

Human Services Subsector: The Effects of Lancaster Outreach Center's  
Poverty Reduction Efforts in Rural Communities

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## **ABSTRACT**

Lancaster Outreach Center (LOC) has for almost 30 years provided high social welfare quality services with minimum setbacks. However, the faltering economy had a negative influence on the level of donor funding LOC expected. The decreased funding level has greatly affected LOC's operations, and the nonprofit organization no longer sees donor funding as a solid revenue source. This study aims to analyze the challenges that rural social workers encounter working for a small nonprofit. Data regarding the agency was collected directly from members of the LOC staff. The research findings for the literature review were obtained through the UTA online library. The conclusion describes the many adversities the agency faces and the solutions suggested for fixing the issues.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Lancaster Outreach Center (LOC) has for almost 30 years provided high social welfare quality services with minimum setbacks. However, the faltering economy had a negative influence on the level of donor funding LOC expected. The decreased funding level has greatly affected LOC's operations, and the nonprofit organization no longer sees donor funding as a solid revenue source.

I had the opportunity to work with LOC as a volunteer working in several departments such as, stocking for the thrift store, loading and unloading the delivery trucks, assisting in packing and issuing out orders from the pantry to clients and as a custodian refreshing the office after work hours.

This study analyzes the human services subsector that defines my research interest, namely the challenges rural social workers encounter working for small nonprofit organizations face. In order to provide real-life details of the challenges, the selected organization for this

study is LOC. With this aim in mind, the study begins with the background and history of LOC, the mission, target population, and services the agency offers as an effort to help reduce poverty in the rural communities of South Dallas County (Lancaster, Texas; Wilmer, Texas; and Hutchins, Texas). The paper addresses governance, the funding sources, the literature review illustrates research in the human services subsector including demographics on poverty, and then bridges into the recent emergence of human services as a profession. The methodology consisted on an analysis of data obtained by interviewing staff members. The paper discussed a short case study that is targeted to the outcomes of LOC's financial situation. The paper ends with a conclusion and recommendations from observation and research.

### **Background Information**

Lancaster Outreach Center is a private non-profit organization categorized as a Family Service Agency and located in Lancaster Texas. It separated from the Ministerial Alliance, and established LOC in 1986 and partnered with government agencies along with being United Way Affiliated. Recently, LOC, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity and Salvation Army, have provided assistance for tornado victims. Tornado relief consisted of funding assistance to rebuild, furnish temporary shelter. LOC currently employs approximately nine full time staff members. There are ten volunteers on a regular basis and volunteers from colleges and schools are encouraged to volunteer for credit. Some individuals that have court orders volunteer at LOC to serve out their community services.

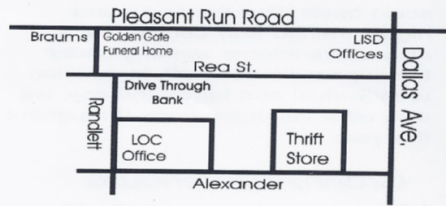
### **History**

Since its inception, the agency has adapted to changes in society. LOC was formalized in 1971 as the Lancaster Welfare Fund, operated by the Lancaster Ministerial Alliance. LOC, in its current form has been serving Lancaster, Wilmer, and Hutchins for 25

years, but its real history and beginning can be traced back to the 1950's. It began when a small group of concerned Lancaster citizens started providing emergency food and clothing. The office and food pantry was located at various churches in town. The name of the organization was changed to Lancaster Outreach Center when it became a separate entity in 1986. In 1988, donated land and labor provided the main facility on Randlett Street. Five additional properties have been added since then including, a commercial building for the Thrift Store, a Counseling Center, a small apartment, and storage areas.

In the year 2000, a 2,500 square foot expansion was completed adding additional room for both social services and counseling. This addition includes a Client Choice Food Pantry, a Classroom/Group Counseling Room, Computer Lab, and Individual Counseling Rooms. The store, known as "Granny's Storehouse," was named in honor and memory of the beloved volunteer and part-time employee, Meda "Granny" Wheat. This property was added following the April 1994 tornado, and was remodeled by volunteers.

