



**THE
COLORADO
TRUST**

ACHIEVING ACCESS TO HEALTH FOR ALL COLORADANS



SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION IN COLORADO
Lessons Learned

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Supporting Immigrant Integration in Colorado: Lessons Learned was prepared by:

Association for the Study and Development of Community

Kien Lee, Ph.D., Senior Managing Associate

Other contributors from the Association for the Study and Development of Community included Joie Acosta, Carmen Arroyo, Sonia Arteaga, Susanna Hayward, Mondy Mason, Marjorie Nemes, Mario Acosta Velez and Varsha Venugopal.

Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning

Joe Wismann-Horther, M.Ed., Project Director, Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative

Susan Downs-Karkos, Director, Integration Strategies (formerly Senior Program Officer, The Colorado Trust)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2004 – when The Colorado Trust, the Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning, and the Association for the Study and Development of Community first began working together to promote immigrant integration – policymakers, community advocates, academics, foundations, government agencies and nonprofit organizations have expressed keen interest in learning from this statewide demonstration project.

While the enduring impact of actively addressing immigrant integration in Colorado communities isn't yet fully realized, collective efforts to date have resulted in some meaningful lessons that will prove helpful to others who are focusing on community-based efforts that consider demographic changes. This document describes the process of bringing together diverse perspectives and the concrete ways in which communities are addressing the arrival of newcomers.

With record numbers of people across the globe migrating from their home countries to new destinations, immigrant integration as a means to foster healthy communities is arguably of greater relevance than ever before in history. After four years of intense, intentional work to advance immigrant integration statewide, the three aforementioned lead organizations recognized the importance of sharing their experiences in bringing together newcomers and established residents in response to changing demographics. Given that other organizations and communities are increasingly interested in new, effective approaches to achieve immigrant integration, this document strives to capture the many lessons learned from designing, supporting and evaluating immigrant integration efforts in communities across Colorado.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Lessons learned from the efforts of 19 community collaboratives being funded to develop and implement comprehensive, local integration plans include:

- **Revisit the definition of integration to continuously refine localized integration strategies.** Definitions of immigrant integration typically evolve over time, but it can be challenging to maintain an equal emphasis on immigrants' responsibilities and the receiving community's responsibilities, with groups at times focusing disproportionately on the former.
- **In Colorado, it was generally easier to engage Mexican immigrants in immigrant integration efforts than other immigrant groups.** There were many reasons for this, such as previously established relationships, insularity of some ethnic groups and a political environment that focused virtually all immigrant considerations on Mexico.
- **There is a high level of community interest and motivation to work intentionally to promote immigrant integration.** Colorado communities engaged in immigrant integration work reflect the geographic and other diversity of the state – including rural, urban and suburban communities that represent, for example, different ethnicities and political affiliations (such as those considered to be politically conservative and those generally perceived to be liberal).
- **Communities must create and implement solid communication strategies.** For those involved in immigrant integration work, it is necessary to be prepared to communicate quickly and accurately about what can be a politically charged issue in some communities. To ensure that immigrant integration remains at the fore, it is also imperative to incorporate new thinking into the work as the environment changes.
- **Prior to the local integration planning efforts, many longer-term community members had not interacted with immigrants in meaningful ways.** Many collaboratives needed to focus early and ongoing efforts on relationship building among established community members and immigrants and refugees.
- **Addressing immigrant integration comprehensively is challenging because the dynamics of changing demographics impact every aspect of community life.** Communities working on immigrant integration grappled with balancing comprehensiveness and addressing root causes, identifying what was most realistic and feasible to accomplish.

- While the planning process must be thoughtful, strategic and results-oriented, the longer the planning process takes, the greater the risk of losing momentum. Communities should stay aware of how much time is being spent in meetings, and find ways to re-energize and re-engage collaborative members throughout the initiative.
- A compatible relationship between the facilitator and primary community contact is imperative. If there is a conflict – due to differences in personalities, work styles or approaches to achieving community change – and if a good faith effort by both parties does not lead to satisfactory results, it is important to change facilitators until the right match is found.
- For immigrant integration efforts to succeed, it is critical for key champions and volunteers to emerge as leaders, many of whom subsequently contribute many hours toward achieving immigrant integration in their communities. These individuals generally demonstrate an unusually high level of passion and commitment to the initiative.
- Through careful consideration of communication strategies, grantee communities must address politically-charged issues and prevent work from being undermined by narrow political agendas. Sites that deliberately separated their work from immigration policy did not get sidetracked; rather, each time an unrelated immigration issue was raised, collaborative members redirected their audience to the intended conversation on integration.
- Even after a plan is established, all parties involved must remain open to making adjustments in integration efforts. Because the environment tends to change quickly, and new opportunities and challenges arise constantly, flexibility and a constant focus are critical ingredients of successful immigrant integration.
- Collaborative integration efforts require substantial patience, particularly in the early phases. Much integration work is an ongoing process of building relationships, influencing systems and seizing opportunities for activities to promote social change. It can be difficult to realize immediate actions and corresponding results – it takes time for communities to fully prioritize and launch their activities, and it takes even more time to measure the outcomes of these efforts.
- Competing demands on time are an obstacle to receiving and incorporating technical assistance learnings into immigrant integration work. Members of the community collaboratives have many priorities vying for their time; participants serve on other boards, have demanding work schedules, and sometimes struggle to balance their personal, professional and community commitments. As a result, some are unable to dedicate the time and effort needed to benefit from the availability of various forms of technical assistance.
- The initiative-level evaluator must be prepared to work with individuals whose understanding and skills related to evaluation may be limited. As well, the evaluator – and the funder – must be flexible and adjust their expectations when grantees' indicators change to reflect shifting integration strategies. It is important to remember that evaluation adds a layer of complexity to already-challenging immigrant integration work. Additionally, grantees typically have limited capacity to collect and analyze data beyond monitoring attendance, evaluating workshops and coordinating with partner agencies to provide the needed information.
- Integration efforts may not always be sustainable at the same scale and scope as originally funded. To ensure continuity of core immigrant integration activities through multiple avenues of support, grantee communities must be innovative in pooling community resources to coordinate their efforts, as well as integrate relevant immigrant integration strategies with the work of existing organizations, community agencies, etc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1:	
Introduction.....	5
Chapter 2:	
History.....	8
Chapter 3:	
Community Planning.....	11
Chapter 4:	
Communication	16
Chapter 5:	
Implementation.....	18
Chapter 6:	
Technical Assistance	23
Chapter 7:	
Evaluation	25
Chapter 8:	
Sustainability	28
Appendix:	
Community Project Descriptions.....	29

CHAPTER 1: *Introduction*

This chapter provides an overview of Colorado’s demographics and a definition of immigrant integration, and explores how local communities perceive integration.

In the 1990s, Colorado was the eighth fastest growing state for foreign-born residents, with over 10% of the state’s population born overseas (2006). While almost 60% of those individuals are from Mexico and Latin America, other major areas of origin include Asia (20%), Europe (14%) and Africa (4%).

