



WELCOME TO THE HORIZONS PROGRAM!

You are now part of a growing family of rural and reservation communities that have decided to move from despair to hope, from poverty to prosperity. More than 200 communities across eight states have already participated in Horizons I and II. You join another 100+ in Horizons III. We are honored to work with you in this effort.

The Horizons program is about the changes a community can make to move from waiting to leading, from talking to action, from control by few to the participation of many, and from indifference to pride. Ultimately, it is about community leadership that can act to reverse your town's economic and population decline, and thrive.

Horizons is open to all the members within your community. It focuses on practical strategies and tools. It provides locally-delivered training, skill building and coaching to strengthen community leadership and civic engagement systems. The program is intensive and challenging. Communities must invest time to achieve long-term results. Our hope is that by bringing resources and support right into your area, a more fertile ground can be created where more people can build the skills, connections and confidence needed to thrive.

We are thrilled to know that you have accepted this challenge. It is your ideas, your commitment and your participation what will make your community thrive.

You can read about the experiences and achievements of previous Horizons communities by going to <http://communityblogs.us/>.

This guide will help explain how the Horizons program will unfold over the next 18 months. It will describe your role. It will also outline the assistance, training or coaching that will be provided to you by the many partners involved. Please refer to this guide often throughout the program and feel free to reproduce it and share it with others in your community.

We look forward to working with you.

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THE HORIZONS PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

Horizons is a community leadership program aimed at reducing poverty in small rural and reservation communities (population less than 5,000 with greater than 10% poverty rate) faced with economic decline and demographic change. The program's goal is to help communities understand poverty, help them commit to action to change it, and then bring about lasting change in their community.

During 2003 – 2005, Horizons went through a pilot. The program was designed collaboratively by the Northwest Area Foundation and 11 organizations that were already working with communities across the Northwest Area Foundation's eight-state region. The Horizons pilot engaged 44 communities. In 2006 another 162 communities started Horizons II; 140 successfully completed all program activities in June 2008. One-quarter of all communities were located within the boundaries of American Indian nations. The communities ranged in population size from 100 to 4900 with poverty rates of 10 percent to 96 percent.

PROGRAM FOCUS AND OUTCOMES

Horizons is focused on poverty, leadership and community. The program focuses on poverty because poverty impacts everyone within a community. Horizons explores the perceptions and the sources of **poverty**. Poverty is multi-dimensional and must be solved in multiple ways. Horizons builds stronger community **leadership**, acknowledging that leadership is as important as good roads, great schools and clean water. This initiative embraces the entire **community**; everyone is needed and everyone has something to contribute. For communities to thrive, everyone has to have an opportunity to prosper.

Horizons helps communities meet the following major outcomes.

POVERTY

Building knowledge and awareness

Entire communities are being left behind because of the impact of poverty on the life and vitality of their town. In almost every community taking part in Horizons, awareness of poverty begins to happen during the Study Circles process where communities learn that poverty has many dimensions. They begin to identify community assets and hold community dialogues to discuss what poverty looks like locally and the factors that fuel poverty. They explore ways to reduce poverty and examine how local, regional, state and national policies affect poverty and prosperity in their community.

Building skills and mobilizing

Horizons assists communities in their efforts to build the skills, information and connections they need to design, lead and implement their own poverty-reduction vision and sustainable action. These skills include the ability to: identify and develop assets, promote collaboration between community members and the public and private sectors, acquire facilitation and community dialogue and action skills, develop strategic plans, set measurable goals and promote civic engagement.

Taking action and changing structures

While taking part in the Horizons program, community members become aware of the demographics in their community, and become deliberate about recruiting low-income and diverse community members and developing intercommunity relations. During each activity of the program, community members and program delivery organizations work together to develop a plan of action that promotes movement on vision and goals for poverty reduction. Action on the plan happens during the last program activity where communities work to sustain their poverty reduction efforts for the long term.

Impact:

Some examples of how communities linked their actions to poverty reduction: economic and skills development, housing development, training, partnerships, new business development, youth program activities and fundraising.

Our goals on poverty are for communities to identify it, commit collectively to do something about it and begin to take strategic action to change it.

In one town, the community dialogues directly led to changes in how the city billed for utilities. The town had been charging more than it needed to for its security deposits. This was not only taking needed money out of circulation, but also made it difficult for many people to get their electricity. Not only did the town begin charging less, but utility commission members attended community meetings rather than forcing citizens to come to the scheduled utility hearings.

LEADERSHIP

Building knowledge and awareness

The Horizons model was created around the belief that everyone has leadership ability, everyone has a role to play and every community has assets on which it can build. Through the LeadershipPlenty® curriculum provided by the program, the notion of “the we, not the me” in leadership is emphasized. The process aims at including diverse voices and perspectives – people **and** processes. Communities can use many different ways to make decisions that involve many people.

The program serves as a space for people to begin identifying themselves as leaders. Rather than seeing their communities as a bundle of needs and deficits, they view themselves as centers of assets and abilities. It builds on the notion that leadership is not just the elected and appointed officials in a town, but it is everyone who steps forward to work together to better the community.

