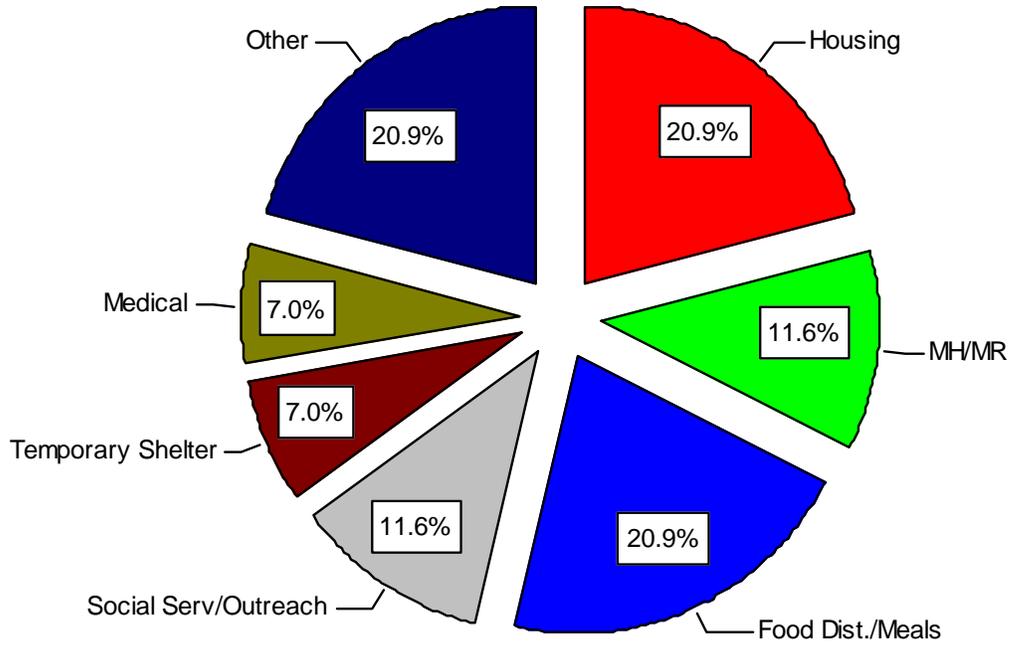
FBO = Faith-Based Organization

*Organization characteristics are presented as a percentage of the total number by category

Note: *Misc* category includes a community development corporation, housing organizations that do not fit in any of the other categories, and for-profit organizations

Figure B4

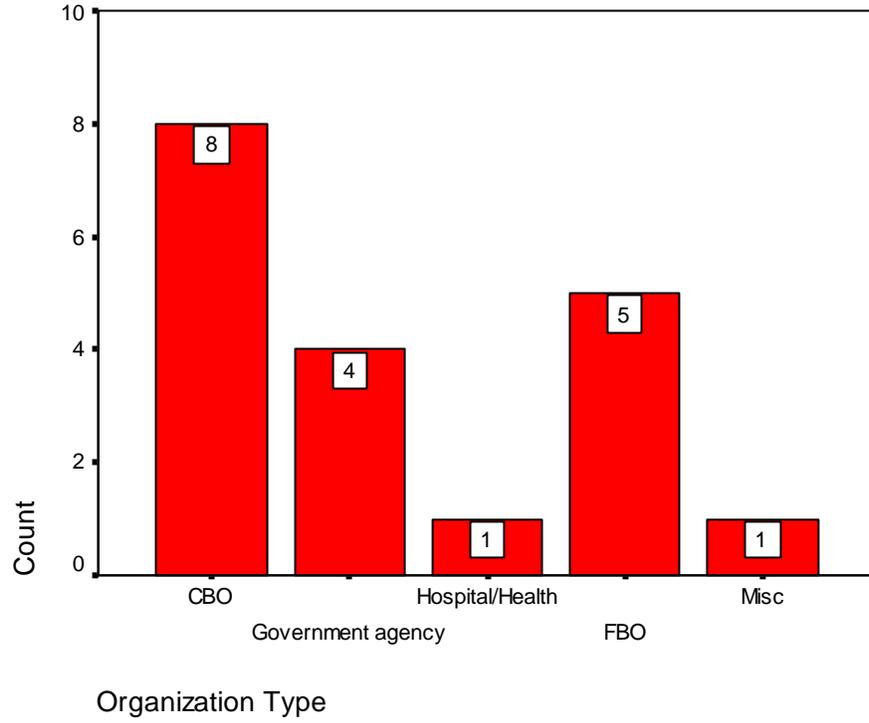
Services Provided by Respondent Organizations



Note: *Other* category include services such as offender services, ministry, and employment assistance

Figure B5

Organization Characteristics of Non-Partner Organizations by Type*
(N = 19)