In connection with this early effort, a thrift store was established at the old school on Second Street to make clothing readily available. The thrift store, operated solely by one paid employee and volunteers, was moved several times over the years, being subject to available donated space. Figure 1 below shows the location and the type of services provided:



**How Can You Help?**

**Become A Volunteer**

Volunteers make all the difference! LOC is constantly looking for new faces to brighten the environment around the office, food pantry, and thrift store. All possessing kindness, generosity, and a desire to assist fellow members of the community are encouraged to visit and become a part of the LOC family. Choose from a variety of interesting positions. Training is available and schedules are flexible.

**Give Financial Support**

You may wish to make an annual or monthly tax deductible contribution to the ministry of LOC. You can even make a one-time or monthly donation billed to your credit card

**Give Food & Clothing**

Food, Baby foods, diapers, personal hygiene products, good used clothing and furniture are always needed.

**Lancaster Outreach Center**

1120 Randlett St.  
Lancaster, TX 75146  
Phone: (972) 227-0138  
Fax: (972) 227-5117  
Website: [www.l-o-c.org](http://www.l-o-c.org)  
Email: [info@l-o-c.org](mailto:info@l-o-c.org)

**Client Services Available:**  
Monday - Saturday  
9:00-1:00

**Counseling Center:**  
Phone: (972) 227-0190  
*Counseling Available by Appointment*

**Granny's Storehouse:**  
123 Alexander

**For More Information, Contact:**  
*Ronnie Lowe*  
Executive Director



LOC is Proud to be a  
*United Way Affiliate*



*LOC helps people today, so they can help themselves tomorrow!*

**Mission**

The mission of LOC is to relieve suffering, restore human dignity and promote self-sufficiency. They believe that the higher the level of self-sufficiency in a society, the smaller the nonprofit sector assistance, and ultimately their support to the people of South Dallas County.

**Target Population.**

The intended target population is those living in the South Dallas County who are employed, unemployed, disabled, elderly, or experiencing immediate financial hardship. The city of Lancaster is predominantly African American while the cities of Wilmer and Hutchins are majority Hispanic. LOC is available to assist any resident in need that lives in the three cities. While there is no specific, targeted ethnic group, the majority of clients are African American and Hispanic. LOC assists many retired and elderly clients but the majority of clients are of

working age with low incomes. Most of the clients assisted have children, and some grandparents who are raising grandchildren. “The majority of LOC’s clients are indeed employed. They are productive members of society, who due to some short-term crisis are unable to ‘make ends meet.’ Some clients need professional assistance and education to better manage their daily responsibilities—things many of us take for granted” R. Lowe (2013, p.1).

### **Services**

LOC is not just in the emergency assistance business. It provides food, clothing, furniture, rent/utility assistance, job placement, and some transportation. Although, LOC has only one location, the agency is organized into several different entities generally known as programs. Each program is briefly explained below:

1. Food Pantry - When individuals cannot afford food then the entire community suffers from the effects of hunger. Each year, LOC fills over 7,000 food orders and spends over \$20,000 to purchase food from various sources to provide over \$270,000 worth to meet basic food needs of clients.
2. Counseling Center – It provides a wide range of services for one month old individual through ages one and beyond despite their background.
  - a. Utility Bill Assistance – LOC assists clients with TXU electric bills.
  - b. Dallas County Health and Human Services – A representative from Dallas County is also available on campus from most providers to assist clients that live in Desoto and Glenn Heights with utilities.
  - c. Consumer Credit Counseling – a caseworker with CCCS also offices in the agency to provide clients with credit counseling.
  - d. Therapy Services provided for families and individual.