Until the 2000 Census, Colorado wasn’t considered an immigrant gateway state. However, as the number of new immigrants in rural, urban and suburban communities continued to grow, the need to explore the implications of those demographic changes became increasingly apparent. Institutions and individuals recognized that – while their communities were changing – little emphasis was being placed on how those changes might be addressed. As areas of health, education, language, economic mobility, social interaction and civic participation were examined, it was clear that communities were doing little to adapt to an increasingly diverse population with correspondingly diverse assets and needs. While the dominant conversation at that time was how immigrants needed to change, there was a growing recognition that communities and their institutions also needed to adapt, and that a proactive approach to the increased diversity would help strengthen communities.

At the same time, federal immigration law has in recent years become one of the most contested issues in U.S. politics, even as Colorado’s economy increasingly relies on immigrant labor, particularly in the service, agricultural and construction sectors – indeed, immigrants comprise a significant share of the low-wage work force in Colorado. So those interested in proactively addressing immigrant integration recognize that, while newcomers are settling here and striving to become part of their new communities, the immigration debate continues in the nation’s capital. Rather than waiting for progress at the federal level, communities have begun to talk about local impacts and how they can create healthy communities despite this conflicted environment.

Immigrant integration in Colorado is founded on the principle of immigrant and receiving community members working together. Despite their cultural, linguistic and other differences, immigrant and longer-term residents have similar hopes and aspirations for themselves, their families and the broader community. Yet many longer-term residents have little or no occasion to develop relationships with immigrants, and vice versa; in most communities, receiving community members rarely have meaningful conversations and extended interactions with immigrants. Finding ways to build these relationships over time is a major thrust of immigrant integration work. Thus, bridging cultural divides by bringing people together at the local level to create and implement a shared agenda around immigrant integration became the cornerstone of The Colorado Trust’s Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative.

DEFINING “IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION”

Increasingly, members of government and academia, as well as practitioners across the globe, view the long-term adaptation of immigrants to their new communities in terms of “immigrant integration” – a concept that recognizes a two-way street in which both newcomers and receiving community members adapt to each other and work together to create healthy, vibrant communities. While some may prefer terms such as “community integration,” “immigrant integration” was intentionally applied throughout the initiative to reflect an emphasis on the state’s changing demographics and the consequent need for a stronger focus on immigrants.

LESSON LEARNED:

Definitions of immigrant integration typically evolve over time, but it can be challenging to maintain an equal emphasis on immigrants' responsibilities and the receiving community's responsibilities, with groups at times focusing disproportionately on the former.

Immigrant integration is a dynamic, two-way process in which newcomers and the receiving society work together to build secure, vibrant and cohesive communities. Integration should be an intentional process that engages and transforms all community stakeholders, enriching our social, economic and civic life over time. Mutual responsibility and benefits, multi-sector involvement and a multi-strategy approach are the cornerstones of the *Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees' Immigrant Integration Framework*. These elements are critical to any effort to include newcomers in the fabric of our communities.

Toward the end of the Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative grantee planning processes, the evaluation team asked 197 immigrants and receiving community members in the 19 grantee communities how they defined immigrant integration and what forms it has taken in their communities. Their comments revealed the following themes:

- Immigrants have equal access to information about available services and resources
- Immigrants leaders are visibly engaged in the civic life of the larger community
- Immigrants enroll in ESL (English as a Second Language) coursework to learn English
- Receiving community members accept immigrants' presence in their communities, help immigrants adjust to life in the United States, and recognize that immigrants are vital to community life
- Immigrants and receiving community members share the responsibility of making the community a better place for everyone and find solutions to issues collaboratively
- Immigrants and receiving community members exchange information about their respective cultures, and value and honor each others' contributions.

Two years later, participants from grantee communities reported that their definitions of immigrant integration had not changed. Their experiences, however, led some of them to emphasize the significance of two features of the process: **integration takes time and the process has to focus on both immigrants and receiving community members.** This improved understanding about immigrant integration is most notable among receiving community members and immigrants who actively participate in their community's immigrant integration efforts. Participants also reported such early integration successes as:

- More interaction among immigrants and receiving community members at community and sporting events, and in public locations (e.g., the library)
- Increased immigrant involvement in civic affairs (e.g., writing letters to local officials, attending PTA meetings, etc.) and community events (e.g., parades)
- Higher immigrant enrollment and attendance at ESL classes
- More requests from receiving community members for immigrant outreach assistance, as well as translation and interpretation support
- Increased immigrant attendance at workshops to learn about their rights, resources available to them and how to navigate U.S. systems
- Increased use of immigrant resource centers by both immigrants and receiving community members.

Because a high proportion of Colorado's foreign-born population is from Mexico, there was a tendency throughout the initiative to associate immigrant integration only with Mexican immigrants. Additionally, political controversy about undocumented immigrants also sometimes distracted grantee communities from focusing on integrating all community

residents that represent a wide range of cultures. Helping community members to think more broadly about the state's foreign-born population is an important and challenging aspect of the work.

LESSON LEARNED:

In Colorado, it was generally easier to engage Mexican immigrants in immigrant integration efforts than other immigrant groups. There were many reasons for this, such as previously established relationships, insularity of some ethnic groups and a political environment that focused virtually all immigrant considerations on Mexico.

Throughout history, communities have struggled to accept and integrate newcomers. Yet given today's global mobility, integration is more complex – and more necessary – than before. Growing disparities in health, education and economic well-being further point to the compelling need for communities to achieve immigrant integration.

Indeed, the ability of communities to successfully realize immigrant integration over the next decade is critical to the global role of the United States. As a nation, we have the challenge and the opportunity to demonstrate leadership in championing healthy, thriving communities through immigrant integration.

BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

In his work *E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century*, political scientist Robert Putnam argues that – while racially and ethnically diverse communities may be divided societies in the short-term – intentional efforts to build social capital between different racial and ethnic groups is essential for increasing social solidarity and creating more encompassing community identities over time.

CHAPTER 2: *History*

This chapter explains the development of The Colorado Trust's Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative, its major components and the initiative logic model. Also included is a description of how the funding, technical assistance and evaluation portions of the initiative supported each other.

HISTORY

In developing the Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative in 2000, The Colorado Trust – a grantmaking foundation dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the people of Colorado – focused on strengthening immigrant-serving organizations that provide mental health and cultural adjustment services to immigrants and refugees. In the first four years of the initiative, many such organizations successfully enhanced and expanded their services. However, it also became clear that these organizations, while trusted by the immigrant population and sensitive to their needs, were not equipped to meet all of the challenges that newcomer families face, or leverage on the many strengths they have to offer their communities.

The Trust came to understand that – to be fully responsive to immigrant and refugee needs – significant effort was required at the community level, particularly through larger institutions (e.g., schools, health care providers and local governments). A comprehensive approach to include such institutions, as well as immigrant-serving organizations and immigrants themselves, emerged as the next step to more thoroughly address Colorado's changing demographics.

STRATEGY

When The Trust began to explore a subsequent funding strategy to address immigrant integration more broadly, few such efforts existed. So the foundation relied on the following inputs for guidance:

- Comprehensive literature review
- Summit of key local and national leaders to discuss the integration framework
- Focus groups with immigrants and refugees.

