

Poverty and Evidence-Based Governance: The New York City Center for Economic Opportunity

Report Finds CEO Fosters Innovation, Evaluation, Cooperation and Evidence-based Policy

A report by the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government (RIG), *Poverty and Evidence-Based Governance: The New York City Center for Economic Opportunity* analyzes CEO's innovative processes and impact. The Institute describes CEO as "more than an anti-poverty agency. It is an ongoing experiment in governance, one that addresses a complex public problem through innovation, testing, and problem measurement." The report goes on to consider CEO as a potential national model in making government policy smarter and more effective.

The report highlights CEO's strong relationships with City agencies and community-based program providers; extensive staff expertise in evaluation methods and relevant policies; and reputation for technical proficiency and intellectual honesty. Partners cite CEO's collaborative and innovative approach in helping to realize ideas not previously explored. The report also discusses how partnering with CEO offers agencies the flexibility to make adaptive program changes as new evidence and information comes to light.

The report finds that CEO:

- **Drives significant innovation in local government.** 13 CEO programs have been declared successful and transitioned to City agencies, at which point programs often expand.
- **Improves collective understanding of poverty through its groundbreaking new Poverty Measure.** The measure is an important indicator of how policy affects poverty and paved the way for the use of a similar measure at the federal level.
- **Establishes a considerable body of evidence on the effectiveness of program models.** A strong commitment to evaluation is embedded in CEO operations. Since its launch in 2006, CEO has conducted over 40 evaluations, including program reviews and random control trials.
- **Adds a spirit of innovation to City government, as well as a willingness to discontinue ineffective programs.** CEO fosters innovative collaborations across agencies to pilot programs and successfully engages a wider and non-traditional range of city agencies in antipoverty efforts. CEO has discontinued approximately 20 programs.
- **Applies lessons learned to New York City and nationwide through its prominence in the Mayor's Office and role in the Social Innovation Fund.** CEO serves as an intermediary for the Social Innovation Fund, a federal grant that is supporting the replication of 5 successful CEO programs in 8 cities, and thus influences cities nationwide and informs federal policy.

About This Report

The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government is the public policy research arm of the State University of New York. The Institute lends its academic expertise on governance and innovation to this analysis, which assesses CEO's role in City government and contributions to the movement to promote evidence-based policymaking. Data are analyzed from more than 60 interviews with CEO staff, city officials, service providers, evaluation firms, national policy experts, advocacy groups, and others; and the report draws upon evaluations and budget and performance documents.

For the full report, please visit:

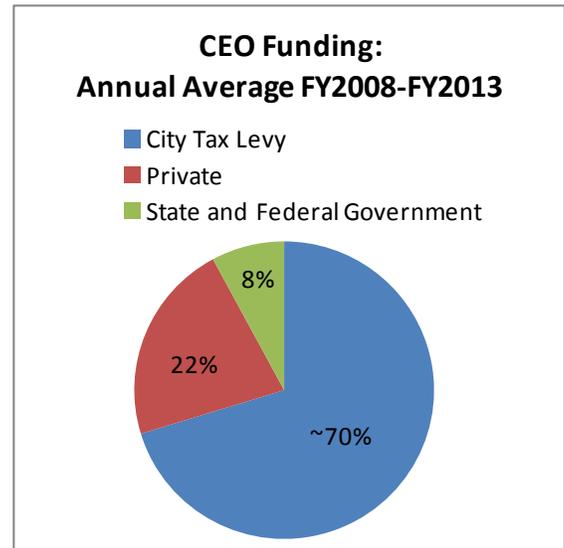
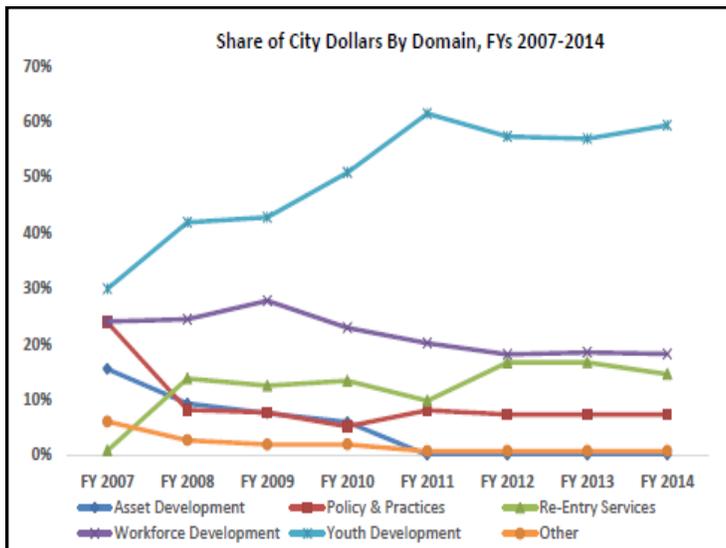
- http://www.nyc.gov/html/ceo/downloads/pdf/2014-03-NYC_CEO_Report.pdf

Other independent reports on CEO's work include:

- *Innovation and Success: Qualitative Assessment of the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity's Transition of Proven Programs to City Agencies* (http://www.nyc.gov/html/ceo/downloads/pdf/qualitative_assessment_transition_of_programs.pdf)
- *Evidence of Organizational Change: Qualitative Assessment of the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity's Impact on New York City Agencies and Provider Organization* (http://www.nyc.gov/html/ceo/downloads/pdf/organizational_change_report.pdf)

CEO's Policy Domains by Program Status						
All Programs, 2006-2013						
	Asset Develop- ment	Workforce Development	Youth Devel- opment	Re-Entry Services	Policies & Practices	Total
<u>Standard CEO Programs</u>						
Successful (continued)	5	4	2	0	2	13
Discontinued	0	3	5	5	1	14
Pilots (ongoing evaluation)	0	2	5	2	5	14
<u>Programs in other Funding Streams</u>						
Social Innovation Fund	2	2	1	0	0	5
Young Men's Initiative Pilots	0	0	4	6	0	10
Completed (one-shot initiatives)	3	0	2	0	2	7
Total	10	11	19	13	9	62

Source: Report authors' analysis of data in CEO annual reports and interviews with CEO staff.



Key Recommendations

1. Playing a broader role in City government (i.e., outside poverty policies) by providing expertise in measuring problems, piloting innovative programs, evaluating and/or partnering with private funders;
2. Piloting and evaluating administrative and other incremental changes in established agency-led programs, such as CEO's innovative partnership with NYC Department of Finance to mail EITC tax forms to families who were eligible but had not applied;
3. Working to promote CEO-like entities in other cities (such as those already launched in Philadelphia, Hartford, Providence and Richmond);
4. Summarizing the broader findings from evaluations conducted by CEO and CEO-like entities, and discussing their implications for federal policies, including federal assistance;
5. Measuring factors that contribute to poverty to better understand the impact of program and policies on those factors.