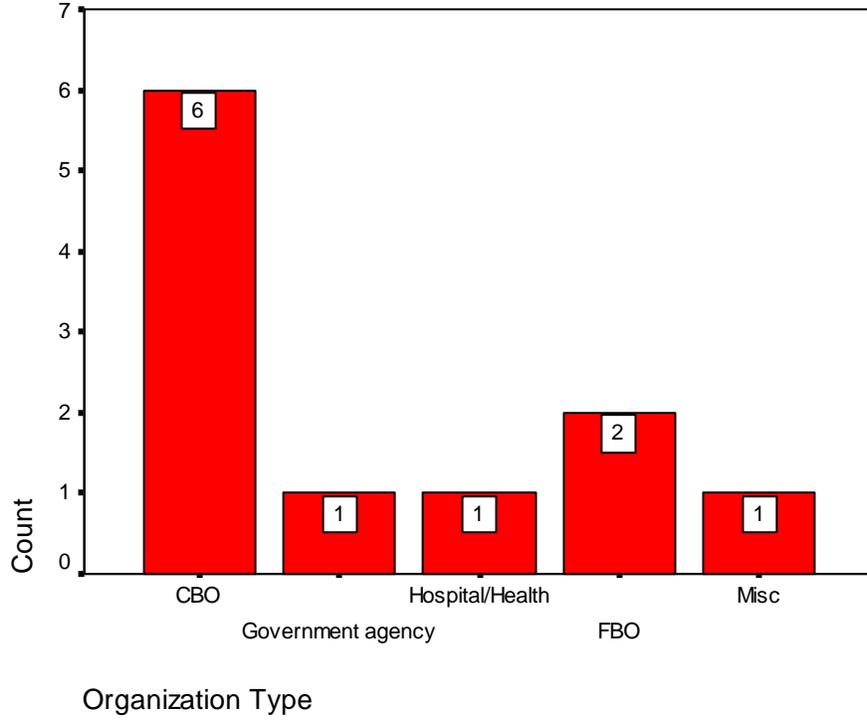


*Organization representation is presented as the number of organizations in each category

Note: *Misc* category includes a community development corporation, housing organizations that do not fit in any of the other categories, and for-profit organizations

Figure B6

Organization Characteristics of Follow-Up Survey Respondents by Type*
(N = 11)



*Organization representation is presented as the number of organizations in each category

Note: *Misc* category includes a community development corporation, housing organizations that do not fit in any of the other categories, and for-profit organizations

Figure B7

Focus Group Benefits and Drawbacks of Participation

Benefits	Drawbacks
Networking opportunities with other providers	Communication Difficulties
Information sharing among providers	Understanding the complex nature of Homeward's planning process
Data, research, other information provided by Homeward	Time
Not having to work independently to serve homeless persons	

Figure B8

Hypothesized Influences on Partner Motives to Participate and Level of Participation

