Development of the Community Impact Scale Measuring Community Organization Perceptions of Partnership Benefits and Costs

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This article describes the development and psychometric properties of the Community Impact Scale (CIS), a measure of benefits and costs of community-university partnerships across a range of outcomes as perceived by community partners. Scale development was carried out in two phases: (a) item generation, through which the research team, in close collaboration with a long-term community partner, created scale items based on content analysis of interviews with eight community partners, observations of existing community-university partnerships, and insights from the research literature; and (b) item analysis, through which the psychometric properties of the scale were examined and the scale slightly revised based on results of administering the scale to a sample of 31 community partners. The final version of the CIS comprised 46 items across eight scale domains. The CIS may be regarded as a foundational assessment tool that has the potential to help community partners evaluate the impact of partnering with universities.

As a growing number of colleges and universities in the United States promote community-engaged approaches to scholarship and learning, partnerships between community organizations and universities (which we will refer to as community-university partnerships) have become more common and integral to academic and extra-curricular programming (Curwood, Munger, Mitchell, Mackeigan, & Farrar, 2011). Taking note of this trend, researchers and practitioners within the field of community engagement have increasingly recognized the need for strategies and tools to evaluate community-university partnerships. To date, most empirical studies of community-university partnerships have focused on evaluating processes, such as catalysts, facilitators, and barriers to the formation, functioning, and sustainability of partnerships (e.g., Doll et al., 2012; Pivik & Goelman, 2011; Sandy & Holland, 2006), as well as characteristics of relationships within partnerships (Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq, & Morrison, 2010; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Schulz, Israel, & Lantz, 2003; Wells, Ford, McClure, Holt, & Ward, 2007). When the impact of community-university partnerships is considered, the majority of research has focused on impact to students, as through service-learning courses (e.g., Bringle, Phillips, & Hudson, 2004; Casile, Hoover, & O'Neil, 2011; Groh, Stallwood, & Daniels, 2011; Kearney, 2013). While this body of work provides a critical foundation for understanding the quality and dynamics of community-university partnerships and their impact on student outcomes, less research has focused on measur-

ing the impact of community-university partnerships on *community partners* (Granner & Sharpe, 2004). As we will review below, a handful of studies pave the way for growth in this area, pointing to the need for an evaluation tool to assess the perceived benefits and costs of community-university partnerships on *community partners*.

Consideration of community organization outcomes first emerged from three main sources of research literature: public health, service-learning, and community psychology. Research literature in public health and service-learning has tended to focus on outcomes relevant to the community as a whole or to community organization metrics. Specifically, the focus has primarily been on three kinds of outcomes: (a) outcomes relevant to the community or to the overall expectations and goals of the community organization, including community-level attitude or behavior changes (e.g., increases in community awareness regarding substance abuse, decreases in adult-reported use of drugs; Francisco, Paine, & Fawcett, 1993; Goodman, Wandersman, Chinman, Imm, & Morrissey, 1996); (b) limited, concrete organizational outcomes (e.g., financial resources generated and volunteers recruited by the community organization; Francisco et al.); and (c) community organization staff members' perceptions of the impact of partnerships on community norms, policies, and prevention resources (Florin, Mitchel, Stevenson, & Klein, 2000; Wells, Feinberg, Alexander, & Ward, 2009).

In contrast, research literature in community psychology has tended to focus on outcomes relevant to

individuals within community organizations. Specifically, the focus has primarily been on two kinds of outcomes: (a) individuals' sense of community within the organization and the community at large (Hughey, Speer, & Peterson, 1999); and (b) individuals' perceptions of their own competence and capacity to contribute within the partnership as well as of the organization's overall effectiveness within the partnership (McMillan, Florin, Stevenson, Kerman, & Mitchell, 1995). While these studies advanced research on community organization outcomes, they were limited in two main ways: they each examined a relatively small slice of potential outcomes in the absence of broader, systematic measurement of a range of outcomes; and due to method of measurement, identified outcomes were not considered in terms of relative benefits or costs to community organizations and their staff members.

More recently, researchers have argued for the importance of studying potential benefits and costs or challenges of community-university partnerships from the perspective of community partners. For example, two large studies using focus groups solicited community partners' perspectives on motivations, benefits, and areas of improvement in community-university partnerships involved in service-learning projects (Sandy & Holland, 2006; Stoecker, Tryon, & Hilgendorf, 2009). Further, at least two quantitative studies have examined the relationship between partnership dynamics and community partners' perceptions of benefits and/or costs (El Ansari & Phillips, 2004; McNall, Reed, Brown, & Allen, 2009). These studies have started the important process of advancing research on community-university partnerships by examining community organization staff members' perceptions of the relative benefits and costs of partnering. However, missing from the literature is a brief instrument that allows for systematic measurement of perceptions of benefits and costs from the perspective of community partners across a range of outcomes including both tangible and intangible outcomes. Tangible impacts include more concrete effects such as perceived increases in number of volunteer hours, while intangible impacts include more abstract and personal effects to the community partner such as perceived increase in one's sense of life purpose.

Demonstrating the importance and feasibility of assessing potential benefits and costs to community partners of community-university partnerships, recent research thus sets the stage for the development of a tool that addresses key limitations in the literature to date. First, the range of outcomes assessed across studies has remained very limited, with much more of the literature focused on partnership dynamics. When outcomes are examined, the focus tends to be on measuring discrete outcome categories (e.g.,

organizational metrics, sense of community) rather than also considering a range of nuanced outcomes including concrete gains of partnering (e.g., perceived increase in volunteer service hours) as well as less obvious, personal impacts (e.g., sense of community) for individual staff members. Second, researchers have not consistently explored how measured outcomes map onto categories of relative benefits or costs. When they do consider outcomes in terms of these categories, researchers have tended to assume a priori whether particular outcomes are inherently benefits or costs to community partners rather than allowing respondents to indicate this. This is important, as not all community partners may share the same view on whether a particular outcome is a benefit or a cost, and the same partner may not necessarily see a particular outcome as consistently beneficial or costly. Third, studies have yet to take methodologically rigorous approaches to the development of items, as through a grounded, bottom-up qualitative approach that integrates feedback from community partners, researchers, faculty, and students, all of whom contribute to community-university partnerships.