- e. Back to School - Each August, LOC helps distribute school supplies to students from qualified families. On August 18, 2013, LOC distributed supplies for 600 students. LOC also provides supplies for students in need throughout the year.
  - f. Christmas – In 2013, LOC assisted 171 families, including 423 children, with Christmas. The agency completed the Christmas Shoppe donations with a totaling of \$23,265 for brand new toys and \$10,405 in food.
3. Thrift Store known as Granny’s Storehouse while its main purpose is to raise revenue, it also provides services. LOC generating over \$100,000 annually from the sale of donated new and used clothing, furniture, and miscellaneous durable goods. As the old saying goes, "One person’s trash is someone else’s treasure."

#### **Board Governance.**

“Governing board members are stewards of the public interest and have a responsibility to use and preserve the organization’s assets for advancing a beneficial mission” (Dicke, et. al., 2012, p. 7). The board of directors of LOC ensures that the organization is effectively managed and is working toward the achievement of the mission that has a public purpose. Ronnie Lowe who is the only paid board member working as Executive Director

The board and executive director strive to diversify funding sources for the organization. Fundraising is an essential activity to help sustain the agency. Leaders understand that the fundraising process contains several functions: “research, planning, cultivation, solicitation, stewardship, and evaluation” (Dicke and Ott, 2012, p. 117). LOC conducts research by locating prospective donors, including individuals and foundations. The Executive Director understands the fundraising environment and plans, setting goals and takes action accordingly. In order to cultivate donors, LOC engages and maintains the interest and involvement of donors. This helps

donors feel that they have a stake or an investment in the organization. The Executive Director solicits annually from the public as a component within his fundraising effort. Stewardship is defined as “a process whereby an organization seeks to be worthy of continued philanthropic support by acknowledging donors” (Dicke, et. al., 2012, p. 123). LOC evaluates whether its fundraising efforts lead to successful achievements and make adjustments as needed.

### **Funding Sources.**

Overall, volunteers play a valuable role as a funding source for the organization. The organization only has 9 paid employees and approximately 10 volunteers that work each day. This does not include interns that come in and work for a period of time. Using volunteers and interns saves the organization over \$200,000/year in payroll. LOC obtained gross revenue of \$922,935 for 2013. The agency is funded by different sources throughout the year in cash and noncash donations. U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided \$18,154 for utility bill assistance. United Way funding consisted of \$264,141 for basic needs and financial education. TXU donated \$36,213 for energy bill assistance. However, there is no data to show how much revenue the thrift store generated 40 years ago, but “revenues in recent years have grown from \$ 10,000 in 1989, to a high of \$133,000 in 2012” Lowe (2013, p.1). The thrift store generated \$400,287 in noncash donations. \$204,140 was raised from thrift store sales and individual donations for general operations. The agency has diverse sources of funding for restricted and unrestricted use. Thus, the Funding Revenue for 2013 was over \$1,845,870.

### **Literature Review**

Social workers will be confronted with a myriad of issues, in which grief and loss of loved ones are at the core. This study will discuss the issues concerning social workers in rural communities. Friedman (2003) talks about the similar challenges the urban and the rural social



worker faces. He gives examples of some of the challenges such as health care, childcare, and public transportation. However, the article speaks on the difficulties rural communities have as compared to those of the urban metropolitan, when it comes to child care and transportation being unreliable. Pindus (2001) speaks on the influence that these challenges (health care, child care, and no public transportation) have on the economic condition of families and communities, which is a major challenge to rural communities because undeveloped commercial property does not generate enough revenue through taxes to help support the area.

Likewise, Weber, Duncan, & Whitener (2001) speak on issues concerning Medicare health, health insurance, and the challenges rural communities have in contrast to the metropolitan and other areas. Even though, services provided by urban and rural areas are the same, the important thing to know is that rural nonprofits, such as LOC refer services they do not provide to organizations that do. However, services from government agencies are lacking in promptness. Kraybill and Labao (2001) conducted research that showed the reasons why rural communities were slow to receive services from the county governments. They found that an increase in the administrative workload for established programs going on at the same time faced changes in staffing as well as a budgetary deficiency that cause delays in social service delivery. Additionally, a number of employees began to retire, and in doing so departments were left with less experienced employees operating the services (Dohm, 2000). Programs, especially in rural communities, suffered from these changes. However, programs were developed to intervene.