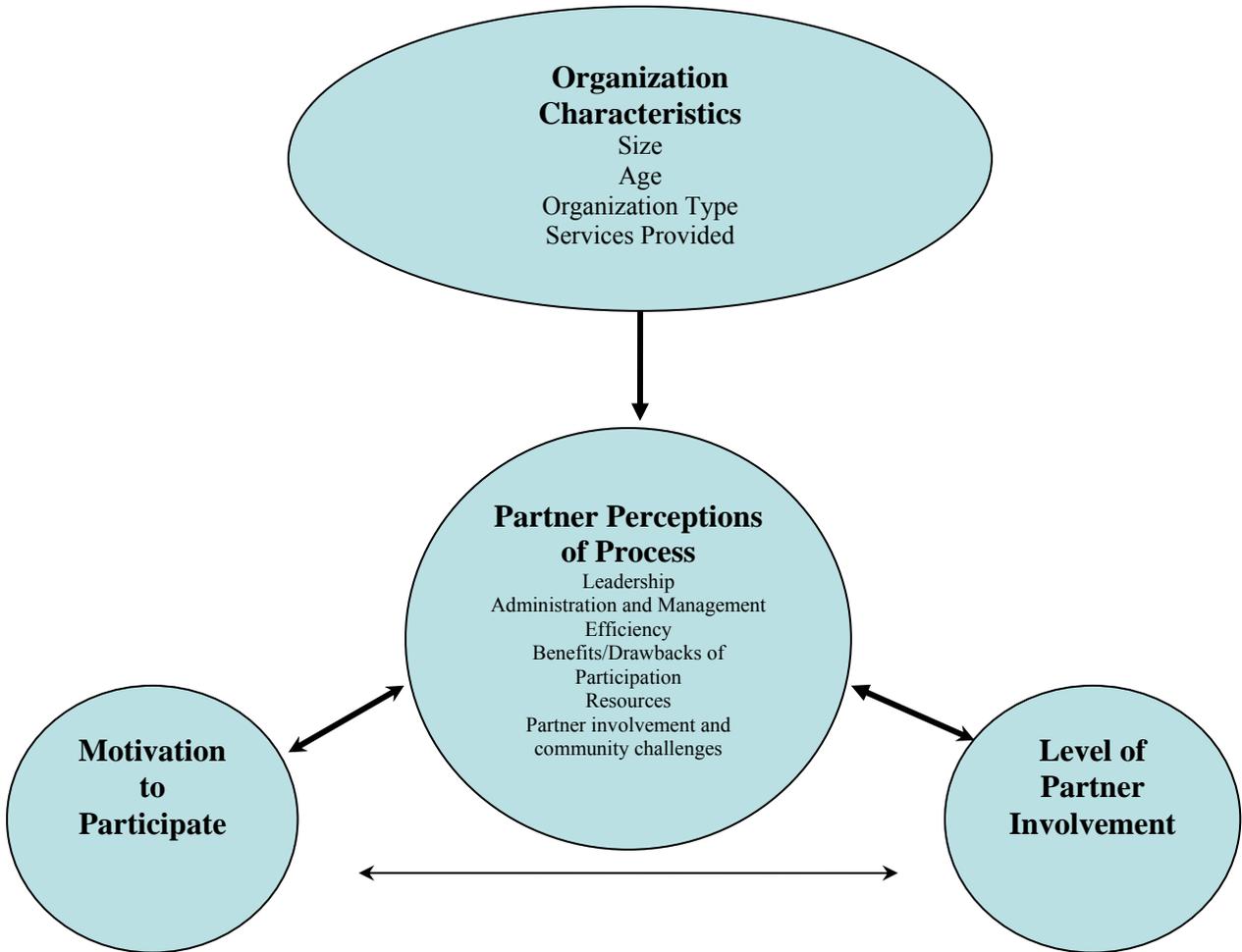
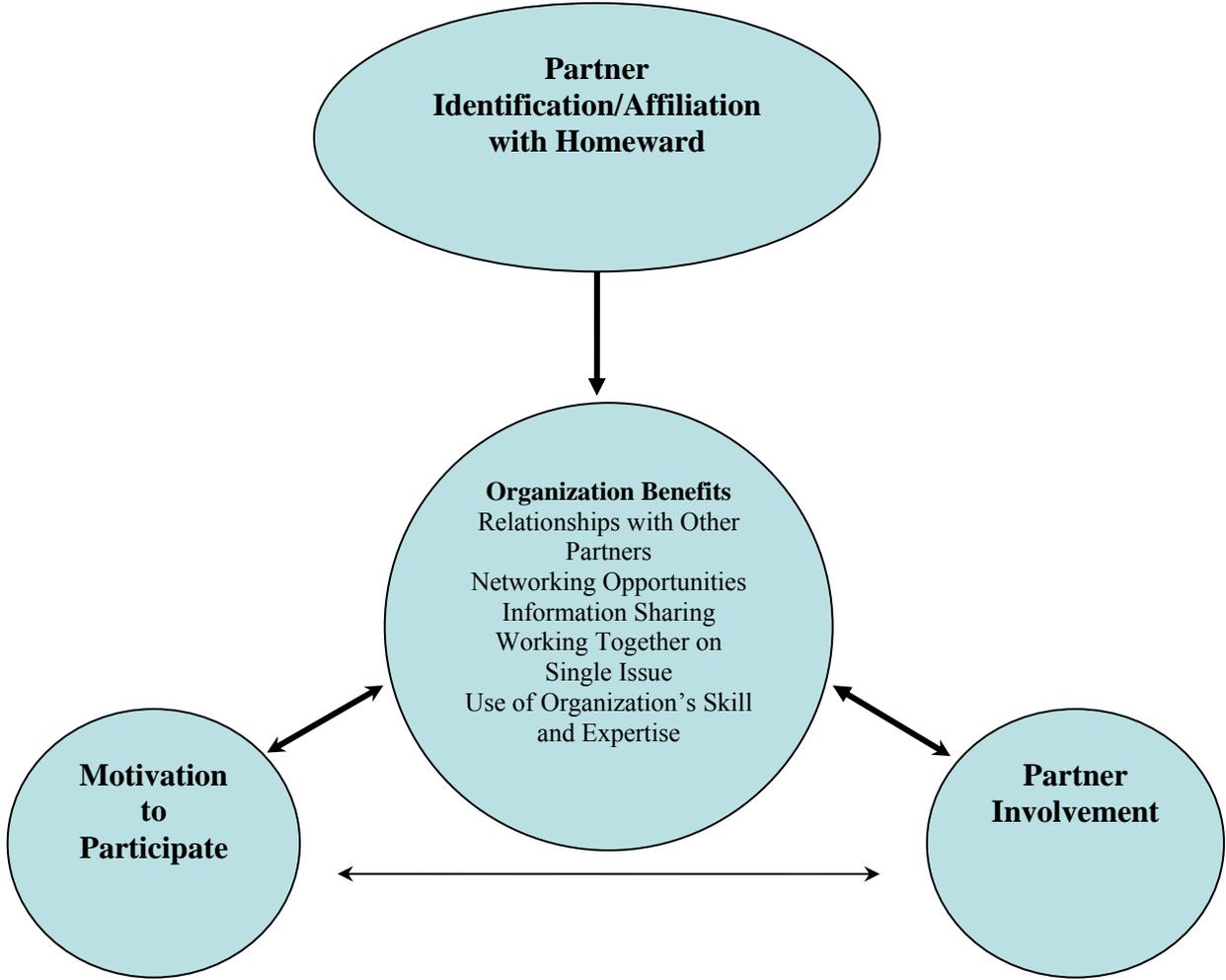


Figure B9

Influences on Organization Motivation for Participation



Appendix C

Phase One Recruitment Materials

INITIAL CONTACT
Recruitment Script

Introduction

Hello, May I please speak with [Name of Organizational Representative]

My name is Jan Ivery and I am a Ph.D Student at VCU's School of Social Work. I am conducting a study to find out about what motivates Homeward's partners to participate in the planning process and how those motives may influence participation. In addition, I hope to identify areas within the planning process that you feel are effective and those that you think could be improved.

Are you the correct person to whom the questionnaire should be sent?

[IF NOT THE CORRECT PERSON]

May I please speak to the person who should complete it?

[IF IT IS A DIFFERENT PERSON, REPEAT THE INTRODUCTION ONCE THEY ARE ON THE PHONE]

Within the next week you will receive a copy of the questionnaire in the mail and I sincerely hope you will be able to complete it. Your participation in the project is voluntary. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (804) 828-0703.

I know your time is very valuable and I appreciate your time.

Thank you very much for your help.

COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Ms. Jane Smith
 The Nonprofit Center
 1000 Oak Street
 Richmond, VA 10000

Dear Ms. Smith:

As I indicated in my phone call last week, I am conducting a study about Homeward's planning process as part for my Ph.D requirements in Social Work at VCU. I am interested in what factors motivate organizations to participate in collaborative partnerships with Homeward and how partners perceive the effectiveness of the planning process in areas such as leadership, management, and use of resources. The enclosed questionnaire is short and can be completed in approximately 20 minutes. Also,

- You are under no obligation to fill out and return the questionnaire.
- Your participation is voluntary and confidential.
- Although Homeward will receive a copy of the final report, they will never see your individual responses or any information that can link you to your answers.
- Your responses, along with those of other partners, will provide valuable information about process that can lead to improvement in the planning process and improve service delivery to homeless persons.
- When the study is completed, you will have an opportunity to hear about the results at one of Homeward's meetings.
- Your return of the questionnaire will serve as your consent.
- Strict confidentiality will be maintained. All questionnaires will be kept in a locked filing cabinet to which only the primary investigator has access.
- You do not need to write your name on the questionnaire. All study findings will be reported without identifying the names of any respondents or their organizations.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (804) 828-0703 or Dr. Ellen Netting, the faculty member who is supervising my work at (804) 828-0404.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact:

VCU Office of Research Subjects Protection
 Sanger Hall, Room 1-023, 1101 East Marshall Street
 Richmond, Virginia, 23299
 Telephone: (804) 828-0868

If you do not wish to respond, please let me know by returning the blank questionnaire and your name will be removed from the follow-up mailing list.

I understand that your time is valuable and I hope you will be able to participate. Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely,

Jan M. Ivery, MSW, Ph.D. Candidate

SECOND MAILING

Postcard

Last week I sent you a questionnaire concerning the Homeward's planning process. Your participation is important because the accuracy of the study is dependent on a representative sample of respondents. If you have not yet returned it, please do so as soon as possible.

If you have already returned the questionnaire, thank you for your assistance. Please remember that your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. If for some reason you didn't receive the questionnaire or it has been misplaced, please give me a call at (804) 828-0703 or send me an email at jmivery@vcu.edu. I'll put another copy in the mail right away.

Sincerely,
Jan M. Ivery
Ph.D Candidate

THIRD MAILING

Ms. Jane Smith
The Nonprofit Center
1000 Oak Street
Richmond, VA 10000

Dear Ms. Smith:

About three weeks ago I wrote you asking if you would participate in a study of Homeward's planning process. As of today, I have not received your completed questionnaire. I hope you will be able to take 20 minutes from your busy schedule to fill it out and return it to me.

The information gathered from the questionnaires will be used to improve the way Homeward works with its partners to develop the Continuum of Care system in the greater Richmond area. I am interested in learning how organizations of different types and sizes work together and perceive the effectiveness of the planning process. As a result, each questionnaire is very important to the successful completion of this project.

Again, let me assure you that all responses will be held in the strictest confidence. If you have questions about the study, please do not hesitate to call me at (804) 828-0703. In case you misplaced the questionnaire I sent to you earlier, I have enclosed another one.

If you have not participated in Homeward's process, or do not know anything about it, please forward the questionnaire to the appropriate person.

Sincerely,

Jan M. Ivery, MSW
Ph.D Candidate

Appendix D

Phase Two Recruitment Materials

COVER LETTER FOR FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

Ms. Jane Smith
The Nonprofit Center
1000 Oak Street
Richmond, VA 10000

Dear Ms. Smith:

Last October you received a letter and questionnaire from me requesting your participation in a study of Homeward's planning process as part of my Ph.D requirements in Social Work at VCU. Although your organization is included on Homeward's list as a partner, you indicated that you did not consider your organization to be one of Homeward's partners. I am interested in learning about the factors that have influenced your organization to not participate and to what extent you are interested in becoming more active with Homeward. The enclosed questionnaire is short and can be completed in 10 minutes.

- You are under no obligation to fill out and return the questionnaire.
- Your participation is voluntary and confidential.
- Although Homeward will receive a copy of the final report, they will never see your individual responses or any information that can link you to your answers.
- Your responses, along with those of other partners, will provide valuable information about process that can lead to improvement in the planning process and improve service delivery to homeless persons.
- When the study is completed, you will have an opportunity to hear about the results at one of Homeward's meetings.
- Your return of the questionnaire will serve as your consent.
- Strict confidentiality will be maintained. All questionnaires will be kept in a locked filing cabinet to which only the primary investigator has access.
- You do not need to write your name on the questionnaire. All study findings will be reported without identifying the names of any respondents or their organizations.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (804) 828-0703 or Dr. Ellen Netting, the faculty member who is supervising my work at (804) 828-0404.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact:

VCU Office of Research Subjects Protection
Sanger Hall, Room 1-023, 1101 East Marshall Street
Richmond, Virginia, 23299
Telephone: (804) 828-0868

I understand that your time is valuable and I hope you will be able to participate. Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely,

Jan M. Ivery, MSW, Ph.D. Candidate

Focus Group Recruitment Script

Introduction

Hello, May I please speak with [Name of Organizational Representative]

My name is Jan Ivery and I am a Ph.D Student at VCU's School of Social Work. Last October you should have receive a questionnaire from me asking you for your opinion about Homeward's planning process. I am in the process of finalizing the data analysis and would like your help. I am organizing two focus groups with Homeward's partners to present the preliminary findings of the study and get your input about what you think the results mean. You have been randomly selected from Homeward's list of partners as a potential participate.

Will you be able to participate in the focus group discussion?

IF YES:

Thank you for agreeing to participate. The focus group will be held at the United Way building on [date] at [time] and refreshments will be served.