Building skills and mobilizing

In Horizons, leadership takes place in the context of a community. The program is driven by the notion of collective leadership rather than individual actions. Throughout their participation in the program, community members develop skills in the areas of inclusive leadership, asset-based approaches, group dynamics, effective meeting management, conflict resolution, partnership creation, community change process management and evaluation, and communication.

In preparation for LeadershipPlenty®, community members work to identify gaps in leadership and identify targets for broadening and deepening the leadership base of their community.

Taking action and changing structures

Leadership is expected to change in systemic ways by developing structures that continuously recruit and welcome new leaders and by documenting visible changes in the way communities carry out their day-to-day business.

Our goal on leadership is to move communities toward intentional decisions around leadership – to build a leadership base that reflects the demographics of a community and that is skillful, sustainable and can bring about lasting change on poverty.

Impact:

In one American Indian nation, four out of six open seats on the tribal council were filled by Horizons participants. In another community, the race for mayor was a contest between two Horizons participants. The election ended in a tie and, as a gesture of how different things were going to be, they decided to make a final decision by means of a good-natured coin toss on Main Street. But more important than the benefits generated by new people running for elected office, many more people began to talk about an increased willingness to serve the community. Existing leaders began to listen more intently to community members.

COMMUNITY

Building knowledge and awareness

Horizons is a program about community mobilization and momentum – it rests on the theory of engaging many and on a sense of hope and movement. The program is set up to provide opportunities for many communities to come together, learn from each other and work together to build their own thriving communities.

Building skills and mobilizing

The goal is that community members apply skills learned from Study Circles, LeadershipPlenty® and their visioning and action work with the delivery organizations. The community is mobilized and coached to create and adopt a shared vision for poverty reduction. Throughout the program, the larger community increases knowledge and ownership of poverty and leadership as a community issue.

Taking action and changing structures

Through a simple invitation to take part in making the community a better place, more people usually get involved in charting their own future. The significant progress observed in communities during the Horizons pilot was really a result of the community's own efforts to hope and take action for a better future.

Forward movement starts when communities begin to have a new perception of community leadership and a new understanding of community assets. Only when people own the change effort for their communities will progress be achieved.

It is expected that the program will increase the ability of Horizons communities to act collectively and to articulate the link between action and poverty reduction. Communities will be able to address local, regional, state and national policies and leverage resources that can help sustain the community's vision and goals over time.

The program also aims at linking communities beyond their own environment and building opportunities for participants to network and learn from each other. Building regional capacity for poverty reduction is another overarching goal.

Impact:

The significant progress observed in communities during the Horizons pilot was really a result of the community's own efforts to hope and take action for a better future. During Horizons II, nearly 40,000 people from 140 communities got involved in developing a shared vision and plan for their community. Creating a course together for the future can spur people to begin to make this future happen, to work for a different future. In one town, Horizons visioning work resulted in the community working together to pass a new school bond, which provided money for sorely needed upgrades to aging facilities.

KEY PARTNERS

Seven delivery organizations, all of which already work in small communities, deliver the Horizons program. These organizations helped design Horizons and have already assisted nearly 200 communities in Horizons I and II. They provide communities with coaching, training and connections through each step of the program. They also work together with the Northwest Area Foundation to continually improve the program. These organizations are also trying to expand their own ability to work with many communities on poverty reduction.

The Northwest Area Foundation invests nearly \$100,000 per Horizons community. Horizons III reflects the Foundation's ongoing commitment to building capacity in rural and reservation communities to reduce poverty.

Everyday Democracy is a national partner because of its commitment to community organizing, dialogue, and action that results in community understanding of issues, and work on action and change. Everyday Democracy has helped hundreds of communities develop their own ability to solve problems by innovating ways for all kinds of people to think, talk and work together to create change on many diverse issues.

The **Pew Partnership for Civic Change**, and its LeadershipPlenty® curriculum, is a key part of the Horizons program because it emphasizes the concept of collective leadership. Horizons is based on the idea that success involves including many people in leadership rather than an exclusive few. The theory behind LeadershipPlenty® is simple – broad-based community leadership is critical for long-term, positive community change.

THE PROGRAM IS DESIGNED SO THAT ALL HORIZONS COMMUNITIES MOVE THROUGH THIS SEQUENCE:

Horizons is an 18-month program with four required activities of participation. Communities must meet the thresholds for each activity within defined timeframes before they can move forward. Each threshold is connected to skills and achievement that help strengthen a community.

- **Community conversation and action ideas focused on poverty.** This segment requires 12 hours during a two-month period and the involvement of at least 30 people. The goal is for the community to learn what poverty looks like and what it can do about it. Momentum grows as the community builds skills, involves more people and becomes increasingly strategic.

- **Leadership building using LeadershipPlenty® training.** At least 20 people give 30-40 hours of time. This is a popular segment because it's practical and assumes every community member can provide leadership.

- **Community visioning and planning focused on leadership growth and poverty reduction.** This involves the whole community. Some communities get competitive, seeing who can involve the most people!

- **Idea implementation.** Delivery organizations and others provide the community with support, coaching and additional resources as they put their plans into action.