Current Study

Project Framework and Approach

The current study describes a two-phase approach to the development of a scale that measures the impact of community-university partnerships on community partners and addresses limitations of the literature described above. Throughout development, we were guided by Marullo and colleagues' (2003) evaluative framework, which suggests that effective community-based research assessments conform to the five basic guidelines of being community-driven; collaborative; systematic and rigorous, yet flexible and context-specific; guided by grounded theory; and multidimensional. Furthermore, our scale development approach was both empirically and rationally derived, in that scale items were developed with attention to both qualitative empirical data from the content of interviews with community partners as well as rational observations and insights of faculty and students researchers, in close collaboration with a long-term community partner.

Due to diversity in how institutions approach community engagement and use terms such as "partnership" and "partner," it is important to clarify our approach and use of terms. The office on our university campus charged with educating and equipping faculty, students, and staff to do public good work focuses explicitly on preparing university stakeholders to develop community-university partnerships that are mutually beneficial and reciprocal, consis-

tent with Carnegie's definition of community engagement (Driscoll, 2008). In addition, grounded in a community organizing approach, the office explicitly provides training opportunities and support (e.g., in the form of grants) that emphasize the importance of collaborative participation of both community and university actors from project inception to completion as well as the identification of collective interests to pursue collective action aimed at achieving long-term and sustainable change related to public issues. Our university does not use static criteria to define community engagement, nor does the coordinating office develop partnerships for faculty and students, thus allowing for heterogeneous partnerships to develop in many ways and for diverse purposes, including (but not limited to) in the context of service-learning classes, faculty and/or student research, and long-term service and civic development programs. Additionally, consistent with Bringle, Clayton, and Price's (2009) definition, we define community-university partnerships as specific kinds of relationships characterized by closeness, equity, and integrity, and a "community partner" as anyone involved in the community-university partnership from the community side (e.g., volunteer coordinator, executive director).

Project Overview

Scale development was carried out across two phases: (a) item generation, and (b) item analysis (see Figure 1 for an integrated delineation of project overview and approach). In Phase 1, we conducted semi-structured interviews with eight community organizations (Sample 1) that had partnered with one university's faculty members and/or students (see Appendix A for interview items). The purpose of the interviews was to gather community partner perceptions of the impact of faculty and student activities on community organizations. Content analysis of the interviews revealed broad categories of benefits and costs of partnership for community organizations. Next, in close consultation with the third author's long-term community partner, our research group of two faculty members and two graduate research assistants (GRAs) integrated community partner feedback with observations of existing community-university partnerships and insights from the literature on partnerships to generate scale items that could measure a range of potential outcomes. We sought feedback on scale items at a large national conference attended by a mix of community organization and educational institution representatives. The resulting scale comprised nine domains. In Phase 2, the scale was administered to community partners (Sample 2) to test for internal consistency of scale domains. Analysis of internal consistency and

minor reorganization of scale items resulted in eight domains for the final scale (see Appendix B for all items). A university-based Institutional Review Board approved all study procedures.
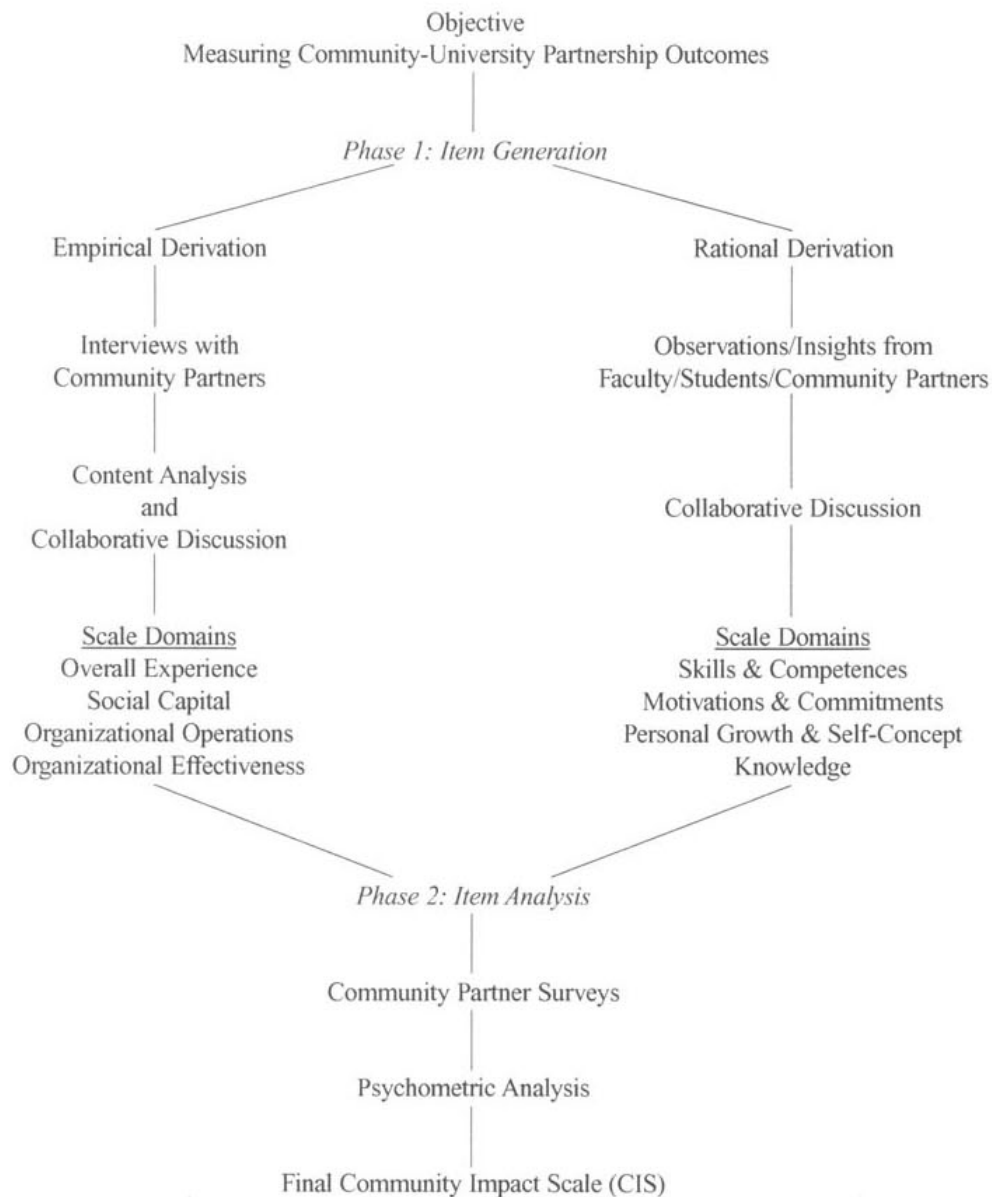
Phase 1 (Item Generation) Method