Working with the Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning – a Denver-based nonprofit organization that provides direct services to immigrants, as well as helps strengthen organizations and communities in their work with diverse populations – The Trust developed a **funding strategy** to address immigrant integration in communities as follows:

- Support an inclusive planning effort among participants from the health care, education, business, banking, law enforcement and local government sectors, as well as libraries, faith-based organizations, immigrant-serving organizations and immigrants and refugees themselves. Facilitators from the Spring Institute provided neutral meeting facilitation and helped ensure inclusive participation during the planning process – ranging from six to nine months – for grantee communities. Outcomes from this planning process were comprehensive immigrant integration plans, localized to each community, that addressed pathways to integration (e.g., language, health, education, employment, economic mobility, civic involvement and community relations).
- Four-year grants from The Trust helped communities to begin the long-term work of implementing their immigrant integration plans. Ongoing technical assistance from the Spring Institute and other third party experts was also provided throughout the implementation phase, as well as numerous networking opportunities for all grantees to learn from each other, and together explore and support each other in areas of common interest.
- Fund an initiative evaluation by which to share lessons learned from the planning, implementation and intermediate outcomes of these statewide immigrant integration efforts.

Because Colorado is such a geographically and economically diverse state, it made sense for The Trust to fund different types of communities. Through a two-part competitive Request for Proposals process, The Trust funded 19 communities to engage in immigrant integration activities; 10 communities were funded in 2004 and an additional nine communities were funded in 2006.

LESSON LEARNED:

There is a high level of community interest and motivation to work intentionally to promote immigrant integration. Colorado communities engaged in immigrant integration work reflect the geographic and other diversity of the state – including rural, urban and suburban communities that represent, for example, different ethnicities and political affiliations (such as those considered to be politically conservative and those generally perceived to be liberal).

In selecting which communities to fund, The Trust carefully considered the level of community interest in addressing immigrant integration. Letters of commitment were required from every potential individual participant in the planning process. Reviewers examined to what extent the three main sectors were represented – immigrants themselves, immigrant-serving organizations and mainstream institutions – and to what extent a positive, committed spirit of working together existed (e.g., the number of existing relationships with immigrant communities, the level of commitment to ongoing outreach across ethnic groups, and the willingness to create a comprehensive plan and receive help in its development).

Other expectations from applicants included evidence of a commitment to work on implementing the plan over a four-year period, as well as enthusiasm to attend networking events with grantees from across the state and participate in the initiative evaluation.

OVERSIGHT

Internally, addressing immigrant integration comprehensively statewide required coordination and flexibility in meeting unique grantee needs, and creative problem solving by The Trust (funder), Spring Institute (technical assistance provider) and the Association for the Study and Development of Community (evaluator). Management team meetings were held regularly to ensure that:

- Everyone who was working with the grantee communities was using a common definition of integration
- Roles and responsibilities were clearly delineated
- Program design and evaluation measures were in alignment
- The needs of the community grantees were met as consistently and quickly as possible, including brainstorming swift and thoughtful resolution to challenging grantee issues.

It was important to integrate all initiative components, and to foster a team approach based on mutual respect among the funder, technical assistance providers, evaluator and grantees. In turn, this collaborative spirit helped foster an environment in which strong integration efforts could thrive.

An example of a tangible intervention that emerged early in the planning process was the one grantee's need for headsets to provide language interpretation at meetings. The few available headsets were being shared across several communities; it was burdensome to reserve and transport the headsets, but the cost of new headsets was prohibitive. Upon learning of this challenge in a management meeting, The Trust negotiated a favorable rate and purchased headsets in bulk for all grantees. As a result, the communities not only had the equipment they needed to ensure inclusivity at their planning meetings and group forums, but the headsets also were shared in other local venues – including schools, courtrooms and at civic events.

Recognizing that language access is an important element of integration, communities practiced integration strategies within their own planning process. Providing headsets to community members – and holding some meetings in a language other than English – gave participants the opportunity to understand what it means not to speak someone else's language.

As well, a constantly changing political environment – including marches for immigrant rights, increased local and national press about immigrants and immigration, federal congressional debates, workplace raids by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Colorado, and a special session devoted to immigration by Colorado’s legislature – made it imperative for all parties to understand the implications thereof and how to move forward strategically with an immigrant integration agenda. In most cases, that meant staying focused on positive community change.

LESSON LEARNED:

Communities must create and implement solid communication strategies. For those involved in immigrant integration work, it is necessary to be prepared to communicate quickly and accurately about what can be a politically charged issue in some communities. To ensure that immigrant integration remains at the fore, it is also imperative to incorporate new thinking into the work as the environment changes.

For example, when a misunderstanding about immigrant integration arose in one grantee community and was reported in a local newspaper, it was shortly thereafter picked up by the Associated Press and, subsequently, referenced in an article in *The New York Times*. Such unfortunate occurrences that can inflame tensions and cause alienation among community members demonstrate the critical need to develop effective communication strategies to help all residents better understand immigrant integration issues.

CHAPTER 3: *Community Planning*

With a focus on community planning, this chapter is particularly helpful to those interested in bringing together diverse community members to proactively address community issues that are affected by changing demographics.

PLANNING MODEL

The purpose of the community planning process was to establish a strong foundation for dialogue, not debate, in communities. Based on Appreciative Inquiry practices, community planning efforts focused on bringing together immigrants and receiving community members in partnership and dialogue – including as many different sectors of the community as possible – and gathering ideas about future activities to incorporate in a comprehensive immigrant integration plan. Communities were empowered to develop a planning process that best fit their needs in response to the unique dynamics at the local level.

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

The model for the community planning process was designed as an assets-based approach that incorporated Appreciative Inquiry practices. Developed by David Cooperrider of Case Western Reserve University, Appreciative Inquiry considers positive relationships as a means to enhance collaboration and achieve positive change.

All community grantees of The Colorado Trust's Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative were presented an overview of the "4-D" Appreciative Inquiry cycle, **Discover-Dream-Design-Deliver**. Activities were designed to capture the creative and positive thinking that community members brought to discussions about how to build healthier communities through a shared sense of belonging among community residents. For more information about Appreciate Inquiry, please visit <http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/>.

During the community planning stage, grantees organized activities that brought together community members to engage in in-depth discussions, deliberations and visioning of future activities. Additionally, forums allowed for critical dialogue among concerned community members, and included celebrations of food, music, dance and art.

LESSON LEARNED:

Prior to the local integration planning efforts, many longer-term community members had not interacted with immigrants in meaningful ways. Many collaboratives needed to focus early and ongoing efforts on relationship building among established community members, and immigrants and refugees.

To help participants examine immigrant integration comprehensively, communities considered how their current efforts related to the following pathways to well-being:

- Language
- Education
- Health and well-being
- Employment
- Economic mobility
- Civic involvement and participation
- Community building and community relations

LESSONS LEARNED:

Addressing immigrant integration comprehensively is challenging because the dynamics of changing demographics impact every aspect of community life. Communities working on immigrant integration grappled with balancing comprehensiveness and addressing root causes, identifying what was most realistic and feasible to accomplish.

