Conducting Homeless Counts on Native American Lands

Welcome to HAC's webcast!

The webcast, sound, and recording will begin at 2:00 pm EST.

To submit a question during the webinar please use the chat box on the lower right-hand side of the screen. If you would like to verbally ask a question, please click the "Raise Hand" button at the top of the screen.

Conducting Homeless Counts on Native American Lands

Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI)
Presented by: Eric Oberdorfer, Research Associate

HOUSING ASSISTANCE COUNCIL
February 19th, 2014

HAC

Housing Assistance Council

Building Rural Communities

- Established in 1971

- National nonprofit organization

- Created to increase the availability of decent and affordable housing for low-income people in rural areas throughout the U.S.

- Provide services to local, state, and national organizations

Housing Assistance Council

Housing Assistance Council
1025 Vermont Ave Ste 606
Washington DC 20005
(202) 842-8600
hac@ruralhome.org
www.ruralhome.org

Southeast Regional Office
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Ste 1500
Atlanta, GA 30308
(404) 892-4824
southeast@ruralhome.org

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Albuquerque, NM 87109
(505) 883-1003
southwest@ruralhome.org

West Regional Office
717 K Street
Ste 404
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 706-1836
west@ruralhome.org

Upcoming Webinars/Trainings

Section 502 Packaging Training

  Date: March 25-27, 2014

  Location: Memphis, TN

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Systems

  Date: March 25-27, 2014

  Location: Memphis, TN

Serving Veterans in Rural America: A Symposium

  Date: April 9, 2014

  Location: Washington, DC

Housing Seniors & Veterans in Rural America: *Preservation, Development & Services*

  Date: April 22-23, 2014

  Time: Phoenix, AZ

Register online @ http://www.ruralhome.org/hac-services/training

Shonterria Charleston, 404-892-4824 ext. 27 or shonterria@ruralhome.org.

RURAL HOMELESSNESS

- Not evenly distributed

- Experience both literal homelessness and precarious housing situations

- Less access to service providers

HEARTH ACT

- *Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act*
  - Expands previous definitions of homelessness to include those at imminent risk of homelessness
  - Allows rural communities to apply for funding under simplified criteria scored against other rural communities
  - Provides increased flexibility

TRIBAL HOMELESSNESS

- Similar to rural homelessness
- Persistent poverty
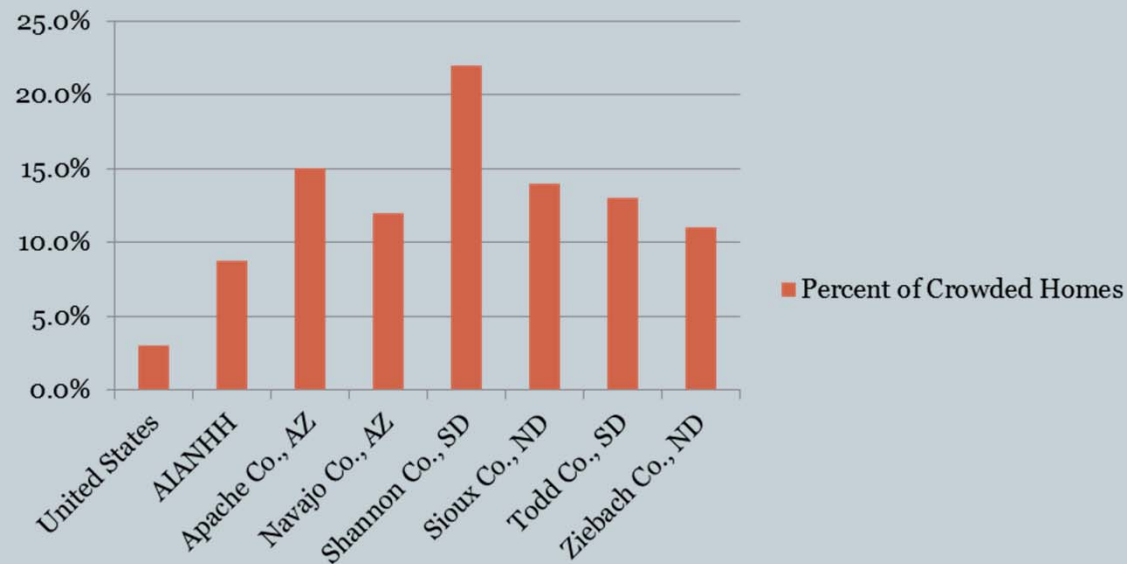- Inadequate housing conditions
- Tribal sovereignty