Participants

Sample 1 was recruited through email invitations to representatives of community organizations that had previously partnered with university faculty and/or students. The staff members who participated in interviews represented eight community organizations that had partnered with faculty members and/or students in which (a) undergraduate and graduate students engaged in service-learning projects for university service-learning classes; (b) faculty members and student associates pursued community-engaged scholarship or research on particular community-based research questions; (c) undergraduate and graduate students in the Compact Service AmeriCorps Program completed their 12 to 24 month term of service; (d) undergraduate students completed four-year civic engagement and public work projects; and (e) undergraduate and graduate students coached middle school and high school students undertaking a public work project or provided in- and out-of-class tutoring support. In terms of their target human service benchmark areas, four organizations identified education, four organizations identified social services, one organization identified environment, and one organization identified health (some organizations reported more than one benchmark area). In terms of length of the partnership with the university, three organizations reported less than five years, three organizations reported five to ten years, and two organizations reported over ten years. Participants included volunteer coordinators, program directors, and executive directors.

Measures

The semi-structured interview included 15 open-ended questions (see Appendix A). Questions were adapted from focus group and survey questions from a study of the impact of student services on community organizations partnered with a university (Barrientos, 2010). The survey questions used by Barrientos were themselves based on a focus group model developed by Gelmon, Holland, Driscoll, Spring and Kerrigan (2001) in the "Impact on Community Partners" section of their handbook. Thus, the current semi-structured interview items were solidly based in prior assessment of community organization outcomes. Furthermore, our decision to adapt questions from Barrientos' project was inten-

Figure 1
Community Impact Scale (CIS) Research Development Process

Objective
Measuring Community-University Partnership Outcomes

Phase 1: Item Generation

Empirical Derivation

Interviews with
Community Partners

Content Analysis
and
Collaborative Discussion

Scale Domains
Overall Experience
Social Capital
Organizational Operations
Organizational Effectiveness

Rational Derivation

Observations/Insights from
Faculty/Students/Community Partners

Collaborative Discussion

Scale Domains
Skills & Competences
Motivations & Commitments
Personal Growth & Self-Concept
Knowledge

Phase 2: Item Analysis

Community Partner Surveys

Psychometric Analysis

Final Community Impact Scale (CIS)

tional and consistent with Marullo's evaluative model and the guideline to be "systematic and rigorous, yet flexible and context-specific" in assessment development. Barrientos' (2010) goal was to measure the impact of service-learning on a wide range of community organizations that had partnered with one university, with organization benchmark areas including social services, education, health, housing/tenant issues, and the environment. The questions she used for focus groups and surveys with community organizations were thus "systematic and rigorous" enough to meaningfully capture responses across different kinds of community organizations as well as "flexible and context-specific" enough to capture the unique experience of each organization. Since we also aimed to assess impacts for a wide range of organizations, we believed that Barrientos' questions would be well-suited to our goals.

Open-ended questions queried for basic characteristics of the community organization and partnership (i.e., benchmark areas served by the organization, length of partnership, protocol for handling student placements); satisfaction with various elements of the partnership (i.e., communication with students and faculty, level and quality of interactions with students and faculty, level of trust with students and faculty, quality of students' work, scope and timing of students' participation); impact of the partnership on the organization (i.e., capacity to fulfill its mission, tangible effects, awareness of the university, ability to influence the university); challenges of the partnership; and likelihood of continuing the partnership.

Procedure

Participants were recruited through email invitations and follow-up phone calls to representatives of community organizations that had previously partnered with university faculty members and/or students. Of 25 representatives contacted, 8 expressed interest in participating and completed interviews, thus representing a convenience sample. Two doctoral level GRAs conducted the approximately one-hour audio-taped interviews at each interviewee's preferred location (the community organization site, the university, or a private room within a community library). Following informed consent procedures, participants were told that interviews would be conducted in a semi-structured format, and that the purpose was to gather feedback on the impact of university student and faculty activities on community organizations, with the ultimate aim of developing an assessment tool to measure impacts of community-university partnerships. At the completion of the interviews, community partners each received a $25 gift certificate for participation.

Phase 1 (Item Generation) Analysis and Results

Two GRAs conducted content analysis on the eight audio-taped interviews. Following a bottom-up approach (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003), the GRAs listened closely to the interviews to identify segments relating to broad categories of benefits and costs of partnerships for the community organizations. They then grouped relevant statements into repeating themes underneath the broader categories of benefits and costs. At the end of the qualitative analysis process, four main themes emerged under each of the broader benefit and cost categories. Under benefits, themes included increased capacity/efficiency, increased networking/connections, high quality student work, and tangible work products. Under costs, themes included time constraints of the partnership, supervision of student work, training students in real-world/workplace practices, and training students in cultural competence. See Table 1 for example statements from community partners for each of these themes.

Table 1

Community Partner Statements Exemplifying Themes of Benefits and Costs

	Example Statements
Benefits	
Increased capacity/efficiency	"XXX University students really add in terms of our being able to offer additional services, expanded services, and an increased amount of time with clients."
Increased networking/connections	"Every time we interact with XXX University, we add resources to our toolbox, especially in terms of connections with faculty and students who help inform our program development."
High quality student work	"In general, when we see that someone is a XXX University student, we feel pretty confident; there's a general sense that this person will be high quality, high caliber."
Tangible work products	"In one project, XXX University students produced several videos we used for marketing. They have also helped tutor our students in small groups. XXX University faculty have supported our curriculum too, bringing in further research education, leading class discussions and supporting staff."
Costs	
Time constraints	"It is tough to work with students within the constraints of XXX University's quarter system. It's tough to figure out how to build more sustainable partnerships within those constraints."
Supervision of student work	"There's a good amount of cost in terms of supervision and legwork, so we really try to evaluate whether a student's goals align with our needs and whether they're willing to make a good time commitment."
Training students in real-world/workplace practice	"There is a steeper learning curve on the front end in terms of students learning what to expect in the workplace."
Training students in cultural competence	"The majority of students who have come to us have been fairly privileged, so that means there's a certain amount of cultural competency education that's on us. This is a very different community for them, a very new experience, and there's a little bit of a leap they need to take to engage here."