While the planning process must be thoughtful, strategic and results-oriented, the longer the planning process takes, the greater the risk of losing momentum. Communities should stay aware of how much time is being spent in meetings, and find ways to re-energize and re-engage collaborative members throughout the initiative.

ROLE OF FACILITATORS

Facilitators of the community planning process were selected by the Spring Institute based not only on their facilitation skills, but also their cross-cultural expertise, practical background in collaborative efforts, passion for immigrant integration and community building, knowledge of the grantee communities and ability to contribute to the overall team.

A positive relationship between the facilitator and the local community contact for the immigrant integration grant emerged as essential to a successful planning process. This relationship was necessarily based on mutual trust, willingness to learn from each other and compatible viewpoints about how to promote community change (e.g., community organizing, dialogues, etc.).

For some grantees, it also mattered that the facilitator was familiar with their community's history and context, preferably a resident of their community; for others, such close familiarity had little bearing on the team relationship, or relevance and quality of technical assistance provided. In both cases, however, clarity about how many hours and the specific type of assistance to be provided was key to ensure effective communication throughout the planning process, as well a common understanding of mutual expectations.

In a few sites, the match between the facilitator and the local contact was unsuccessful due to differences in personal style and the facilitators' perceived inadequate knowledge about the local community and culture. In such instances – if a good faith effort by both parties did not lead to satisfactory results – The Trust and Spring Institute engaged a new facilitator who could better respond to the community's needs. Communication during this time was key to minimize the disruption and ensure a smooth transition.

Grantees agreed that – beyond being accessible and available – facilitators were also helpful because they:

- Provided fresh and neutral outside perspectives that were not associated with any agency or sector in a given community
- Skillfully optimized group dynamics and – when necessary – diffused disagreements and conflicts
- Shared information about the experiences of other communities, including other grantees
- Served as a liaison between The Trust and grantees, and clarified grant expectations and requirements
- Ensured that evaluation findings and lessons learned were discussed and applied as appropriate in mid-course strategy adjustments.

Facilitators' expertise and assistance was especially helpful when anti-immigrant rhetoric caused tension in some communities.

LESSONS LEARNED:

A compatible relationship between the facilitator and primary community contact is imperative. If there is a conflict – due to differences in personalities, work styles or approaches to achieving community change – and if a good faith effort by both parties does not lead to satisfactory results, it is important to change facilitators until the right match is found.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach is a long-term, ongoing effort that requires commitment and dedication by immigrant and receiving community members, as well as the facilitator, on a consistent and daily basis. It is also the most difficult – but arguably the most important – part of the planning process.

Newly arrived immigrants were often consumed in day-to-day survival and longer-term immigrants didn't always identify with a broader immigrant group. As well, the question of documentation tended to separate communities; in some cases, even the term “immigrant” carried a negative connotation, given the controversial political environment regarding immigration reform. Other barriers to community outreach included misunderstandings due to cultural differences and a lack of trust in communities.

Overall, community members with already-established personal relationships with immigrants were more successful in engaging them during the planning process. Additionally, it became apparent that effective outreach strategies must go well beyond e-mails and fliers; though time consuming, face-to-face encounters worked best in expanding participation in immigrant integration activities. Also, communities must be open to scheduling meetings beyond regular working hours to ensure maximum engagement by immigrants.

SECTOR REPRESENTATION

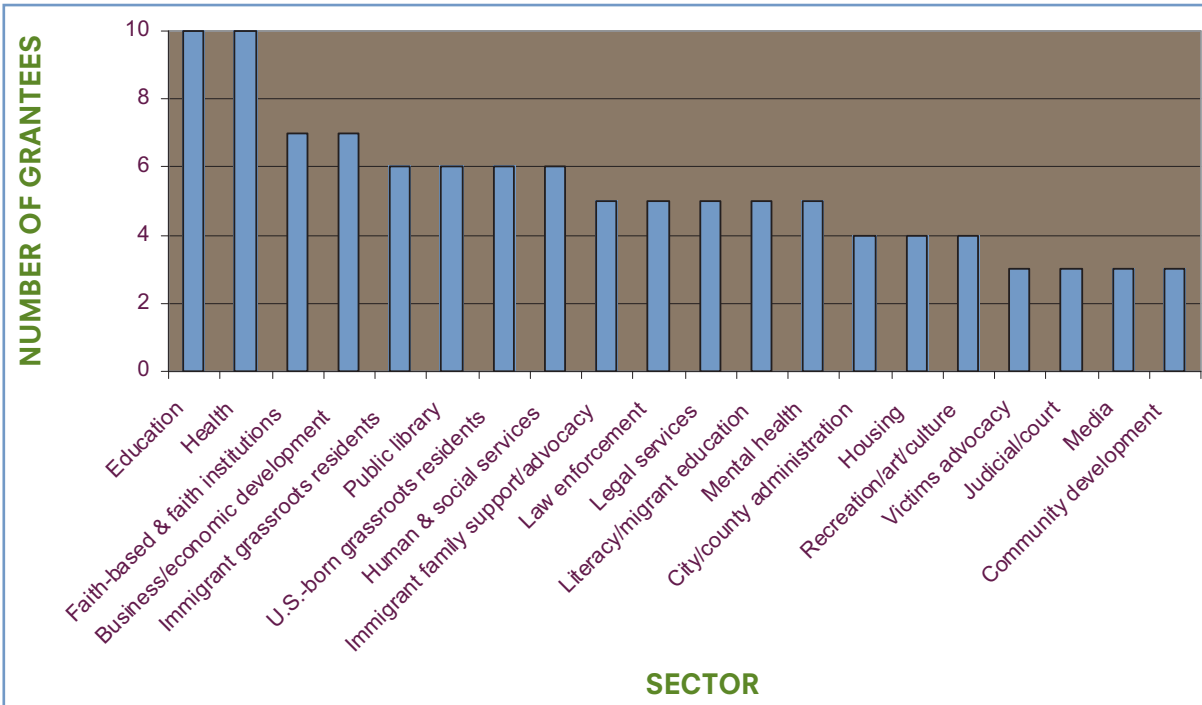
The Association for the Study and Development of Community – evaluators of the Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative – collected data on the sectors represented in the 10 initially funded sites. Across these sites, 8-17 sectors were represented in the planning processes; in five sites, 13-17 sectors were represented; and over half of the grantee communities reported at least one representative from the following sectors:

- Education (e.g., schools and colleges)
- Health (e.g., hospitals, city or county departments of public health, as well as substance abuse prevention task forces)
- Faith-based and faith institutions (e.g., Catholic Charities and churches)
- Business and economic development groups (e.g., the Cargill Corporation and local chambers of commerce)
- Immigrant grassroots residents (i.e., not affiliated with any organization)
- U.S.-born grassroots residents (i.e., not affiliated with any organization, including retired citizens)
- Public libraries
- Human and social services (e.g., city or county departments of social services and family resource centers).

A few grantees further included representatives from these sectors in their leadership committees:

- Political and policy advocacy in Mesa and Pueblo counties
- Philanthropy in Boulder County
- Disability advocacy in Littleton
- Leadership development in Summit County
- Labor and workforce development in El Paso County.