Again, thank you for your participation and I look forward to seeing you on the [confirmation of date and time]

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (804) 828-0703.

IF NO:

Thank you for your time.

RESEARCH SUBJECT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM FOR THE FOCUS GROUP

TITLE: An Examination of Factors That Influence the Motivation for Participation in a Collaborative Partnership of Homeless Service Providers

PROTOCOL NR: VCU IRB # 3426

INVESTIGATOR: F. Ellen Netting, Ph.D and Jan Ivery, MSW

This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask the researcher to explain any words or information that you do not clearly understand.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

The purpose of this research study is to understand the relationship between organizational characteristics, perceptions of Homeward's planning process, and partner motives for and level of participation. You are being asked to participate in this study because you have been identified as one of Homeward's organizational partners.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

Homeward's partners have previously been selected to participate in the first phase of the study by completing a survey in order to obtain a better understanding of its Continuum of Care planning process. The results of the survey data have been analyzed and two focus group with Homeward's partners will be convened in order to gather more in-depth information on their experiences. The project is designed to collect data about the factors that motivate as well as prevent partners from participating in Homeward's process to prepare the application to HUD for Continuum of Care funding. It is anticipated that the information obtained from the study will enable Homeward to improve the way in which the organization works with its partners.

Your participation in this study will last up to two hours in a focus group discussion. Approximately twenty subjects will participate in this study.

PROCEDURES

If you decide to be in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form after you have had all your questions answered.

You are being asked to participate in a research focus group to talk about your organization's participation as a partner in the planning process for HUD Continuum of Care funding. Your responses will help us better understand what components of the planning process are effective and identify areas that can be improved. You will be asked a series of open-ended questions that relate to your perception of Homeward's planning process and the factors that may or may not influence your motivation to participate and your level of involvement. Information about you as an individual will not be collected. Anything you say within the focus group will not be connected to you. The focus group data will be audiotaped and then later transcribed to identify key themes that emerge during the discussion. The audiotapes will be secured by the researcher in a locked filing cabinet and will not be shared with anyone except for the appropriate research staff.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

It is not anticipated that you will experience any risk or discomfort. However, some participants may not feel comfortable discussing their feelings about Homeward and/or the planning process in a small group.

BENEFITS

There is no guarantee that you or your organization will receive any direct benefits from being in this study. Your input will assist Homeward in strengthening their planning process and the way in which the organization works with its partners. The findings from the study will be presented at one of Homeward's monthly meetings.

COSTS

There will be no cost to participate in the study.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

You will not receive payment for your participation in the study.

ALTERNATIVE

This is not a treatment study. Your alternative is not to participate in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

You are free not to respond to any of the questions that we ask and you may stop your participation in the focus group at any time without any consequence to you or your organization. Your responses will not be linked with your name or organization. The results of this research study may be presented at meetings or in publications. Your identity will not be disclosed in those presentations.

COMPENSATION FOR INJURY

In the event of physical and/or mental injury resulting from your participation in this research study, Virginia Commonwealth University and MCV Hospitals will not provide compensation. If injury occurs, medical treatment will be available at the MCV Hospitals. Fees for such treatment will be billed to you or to appropriate third party insurance. Your health insurance company may or may not pay for treatment of injuries as a result of your participation in this study.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide to not participate in this study. If you do participate, you may freely withdraw from the study at any time. Your decision will not affect your participation in the Continuum of Care planning process.

QUESTIONS

In the future, you may have questions about your study participation. If you have any questions, contact:

F. Ellen Netting, Ph.D
Virginia Commonwealth University
School of Social Work
1001 West Franklin Street
Richmond, Virginia 23284
Telephone: (804) 828-0404

Jan Ivery, MSW
Virginia Commonwealth University
School of Social Work
1001 West Franklin Street
Richmond, Virginia 23284
Telephone: (804) 828-0703

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact:

VCU Office of Research Subjects Protection
Sanger Hall, Room 1-023
1101 East Marshall Street
Richmond, Virginia, 23299
Telephone: (804) 828-0868

Do not sign this consent form unless you have had a chance to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers to all of your questions.

CONSENT

I have read the information in this consent form. All my questions about the study and my participation in it have been answered. I freely consent to participate in this research study.

By signing this consent form I have not waived any of the legal rights which I otherwise would have as a subject in a research study.

Subject Name, printed

Subject Signature

Date

Witness Signature

Date

Signature of Person Conducting Informed Consent Discussion

Date

Investigator Signature (if different from above)

Date

Appendix E
Survey Instruments

Description of Your Organization and Your Role in the Partnership

1. Please name the organization that you represent in this partnership. If you represent a department or division within the organization rather than the entire organization, please also name this department or division.

Organization: _____

Department/Division: _____

Throughout the remainder of this questionnaire, the term “organization” refers to either the organization or the department/division that you represent, as noted above.

2. How long has your organization been a partner in this partnership?

- Less than 6 months
 From 6 months to 1 year
 More than 1 year but less than 3 years
 Three years or longer

3. Is your organization located in the area where the partnership is targeting its actions?

- Yes
 No

4. How important are the partnership's goals to the organization you represent?

- Very important
 Somewhat important
 A little important
 Not at all important

5. How long have you been your organization's representative in this partnership?

- Less than 6 months
 From 6 months to 1 year
 More than 1 year but less than 3 years
 Three years or longer

6. Is there anyone else who also represents your organization in the partnership?

- Yes
 No

→ 6a. If No, is anyone else in your organization involved in the activities of the partnership?