Our item generation approach was both empirically- and rationally-derived. It was empirically-derived in that we integrated content analysis of benefits and costs of partnership from community partner interviews in our generation of scale items. Our method was also rationally-derived (see Weathers, Keane, King, & King, 1997) in that we incorporated faculty, student, and community partner observations of existing community-university partnerships, as well as knowledge of the research literature and theoretical conceptualization of relevant constructs, in our generation of scale items. Specifically, in close collaboration with the third author's long-term community partner, our research group of two faculty members and two GRAs—all of whom had considerable familiarity with existing community-university partnerships and knowledge of existing assessment instruments for measuring outcomes of community-university partnerships—discussed potential scale domains and items. Over the course of four meetings, extensive out-of-meeting review of draft materials, and solicitation of feedback from community organization and educational institution representatives at a large national conference, we settled on scale items that fell under the following nine domains for measuring outcomes of community-university partnerships: (a) overall experience; (b) social capital; (c) skills and competencies; (d) motivations and commitments; (e) personal growth and self-concept; (f) knowledge; (g) organizational operations; (h) organizational resources; and (i) organizational effectiveness.

Our empirically-derived approach primarily contributed to scale domains (a), (b), (g), (h), and (i); content analysis from community partner interviews resulted in the benefit theme of increased networking/connections subsumed under the social capital domain; the benefit themes of increased capacity/efficiency and tangible work products subsumed under the organizational resources and organizational effectiveness domains; and the cost themes of time constraints, supervision of student work, training students in real-world/workplace practice, and training students in cultural competence subsumed under the organizational operations domain. Our rationally-derived approach primarily contributed to scale domains (c), (d), (e), and (f); observations of existing community-university partnerships, insights from the research literature, and theoretical conceptualization of relevant constructs resulted in deliberate construction of scale domains such as skills and competencies, motivations and commitments, personal growth and self-concept, and knowledge. These domains mirror student learning outcomes that have been measured to various degrees in existing student assessments (e.g., Furco, Muller, & Ammon's (1998) Civic Responsibility Survey;

Moely, Mercer, Ilustre, & Miron (2002) Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire). During the discussion and revision stage, the research group and collaborating community partner considered and edited scale items with attention to redundancy, clarity, ambiguity, and fit with domain. A description of the final scale, called the Community Impact Scale (CIS), appears in the Phase 2 Measures section below.

Importantly, community organizations were critically involved throughout scale item generation. First, the explicit purpose of interviews with community partners, which was also written in the informed consent form, was to gather feedback that could directly be used in scale development. The content of the interviews served as the raw data on which content analysis was conducted. Without the raw data of community partner feedback, we would not have had any content to work with and decipher themes that were then critical to the development of scale items. Second, the third author's long-term community partner reviewed and provided comments on all iterations of the developing scale. While so doing, he solicited feedback on scale items from others at his community organization and also shared items that his organization had used in more informal assessment contexts. Third, our collaborating community partner and members of our research team presented on the scale and its development at an annual and national service-learning conference; we provided a copy of the scale and requested feedback from the attendees, who were a mix of representatives from community organizations and educational institutions. Community perspectives were thus integral to the scale item generation process.

Phase 2 (Item Analysis) Method

Participants

Sample 2 included 31 representatives of community organizations recruited through email invitations that had previously partnered with university faculty members and/or students. At least 23 community organizations were represented (not all respondents indicated the organization with which they were affiliated, and so this is a conservative estimate). With the exception of one community organization representative, the 31 representatives were different from the 8 community organization representatives interviewed in Phase 1. As in Phase 1, participants included volunteer coordinators, program directors, and executive directors, and community organizations partnered with faculty members and/or students in at least one of the five aforementioned ways. Participants received a $10 gift certificate for their participation.

Measures

The instrument developed in Phase 1 consisted of 46 items designed to measure potential positive and negative outcomes of community-university partnerships for community partners across nine domains. The domains included the following, with the number of items for each domain indicated in parentheses: overall experience (6), social capital (8), skills and competencies (5), motivations and commitments (6), personal growth and self-concept (6), knowledge (5), organizational operations (4), organizational resources (4), and organizational effectiveness (2). Items in the overall experience domain were presented with the following instructions: "For each item below, please indicate the response that best captures your OVERALL partnership experience." The response scale for items in the overall experience domain was as follows: 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*somewhat agree*), 3 (*neutral*), 4 (*somewhat agree*), 5 (*strongly agree*), and 6 (*not applicable*). Items in the social capital, skills and competencies, motivations and commitments, personal growth and self-concept, and knowledge domains and all but one item in the organizational operations domain were presented with the following instructions: "For each item below, please indicate the response that best captures how your partnership impacted YOUR OWN [item text]." One item in the organizational operations domain and all items in the organizational resources and organizational effectiveness domains were presented with the following instructions: "Please circle the response that best captures how your partnership impacted THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION'S [item text]. The response scale for items in all domains except for the overall experience domain was as follows: 1 (*very unfavorable*), 2 (*unfavorable*), 3 (*no impact*), 4 (*favorable*), 5 (*very favorable*), and 6 (*not applicable*). Notably, the response scale was selected to allow respondents to rate any item as positive or negative, rather than anticipating the valence associated with particular items.

In addition, the CIS included several introductory items. These items queried the types of activities involved in the partnership (e.g., providing direct service to clients, obtaining resources) and respondents' reasons for participating in the partnership (e.g., organizational mandate). Follow-up questions gathered additional details depending on selected activities and reasons (e.g., number of clients served before and after the partnership if providing direct service to clients was an activity involved in the partnership).