Figure 1: Community Sectors Represented in Grantees' Leadership Committees



The proportion of representation from each sector (number of representatives from each sector compared to the total number of representatives across the 10 committees) varied slightly from the order shown in Figure 1. Figure 2 shows the relative proportion of each sector's representation across the 10 grantee communities.

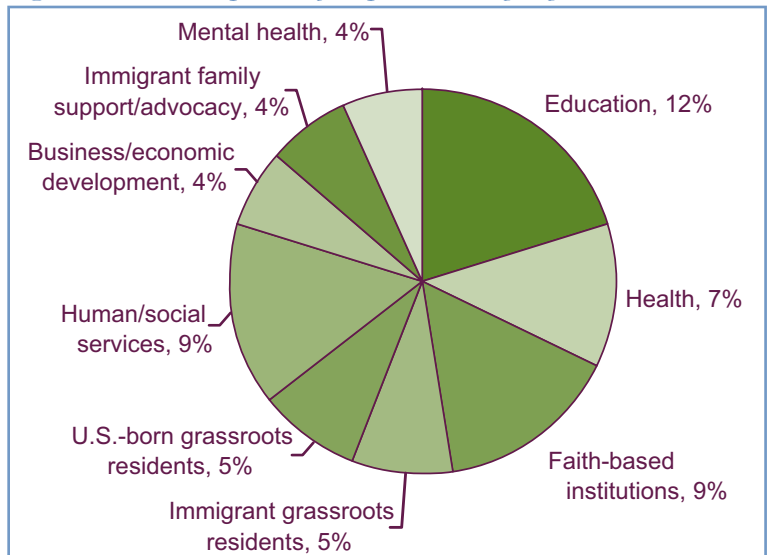
This analysis suggests that representation from the education, faith-based and religious, human and social services, and health sectors dominated immigrant integration efforts in the 10 sites.

According to some grantees, however, several key sectors were absent or under-represented from local immigrant integration efforts, including:

- City and county governments
- Law enforcement
- Faith-based organizations (other than the Catholic Church)
- Businesses (both immigrant- and non-immigrant-owned businesses/employers).

While such perceived lack of complete sector representation did not substantially hinder the work of the grantee communities, it limited the potential for change in these sectors and systems.

Figure 2: Relative Proportion of Representation by Key Sector



Given the collaborative nature of the communities' immigrant integration efforts, many new or strengthened relationships developed as a result of the initiative. The evaluation team asked each site's collaborative members to identify up to

three individuals or organizations with whom they worked closely to promote immigrant integration – a total of 256 relationships were reported by respondents, some of whom reported the maximum number of three, while others reported only one.

Of all the relationships reported, slightly over one-third (36%) formed as a direct result of the respondents' involvement in immigrant integration activities. In three of the 10 sites, 50% or more of the relationships resulted from the respondents' involvement, suggesting that local immigrant integration efforts provided a valuable platform for relationship building. [For examples of relationships and relationship building among immigrants and receiving community members, please refer to the Strategies and Activities section in Chapter 5: Implementation.]

KEY CHAMPIONS AND VOLUNTEERS

Beyond the efforts of key leaders and champions of immigrant integration, every grantee community also benefited from a cadre of volunteers who demonstrated unusual commitment to the initiative. Unlikely supporters also emerged, including such individuals as a former university president, a farmer, a police chief, a teacher, a stay-at-home parent, a retiree and a mayor.

Ultimately, all 19 grantee communities funded to create an immigrant integration plan were able to do so successfully, despite challenges along the way. For example, both Alamosa and Greeley endured and overcame disruptive and controversial ICE raids by bringing together diverse people to talk through their long-term integration concerns, needs and aspirations.

Communities held fast to their resolve to include in their immigrant integration efforts people with different perspectives. For the most part, communities were able to build common ground across political viewpoints – but, in some cases, members of the community collaboratives left the initiative process to pursue their political agendas separately.

LESSON LEARNED:

For immigrant integration efforts to succeed, it is critical for key champions and volunteers to emerge as leaders, many of whom subsequently contribute many hours toward achieving immigrant integration in their communities. These individuals generally demonstrate an unusually high level of passion and commitment to the initiative.

CHAPTER 4: *Communication*

Given the contentious climate surrounding immigration issues, communicating to others about immigrant integration can be challenging. This chapter describes the communication strategy for the Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative, and how immigration concerns were addressed.

From the beginning of the initiative, the term “immigrant integration” brought to the minds of some target audiences a perceived association with “immigration policy.” The challenge became to help participants move beyond that level of thinking to consider the long-term need for – and opportunities of – immigrant integration in their communities.

To support the process of building a common understanding of immigrant integration work, The Colorado Trust developed a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that were posted to The Trust website – www.coloradotrust.org. These FAQs outlined the scope of the Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative; grantees were provided the FAQs, as well as encouraged to develop their own to reflect the unique context and immigrant integration approach of their communities. Indeed, many grantee communities developed FAQs as part of the immigrant integration planning process, thereby helping to establish a collaborative identity and ensuring buy-in among community participants; the related “talking points” that each community developed became their own.

Further, technical assistance in the area of communication helped collaborative members become more mindful – and therefore more effective – in their collective communication. Additionally, some group communication trainings across all immigrant integration grantees helped them to learn from each other, and build the necessary skills to maximize the impact of their individual and collective communications. Trainings were not designed to dictate grantees’ messages; rather, the trainings were designed to help collaborative members develop their own abilities to effectively convey the goals and progress of their efforts and – especially – to deflect controversies.

Collaborative members practiced communicating about their integration activities, and each site selected one to two spokespersons who were well-respected in their communities and who were able to speak on behalf of the collaborative.

Over the course of the initiative, communicating effectively about immigrant integration – specifically – became increasingly important as the broader political debate on immigration reform intensified. Collaborative members received multiple media inquiries; thus, at times, their communication strategies were necessarily more reactive – for example, answering reporters’ often urgent questions in a timely manner. However, as the immigrant integration projects became more established and participants gained confidence in their abilities to communicate effectively, their media strategies became more proactive – for example, grantee communities became adept at sharing success stories of immigrants and receiving community members coming together in positive ways.

Within the immigrant integration collaboratives, some members were interested in working on immigration reform issues; these individuals were able to do so by working separately with other advocacy organizations focused on their areas of interest. Also of note, many individuals participated in the immigrant integration collaboratives as representatives of various agencies, precluding them from taking a position on immigration (e.g., teachers, public health officials, etc.); however, for the most part, these individuals were able to take a position on integration.

Further, it was understood that many collaborative members held strong personal views on immigration policy, and that such policy affects immigrant integration; yet, given the stated scope of purpose of the initiative, it wasn’t feasible for participants to focus on immigration reform activities in this context.

At the statewide level, The Trust made every effort to communicate proactively and regularly its stance on immigrant integration. From hosting learning events to conducting film screenings, developing information materials and presenting at relevant conferences, the foundation strategically communicated its immigrant integration goals and objectives to diverse audiences – including widely sharing the positive impact of the collective efforts of its statewide grantee communities.