- Yes
 No

7. Please describe your role(s) in this partnership:

8. Do you currently provide either informal or formal leadership in this partnership?

- Yes
 No

9. During the past three months, how many hours per month, on average, have you devoted to activities of the partnership?

Average # of hours per month

10. Of all the full-partnership and committee meetings you have been invited to attend, what portion of these meetings have you actually attended?

- All of them
 Most of them
 Some of them
 A few of them
 None of them

11. How much authority has your organization given you to commit money, staff or other in-kind resources to the partnership?

- Full authority
 Partial authority
 No authority

12. Has the organization you represent given you enough time and other resources to fulfill your role in the partnership?

- Yes
 No

13. Have you worked previously with any of the people or organizations involved in this partnership?

- Yes → 13a. If Yes, how would you describe the experiences you have had working with these people or organizations?
- No
- Mostly positive
- Some positive, some negative
- Mostly negative

14. Has the organization you represent worked previously with any of the other organizations participating in this partnership?

- Yes → 14a. If Yes, how would you describe the experiences your organization has had working with these other organizations?
- No
- Don't Know
- Mostly positive
- Some positive, some negative
- Mostly negative

Relationships in the Partnership

The questions in the next section focus on relationships between partners. **By "partners," we mean the people and organizations currently involved in this partnership.**

15. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Select one response for each item.)

	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
a. I am concerned that the organization I represent will be taken advantage of by other partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I believe that other partners appreciate the contribution my organization makes to the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I am concerned that some partners will not fulfill their obligations to the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I feel that the organization I represent has as much influence as other partners in decisions about partnership activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. I have experienced strained relations with other partners due to disagreements or differences in perspective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Leadership

Individuals may play different roles in the partnership. For the next set of items, please think about people who provide either formal or informal leadership in the partnership. Based on your experiences in this partnership, please rate the total effectiveness of the leadership in each of the following areas. If an item is not relevant to this partnership, please check the “Not Applicable” box. (Select one response for each item.)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
a. Taking responsibility for the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>					
b. Inspiring or motivating people involved in the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>					
c. Empowering people involved in the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>					
d. Communicating the vision of the partnership..	<input type="checkbox"/>					
e. Working to develop a common language within the partnership.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
f. Fostering respect, trust, inclusiveness and openness in the partnership.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
g. Creating an environment where differences of opinion can be voiced	<input type="checkbox"/>					
h. Resolving conflict among partners.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
i. Combining the perspectives, resources and skills of partners	<input type="checkbox"/>					
j. Helping the partnership look at things differently and be creative.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					

17. How satisfied are you with the leadership in this partnership?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- A little satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

18. Since you have been involved in the partnership, have there been any changes in its leadership?

- Yes → 18a. If Yes, what overall effect did the changes have on the partnership?
 - No
 - Don't know
- Very positive effect
 - Positive effect
 - Both positive and negative effect
 - Negative effect
 - Very negative effect

Administration and Management of the Partnership

19. Now we would like you to think about the administrative and management activities in this partnership. Based on your experiences, please rate the effectiveness of the partnership in carrying out each of the following activities. If an item is not relevant to this partnership, please check the “Not Applicable” box. (Select one response for each item.)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
a. Coordinating communication among partners	<input type="checkbox"/>					
b. Coordinating communication with people and organizations <u>outside</u> the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>					
c. Organizing partnership activities, including meetings and projects	<input type="checkbox"/>					
d. Managing and disbursing funds	<input type="checkbox"/>					
e. Applying for and managing grants	<input type="checkbox"/>					
f. Preparing materials that inform partners and help them make timely decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>					
g. Performing secretarial duties	<input type="checkbox"/>					
h. Maintaining databases	<input type="checkbox"/>					
i. Providing orientation to new partners as they join the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>					
j. Evaluating the progress and impact of the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>					

20. How satisfied are you with the effectiveness of the administration and management of the partnership?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- A little satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

21. How involved are you in the administrative and management activities of the partnership?

- Very involved
- Somewhat involved
- A little involved
- Not at all involved

22. How comfortable are you with the way decisions are made in this partnership?

- Very comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- A little comfortable
- Not at all comfortable

23. What portion of the decisions made by the partnership have you supported?

- All of them
- Most of them
- Some of them
- A few of them
- None of them

24. How often are decisions in this partnership made in a timely manner?

- All of the time
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Almost none of the time
- None of the time

Partnership Resources

Now we would like you to think about the financial and in-kind resources the partnership needs to work effectively and achieve its goals. Please consider resources that can be obtained from partners as well as from external sources.

25. For each of the following types of resources, to what extent does the partnership currently have what it needs to work effectively and to achieve its goals? If you think this partnership does not need a particular resource to work effectively and achieve its goals, please mark the “Not Applicable” box. (Select one response for each item.)

	Has all or most of what <u>it needs</u>	Has some of what <u>it needs</u>	Has almost none or none of what <u>it needs</u>	Not <u>Applicable</u>
a. Money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Skills and expertise (e.g., leadership, public policy, administration, evaluation, law, cultural competency, training, community organizing).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Equipment and goods (e.g., computers, books, medications, food).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Data and information (e.g., statistical data, information about community perceptions, values, resources, and politics).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Connections to target populations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Connections to political decision-makers, government agencies or other organizations or groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Endorsements that give the partnership legitimacy and credibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Influence and ability to bring people together for meetings or other activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

26. Thus far, what do you think are the most valuable resources your organization has contributed to the partnership?

Benefits of Participation in the Partnership

The next set of items is about benefits that organizations can receive from participating in partnerships.

