



Georgetown Public Policy Institute



# Promise Neighborhoods and HCZ: Thoughts on Policy and Practice

Steven Rathgeb Smith  
Georgetown University  
University of Washington  
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## HCZ and the Promise of Social Innovation Through Nonprofits

- Big growth in the number of nonprofits
- Widespread interest in voluntarism and community service
- The possibilities of grass-roots community organizations to solve social problems
- The potential of public-private partnerships
- Broad support for performance management and greater accountability in publicly supported services
- New approaches to philanthropy



## Challenges Facing Nonprofit Organizations in Providing Quality Services

- Modest size
- Lack of infrastructure
- Difficult to evaluate services
- mission driven
- Inadequate revenues and/or over-dependence on certain grants or contracts
- Staff and board recruitment



# Success factors for Nonprofit Organizations

- A clear strategy and alignment between mission and strategy
- Investment in Infrastructure
  - Professionalization
  - IT and Data collection capacity
- Measuring results and outcomes on a sustained basis
- Strong support from local public and private institutions



# Success factors for Nonprofit Organizations

- Diversified revenue base
- Productive partnerships with foundations, corporations
- Stable leadership and governance
- Organizational development and learning



# Implications for the Promise Neighborhoods Initiative

- Careful selection of the partner organizations
- Need for sustained financial support
- Common set of outcome measures across sites
- Fund a single organization rather than a new coalition of agencies
- Provide flexibility for program adaptation
- Success hinges on local community support including local government and foundations.



# Implications for the Promise Neighborhoods Initiative

- Need for a short and long-term perspective
- Value of routine services
- Need to understand the impact of Promise Neighborhood grants on the local social service system
- Government will need its own capacity to monitor this program on an ongoing basis
- Important role for evidence-based practice
- Organizational capacity among local partner agencies is key