NIH CEAL | CHICAGOLAND
Community Engagement Alliance | CEAL Program

Community based organizations (CBOs) are on the frontlines to tackle social and health inequities in Chicago.

Data is very important for CBOs to determine what issues they should address and how to support their communities.

The Chicagoland CEAL Program wanted to find out more about the data needs, goals, and supports for CBOs in Chicago.

Surveys
- 51 surveys done in summer 2023
- Most respondents held leadership roles
- Surveys asked about:
  - Organizational budget
  - Data use
  - Data goals
  - Funding
  - Population-level data
  - Data Platforms

Interviews
- 24 of 51 survey respondents were interviewed in fall 2023
- Resulted in more detailed answers about data needs

We're... in that area of figuring out what is the data that's most important to us. What is going to be most impactful for our programs?... Part of our mission is for thriving communities... How do we demonstrate that? And what does that mean?

-Quote from a CBO senior advisor

Results and Solutions

Increase long-term funding for CBOs

Make CBO funding less restrictive

Let CBOs allocate their own funding

Staff Funding
- Only 4% of CBOs had sufficient funding for data-related work
- 38% of CBOs had a dedicated data-related staff member

Data Use vs. Goals
- Funders require data that isn't always useful to CBOs
  - CBOs collect more data than they need → overworked staff
  - CBOs want action-focused data

CBO data needs should be prioritized by funders

Inaccessibility of Data Systems
- Data platforms are outdated and hard to use
- Data not hyperlocal enough
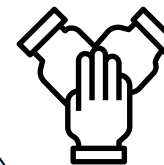- Multiple databases to satisfy all funders → requires double data entry

Funders should increase qualitative data measures

Make data platforms more action-focused

Train CBOs to navigate data platforms

Improve data sharing between CBOs and with funders