LESSON LEARNED:

Through careful consideration of communication strategies, grantee communities must address politically-charged issues and prevent work from being undermined by narrow political agendas. Sites that deliberately separated their work from immigration policy did not get sidetracked; rather, each time an unrelated immigration issue was raised, collaborative members redirected their audience to the intended conversation on integration.

CHAPTER 5: *Implementation*

This chapter explains how communities transitioned from development of an immigrant integration plan to implementation thereof, including the role of staff and the activities on which communities focused their efforts. Also included is a description of how community members stayed engaged in this work after the initial planning period.

As grantees of The Colorado Trust's Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative transitioned from planning to implementation activities, the following core ingredients proved helpful:

CHOOSING A COORDINATOR

Communities used a portion of their grants to hire an immigrant integration coordinator. This paid staff person served a critical role in holding together the collaborative via daily activities throughout the community. They also were champions of immigrant integration and, in most cases, had established a solid base of relationships within the community. These coordinators:

- Kept the planning process on track
- Coordinated meetings, community forums and information sharing
- Developed and nurtured relationships
- Facilitated and diffused disagreements or conflicts
- Kept everyone engaged in the process
- Reached out to immigrants and gathered their input.

Successful coordinators tend to demonstrate the following attributes:

- Comfortable navigating local systems, easily identifying and engaging key stakeholders across sectors (e.g., education, business, health and human services, etc.)
- Bilingual and able to communicate equally well with both non- or limited-English-speaking immigrants, as well as members of the receiving community
- Skilled in managing group processes and facilitating information exchange among collaborative members.

These attributes were especially important when grantees shifted from planning to implementation, as collaborative members frequently needed to be re-engaged and re-energized, and new members needed to be recruited. Coordinators who participated in the planning process and continued to coordinate the implementation phase were better prepared to facilitate the shift because they had already developed relationships with members of the collaborative and understood the premise for their integration strategies. When this was not the case (i.e., the coordinator was new to the initiative at the start of the implementation phase or thereafter), it was critical that the leader of the group (i.e., contact person from the fiscal agency or designated chair of the collaborative) remained actively involved throughout the implementation and closely supervised the new coordinator.

Given the collaborative nature of the initiative, it became important to remember that the coordinator was not solely responsible for the immigrant integration work. Yet due to busy schedules, as well as unclear expectations and terms of accountability, coordinators often did not receive the needed support, mentoring and supervision.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Grantees developed and implemented immigrant integration strategies that fell into the four major categories – these strategies were translated into activities that targeted either immigrants, receiving community members, or both groups.

Following are examples of these strategies and activities:

Immigrants Only	Immigrants & Receiving Community Members	Receiving Community Members Only
Build public awareness to increase appreciation for the community's growing racial, ethnic and cultural diversity.		
	Through local media, highlight contributions of individuals to the community.	Share immigrants' experiences through storytelling.
	Support World Festival Day and other community-wide cultural events.	Produce and broadcast cooking shows that feature immigrant and receiving community members preparing meals together.
	Promote a particular culture at an annual community-wide event attended by many community members.	Create and distribute materials about different cultures and newcomer groups.
Build relationships among immigrants and receiving community members to increase understanding and develop trust.		
	Conduct dialogues, study circles and café conversations that bring together people from both groups to talk about integration, or specific topics related to integration.	
	Bring together pairs of immigrants and receiving community members to prepare meals together.	
	Bring together pairs of immigrants and receiving community members to help immigrants prepare for the citizenship test.	
	Bring together immigrant and longer-term resident mothers and young children for child development activities.	
Increase the capacity of immigrants and receiving community members to become more civically engaged.		
Offer more English language classes at different times and locations to accommodate diverse schedules.	Establish one-stop information centers that become a resource for both immigrants and receiving community members; locate centers in a convenient and frequently-visited place.	Provide translation and interpretation support (e.g., interpreter banks).
Build leadership skills of immigrants to organize, advocate and take action.	Teach immigrants and receiving community members the skills necessary to engage in conversations about immigrant integration.	

Increase the capacity of immigrants and receiving community members to become more civically engaged.		
Offer Living in America classes where immigrants learn about U.S. systems and how to navigate them (e.g., banking, housing, employment, etc.).		
Help immigrants prepare for and pass the citizenship test.		
Offer workshops on health issues to increase immigrants' understanding of healthy behaviors and health resources in their community.		
Support a Spanish-language insert in the local newspaper.		
Change the way institutions and systems operate to promote equal access and opportunity for everyone.		
	Engage immigrants in governing bodies, such as advisory committees, boards, and task forces.	Conduct cultural competency training for staff of public agencies and nonprofits.
		In different languages, offer such courses as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How To Start A Business ■ Citizens Police Academy
		Provide bilingual signage throughout the community (e.g., recreation centers, health providers offices, etc.).
		Offer free or discounted health services through a clinic, health festival or mobile van.
		Place a part-time bilingual liaison in certain institutions to improve outreach and communication (e.g., health clinics, schools, etc.).

Examples of outcomes of the above activities include:

Increased public awareness and greater appreciation for the community's growing racial, ethnic and cultural diversity:

- Immigrants who shared their stories with receiving community members increased their confidence to engage with established residents
- Resources customized to the local community were developed (e.g., a guide about Cora Indians and information about Somali newcomers).

Increased and improved relationships among immigrants and receiving community members, resulting in greater mutual understanding and trust:

- Some dialogue participants started to meet and work together on their own

- Immigrants felt like they were seen and heard for the first time (e.g., as reported by immigrant staff who work at college residence halls and were presented the opportunity to interact with the college students who live there)
- Several immigrants passed their citizenship tests and become naturalized citizens.

Increased capacity of immigrants and receiving community members to become civically engaged:

- The number of adults and children enrolled in ESL classes increased when the classes were offered at different locations, including a local business
- Two new immigrant-led organizations were established.

Positive change in the way institutions and systems operate to promote equal access and opportunity for everyone:

- The number of immigrants engaged in a partner organization's task force increased from zero to three
- All health provider booths at a local health festival had bilingual volunteers and signage.

Improved access and availability of helpful information for – and about – immigrants:

- Health workshop participants indicated that they learned a lot, including how to stay healthy through the flu season and basic hygienic practices (e.g., regularly washing one's hands)
- The number of immigrants and receiving community members, in particular, who use established one-stop information centers quickly increased.

SUPPORTING AND MANAGING THE COLLABORATIVE'S LEADERSHIP GROUP

After the planning processes were complete and implementation activities had begun, many community members stayed actively engaged in the immigrant integration collaboratives (e.g., through subcommittees on specific integration activities).

Communities demonstrated different ways of self-managing: some chose a formal approach – including adherence to by-laws and operating agreements – while others were more informal. In all cases, it was important for the coordinator to support leaders of the collaborative (typically, steering committee members) by communicating thoroughly and regularly with all engaged parties.

BUILDING LEADERSHIP

Immigrant voices aren't heard in most Colorado communities, especially those of newer immigrants not entirely proficient in English and of a disadvantaged socioeconomic status.

All grantees recognized the need to help immigrants build and expand their skills in order to fully engage in community life, but no typical model existed for this purpose. Thus, many communities created their own model to support immigrant leadership development, including the opportunity for immigrants to first work among themselves before coming to the bigger community table, thereby building confidence and trust incrementally.