In addition, The Northwest Area Foundation will coordinate grants of up to \$10,000 to each community that successfully completes all components of the program.



GETTING STARTED

JULY – AUGUST 2008

During this time period, delivery organizations will be doing a number of “program previews” throughout your state. These events give a sample of some of the activities that happen during the 18 months of Horizons, basic information about community eligibility and the program itself. If the community preview happens outside the community (sometimes it’s easier to have an event with multiple communities) it must have at least 5 people from the community attend. If the event is done inside the community, it is strongly recommended that at least 15 people attend. This will assure the delivery organization that people in the community are interested and understand the program requirements.

If the community meets the eligibility criteria (a population less than 5000 and a poverty rate greater than 10% on the 2000 U.S. census) and had the minimum number of people attend the program preview, it may submit an application with at least 30 signatures of people who represent a broad cross section of your community. This will be a great recruiting opportunity as well, since the last requirement to enter Study Circles, the first major program activity, is to have recruited the minimum number of Study Circles facilitators (see chart).

During this time period, several other things will happen:

- The delivery organization (DO) will assign several people to work with the community. The main person will be a “coach”, who will likely remain with the community throughout the 18 months of the program. That person might also be coaching several other communities nearby.
- The coach will help to organize a steering committee in the community that represents all parts of the community and that will help to keep the program on track. Some members might stay with the committee the entire time, but often new members are recruited to bring fresh ideas and perspective.
- The DO will help communities collect important demographic data about the community, so that it can target Study Circles and LeadershipPlenty® participants who reflect the diversity of your community.
- The coach will help to create an environment within Horizons that always welcomes new people, expects change, and shares learning.
- It is likely that community members from Horizons I and II will help recruit and mentor Horizons III communities.
- DOs will start helping the steering committee recruit community “bloggers”.



Thresholds to-do list

In order to move forward to Study Circles, the first activity of the Horizons program, communities have threshold requirements that had to be met:

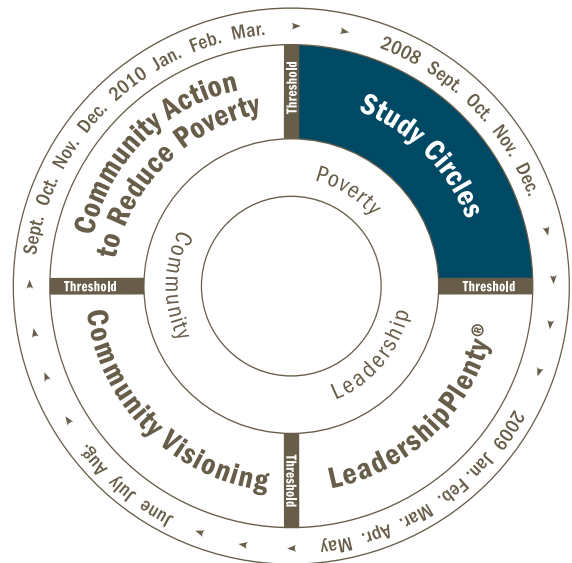
- Minimum of five community members attend program preview ;
- Application with at least 30 signatures from many sectors of the community; and
- Minimum number of facilitators recruited and trained. (See diagram below).

REQUIRED FOR STUDY CIRCLES

Town size	Minimum participants	Facilitators
=<1500	30 people	6
2000	2% = 40 people	8
2500	2% = 50 people	8
3000	2% = 60 people	10
3500	2% = 70 people	10
4000	2% = 80 people	12
4500	2% = 90 people	12
5000	2% = 100 people	14

STUDY CIRCLES

SEPTEMBER 2008 – DECEMBER 2008



WHAT ARE STUDY CIRCLES?

Study Circles are a type of community dialogue process that can help people explore complex issues, make some decisions about them and begin to take action. During Study Circles, community members come together to have a community dialogue on poverty. Study Circles is a community-driven process that recruits from all parts of the community. This process begins with community organizing and is followed by facilitated, small-group dialogue on poverty that leads to community change. Study Circles don't advocate a particular solution. Instead, they welcome many points of view around a shared concern.

Horizons program participants use a Study Circles guide as a method for facilitating community group discussions that promote understanding and action around critical poverty issues. The guide, entitled “Thriving Communities: Working together to move from poverty to prosperity for all,” is available in English and Spanish. It leads community members through Study Circles’ five-topic discussion process: How are we connected to our community and to poverty? What does poverty look like here? Why is there poverty in our community? Reaching our vision and reducing poverty.

Moving to action

As communities make this process their own, they have called this activity different names such as talking circles, community conversations, community round tables, etc. It is assumed that during Study Circles there will be great energy generated in communities for action and that some community activity will continue as LeadershipPlenty® begins.

Community work during Study Circles

- Community recruits at least 30 people to participate in Study Circles community dialogues (see diagram on page11).
- Recruitment targets all parts of the community.
- At least six facilitators are recruited to attend a full day of training to lead a community dialogue process. The training might take place jointly with other communities, allowing for the development of broader networks and the exchange of knowledge and information.
- Participants contribute at least 12 hours (six sessions) of their time to understand poverty and to develop ideas to reduce it.
- An Action Forum, the last session, generates many achievable ideas for ways to reduce poverty. Communities are encouraged to choose just a few ideas to get started on now, and to bring the list back during the community visioning process. One of the thresholds to move into LeadershipPlenty® is to take action on at least one idea.
- A few community members are trained to start tracking community progress using a community blog.