27. For each of the following benefits, please circle Yes or No to indicate whether your organization has or has not already received the benefit as a result of participating in this partnership. If you circle Yes, go on to the next question. If you circle No, please indicate whether your organization expects to receive the benefit or does not expect to receive the benefit.

	<u>Already Received</u>		<u>Expects to Receive</u>	<u>Does Not Expect to Receive</u>	
a. Enhanced ability to address an issue that is important to my organization	Yes	No	If No —————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Acquisition of new knowledge or skills for my organization’s staff or members	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Heightened public profile of my organization.....	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Acquisition of additional funding to support my organization’s activities.....	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Increased utilization of my organization’s expertise or services	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Acquisition of useful knowledge about services, programs, or people in the community.....	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Enhanced ability to affect public policy.....	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Development of valuable relationships	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Enhanced ability to meet performance goals.....	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Enhanced ability to meet the needs of my organization’s constituency or clients	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Ability to have a greater impact than my organization could have on its own.....	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Ability to make a contribution to the community	Yes	No	—————>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. Please describe any other important benefits your organization has received or anticipates receiving that are not listed above.

29. Overall, how important are the benefits your organization receives from participating in this partnership?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- A little important
- Not at all important

Drawbacks to Participation in the Partnership

The next questions are about drawbacks that organizations experience as a result of participating in partnerships.

30. For each of the following drawbacks, please circle Yes or No to indicate whether your organization has or has not already experienced the drawback as a result of participating in this partnership. If you circle Yes, go on to the next question. If you circle No, please indicate whether your organization expects to experience the drawback or does not expect to experience the drawback.

	<u>Already Experienced</u>		If No	<u>Expects to Experience</u>	<u>Does Not Expect to Experience</u>
a. Diversion of time and resources away from other priorities or obligations.....	Yes	No	—————→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Less independence in organizational decision making	Yes	No	—————→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Strained relations within my organization	Yes	No	—————→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Insufficient influence in partnership activities.....	Yes	No	—————→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Organization viewed negatively due to association with other partners or the partnership	Yes	No	—————→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Loss of competitive advantage (e.g. in obtaining funding or providing services).....	Yes	No	—————→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Frustration or aggravation	Yes	No	—————→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Insufficient credit given to my organization for the accomplishments of the partnership	Yes	No	—————→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

31. Please briefly describe any other important drawbacks your organization has experienced or expects to experience that are not listed above.

32. Overall, how concerned is your organization about the drawbacks it experiences as a result of participating in this partnership?

- Extremely concerned
 Very concerned
 Somewhat concerned
 A little concerned
 Not at all concerned

33. So far, for your organization, how have the benefits of participating in this partnership compared to the drawbacks?

- Benefits greatly exceed the drawbacks
 Benefits exceed the drawbacks
 Benefits and drawbacks are about equal
 Drawbacks exceed the benefits
 Drawbacks greatly exceed the benefits

Collaboration

In the next set of questions we would like to learn more about how the partners in this partnership work together.

34. To what extent have your organization's roles and responsibilities in the partnership reflected your organization's particular interests, skills or resources?

- A lot
 Some
 A little
 Not at all

35. To what extent has your organization been asked to take on roles or responsibilities that are better suited to other partners?

- A lot
 Some
 A little
 Not at all

36. Overall, how much has your organization’s involvement in the partnership made a difference in the partnership’s goals, plans, and activities?

- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Not at all

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Select one response for each item.)

		<u>Strongly</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Disagree</u>
37.	The partnership makes good use of partners’ financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38.	The partnership makes good use of partners’ in-kind resources (e.g., skills or expertise; information and data; connections and influence; space, equipment or goods)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39.	The partnership makes good use of partners’ time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40.	The partnership has developed common goals that are understood and supported by all partners.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41.	The partnership is better able to carry out its work because of the contributions of diverse partners.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42.	The partnership has clearly communicated how its actions will address problems that are important to people in the community.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43.	The partnership has done a good job of documenting the impact of its actions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

44. How much has the involvement of different kinds of partners led to new and better ways of thinking about how the partnership can achieve its goals?

- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Not at all

45. How much has the involvement of different kinds of partners enabled the partnership to plan activities that connect multiple services, programs or systems?

- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Not at all

46. How much does the partnership incorporate into its work the perspectives and priorities of the population of interest to the partnership?

- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Not at all

47. How much support has your partnership obtained from individuals, agencies and institutions in the community that can either block the partnership’s plans or help move them forward?

- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Not at all

Please tell us how true or false the following statements are for your partnership. (Select one response for each item.)

	<u>True</u>	<u>More True than False</u>	<u>More False than True</u>	<u>False</u>
48. We frequently discuss how we are working together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49. Divergent opinions are expressed and listened to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50. The process we are engaged in is likely to have a real impact on the problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51. We have an effective decision making process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52. The openness and credibility of the process help members set aside doubts or skepticism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53. There are strong, recognized leaders who support this collaborative effort.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54. Those who are in positions of power or authority are willing to go along with our decisions or recommendations.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
55. We set aside vested interests to achieve our common goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56. We have a strong concern for preserving a credible, open process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
57. We are inspired to be action-oriented.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58. We celebrate our group’s successes as we move toward achieving the final goal.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

59. Have any of the partnership’s plans been implemented?

- Yes
- No

→ 59a. If Yes, how successful has the partnership been in implementing its plans?

- Very successful
- Generally successful
- Somewhat unsuccessful
- Very unsuccessful

The following questions ask about your satisfaction with different aspects of the partnership. (Select one response for each item.)