OVERCROWDING

- Doubling up and homelessness are interchangeable
- NAIHC reports 1/3 of all homes on Native lands are overcrowded

Percent of Crowded Homes

TRIBAL HOMELESS COUNTS

- Beneficial for tribal communities
    - Provides quantifiable information
    - Helps tribes better plan for and coordinate services in their communities
    - Improves access to funding at the federal, state, and local levels

CONDUCTING HOMELESS COUNTS

- Outreach and Engagement
- Survey Planning and Implementation
- Partnering with Organizations
- Funding the Project

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

- *Identifying appropriate leaders and staff*
  - Find a champion for the survey who can:
    - Communicate the importance of homelessness data
    - Describe the long-term benefits
    - Act as a liaison
    - Engage key stakeholders
    - Provide overall leadership

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

- *Involving the Tribal Government*
  - Present tribal governments with updates regularly
  - Inform tribal governments of:
    - The purpose of the survey
    - Types of information collected
    - Time lines
    - Collaboration between organizations
    - Confidentiality
    - Benefits

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

- *Addressing the issues and concerns of the larger tribal community*
  - Concerns about participation
    - Privacy
    - Negative attention
    - Consent
  - Tribal participation
  - 'Houselessness' and housing concerns

SURVEY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- *Developing the survey tool*
  - Adapt an existing survey
  - Ask important questions
    - Current housing
      - Demographics
      - Current housing situation
        - Type of housing
        - Time spent in current situation
        - Number of rooms respondent needs for adequate housing
    - Economic conditions

SURVEY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Determining survey administration
- Door-to-door
  - Time intensive
  - More interviewers, screeners, and training needed
- Community centers
  - Survey can be done in two days with only one screener

SURVEY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- *Training interviewers*
  - Important to ensure accurate data across the board
    - Mock-interviews
    - Instructional DVDs
  - Topics to cover:
    - Explaining the survey
    - Building rapport with survey participants
    - Getting complete and accurate data without bias
    - Probing for more in-depth information
    - Handling emotional situations or situations where follow-up services are needed
    - Handling uncomfortable situations

SURVEY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- *Publicizing the survey and encouraging high rates of participation*
  - Financial incentives
  - Food

PARTNERING WITH ORGANIZATIONS

- *Partnering with an intermediary organization to help coordinate the survey*
  - Existing relationship preferable
    - If not, organization should spent time building rapport with tribal members
  - Identify a researcher/research organization to analyze the results
    - Outside firms may have more connections and access to resources

PARTNERING WITH ORGANIZATIONS

- *Remembering cultural competencies*
  - Tribal mistrust
    - Uncounted Populations
    - Sense of being "over studied" without results
  - Important to recognize the community as its own unit of identity
    - Co-learning
    - Balance between research and action
    - Emphasize relevance of community-defined problems
  - Considerations to take into account
    - Language
    - Objectification of participants
    - Research history of service in the community

PARTNERING WITH ORGANIZATIONS

- Partner organizations can:
  - Identify and facilitate connections to move project forward
  - Engage local and state housing and human services agencies
  - Help coordinate with state run homeless counts
  - Provide planning logistical support
    - Training
    - Recruiting
    - Publicizing
    - Coordinating with outside researchers

FUNDING THE PROJECT

- *Putting together a budget*
  - Time for researcher/research organization to
    - Develop survey
    - Train interviewers
    - Code, clean, and analyze data
    - Write final report
  - Time for tribal staff to plan and implement survey
  - Labor costs for hiring and training interviewers
  - Stipends/food for survey respondents
  - Printing and disseminating findings

- *Raising the necessary funds*
  - Philanthropic organizations
  - Local universities and colleges