What can be expected from delivery organizations?

- Help compile a basic demographic profile of the community that will assist in outreach efforts.
- Coach for the recruitment of participants.
- Manage the facilitator training.
- Coach community facilitators to implement the Study Circles process.
- Distribute and collect pre- and post-surveys.
- Collect community ideas at action forum.
- Provide Study Circles evaluation results back to the community.
- Assist with recruitment of three trainers for LeadershipPlenty® training.
- Help communities develop a recruitment plan to involve at least 20 people from all parts of the community in LeadershipPlenty®.

What are the benefits to the community?

- Six community people are trained as facilitators and have new skills to lead a community dialogue and action process.
- At least 30 people in each community understand what poverty looks like in their community, its causes and how to move forward on action.
- More people are involved from all parts of the community.
- Many practical ideas are developed to help reduce poverty.
- A work plan is created for carrying at least one idea to action.
- Trained facilitators are connected to other communities.

Evaluation: what happens during this segment?

- Study Circle participants fill out pre- and post-surveys.
- Delivery organizations collect surveys and help communities track progress and participation
- Some community members may participate in interviews with program evaluators.
- The delivery organizations share community information and Study Circles survey results with the community.

Role of Everyday Democracy

Everyday Democracy provides training and technical assistance to the delivery organizations as they help communities implement the Study Circles community dialogue process. Facilitator training will happen during the fall of 2008. Everyday Democracy is available to communities via telephone and e-mail throughout the Study Circles dialogue process.

If a community wanted to receive direct assistance from Everyday Democracy, they would likely pay between \$5,000 and \$15,000.



Thresholds to-do list

Before a community can move forward to LeadershipPlenty®, the next activity of the program, the following thresholds must be achieved:

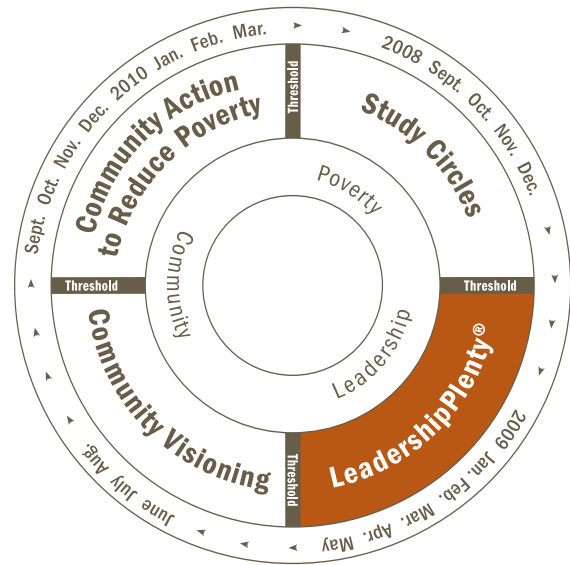
- Minimum number of Study Circles facilitators trained; (see diagram on page 11)
- Minimum number of Study Circles participants; (see diagram on on page 11)
- Pre and post surveys completed;
- Action list submitted with at least one item completed;

LeadershipPlenty® preparation

- 3 LeadershipPlenty® trainers recruited;
- LeadershipPlenty® participation recruitment plan;
- Community members track progress on poverty outcomes on blog.

LEADERSHIPPLENTY®

JANUARY 2009 – MAY 2009



WHAT IS LEADERSHIPPLENTY®?

LeadershipPlenty® is a curriculum that helps communities focus on developing community leadership. Through this program, communities learn to understand the leadership structure and skills needed to address poverty and sustain community action and change over time. Since the community has just completed the Study Circles on poverty, this provides an opportunity for conversation about the leadership needed to take action on poverty. LeadershipPlenty® was developed by the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, a civic research organization that provides consulting and program support to communities and helps them identify and implement solutions and strategies that make them stronger. LeadershipPlenty® is an experiential and practical tool for training emerging leaders that builds on individual experience and adult education principles. The goal is to make civic leadership training available to those who may not consider themselves leaders but have much to offer their communities. It also strengthens the skills of those who may already hold leadership positions. The LeadershipPlenty® curriculum consists of nine modules, each addressing skills that enable participants to confidently identify and solve problems in their communities. The curriculum is available in English and Spanish.

Community work during LeadershipPlenty®

- Three community members are trained to deliver LeadershipPlenty® training.
- Community members participate in 30-40 hours of leadership training through LeadershipPlenty® sessions.
- At least 20 community members participate, representing the demographics of the community, including low-income people.
- Community tracks progress on leadership outcomes on a blog.
- Participants help plan community visioning sessions.

What can be expected from delivery organizations?