On one note, LOC serve rural areas with home healthcare visits that offers case management for clients, some transportation for the elderly, and a resource for short term and long-term rehabilitation with a professional caregiver that helps the handicap and elderly. However, clients are advised to similar organizations when needed. Moreover, the

Comprehensive Care Management LLC (2010) organization provide healthcare services that focuses on case management and advocating for the patient, guiding the patient and family, acting as a resource, and coordinating healthcare service in a timely and cost effective manner. Comprehensive Healthcare Management Services offers specializes care, both short and long-term rehabilitation, and unique medical, nursing and rehabilitative programs. Their professional caregivers develop customized treatment plans and strive to provide the highest level of clinical and personalized care for your loved ones.

What's more, Catholic Charities of Central Texas (2002- 2010) stated that “long-term comprehensive case management is available to assist families in developing and implementing a recovery plan. Management has helped families to stabilize their household and achieve economic self-sufficiently” (p 1). They also provide critical services including emergency food, shelter, direct financial assistance, counseling, and support. These services are provided regardless of race, creed, or socio-economic status.

Meanwhile, experts and advocates similarly point out that welfare reform faces obstacles in rural areas that often are more difficult to overcome than obstacles in the urban areas. First and foremost of these obstacles is a lack of suitable jobs. Thus, rural America, where nearly 29% of welfare recipient families live, has higher unemployment, more seasonal jobs, part-time, and lower wages than urban America (Comprehensive Care Management LLC, 2010). Equally important, public transportation not being in the rural community hurt the stabilization as well.

Finally, Kerschner and Aizenberg (1999) said, rural or non-metro residents made up 25% of the U. S. population, while only 6% of the federal transit fund was spent for rural transit. Alternately, 73% of the populations live in urban areas, while 94.5% of federal transit funds are

spent there (Keischner & Aizenberg, 1999). Buses, para transit, and private taxi or private transport services do not even exist in many communities. Forty percent of rural residents (37 million people) are said to have no public transit, and 25% live in places where transportation is said to be inadequate (Keichner & Aizenberg, 1999). Eskenazi (2010) said, "In Texas, the state does not contribute any money to urban metropolitan transit agencies. Funding comes via a portion of the sales tax. Also, Texas, the sales tax is capped at 8.25 percent and 6.25 percent must go to the state. So municipalities play with that leftover 2 percent" (Eskenazi, 2010, p.1).

Moreover, during the 2011 budget, Barry (2010) states President Obama proposed \$830 million for collaborative projects between these key agencies to improve quality of life in our communities and increase transportation options. Future research might include the basic needs of the rural communities as a top priority in terms of the implementation of services to improve rural infrastructure. Provision of such services is becoming increasingly important in the rural communities, and more attention should focus on the welfare of those living in rural areas.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Data was collected using different methods. Research findings for the literature review were obtained through the UTA online library, from professional journals such as Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector and Policy Studies Review, and from course textbooks. Data regarding the agency was collected directly from LOC leaders, clients, and the lead social worker through interviews and direct interaction

## **IRB**

The first thing one did was to contact LOC by telephone to set up an interview with the head social worker. After talking to the secretary, she connected me with Ms. Kathy Gaither. I

explained to her what my intention was, and she set me an appointment to meet with her. Regarding the field of rural social workers, the study was done at the Lancaster Outreach Center, where I had an observation section and interview section. The main focuses in both sections were on the operation of their system. Kay Roquemore who is the assistant to Kathy Gaither of the LOC organization did the observation section. I also observed the LOC's operation. The observation showed social workers addressing their services to needed clients as well as the challenges LOC faces. It was conducted at the LOC from 12:00 pm. to 12:30 pm. on October 1, 2013. Moreover, I met with Ms. Kathy. I told her that my subject was about *what challenges do rural social workers working for small nonprofit organizations face*. Furthermore, I explained to her that I had 10 interview questions that I would like for her to answer as honest and clear as she possibly could. She answered saying, "I will try to" K. Gaither (personal communication, October 1, 2013). I then asked her was it all right to record the interview? And she said, "That was fine" K. Gaither (personal communication, October 1, 2013).