Building leadership among receiving community members was also important. By participating in steering committees, receiving community members developed a deeper understanding of immigrant integration issues and were therefore better able to make changes in their organizations to promote integration. As well, community members learned to spend more time listening to immigrants, rather than jumping directly into action to fix immigrants' problems for them.

As implementation activities evolved from theory to practice, a natural pipeline for membership recruitment into the collaborative emerged, particularly among immigrants.

LESSONS LEARNED:

Even after a plan is established, all parties involved must remain open to making adjustments in integration efforts. Because the environment tends to change quickly, and new opportunities and challenges arise constantly, flexibility and a constant focus are critical ingredients of successful immigrant integration.

Collaborative integration efforts require substantial patience, particularly in the early phases. Much integration work is an ongoing process of building relationships, influencing systems and seizing opportunities for activities to promote social change. It can be difficult to realize immediate actions and corresponding results – it takes time for communities to fully prioritize and launch their activities, and it takes even more time to measure the outcomes of these efforts.

CHAPTER 6: *Technical Assistance*

Community members integrated third party expertise in their immigrant integration efforts. This chapter outlines the usefulness of various forms of assistance.

As grantees of The Colorado Trust's Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative began implementing their integration plans, the role of facilitators transitioned from helping them to complete a plan to helping them implement integration activities.

To this end, facilitators helped build new skills among members of the immigrant integration collaboratives, as well as connect them with specific content expertise that may benefit them. Some grantees traveled to other communities to learn about their successes in a content area. For example, several participants from Littleton traveled to New York to learn more about the Queens Library's efforts to integrate newcomers in the library setting – these concepts were then considered in the design of Littleton's Bemis Public Library.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Early on, a demand emerged among community grantees for cross-cultural training. Helping community members to identify their key audiences, and understand the usefulness of a one-time training and how to leverage its impact on their efforts, was an important process. It was generally concluded that – to develop cross-cultural skills – one-time trainings are mostly ineffective; rather, trainings are needed as part of a long-term, ongoing strategy to achieve immigrant integration.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Many grantees desired more extensive community participation, but newcomers often lack previous experience in working with collaboratives. As such, grantees expressed interest in culturally relevant leadership models, but no such model fit everyone's needs and circumstances. As a result, several grantees developed their own outreach efforts to engage and build skills among both immigrant and receiving community members.

COACHING AND MENTORING FOR COORDINATORS

Coordinators served a vital role in keeping together the collaboratives; however, as paid staff, they were often subject to too many expectations and frequently lacked supervision. Facilitators then assumed the role of helping the coordinators to strategize and solve problems, serving as sounding boards and mentors. Additionally, coordinators were supported through peer learning opportunities in which they regularly heard from experts and discussed with each other their immigrant integration approaches and lessons learned.

STRENGTHENING COLLABORATIVES

In implementing integration activities, it was necessary for grantees to find ways to help community members come together, build relationships and work collaboratively. It was therefore important to help community grantees to identify and establish their structure, roles, responsibilities and collaborative skills.

MEASURING CHANGE

As part of their planning process, each grantee community selected a few key indicators of immigrant integration that were important to them and that they would measure over time. The Association for the Study and Development of Community – evaluator of the Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative – helped grantees think through the indicator selection process, data gathering and reporting issues. Grantees required significant assistance in this arena because many had no experience in working with indicators.

GRANTEE CONFERENCES AND NETWORKING

Annual grantee conferences and networking events provided collaborative members the opportunity to meet others working on immigrant integration across the state, and to hear from integration experts, communication consultants and practitioners from around the country. Presenting national perspectives was helpful to grantees to contextualize how their work supports and complements national efforts that promote immigrant integration on a broader scale.

Further, establishing a statewide network is critical to sharing ideas, peer-to-peer learning, and supporting common efforts across grantee communities. Grantees were provided opportunities to travel to other grantee sites to participate first-hand in each others' immigrant integration efforts; as well, regular grantee gatherings were designed to encourage, facilitate and sustain their sharing of successes, challenges and immigrant integration lessons learned – well beyond the grant period.

Conferences and networking occasions also enabled the evaluation team to keep grantees informed about the progress of the initiative evaluation and share findings that could inform their work. As well, the evaluators' participation in grantee gatherings helped confirm the integral role of evaluation activities in the initiative learning process.

LESSON LEARNED:

Competing demands on time are an obstacle to receiving and incorporating technical assistance learnings into immigrant integration work. Members of the community collaboratives have many priorities vying for their time; participants serve on other boards, have demanding work schedules, and sometimes struggle to balance their personal, professional and community commitments. As a result, some are unable to dedicate the time and effort needed to benefit from the availability of various forms of technical assistance.

CHAPTER 7: *Evaluation*

The main focus of the evaluation of The Colorado Trust's Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative was to understand the changes happening in participating communities. This chapter provides an overview of the evaluation – including its methodology and how it was incorporated across the initiative. This information is particularly useful to evaluators and other funders in designing evaluations that measure process and implementation outcomes with respect to the diverse planning processes and projects of community groups.

Evaluation occurred on both the initiative and grantee levels. At the initiative level, the evaluator – the Association for the Study and Development of Community – was responsible for examining the progress and outcomes of all the grantees; at the grantee level, each grantee was responsible for monitoring the goals outlined in their respective work plans. Given that data collected from the grantees fed into the data examined by the evaluator, the two levels of evaluation were interconnected.

Essential conditions and ingredients to ensure a successful evaluation of an immigrant integration efforts include:

GRANTEE-LEVEL EVALUATION

Grantees began with ambitious plans for measuring and evaluating their success, but quickly learned the significant challenges of this task, including:

- Because there was no requirement by The Colorado Trust to set aside funds for monitoring and evaluation, some grantees had not earmarked appropriate resources for this task
- Grantees did not differentiate between long-term outcome measures of integration (e.g., increased civic participation of immigrants) and short-term output measures (e.g., increased attendance of immigrants in leadership workshops)
- There was typically no one on staff with the knowledge and skills to plan and conduct monitoring and documentation
- The list of measures that grantees wished to monitor was too long and complex, given limited capacity and resources.

Therefore, it was essential for the funder to support technical assistance in the area of evaluation. It made sense for the initiative evaluator to provide grantee-level assistance to ensure that the measures and data collected by each grantee supported the initiative-level evaluation.