- Assist communities to understand where they currently are with informal and formal leadership.
- Assist communities to involve more people in leadership opportunities and have their leadership base reflect the demographics of the community.
- Assist with trainer recruitment.
- Coordinate training for LeadershipPlenty® trainers.
- Coach community trainers as they provide local trainings.
- Distribute and collect pre- and post-evaluation surveys.
- Help communities stay on track to complete LeadershipPlenty®.

What are the benefits to the community?

- At least 20 community members expand their understanding of leadership and obtain greater skills.
- Three people are licensed as LeadershipPlenty® trainers; they can conduct LeadershipPlenty® training sessions in their community or in other places.
- Individuals with skills to organize community visioning and planning are identified.
- The community has more people who can mobilize others to act on poverty.
- More leadership from all segments of the community is identified.
- A process for developing a community vision and plan is in underway.

Evaluation: what happens during this segment?

- LeadershipPlenty® participants complete pre- and post-surveys.
- Delivery organizations collect surveys and help track community progress and participation.
 - Some community members may participate in interviews with evaluators
 - The delivery organizations collect community information and LeadershipPlenty® survey results to share with the community.

Role of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change

The Pew Partnership for Civic Change will train three people from each community to deliver LeadershipPlenty®. These trainees will join people from other communities and spend up to three days learning how to deliver the 40-hour LeadershipPlenty® training back in their own communities. The training will happen shortly before LeadershipPlenty® begins in communities early in 2009. Each trainer will become a licensed LeadershipPlenty® trainer and will be able to offer the training anywhere and many times. Pew Partnership will provide all materials, as well as coaching by phone, online and through video conferencing to support the implementation of LeadershipPlenty® training, including assistance with setup and post-training work.

If a community purchased LeadershipPlenty® training directly from the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, Pew would conduct a train-the-trainer session for up to 25 people for \$25,000.

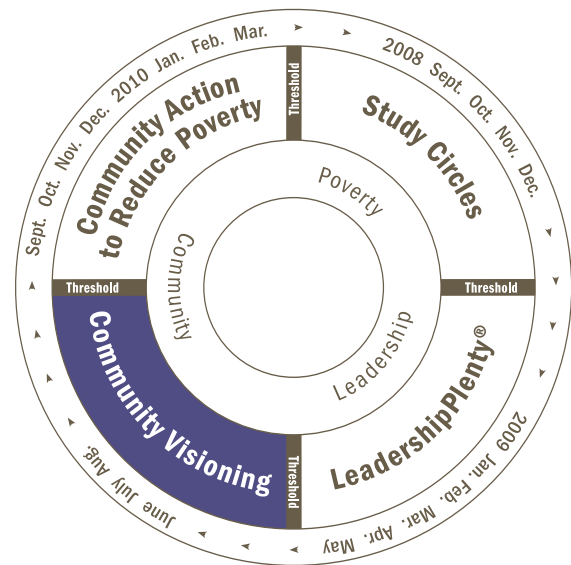


Thresholds to-do list

Before a community can move forward to Community Visioning, the next activity of the program, the following thresholds must be achieved:

- Three people trained to deliver LeadershipPlenty®;
- Minimum number of people complete LeadershipPlenty® training (20 if less than 1500, 25 if greater);
- Community members track progress on leadership outcomes on blog; and
- Pre- and post- surveys complete.

COMMUNITY VISIONING JUNE 2009 – AUGUST 2009



WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY VISIONING PROCESS?

The community visioning process brings together the many ideas and skills generated during Study Circles and LeadershipPlenty®. During this activity, the broader community is mobilized to adopt a shared vision and a plan for poverty reduction. At least 15 percent of the total community is expected to participate. Communities are encouraged to recruit participants from all parts of the community, paying particular attention to low-income people and parts of the community not always represented in the community. Often, this is the time to bring back the list of ideas created during Study Circles.

As communities develop their vision and plan, the delivery organization also helps identify a qualified organization to receive a grant of \$1500 from a community foundation in their state. These funds can be used to help implementing poverty reduction ideas and leverage other resources.

Community work during the visioning process

- Study Circles and LeadershipPlenty® participants work together to lead a community visioning process.
- Recruitment draws people from all parts of the community.
- The community is mobilized to create and adopt a shared vision and plan for poverty reduction.
- Identification or creation of a qualified organization to receive funds on the community's behalf.

What can be expected from delivery organizations?

- Coach through implementation of the community visioning process and development of a poverty reduction action plan.
- Assist with recruiting large numbers of community members from all segments of the community (at least 15 percent of total population).
- Help put in place poverty reduction action plans that reflect the community's vision.

What are the benefits to the community?

- More people from all segments of the community are involved.
- The community has an exciting community vision that results in solid action on leadership and poverty reduction.
- The community has a poverty reduction plan to sustain their work over time.
- There is a qualified organization to receive funds on the community's behalf.