There was an outlined transcript with detailed information about the interview that gave me a clear understanding what the main issue LOC had. Again money shortage created the problems more than any of the other issues. Moreover, coding was done in a short highlight detail for an easy guide to the main sources of the interview.

### **The following is a summary of the interview section**

#### **Interview:**

I interviewed Director of Client Services, Kathy Gaither. I had ten prepared questions, which acted as guide for the interview. I decided that to ask the questions in order. While the interview was going on, I was asking some additional questions for the purpose of giving a clear explanation, at the same time getting a clear explanation about the particular written question.

Kathy has a three years' experience at Cook County Hospice and 16 years at LOC. She hints that there were challenges for LOC: First, better communication is needed between LOC and government in receiving their funds in a timely manner. She also said, it is a challenge to intervene because the United Way plans to shorten their funding.

### **Analysis**

Friedman (2003) writes about challenges to social service delivery in rural areas are similar to those faced in central cities and metropolitan areas such as, health insurance, child care, and transportation are some of the services that these organizations provide. However, Ms. Kathy talks about the few services that LOC does not provide, referring them to other organizations such as, health insurance, child care, and convenient and reliable transportation. Research indicates that the health insurance and child care are services that could be applied by LOC at some point, but there is not enough money provided to accommodate health insurance and child care. However, public transportation in Lancaster, Texas is beyond the control of LOC; it is a city structure problem, which goes through a lot of channels.

Pindus (2001) states the barriers face by residents of rural poor areas have been by passed by our nation's recent economic prosperity. However, state policies were an important factor in determining the availability and location of services (child care, health care, and public transportation). There is a possibility state polices affect service and access because of rural areas more dispersed populations and limited local resources than in urban and suburban areas. Child care and health care has become a national concern, where new laws have been opposed-proposed. Public transportation is another matter for which each the city has their plans.

Ms. Kathy mentions money is the key to programs surviving, and there has been less and less funding in the last three years. Therefore, study of the data suggests that the LOC should

offer a new proposal with plans to upgrade their education and health programs; and ask their main donors for help with more funding.

Weber, Duncan, and Whitener (2002), feel that it is difficult for social workers to identify a family's needs in rural communities because the sociological and psychological actions depended on public assistance are more existing. Yet, it is not so in the case of the LOC communities, according to Ms. Kathy. Although, more people are moving to a community they can afford, in which our communities fall into these areas of choice. LOC is still small enough to identify the ones that need their services. Study indicates there is more research data needed to get a correct analysis.

Kraybill and Labao (2001) researched county government and result shows why delivery services were slow. The government and the state were making personnel changes at the same time, whereas, the state was having a shortfall in their budget. With the employee's changes, it became a factor because a shortage in experience position slowed the delivery services to organizations. Ms. Kathy says, "The delay was felt, and no one explained why services was being later than usual. Yet, some of our programs (workforce training and classroom) had been cut and others put on hold due to the slow process. Meanwhile, we were still able to serve clients with most of their basic needs, and help families stabilize their household and achieve economic self-sufficiently as our mission states; even if it means referring them to other organizations" K. Gaither (personal communication, October 1, 2013).