Procedure

Participants were recruited through email invitations to community organizations that had previously partnered with university faculty members and/or students. We used a snowball approach, asking faculty across the university to forward the invitation to community partners. The invitation included a link to an online version of the instrument (programmed through Qualtrics Survey Software; Qualtrics Labs Inc., 2012). Over the course of three weeks of data collection, 31 community partners completed the online instrument. As part of the informed consent procedures described at the beginning of the survey, participants were told that the survey was a measure designed to collect information about perceived impact of community-university partnership activities on community organizations. At the beginning of the survey, participants were asked to answer questions while focusing on a single community-university partnership in which they had been involved in the past year. At the end of the survey, participants were directed to a separate electronic page to submit their names and email addresses to receive a $10 gift certificate for participation; names and email addresses were not linked to survey responses.

Phase 2 (Item Analysis) Results

Results reported here include both actual responses to introductory scale items and psychometric properties of the scale. Respondents reported that their community-university partnerships involved the following activities: 21 (68%) reported direct service to clients; 10 (32%) reported planning, organizing, and/or implementing events; and 8 (26%) reported exchanging/applying/producing knowledge (e.g., research, case law, grant writing; the total exceeds 100% because participants could select multiple activities involved in the partnership). In terms of reasons for participating in the community-university partnership, 14 (45%) reported seeking volunteers to assist with direct service, planning events, and providing skills; 10 (32%) reported seeking to create a university-community partnership; and 10 (32%) reported seeking to sustain a university-community partnership (the total exceeds 100% because participants could select multiple reasons).

We conducted analyses to examine the psychometric properties of the scale—characteristics of scale quality that can be ascertained statistically and that refer to the capacity of the scale to measure what it intends, which in this case refers to scale domains and their coherence. Specifically, we conducted preliminary analyses on the internal consistency of the nine scale domains. Table 2 summarizes items by scale domain and provides Cronbach's alpha values for each domain. Internal consistency ranged from good to excellent for seven scales domains: overall experience, social capital, skills and competencies,

Table 2

Summary of Items and Internal Consistency Within Domain Scales

Scale	Cronbach's alpha	Items	Mean (SD)	One-sample t value	Range	Percentage of "not applicable" responses
Overall experience	0.86		4.35 (0.83)	8.96***		
		This community-school partnership was successful	4.24 (1.20)	5.17***	1-5	0.00%
		I will pursue community-school partnerships in the future	4.11 (1.40)	4.19***	1-5	0.00%
		Knowing what I know now, I would enter into this partnership again	4.47 (1.07)	7.48***	1-5	0.00%
		This community-school partnership made a difference in the community	4.41 (0.87)	8.78***	1-5	3.20%
		This community-school partnership was mutually beneficial	4.66 (0.55)	16.13***	3-5	0.00%
		This community-school partnership is sustainable	4.59 (0.63)	13.61***	3-5	0.00%
Social capital	0.7		4.00 (0.36)	14.84***		
		Access to mentors and/or future employers	3.96 (1.00)	4.70***	1-5	19.40%
		Sense of community	4.44 (0.58)	12.35***	3-5	16.10%
		Visibility in the community	3.92 (0.89)	5.28***	1-5	16.10%
		Internal dynamics of the organization and/or classroom	4.05 (0.85)	5.41***	3-5	32.30%
		Awareness of like-minded community members	4.13 (0.45)	12.29***	3-5	19.40%
		Awareness of like-minded organizations	3.91 (0.68)	6.24***	3-5	25.80%
		Network of volunteers, friends, advocates, and/or allies	4.04 (0.68)	7.70***	3-5	16.10%
		Access to board members and/or donors	3.54 (0.59)	4.51***	3-5	19.40%
Skills & competencies	0.79		4.33 (0.42)	16.99***		
		Ability to work as part of a team	4.46 (0.58)	12.81***	3-5	12.90%
		Ability to interact with those who are different from you	4.52 (0.59)	12.97***	3-5	19.40%
		Leadership skills	4.26 (0.53)	12.45***	3-5	12.90%
		Confidence to succeed in new situations	4.26 (0.70)	8.78***	3-5	22.60%
		Ability to connect "real world" situations and academic research	4.23 (0.61)	9.41***	3-5	25.80%
Motivations & commitments	0.83		4.45 (0.50)	15.73***		
		Commitment to engaging communities	4.36 (0.57)	11.96***	3-5	16.10%
		Commitment to engaging students	4.54 (0.65)	12.13***	3-5	12.90%
		Commitment to working with people who are different from you	4.42 (0.58)	11.89***	3-5	22.60%
		Commitment to a socially-minded career path	4.62 (0.59)	12.58***	3-5	29.00%
		Commitment to helping others become engaged in the community	4.44 (0.82)	8.77***	2-5	16.10%
		Commitment to involvement in future community-university partnerships	4.50 (0.65)	11.80***	3-5	12.90%
Personal growth & self-concept	0.92		4.23 (0.54)	11.72***		
		Compassion and caring for others	4.50 (0.66)	11.15***	3-5	19.40%
		Sense of purpose or direction	4.36 (0.58)	11.01***	3-5	25.80%
		Sense of accomplishment	4.17 (0.70)	8.14***	3-5	22.60%
		Understanding of your personal values	4.18 (0.66)	8.34***	3-5	25.80%
		Understanding of your own life circumstances	4.16 (0.77)	6.60***	3-5	35.50%
		Spiritual or religious development	3.72 (0.75)	4.08**	3-5	38.70%
Knowledge	0.88		4.09 (0.54)	10.41***		
		Knowledge about relevant social issues	4.09 (0.68)	7.48***	3-5	25.80%
		Knowledge about the organization's client population and/or services	4.14 (0.66)	8.00***	3-5	29.00%
		Information about the organization's successes	4.14 (0.57)	9.14***	3-5	29.00%
		Information about the organization's challenges	4.09 (0.67)	7.80***	3-5	25.80%
		Development of new ideas connected to community-engaged work	4.27 (0.53)	12.13***	3-5	16.10%
Organizational operations	0.7		4.05 (0.46)	9.13***		
		Workload and demands on your time	4.19 (0.68)	8.03***	3-5	29.00%
		Scheduling and logistical concerns	3.81 (0.92)	4.60***	2-5	9.70%
		Personal safety	3.82 (0.73)	5.24***	3-5	25.80%
		Staff workload	4.04 (0.91)	5.62***	2-5	19.40%
		Quality of services provided	4.40 (0.71)	9.90***	3-5	19.40%
Organizational resources	0.94		4.02 (0.93)	5.66***		
		Finances	3.81 (0.87)	4.25***	3-5	32.30%
		Fundraising opportunities	3.85 (1.09)	3.49**	3-5	29.00%
		Fundraising materials	3.94 (1.11)	3.61**	3-5	38.70%
		In-kind resources	4.20 (1.06)	5.08***	3-5	32.30%
		Organizational capacity	4.33 (1.02)	6.01***	3-5	25.80%