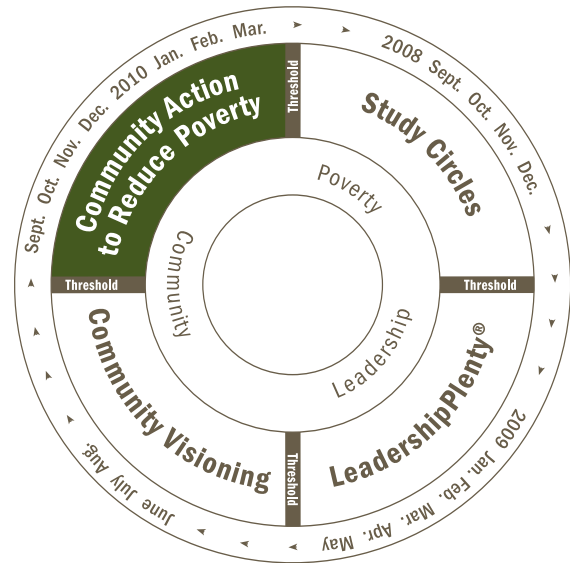
Evaluation: What happens during this segment?

- Community tracks progress on outcomes on community blog.
- Delivery organizations monitor the community's ability to move vision into action.

If a community purchased assistance to conduct a community-wide visioning and planning process, they would likely pay between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

COMMUNITY ACTION TO REDUCE POVERTY

SEPTEMBER 2009 – APRIL 2010



WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY COACHING AND ACTION PROCESS?

At this stage, communities bring together their understanding of poverty, their leadership skills and their vision to take action that will help them thrive. The delivery organizations and the communities work together to sustain these efforts for the long-term by developing structures to continuously recruit and welcome new leaders, to document visible changes in methods of doing business and to broaden/deepen the community's leadership base. Communities implement inclusive processes and decision-making methods, including increasing trust among members, commitment to action, ability to take collective action, building collaborative capacity and learning and using an asset-based approach. This process is assisted by delivery organizations, which will draw from many resources (their own and their partners) to help communities build needed skills and achieve movement on their plans and goals for poverty reduction and leadership development.

Community work during action

- Community knows what poverty looks like and owns poverty as an issue.
- Community is able to articulate the link between action and poverty reduction.
- Community creates strategies to address local, regional, state and national policies.
- Community leadership works with community members and partners to implement and sustain changes that contribute to poverty reduction in their area.
- Community seeks other resources.
- Structures are in place and resources are leveraged to sustain action.
- Community implements poverty reduction plan.

What can be expected from delivery organizations?

- Assist communities to identify and bring in additional resources to implement a community's plan. For example, during the pilot program, communities chose different types of additional resources, based on their own community's needs: extra conflict resolution, study tours of neighboring communities to explore action they might take, entrepreneur training, youth and adult partnership training, and assistance setting up community foundations or nonprofit organizations.
- Help communities achieve movement on their plans and goals for poverty reduction and leadership development.
- Identify opportunities to sustain the community's work long term.
- Help communities connect and move beyond their own community and resources.
- Assist communities that completed all Horizons program segments to apply for up to \$10,000 in follow-up grants to sustain their work in reducing poverty.

What are the benefits to the community?

- Community-wide understanding and plan around poverty and leadership.
- Additional skills from consultants and outside resources.
- Development of strategies that link action to poverty reduction.
- Involvement/participation of a more diverse pool of community members.
- New connections within organizations and other communities to provide resources.

Evaluation: what happens during this segment?

- Community tracks progress on outcomes on community blog.
- Delivery organizations monitor the community's ability to move forward on outcomes.

If a community contracted for consulting assistance for eight months (at about a day per week), they could expect to pay more than \$25,000.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is critical to the program. It provides the opportunity to see the changes happening in communities and to adjust the program for improved results. The current version of Horizons is the result of input and feedback from the program's previous 200 communities.

WHAT IS TRACKED AND WHY?

Through a variety of tools and analysis, the Foundation is able to track and record changes in communities in the three focus areas of the program: poverty, leadership and community. Within each of these areas, the Foundation will follow each community's progress and outcomes in building knowledge and awareness, building skills, mobilizing, taking action and changing structures.

The evaluation results will help to measure the impact communities are having on poverty reduction and leadership development in the region.

WHAT WILL THE COMMUNITY GET OUT OF EVALUATION AND HOW CAN IT BE USED?

- Community blogs will assist communities to learn about their progress over time.
- Evaluation findings will let communities know how to be more effective in achieving their vision toward poverty reduction.
- Communities may help increase momentum in their towns by watching evaluation results of other Horizons communities.
- Communities can serve as role models to other communities by sharing their experiences with evaluators and in blogs.
- Information posted on blogs or collected in evaluation reports can also be used by the community to leverage new resources as part of a long-term sustainability plan.