Nonetheless, LOC staff members have a similar position as the state and government, when it comes to staff changes because LOC uses the service of interns from University of Texas Arlington and volunteers to fill their staff roster. The problem with that is, some of the made up staffs are not experienced, and one does not know if the substitute staff is going to show up all

the time because they are not really employed. Research indicates after the state and government straighten out their situation, they should reevaluate the rural community needs because the issues with these areas speak for themselves. Although all organizations would like their delivery services on time, the rural communities suffer the greatest; it is practically dead without resources, so special attention such as, dividing employees into sections, and trains the section to work toward getting delivery services out to the rural communities on a timely manner to help programs stay afloat. Thus, when it comes to healthcare, there are other programs designed just to assist client's health issues.

Comprehensive Care Management LLC (2010) gives assistance to clients and their families through the healthcare decision making processes that can occur with an illness, injury, or declining health status. This organization has brought about a lot of comfort to know that services could be provided at any time with healthcare during physical setbacks. Case management services understand the key resource to health care setting is to have a vision. Ms. Kathy says, "That LOC similar to this organization and address health care in the same fashion. Matter of fact, social workers visits their in house healthcare clients on a regular basis" K. Gaither (personal communication, October 1, 2013). Data indicates that both organizations are similar, and they abide by the same codes for the welfare of their clients. On another note, issues with transit in the rural area asked the question, is there a real solution?

Ms. Kathy says, "Transit in Lancaster, Texas has been a setback for clients, which makes some of our services limited such as, unable to provide transportation for client to search for jobs and go to doctor appointments" K. Gaither (personal communication, October 1, 2013). According to Kerschner and Aizenberg, (1999), "In rural or non-metro residents made up 25% of the U. S. population while only 6% of the federal transit fund were spent for rural transit.

LOC has continued to build trust within the rural cities of Lancaster, Wilmer, and Hutchins located in South Dallas County, according to Hansmann (1987).

### **Poverty**

The landscape of poverty continues to change. As of 2010, the poverty rate in the United States is 15.1%. Surprisingly, Texas is the sixth state in the country with the highest poverty rate of 18.4%. CNN Money (2010) reports that the states above TX are: (1) Mississippi with 22.7%, (2) Louisiana with 21.6%, (3) Georgia with 18.7%, (4) New Mexico with 18.6%, and (5) Arizona with 18.6%. “Poverty itself, has thrown families into chaos, forcing them into survival mode” (DeVol and Payne, 2011, p.3). Finally, City Data (2010) reports that the poverty demographics for the cities featured in this study are: (1) Lancaster with 14.6%, (2) Wilmer with it 33.2%, and (3) Hutchins with 27.2%. Meanwhile, experts and advocates, alike, point out that welfare reform faces obstacles in rural areas that often are more difficult to overcome than obstacles in the urban areas. First and foremost of these obstacles is a lack of suitable jobs. Thus, rural America, there were nearly 29% of welfare recipient families live, has higher unemployment, more seasonal jobs, part-time, and lower wages than urban America (Comprehensive Care Management LLC, 2010). Equally important, public transportation also plays an important role to stabilization.

LOC reference the activities of utility bill assistance to United Way as financial education. They are lacking in the area of actual education and training. In 2011, United Way significantly reduced funding to less than half due to low quality financial education. There are no requirements to hold clients accountable for the assistance they receive. Some clients have used the services of the agency for more than 10 years consecutively because there are no requirements or limits. Clients are given assistance for up to \$400 on an unpaid electric bill but receive no formal financial education on maintaining a budget.



## **Case Study**

LOC has been involved in measuring program effectiveness for over 10 years. It is an integral part of the agency's philosophy and programming. A total of 1,053 of its 4,216 clients received utility bill assistance in 2013. The Executive Director counted the number of clients who meet with social workers for utility bill assistance. Specific data is collected from the social workers as they follow up with clients. Approximately every 60-90 days for one year, social workers or interns contact clients follow up and to assess their current situation. This information is documented on a spreadsheet. At the final contact, they are asked to rate their overall experience of the program. For the purpose of United Way funding, written outcomes and goals are established for the financial education program. Within 1 year, LOC plans to achieve the following:

- CASE STUDY 60% of clients will see a \$25 per month increase in savings.
- 100% of clients for financial assistance will complete a detailed budget, receive budget counseling, and be given applications and information for additional programs to help build or preserve their assets.
- 100% of clients for financial assistance will complete a detailed budget, receive budget counseling, and be given applications and information for additional programs to help build or preserve their assets.