Notes. ^ = *p*<.10 * = *p*<.05 ** = *p*<.01 *** = *p*<.001

motivations and commitments, personal growth and self-concept, knowledge, and organizational resources. Internal consistency was acceptable for the organizational operations domain, but unacceptable for the organizational effectiveness domain. While alphas can appear artificially low due to few items, this did not appear to explain the unacceptable alpha for organizational effectiveness as the correlation between items was also low ($r=.29$, $p=.21$).

Because the two items that we hypothesized a priori would make up an organizational effectiveness scale clearly did not do so, we re-evaluated the placement of these two items based on the data and conceptual meaning of items/scales. Correlational analyses revealed that each of the two items had stronger correlations with two existing scale domains; specifically, the item measuring impact on "organizational capacity" was significantly correlated with the organizational resources scale, and the item measuring impact on "quality of services provided" was significantly correlated with the organizational operations scale. Furthermore, the items appeared to be consistent in meaning with the scale domains with which they were significantly correlated; "organizational capacity" may be considered a type of organizational resource, and "quality of services provided" may be regarded as a component of an organization's operations, supporting our placement of the items with existing scale domains. Internal consistency for each of these scales remained strong with the new items. Alphas for the organizational resources scale without and with the new item were the same, with alpha equaling .94, and alphas for the organizational operations scale without and then with the new item were .69 and .70, respectively. The final version of the CIS reproduced here (see Appendix B) thus comprises eight domains, with each of the two items from the original organizational effectiveness scale domain respectively placed in the organizational resources and organizational operations domains. With this re-placement, analyses revealed good to excellent internal consistency for all final scale domains (see Table 2).

Descriptive statistics for scale responses are summarized in Table 2. In addition, Table 2 provides details regarding one-sample t-tests used to compare responses to the neutral point on the scale (response value of 3). In all cases, responses were significantly greater than 3, indicating that community partners generally rated the items assessed as reflecting some degree of benefit (from favorable to very favorable). Complementing this approach, examinations of the range of responses for each item indicated heterogeneity, with many items showing a range of 3-5, but others showing ranges of 1-5 or 2-5, suggesting that community partners did recognize and report some unfavorable outcomes.

For each item, Table 2 also reports the percentage of respondents who indicated that the item did not apply. This approach allowed us to examine which items reflected more or less common outcomes. For example, nearly one-third of respondents indicated that the community-university partnership had no impact on "internal dynamics of the organization." Depending on the goals of the partnership, the lack of impact on particular items can signal potential problems, such as in cases when a goal of the partnership was to affect these outcomes. Bivariate correlations of scales appear in Table 3.

We had designed the instrument to take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Timing data from the online survey instrument indicated that the average response time was 12.19 minutes, suggesting that the assessment can be completed with little time burden on respondents.

Discussion

Given the need for an assessment instrument that measures community partners' perceptions of the costs and benefits of partnering, we developed a 46-item instrument. The Community Impact Scale (CIS) measures internally-consistent domains of potential impact on community partners. We believe the process of developing the CIS successfully met the guidelines set forth in Marullo and colleagues' (2003) evaluative framework for effective community-based research assessments. Our process was *community-driven* in that community voices were critically involved throughout scale development. It was *collaborative* in that it involved discussion and exchange of ideas and opinions among faculty and student researchers, the third author's long-term community partner, and other community organizations and educational institution representatives. It was *systematic and rigorous, yet flexible and context-specific* in that the scale was developed with attention to both qualitative and quantitative data, and final scale domains demonstrated good to excellent internal consistency even while measuring the perceptions of partners from a variety of different kinds of community-university partnerships. Our process was guided by *grounded theory* in that we conducted content analysis of interviews with community partners and used this analysis to help craft scale domains and items. And it was *multidimensional* in that scale development was both empirically- and rationally-driven (i.e., with attention to qualitative data from community partner interviews and community partner, faculty, and student researchers' experience and familiarity with the wider literature on community-university partnerships). Multiple scale domains emerged that paralleled different kinds of outcomes

Table 3
Zero-order Correlations among Scales

	Overall experience	Social capital	Skills & competencies	Motivations & commitments	Personal growth & self-concept	Knowledge	Organizational operations	Organizational resources
Overall experience	---	0.18	0.22	0.44*	0.11	0.2	0.16	0.3
Social capital			0.51**	0.43*	0.48*	0.63**	0.58**	0.24
Skills & competencies				0.64**	0.79**	0.59**	0.43*	0.23
Motivations & commitments					0.55**	0.43*	0.55**	0.24
Personal growth & self-concept						0.58**	0.55**	0.12
Knowledge							0.56**	0.41*
Organizational operations								0.11
Organizational resources								---

Notes. ^ = *p*<.10 * = *p*<.05 ** = *p*<.01 *** = *p*<.001

recommended by public health, service-learning, and community psychology literatures.

Furthermore, our project directly addresses limitations in the literature to date on community-university partnership impacts perceived by community partners. First, unlike prior research that has tended to measure a small slice of impacts, the CIS measures a wide range of nuanced tangible (e.g., in-kind resources) and intangible (e.g., partner's sense of life purpose) outcomes. While discussions of community engagement, as in university materials or organizational annual reports, may often center on the tangible impact of community-university partnerships (e.g., economic impact, service impact), we suspect that personal meaning-making and other less tangible considerations are also important to assess. Our results corroborated our suspicions, with well more than a majority of respondents providing ratings for every single outcome (rather than selecting the "not applicable" rating). Measuring a wide range of outcomes may be critical to understanding the quality of the partnership and making decisions about whether and how to partner over time.