Case Study: Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

Case Study: Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

- *Initial Engagement*
  - The Turtle Mountain Homeless Coalition (TMHC)
    - An alliance between the tribal gov't and homeless organizations
    - Provided champions for the project
      - Worked to address all concerns and managed expectations

- *Planning and Implementation*
  - Conducted count in October 2010
  - Provided survey as opposed to PIT count
    - Heavily publicized
    - Flexibility was key

Case Study: Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

- *Results*
  - Over 1,400 tribal members were homeless
    - 807 of whom were children
  - Took results to Washington, DC and lobbied to:
    - Senate offices
    - Federal agencies
    - Nonprofits
  - Inquired about next steps

The Supreme Court at Turtle Mountain Community College

Case Study: Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

- *Conclusion*
  - Successes:
    - Strong committed champions
      - Mitigated trust issues
    - Community backing and tribal buy-in
  - Challenges:
    - Determining next steps
      - Decreased funding available
    - Providing a stronger case to DC
      - More tribes being able to show similar results for a bigger impact

Case Study: Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Case Study: Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

- *Initial Engagement*
  - Fond du Lac joined a regional coalition
    - Included tribes, nonprofit organizations, and county authorities
    - Provided champions for the project
      - Acted as a liaison to the coalition and Reservation Business Committee (RBC)

Fond du Lac College Meeting Space

Case Study: Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

- *Planning and Implementation*
  - Planning began in June 2006
  - Hired Wilder Research, an outside organization
    - RBC provided final decisions and approvals

  - Targeted homeless population through input the Department of Human Services
  - Existing tribal staff conducted interviews from:
    - Department of Public Health
    - Department of Human Services
    - Department of Planning
    - Tribal Schools
  - Participants were provided a $20 stipend to complete the survey

Case Study: Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

- *Results*
  - Hard, accurate data on homelessness
  - Results have been used in funding proposals
    - In the summer of 2010 opened 24 mixed-housing units
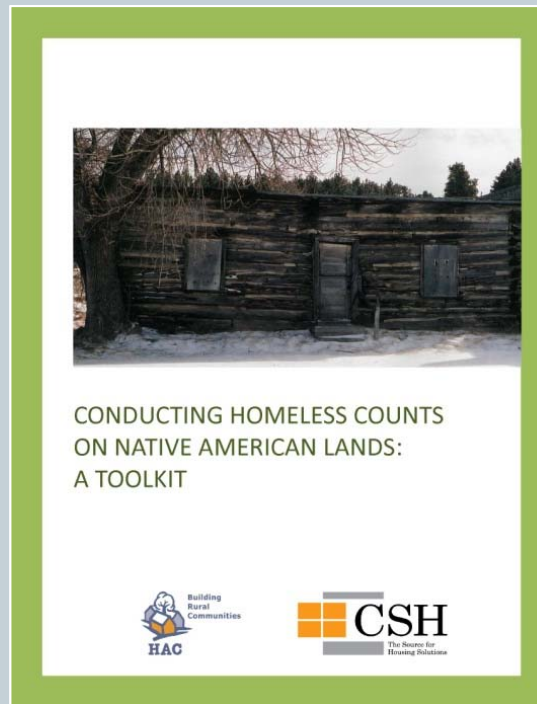   - Helps in NAHASDA, state, and other federal funding applications

The Min-No-Aya-Win Human Services Center, location where surveys were conducted

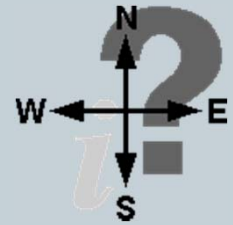# Case Study: Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

The Toolkit

CONDUCTING HOMELESS COUNTS ON NATIVE AMERICAN LANDS: A TOOLKIT

Available online at:

http://www.ruralhome.org/component/content/article/613-na-homeless-counts-toolkit

Resources

Important Websites:

- www.ruralhome.org
- www.csh.org
- http://www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Pages/default.aspx
- portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/ih
- http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/ih/codetalk/nahasda
- http://www.huduser.org/portal/native_american_assessment/home.html

Wrap Up

Materials from today's webinar and the recording will be available on HAC's website.

www.ruralhome.org