## **Conclusion and Recommendation**

Whether, it is a funding problem or a problem that changes the condition, LOC has been around for more than 30 years. How and why they are still in business is an ongoing study to no end. LOC is the only social service agency exclusively serving families of Lancaster, Wilmer, and Hutchins with a total area population of 54,000. The population is 68% African American,

17% Hispanic, and 15% White (Lowe, 2013). Social Workers within LOC have multiple professional roles. The human services organization is a small grassroots social work agency, all the employees have various roles. Some of these roles include therapist, educator, coordinator, advocate, researcher, and more. The agency operates under limited resources and connections. While this is true, it being said economic is encouraged by these resources mention above because all these resources would need money to survive. Human being is supposed to be the number one concern. Therefore, spending money to help people to live productive lives especially, those that live below poverty needs programs and conveniences in a timely manner to survive in society.

President Obama passed laws to assist in such matters as health care, public transportation, and child care, which is now being seemed as a major issue. In contrast, the rural community feels the pressure more than the urban community because rural community has mostly seasonal jobs and no public transportation. However, with the help of other authorities working together with the president vision could possibly lead to fixing these major problems. Therefore, all communities especially, the rural community would maintain its position in society, providing they receive the proper resources for human needs in an opportune time.

Even though, there are several ways to analyzing rural community organizations, yet the overall finding target differential (the difference in optimal spending on the poor and the non-poor) is positive. That is, more of the poor than non-poor receive the programs. Research indicates that presence of outside pressure: Some project tasks were difficult or unsatisfying for LOC such as, redirecting services toward the poor, choosing less capital-intensive technologies for infrastructure, or reducing services and reaching larger numbers of new people. Also, the viewpoint of those concerned with sustainability, traditional impact analysis tended to take a

relatively short-term perspective. There are several dimensions to sustainability in the rural community needs (1) maintenance of project infrastructure and service delivery, (2) continuation of benefits, (3) preservation of the natural resource base for sustainable (food bank and clothing store).

It is also recommended that LOC consider expanding its educational component to hold clients accountable and promote self-sufficiency as stated in the mission. “Education and training are initiatives typically rank high in most antipoverty agendas” (Schiller, 2008, p. 324). Education may not be the sole resolution for poverty reduction, but it certainly plays a key role in the matter. Helping the poor receive more education is part of the answer in poverty reduction. In *Education for Rural People*, Acker & Gasperini (2009) states that education in all its forms has the potential to empower people by increasing their self-confidence, their capacity to improve their livelihoods, and their participation in wider processes of social and economic change. To further elaborate on the three ways that education can help reduce poverty: Firstly, it improves the quality of the worker making them more productive. Secondly, education brings social benefits that improve the situations of the poor. Thirdly, increased and improved education generates and improves economic opportunities. Thus, the agency can improve its efforts by building its own community resource networks to improve its education strategies.

However, the key is to fix the problems observed in the analysis and work toward incremental improvements. It requires a new vision for development that is long term, well evaluated, honest, open to error, learning from error and less prone to the fashions of the moment. While this is true, one research indicates having a careful and creative designed record system can be used with regularly monitor organization progress and costs against design plans,

targets, and schedules. Indeed, they can also be very useful for keeping basic information on users of LOC services such as, their socioeconomic status, and repeated use of services.

United Way is an opportunity, in which is very important to the LOC organization. As I have noted early in the text, a new proposal should be in order for 2013 to expand casework services and place more emphasis on financial education because the main stockholder (United Way) prioritizes health and education as being the number one concern. Therefore, with an upgrade (health and education) at LOC, United Way would probably, consider raising the funds to serve the South Dallas County.

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