Second, unlike prior assessments that fail to measure outcomes in terms of benefits or costs, or that assume particular outcomes will be inherently beneficial or costly, the CIS allows respondents to rate outcomes on an unfavorable-to-favorable response scale that allows for consideration of relative benefits and costs without imposing a framework that categorizes outcomes according to benefit and cost a priori.

By using an unfavorable-to-favorable scale, we hoped to minimize socially desirable responses, normalize variability in responses, and facilitate reporting of costs. The data suggest that we successfully developed items to which community partners recognized and reported unfavorable consequences (as indicated by responses of 1 or 2, for example, in Table 2). While overall means generally indicate that respondents found the impact of partnerships to be favorable, the heterogeneity in the range of responses suggests that the CIS can be used as a tool to examine both relative benefits and costs.

Third, unlike research that has sometimes lacked involvement of community voices in a methodologically rigorous approach, the development of the CIS intentionally valued and privileged community partner involvement at all stages. To our knowledge, our project is the only one to date that employed a bottom-up approach and directly applied qualitative data from community partner interviews and iterative community partner feedback (integrated with faculty and student perspectives) in the generation of actual scale items.

Limitations

Several limitations should be considered in relation to methodological design and use of the CIS. First, the item generation and item analysis samples were relatively small, with eight community partners participating in interviews and 31 community partners completing the pilot administration of the CIS.

The small sample involved in item generation could have constrained the kinds of scale items generated, resulting in a smaller range of measured outcomes. We intended to constrain the effect of this limitation by using a combined empirically- and rationally-derived process for scale item generation. Specifically, we generated scale items through content analysis of community partner interviews as well as faculty, student, and community partner observations of existing community-university partnerships, knowledge of the research literature, and theoretical conceptualization of relevant constructs. The small sample involved in item analysis limited the statistical approach that we were able to use. We did not have the statistical power to conduct a factor analysis of scale items, and so we instead elected to evaluate the internal consistency of scale domains.

Second, all community partners who participated in the item generation and item analysis phases were requested to give feedback on their experiences in community-university partnerships that involved our single university; we did not solicit feedback on experiences involving partnerships with other universities. The effect of this limitation may have been constrained by our university's approach to community engagement, which (as described above) allows for the formation and development of a variety of different kinds of community-university partnerships (as apparent from the range of benchmark areas served by community organizations that participated in our project). Nevertheless, along with the first limitation regarding smaller sample of involved community partners, this limitation suggests that our scale may not be immediately suited for assessing impacts of all possible community-university partnerships. Indeed, we believe it is more useful to consider the CIS as a foundational assessment that can be adapted and modified as needed, depending on the kind of community-university partnership being assessed and the unique goals of stakeholders within the partnership.

Third, while community partners were critically involved throughout the scale development process, they did not participate in certain components of the process; community partners were not involved in content analysis of interviews, and ongoing review and revision of the CIS primarily involved the third author's long-term community partner, rather than a larger panel of community partners. This limitation is somewhat qualified by the fact that our research process largely mirrored the widely respected qualitative research project reported by Stoecker and colleagues (2009), in which community partners were also not involved in content analysis. Nevertheless, as with the prior two limitations, this limitation again suggests that the CIS may better be regarded as a foundational assessment that can be adapted and

modified as needed based on the needs of community partners and other stakeholders in community-university partnerships.

Fourth, we piloted the CIS with community partners who collectively represent one kind of stakeholder involved in community-university partnerships. Other stakeholders include university faculty members and students, and future research will ideally test the validity of CIS scale domains for these stakeholders as well (as described below).

Fifth, due to the scope of our scale development project and its main goal of developing an assessment instrument for measuring community partner impacts, we omitted measurement of other relevant variables, such as partnership characteristics or processes. Future research will ideally measure community partner impacts alongside partnership characteristics and processes (as described below).

Future Research Directions

The limitations described above point to several possible avenues for future research. The CIS may best be regarded as a foundational assessment that can be adapted and modified as needed, depending on the kind of community-university partnership assessed and the unique goals of stakeholders within the partnership. Future research can help test the validity of existing scale domains in larger samples across multiple universities and their respective partners that would allow for factor analysis; elucidate the degree of relevance of various scale domains and items for certain community-university partnerships as compared with others; and explore the usefulness of additional scale items for more precise measurement of various scale domains or the usefulness of additional scale domains for assessing an even broader range of impacts.

Additionally, the CIS would benefit from testing with multiple stakeholders, including not just community partners but also university faculty members and students, as well as use at multiple time-points over the course of a community-university partnership. Use of the CIS with multiple stakeholders would allow for exploring the correspondence in experiences across community and university partners. For example, different stakeholders in a single community-university partnership may have dissimilar experiences that the CIS could help illuminate, as when outcomes across multiple scale domains appear more beneficial for the university researcher than for the community partner, or when there is a disjunction in terms of impacts perceived as beneficial versus costly. Use of the CIS at multiple time-points across the course of a community-university partnership could also help stakeholders understand the evolution of their experiences over time. As with

the aforementioned example, the university researcher and community partner may decide to make changes to the partnership to equalize the level of benefit, and use of the CIS could help evaluate whether or not the changes were successful in producing the desired result. Thus, the CIS could become a critical evaluative and planning tool, helping assess the experiences of all affected stakeholders in a community-university partnership, identify impact areas in need of modification, and understand the evolution of stakeholder experiences over time.

Finally, future research could ideally pair the CIS with measurement of other relevant variables for community-university partnerships, including partnership characteristics and processes such as closeness, equity, and integrity within the partnership; position of the respondent (e.g., executive director, volunteer coordinator, student researchers); and catalysts, facilitators, and barriers to the formation, functioning, and sustainability of partnerships. It would be interesting to explore relationships between partnership characteristics and processes and partnership impacts. For example, certain domains of partnership impact measured by the CIS may emerge as more strongly related to certain partnership characteristics or processes than are other domains. More concretely, a volunteer coordinator involved in a partnership characterized by high levels of perceived closeness but low levels of equity and integrity may show more negative impacts to items in the overall experience domain than to items in the organizational resources domain. Through use as a foundational assessment that can be adapted and modified, completed by multiple stakeholders at multiple time-points across a partnership, and paired with measurement of partnership characteristics and processes, the CIS can become a critical evaluative and planning tool for improving and building sustainability within community-university partnerships.