RESOURCES

DELIVERY ORGANIZATIONS

Iowa State University Extension

Ruth Freeman

Phone: 515-386-3611

Email: rofreema@iastate.edu

Montana State University Extension Service

Dave Young

Phone: 406-994-5552

Email: dyoung@montana.edu

North Dakota State University Extension Service

Lynette Flage

Phone: 701-265-5200

Email: Lynette.Flage@ndsu.edu

South Dakota State University Cooperative Extension Service

Kari Fruechte

Phone: 605-688-4946

Email: kari.fruechte@ces.sdstate.edu

University of Idaho Extension

Barbara Petty

Phone: 208-529-1390

Email: bpetty@uidaho.edu

University of Minnesota Extension

Monica L. Herrera

Phone: 612 624-7649

Email: herre066@umn.edu

Washington State University Extension

Doreen Hauser-Lindstrom

Phone: 509.358.7686

Email: doreen@wsu.edu

PARTNERS

Study Circles Dialogues

Everyday Democracy (formerly the Study Circles Resource Center)

111 Founders Plaza, Suite 1403

East Hartford, CT 06108

Phone: 860.928.2616

Email: info@everyday-democracy.org

<http://www.everyday-democracy.org/en/index.aspx>

LeadershipPlenty® Trainings

Pew Partnership for Civic Change

1927 Thomson Road

Charlottesville, VA 22903

Phone: 434-981-7845

Email: morse@pew-partnership.org

<http://www.pew-partnership.org/>

Northwest Area Foundation

60 Plato Boulevard E., Suite 400

Saint Paul, MN 55107

Phone: 651 224-9635

Email: info@nwaf.org

<http://www.nwaf.org>

To read the stories and information about Horizons communities go to: <http://communityblogs.us/>

To find the most recent indicators on local population characteristics, economic well-being, health, and more on states and counties, selected communities, reservations, and tribes in the Northwest Area Foundation's eight-state region go to: www.indicators.nwaf.org

Books recommended by program designers, facilitators and participants.

Resource Title	Author	Publisher
Turning to One Another	Margaret J. Wheatley	Berrett-Koehler Publishers
Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community	Putnam, Robert D., Lewis M. Felstein, Don Cohen	Simon & Schuster Adult Publishing Group
Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities	Dreussie, Terrie, Ruby Payne and Phillip DeVol	Aha! Process
Inequality Matters	Edited by James Lardner and David A. Smith	The New Press
Owning Up: Poverty, Assets and the American Dream	Miller-Adams, Michelle	The Brookings Institute
Clues to Rural Community Survival	Vicki Luther & Mary Emery	Heartland Center
Clues to Rural Community Survival Workbook	Luther, Wall	Heartland Center
Smart Communities: How Citizens and Local Leaders Can Use Strategic Thinking to Build a Brighter Future	Suzanne W. Morse	Jossey-Bass
Better Schools Through Public Engagement		Heartland Center
The Organization of Hope: Communities Planning Themselves	Howell Baum	State Univ. Of New York Press
The School Dropout Crisis	Keith Melville	Pew Partnership for Civic Change
Take Action: A guide to active citizenship	Marc Kielburger and Craig Kielburger	Jossey-Bass
The Search Conference: A powerful method for planning organizational change and community action	Merrelyn Emery and Ronald E. Purser	Jossey-Bass
The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Times	Jeffrey Sachs	Penguin Group
The Working Poor: Invisible in America	David Shipler	Knopf
A Framework for Understanding Poverty	Ruby Payne	AHA process
Getting Ahead in A Just Getting By World Worlds Apart	Philip Devol Cynthia Mill Duncan	AHA process Yale University Press
Fields of Toil: A Migrant Family's Journey	Isabel Valle	Pullman: Washington State University Press
Unequal Childhoods: class, race and family life	Annette Lareau	University of California Press
One Nation, Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All	Mark Robert Rank	Oxford University Press
Hidden Treasures: Building Community Connections by Engaging the Gifts of People on Welfare	Susan A. Rans	ABCD Institute
Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing Community Assets	John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight	ACTA Publications

ABOUT THE NORTHWEST AREA FOUNDATION

BACKGROUND

The Northwest Area Foundation's mission is to help reduce poverty and grow prosperity across its eight-state region: Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon. Although these states are contiguous, it is a shared history that links them in the Foundation's work. They were once served by the Great Northern Railway, founded by James J. Hill, whose son Louis W. Hill established the Foundation in 1934.

The Foundation leverages its resources and knowledge with those of grassroots organizations, peer funders and other stakeholders seeking to reduce poverty and build prosperity in the region. It strives for sustainable change by combining its assets and experience with the resources, successes, energy, ideas, and perspectives of proven or promising organizations working to promote leadership and community capacity building, build assets and wealth in low-income communities, and improve public policies. Given the remarkable diversity of the eight states it serves, the Foundation is equally committed to investing in urban, rural, and reservation communities.

The Horizons program was framed by the Foundation's mission, input from communities, the desire to expand the capacity of organizations in the region, the Foundation's value of inclusion and the Foundation's desire to help reduce poverty at a regional level. Through Horizons, the Foundation helps communities develop leadership systems that will powerfully engage the communities in vision, strategy and the work of poverty reduction.

The Horizons program focuses on leadership development toward poverty reduction. It can help communities understand the impact of poverty on the life and vitality of their community, understand the issue and how it looks in their community and commit to community-wide action that will bring lasting change and a promising future.

Focusing on poverty reduction

The Foundation believes that poverty-reduction solutions need to emerge from communities and have the greatest potential for being sustained over time if there is broad community support and ownership.

Focusing on community leadership

The Northwest Area Foundation believes that leadership is a critical part of a community's infrastructure. Its work in more than 200 rural and reservation communities was informed by the belief that community leadership works as a system that needs to be developed, maintained and sustained over time. This system must retain people that can help lead a community through change and understand that good leadership skills promote good decision making.