To ensure useful technical assistance in the area of evaluation – including appropriate monitoring and documentation at the grantee level – the following necessary conditions came to light:

- The Trust limited the number of measures that grantees wished to monitor and document in order to help make the process more manageable for the grantees. While The Trust did not prevent grantees from monitoring as many measures as they wanted, it was a relief to the grantees that they would not be considered non-compliant if they could not monitor everything. The key question became, “At the end of five years, what are the one or two things that you would like to be able to say about the success of your initiative?”
- The evaluator worked closely with the facilitators to gather deeper insights about the grantees’ strategies and their anticipated outcomes, and to ensure that all assistance provided by both parties was consistent and integrated. Some grantees had difficulty connecting the changes they wanted to see in their communities to the strategies they created, and had even more difficulty articulating the connection. Including the facilitator in a meeting or on a conference call with the evaluator and the grantee to discuss their measures allowed the facilitator to step in and assist the grantees when necessary. For example, if the grantee wanted to monitor the cultural competency of a particular institution but lacked a strategy to do so, the facilitator would work with the grantee to revisit their work plan. Such collaboration between the evaluator and facilitator allowed the two parties to observe their boundaries and respective responsibilities; at the same time, it ensured a seamless system of support for the grantees. This means that the

evaluator copied the facilitator on all communication with the grantee and always contacted the facilitator for insights and advice when there was ambiguity or confusion.

- It was necessary for the support team – The Trust, evaluator and facilitators – to be flexible and responsive to grantees. Many of the grantees started out with a particular set of measures; however, as they learned over time (especially in the first two years) about what was feasible and what wasn't, and adapted to political and other changes that affected immigrant integration, they modified their strategies. In some cases, a strategy had to be eliminated because a leadership or political change made it impossible for the strategy to be implemented; in such situations, the evaluator worked with the collaborative members to modify their measures, all the while consulting with the facilitator and keeping The Trust informed.
- The evaluator worked closely with the grantee to identify opportunities for connecting their data collection to their programming; it was necessary to emphasize how the information could be useful to their strategies and decision-making. Data collection activities were integrated into the staff's daily work, otherwise the monitoring and documentation process became a separate burden that compromised the grantee's integration efforts. The evaluator created data collection templates, forms for summarizing the data, as well as databases to help make the process as easy and practical as possible.
- Finally, because of the above limitations, it also became apparent that it was challenging for the grantee to collect long-term outcome data. In the end, many of their measures that were within their capacity to monitor and document were output measures (e.g., meeting attendance, number of leaders trained and increased knowledge about a particular issue related to integration).

INITIATIVE-LEVEL EVALUATION

The initiative-level evaluation was guided by three questions:

1. How did communities form collaborations to support immigrant integration?
2. Were the outcomes identified in the communities' plans achieved?
3. Was there an increased sense of immigrant integration?

The evaluation consisted of in-person and telephone interviews, a survey of collaborative members in each grantee community and a survey of community members using naturally occurring groups (e.g., English as a Second Language classes). The following conditions were key to ensuring a successful evaluation process:

- The evaluator was engaged in the process from the beginning, orienting grantees throughout the evaluation and its activities, and ensuring that the data collected would be useful to all stakeholders. This early engagement also ensured that the evaluation was integrated into all aspects of the initiative – thereby helping to mitigate the fear and skepticism typically felt by grantees regarding evaluations, and establishing the evaluator as an additional resource to the team. The evaluator attended and presented at the annual grantee meetings as another means to incorporate evaluation into the programmatic aspects of the initiative.
- The technical assistance provided by the evaluator enabled the evaluator to interact relatively frequently with the community grantees, helping to build relationships among them and encouraging both parties to respond to each other's needs – regardless of whether the needs were related to the grantee's monitoring of its progress or the data needed for the evaluation.

- Finally, an evaluator and evaluation design that are responsive to the diverse cultures represented in a given community are essential for any evaluation – particularly for an immigrant integration initiative. Ideally, the evaluation team includes bilingual staff with the ability to conduct interviews in other languages, as well as professional translators to translate evaluation instruments. Further, the survey administration process should accommodate people who may not be literate, or who may be uncomfortable with taking surveys. Working with naturally occurring groups to administer surveys in familiar locations is necessary to ensure high response rate and quality data.

LESSON LEARNED:

The initiative-level evaluator must be prepared to work with individuals whose understanding and skills related to evaluation may be limited. As well, the evaluator – and the funder – must be flexible and adjust their expectations when grantees' indicators change to reflect shifting integration strategies. It is important to remember that evaluation adds a layer of complexity to already-challenging immigrant integration work. Additionally, grantees typically have limited capacity to collect and analyze data beyond monitoring attendance, evaluating workshops and coordinating with partner agencies to provide the needed information.

CHAPTER 8: *Sustainability*

While there are no easy answers to ensure the sustainability of community efforts toward achieving immigrant integration, this chapter provides an overview of leading thinking in this area – including the inherent nature of addressing immigrant integration.

The Colorado Trust's grants of \$300,000 per community collaborative helped them to undertake a significant amount of immigrant integration work, and inspired them to secure additional funding sources for program sustainability.

At the time of this writing, many grantees of the Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative are still receiving Trust support; it is therefore premature to present fully conceptualized lessons learned about which sustainability tactics are more – or less – effective than others. Currently, it is unclear if there is one type of community arrangement or model that will prove to be more effective or sustainable over time.

What is known, however, is that some communities are well-positioned to obtain ongoing support from local governments (which also served as fiscal agents in four grantee sites); indeed, grantees that were able to engage their city governments as key collaborators at the start of the initiative were ideally poised to seek additional such funds and other support. Many grantees were also successful in securing additional philanthropic support from local and statewide foundations.

As community collaboratives continue their efforts to sustain their immigrant integration activities, there may be an assumption to attempt to carry on their work as originally funded by The Trust. However, some grantees might find greater benefit in sustaining their work in a modified manner – perhaps through an existing organization or established position. That is, community members can and should continue to work together toward immigrant integration goals informally, finding ways to incorporate integration principles into all their work – which does not necessarily require large funding allocations. More formally, organizations have the opportunity to adopt immigrant integration into their mission statements, communications and key service offerings.

So far, establishing community partnerships is emerging as a key ingredient of long-term sustainability. Immigrant integration involves all sectors – schools, law enforcement, businesses, nonprofit organizations and other interested entities that bring the spirit of integration to their everyday work – and communities that establish cross-sector relationships will likely realize successful sustainability.

Additionally, to strengthen the frontline efforts of local communities, immigrant integration must also be supported by statewide and national policies and programs that promote and support newcomers through health, education, language, employment and other avenues of integration.

Sustaining immigrant integration is not only a matter of maintaining funding for a particular set of activities, but also a sense of momentum among community members; ideally, immigrant integration is ultimately upheld as a shared community value.

LESSON LEARNED:

Integration efforts may not always be sustainable at the same scale and scope as originally funded. To ensure continuity of core immigrant integration activities through multiple avenues of support, grantee communities must be innovative in pooling community resources to coordinate their efforts, as well as integrate relevant immigrant integration strategies with the work of existing organizations, community agencies, etc.

PHASE I GRANTEES

(The full description of each grantee is available at

www.coloradotrust.org)

Aspen to Parachute Region

Boulder County

El Paso County

Gunnison County

Lake County

City of Littleton

Mesa County

Morgan County

Pueblo County

Summit County

PHASE II GRANTEES

City and County of Denver

Cities of Greeley and Evans

Commerce City

La Plata County

Montrose and Delta Counties

Original Aurora

Routt and Moffat Counties

San Luis Valley

Telluride Region

THE COLORADO TRUST
1600 SHERMAN STREET • DENVER, CO 80203 • 303-837-1200
WWW.COLORADOTRUST.ORG