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Appendix A
Community Organization Interview Questions (adapted from Barrientos, 2010)

1. How long has your organization been working with XXX University students?

2. What are the benchmark areas addressed by your organization (e.g., education, housing, etc.)?

3. How did your interactions with XXX University students influence your capacity to fulfill the mission of your organization?

4. What are some of the challenges you encountered with XXX University students and/or faculty?

5. What were some of the tangible effects of XXX University students working within your organization (e.g., increased value of services, completion of projects, etc.)?

6. In what ways do you believe you are able to influence XXX University as a result of your connection with XXX University students and/or faculty?

7. As a result of your connection to XXX University students and/or faculty, how has your awareness of XXX University changed (e.g., increased knowledge of university resources, contacts for information, etc.)?

8. Will you continue to accept XXX University students to help with your organization's work? If so, why? If not, why not?

9. How satisfied were you with your overall communication with XXX University students and faculty? What problems did you encounter in terms of communication? How could communication be improved?

10. How satisfied were you with your level and quality of interaction with XXX University students and faculty? What problems did you encounter in terms of level and quality of interaction with XXX University students and faculty? How could these interactions be improved?

11. How satisfied were you with the quality of XXX University students' work? What problems did you encounter with the quality of XXX University students' work? How could quality of work be improved?

12. How satisfied were you with the scope and timing of student participation in your organization? What problems did you encounter with the scope and timing of student participation in your organization? How could the scope and timing be improved?

13. How did you handle the logistics of your XXX University students' placements (e.g., your organization made the arrangements, students made the arrangements, etc.)? How would you ideally like the logistics of XXX University students' placements to be handled?

14. How satisfied were you with the level of trust with XXX University students and/or faculty? What problems did you encounter with the level of trust with XXX University students and/or faculty? How could this level of trust be improved?

15. Apart from the topics we've discussed so far, what other areas of impact on your organization do you believe we should measure to understand the influence of XXX University student and faculty service activities?

Appendix B
Community Impact Scale (CIS)

I. Type of Activity:

Please indicate what type of activity your community-university project included. Select all that apply.

[ ] Provided direct service to clients.
Please estimate how many clients were served prior to student involvement and how many additional clients were served thanks to student volunteers.
Please briefly describe your client population.

[ ] Planned and organized events.
Please estimate how many events you organized prior to student involvement and how many additional events were organized thanks to student volunteers.
Please briefly describe the type of events you organized.

[ ] Obtained resources (financial, food, clothing, etc.) for the organization.
Please estimate the monetary value of resources.

[ ] Provided technical/physical skills (building/construction, transportation, sorting items at food bank, etc.)
Please describe the type of skills provided.

[ ] Exchanged/applied/produced knowledge (e.g. research, case law, grant writing, etc.).
Please describe the type of knowledge exchanged, applied or produced.

[ ] Did community building (forging relationships among individuals, such as in a neighborhood).
Please specify:

[ ] Did community organizing (identifying shared self-interests to take action on community issues).
Please specify:

[ ] Other, please specify:

II. Reasons for Participation

Please indicate your reasons for pursing this community-university project. Select all that apply.

[ ] Course requirement
If so, what class?

[ ] Organizational mandate

[ ] Board member expectations

[ ] Recruited by a friend or family member

[ ] Recruited by a university staff member of faculty

[ ] Recruited by a community agency

[ ] Seeking a new learning experience

[ ] Exposure to internship and/or career possibilities

[ ] Desire to make a difference in the community

[ ] Sense of responsibility to have a positive impact on the community

[ ] Expand personal and professional network

[ ] Develop new skills and competencies

[ ] Seeking volunteers to assist with direct service, plan events, provide skills etc.

[ ] Seeking additional funding and/or help with fundraising efforts

[ ] Seeking to create a university-community partnership

[ ] Seeking to sustain a university-community partnership

[ ] Seeking to preserve possibility of future university-community partnerships

[ ] Other, please describe: _____

III. Assessing Outcomes

For each item below, please indicate the response that best captures your OVERALL partnership experience.

Scale Domain		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
1	This community-university partnership was successful.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	I will pursue community-university partnerships in the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Knowing what I know now, I would enter into this partnership again.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	This community-university partnership made a difference in the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	This community-university partnership was mutually beneficial.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	This community-university partnership is sustainable.	1	2	3	4	5	6

For each item below, please indicate the response that best captures how your partnership impacted YOUR OWN:

Scale Domain		Very Unfavorable Impact	Unfavorable Impact	Neutral/ No Impact	Favorable Impact	Very Favorable Impact	Not Applicable
2	Access to mentors and/or future employers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Sense of community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Internal dynamics of the organization and/or classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Visibility in the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Compassion and caring for others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Ability to work as part of a team.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Ability to interact with those who are different from you.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Leadership Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Commitment to engaging communities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Commitment to engaging students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Commitment to working with people who are different from you.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Commitment to a socially-minded career path.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Commitment to helping others become engaged in the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Commitment to involvement in future community-university partnerships.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Confidence to succeed in new situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Sense of purpose or direction.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Sense of accomplishment.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Understanding of your personal values.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Scale Domain		1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Understanding of your own life circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Spiritual or religious development.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Knowledge about relevant social issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Knowledge about the organization's client population and/or services.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Information about the organization's successes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Information about the organization's challenges.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Ability to connect "real world" situations and academic research.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Development of new ideas connected to community-engaged work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Workload and demands on your time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Scheduling and logistical concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Personal safety.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Awareness of like-minded community members.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Awareness of like-minded organizations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Network of volunteers, friends, advocates, and/or allies.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Access to board members and/or donors.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please circle the response that best captures how your partnership impacted THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION'S:

Scale Domain		Very Unfavorably	Unfavorably	Neutral/ No Impact	Favorably	Very Favorably	Not Applicable
8	Finances.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	Fundraising opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	Fundraising materials.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	In-kind resources (supplies, materials, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	Organizational capacity.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Quality of services provided.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Staff workload.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Note. Scale domains were characterized using the following coding scheme: 1 = Overall experience, 2 = Social capital, 3 = Skills and competencies, 4 = Motivations and commitments, 5 = Personal growth and self-concept, 6 = Knowledge, 7 = Organizational operations, 8 = Organizational resources.