Many leadership programs focus on building the skills of individuals. In contrast, Horizons focuses on community leadership – identifying and developing the activities of citizens to strengthen and move their community forward.

Through Horizons, the Foundation helps communities develop leadership systems that will powerfully engage communities in vision, strategy and the work of poverty reduction. The Foundation has invested in leadership development because it is explicitly connected to the Foundation's goals of increasing the capacity of the community to reduce poverty, and of developing and expanding the community's decision-making processes in ways that create meaningful participation for those traditionally excluded. The community leadership development method used in Horizons can also help communities move forward to other outcomes, including increased community assets and expanded economic opportunities.

COMMUNITY PROGRESS ON OUTCOMES

Building Knowledge and Awareness

POVERTY

1. Building knowledge and awareness about poverty

In what ways has this community's knowledge about poverty changed?

What evidence do you have of this?

Are more community members talking about poverty?

What kind of difference does it make if people in your community better understand the causes of poverty?

Do you see any evidence that the community understands how public policy (local, state, national) can affect poverty?

LEADERSHIP

5. Building knowledge and awareness about leadership

In what ways has your community's knowledge about leadership changed?

How do you know?

Do community members see leadership as an individual or a community issue?

How does it differ?

Is there any evidence that more people in the community feel like they can be or are leaders?

How would your community be different if more people think they have a role to play in community leadership?

COMMUNITY

9. Building knowledge and awareness about community

In what ways is your community more aware of its strengths or assets?

What evidence do you have that people are more aware of all of the diverse people who live in your community?

What difference, if any, does that make?

Have you learned anything about nearby communities like yours?

About resources that your community can take advantage of?

What difference does that make?

Building Skills and Mobilizing

2. Building skills and mobilizing around poverty

What evidence do you have that people in the community feel like they can do something to reduce poverty?

In what ways have community members made a commitment to reduce poverty?

How does the community plan to make sure the entire community supports its plans and actions to reduce poverty?

In what ways are community members working to assure low income people are involved in a poverty reduction planning and activities?

What partnerships has your community made to support its work on poverty reduction?

6. Building skills and mobilizing around leadership

What changes are you seeing in the way community leadership is exercised or carried out?

How is it different?

How has your community changed after LeadershipPlenty® training?

In what ways have leadership skills been improved/enhanced?

What is different?

What changes are you seeing in the way leadership is carried out?

How decisions get made in your community?

What difference does the involvement of low income people make in community leadership?

10. Building skills and mobilizing around community

How has your community changed since joining Horizons?

Is your community more hopeful about the future?

How do you know?

What evidence do you have that community members see poverty as a community issue?

Are more people involved in creating ideas, plans and taking actions on behalf of the community?

What difference does this make?

What new partnerships have been created (within your community, or between your community and others)?

COMMUNITY PROGRESS ON OUTCOMES

Taking Action

POVERTY

3. Taking action on poverty

What kinds of concrete steps are being taken by your community to address poverty?

How did your community make choices about the actions most likely to have an impact on poverty?

How are low income involved?

How does your plan for poverty reduction link with existing leaders, groups and organizations?

What other partnership will help your community carry out its poverty reduction plan?

LEADERSHIP

7. Taking action on leadership

How has your community leadership expanded?

What changes have been made in who is now involved in leadership positions?

Are more people participating in leadership?

Are different kinds of people (representing more sectors or parts of the community) now participating in community leadership?

Does the community leadership reflect the community's demographic profile?

Are more low income people participating in community leadership?

What changes have been made in the way your community recruits and trains new leaders?

Sustains existing leaders?

COMMUNITY

11. Taking action on community

In what ways is your community operating or working differently?

In what new or expanded ways are people contributing to your community?

How are low income involved?

What structures have been created or changed that will help your community?

What new partnerships have been created, and what difference have they made for your community?

Have you learned anything about how nearby communities like yours are taking action to reduce poverty?

Do you see any opportunities to exchange information or combine efforts in this work?

Sustaining Action/Creating Structural Change

4. Sustaining action and creating structural change around poverty

What structures have been changed that will enable your community to address poverty in the long-term?

How will you monitor and evaluate your community's progress in reducing poverty?

What community resources will be needed to sustain the community plan to reduce poverty?

What additional resources would make a difference in your community's work to reduce poverty?

8. Sustaining action and creating structural change around leadership

What is your community's plan for maintaining a strong community leadership system?

How can your community sustain the changes it has already made in its leadership?

What structural changes have been made in how the community does its work/makes decisions?

What structural changes have been made so that your community leadership sustains partnerships with others?

12. Sustaining action and creating structural change around community

How will your community make decisions about seeking further resources to support its plans?

Is a system in place to seek, receive, monitor and report on new resources to support community work?

Is a system in place to maintain contact with, or to continue to work with other communities?

With your Delivery Organization?

In other partnerships?

What new resources have been secured to assist the work of the community?

The Horizons program is sponsored by
the Northwest Area Foundation



**Northwest Area
Foundation**

*Helping communities
reduce poverty*

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