		<u>Very satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat satisfied</u>	<u>A little satisfied</u>	<u>Not at all satisfied</u>
60.	How satisfied are you with the way people and organizations in the partnership work together?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
61.	How satisfied are you with your organization’s influence in the partnership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
62.	How satisfied are you with your organization’s role in the partnership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
63.	How satisfied are you with the partnership’s plans for achieving its goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
64.	How satisfied are you with the way the partnership has implemented its plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Partnership Challenges

The next set of questions asks about challenges that partnerships may face as they work toward achieving their goals.

65. To what extent has the partnership encountered the following internal challenges?

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Not at All</u>	<u>Do Not Know</u>
a. Problems <u>recruiting</u> essential partners	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Difficulties <u>retaining</u> essential partners.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. Difficulties with relationships among partners	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. Difficulties motivating partners to participate	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. Inadequate or changing leadership.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
f. Inadequate or changing administrative/management staff.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
g. Problems with the decision making process	<input type="checkbox"/>				
h. Problems moving the partnership from planning to action	<input type="checkbox"/>				
i. Difficulties obtaining financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>				
j. Difficulties obtaining non-financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>				
k. Inequitable distribution of funds.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				

66. To what extent has the partnership encountered the following challenges related to the community and policy environment?

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Not at All</u>	<u>Do Not Know</u>
a. Problems with categorical funding or program requirements.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Lack of incentives to motivate people and organizations to participate in the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. Competition for resources or clients among groups and organizations in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. Little history of cooperation or trust among people, groups and organizations in the community.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. Resistance by key people and key organizations to the goals and activities of the partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>				
f. Unwillingness of government agencies to grant needed authority or control to the partnership.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
g. Legal or regulatory barriers.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
h. Difficulties bringing partners together due to safety issues, long distances or lack of transportation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
i. Existence of multiple partnerships in the community, many of which involve the same partners	<input type="checkbox"/>				

67. Please list any other factors that have hindered the partnership's ability to carry out its work.

Background of Respondent

Finally, in this last section, we are interested in learning a little about you.

68. Are you female or male?

- Female
- Male

69. How old are you now?
- Under 20 years
 20-29 years
 30-39 years
 40-49 years
 50-59 years
 60 years and older
70. Are you of Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin or descent?
- Yes
 No
71. What is your race? (Check all that apply.)
- White
 Black or African-American
 American Indian or Alaska Native
 Asian
 Pacific Islander
 Some other race (please describe):

72. What is the highest degree or level of education that you have completed?
- Less than a high school degree
 High school degree
 Some college, but no college degree
 Associate's degree (e.g., AA, AS)
 Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, AB, BS)
 Some graduate or professional school (e.g., medical school, law school)
 Graduate or professional degree (e.g., MA, MPH, MSW, PhD, MD, JD)
73. What is your job?

74. How would you characterize the organization you represent in the partnership? (Check all that apply.)
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy group | <input type="checkbox"/> Managed care organization or insurer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College or University | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical practice or clinic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community based organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foundation | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government agency other than a health department | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government health department | <input type="checkbox"/> School below college level |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitals or health system | <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary health organization (e.g., American Cancer Society, March of Dimes) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labor organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

75. Please check the category that best describes your position within the organization you represent in the partnership. (Select one response.)

- Executive or officer
- Managerial
- Faculty
- Other professional
- Clerical or other support
- Something else (please describe:
_____)

76. Is your participation in this partnership included in your job description?

- Yes
- No

77. In addition to representing your organization, please describe any other perspectives you bring to the partnership:

78. Have you participated in any other partnerships?

- Yes → 78a. If Yes, what portion of these partnership experiences have been positive for you personally?
- No

- All of them
- Most of them
- Some of them
- A few of them
- None of them

78b. In general, what portion of these other partnerships have been successful in achieving their goals?

- All of them
- Most of them
- Some of them
- A few of them
- None of them

78c. Have you represented your current organization in any of these other partnerships?

- Yes
- No

79. Is there anything else you would like us to know about your experiences in this partnership?

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE!!

Partnership Participation Survey

Spring 2004

Your answers are very important to us. All of the information you provide in this survey will be kept strictly confidential. Please do not put your name anywhere on the survey. Thoughtful and honest answers will provide us with the most useful information.

Please mail back the completed survey in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope by [insert date]. Thank you in advance for taking the time to carefully complete this survey. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (804) 828-0703. I can also be reached by email at jmivery@vcu.edu

Again, thank you for your time.

- 1) Is your organization familiar with Homeward's work with the homeless population in the Greater Richmond area?

Yes _____ No _____

- 2) Homeward has identified your organization as one of its partners. However, your organization does not consider itself to be in partnership with Homeward. How would you describe your relationship with Homeward?

- 3) What factors have influenced your organization's decision to not be active in Homeward's planning process?

4) What benefits do you think your organization could receive from being active with Homeward's planning process?

5) What drawbacks do you think your organization may experience as a result of being active with Homeward's planning process?

6) To what extent would your organization like to become more involved with Homeward?

May I contact you for additional information about your responses? Yes _____ No _____

Please feel free to add any additional comments on the back of this page
Thank you for completing the survey!

Vita

Jan Marva Ivery earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (Indiana, PA) in 1995 and the Master of Social Work Degree from the University of Pittsburgh in 1997. She is an adjunct professor in the School of Social Work and was employed as the MSW Admissions Coordinator. Her volunteer and work experience includes various positions in HIV/AIDS prevention.