Self- Assessment Tool – Instructions

Purpose:

The purpose of the self-assessment tool is to provide a snap shot of agency effectiveness. Additionally, the self-assessment provides the opportunity for each agency to develop individualized action plans aimed at the growth and development of the organization. The self-assessment also allows for best practices to be documented and shared with the entire Network. CSD staff will review the self-assessment and provide input. Appropriate training and technical assistance will also be identified as part of this process.

Applicability:

This tool is to be used by all CSBG grantees including those directly administering programs and those that utilize subcontractors to deliver services. The tool is intended to assess the total agency operations in addition to specific program operations. At this point the self-assessment is not a part of CSD's formal monitoring practice, however it should be completed subsequent to a CSD monitoring visit. Any challenges and successes identified in the monitoring report should be addressed in the Assessment.

Timeframe:

Following a monitoring visit by CSD, agencies will be contacted to develop a timeframe for completion of the Assessment Tool and subsequent CSD visit. The self-assessment can be initiated at any time, but, the expected use is for the assessment to be used in conjunction with a completed compliance monitoring (which is required by Federal Law no less than once every 3 years).

Areas of Review:

The Assessment Tool focuses on five (5) major areas of review (see Definitions), which are deemed critical in creating and maintaining a CSBG agency that performs at a level of excellence:

1. Board governance - includes active participation by the Board of Directors in achieving their responsibilities of setting policy, oversight and community leadership. For private non profit agencies the Board is the recognized corporate Board. For Public agencies the Board includes both the advisory tripartite Board and the jurisdictional body (decision making Board).
   Indicators Include:
   - Effective Board Oversight

2. Leadership – Provided by agency staff primarily responsible for carrying out board policies and mission of the agency in meeting community needs.
   Indicators Include:
   - Responsiveness
   - Staff Development/ Planning
   - Communication
   - Planning and Evaluation
   - Technological Infrastructure

3. Financial Stability – Adequate financial resources for effective and stable operation of the agency.
   Indicators Include:
   - Board Involvement
   - Financial & Administrative Systems
   - Staffing
   - Cash Management

4. Linkages – Formal or informal relationships used to further agency's capability in achieving successes.
   Indicators Include:
   - Resource Development/ Change Management
   - Partnerships
   - Stability/ Change Management

5. Program Delivery – Includes client services and community programs supported either directly or indirectly by CSBG.
   Indicators include:
   - Program Design
   - Performance Outcomes
   - Community Outreach
   - Customer Satisfaction
   - Continuity of Services

Core Elements:

A core element is defined as activities and functions that are generally recognized as critical to the successful completion of specific indicators.

For each of these major areas of review a set of *core elements* are provided that is felt will create a healthy environment in this area of review. For additional information see Definitions. In completing the assessment tool, the agency's staff will review the elements, determine the presence and extent of these core elements within their agency and respond to a number of inquiries, including: 1) documentation of results achieved by the agency in meeting the core elements, 2) listing challenges in meeting this area of review, along with an Action Plan to be followed, if appropriate, and 3) identify additional

elements utilized by the agency in meeting this area of review, along with Best Practices that could be shared with other CSBG agencies.

Instructions:

The following are ideas and instructions that may be of assistance in completing the assessment tool. However it is realized that agencies may develop alternate strategies for completing the tool that are appropriate for their unique circumstances.

Assessment Preparation:

As this tool includes the overall review and assessment of the *entire* organization, it is suggested that the senior management team of the agency review the entire instrument.

Designate a team to complete the assessment and develop the following:
- A strategy for completion
- Timeframes for timely completion of the assessment
- Identify specific issues or areas of concern for clarification in order to complete the assessment

Completion of the tool

Review the Results and Core Elements (See section A of Tool) identified to achieve the desired result expected for each area of review. It is suggested that healthy agencies will, at a minimum, be able to identify the presence of these core elements within their agency. These elements are not mandatory, however they are strongly recommended as elements that should be present in order to reach the desired result.

Under **Successes** (See section B of Tool) the agency will list the practices, polices and documents that demonstrate the results achieved through the implementation of the listed core elements for each category. Additionally, list the supporting documentation utilized to complete the section. Supporting documentation should be available to the Field Representatives when they come to review the tool.

Under **Challenges/ Resolutions** (See section C of Tool) the agency will document existing issues that may prevent the agency from being fully successful in meeting the desired results. For the purposes of this tool, significant is defined as any challenge worth noting that may impact the success of your organizations. For each challenge listed a corresponding Action Plan should be provided to increase the agencies effectiveness in meeting the core elements. Additionally, list the supporting documentation utilized to complete the section. Supporting documentation should be available to the Field Representatives when they come to review the tool

Under **Best Practices** (See section D of Tool) record your agency's best practices in relation to the indicator. Please keep in mind that these Best Practices may be shared with the Network. Included in this section will be policies, practices and/or initiatives that

the agency utilizes which they believe are Best Practices that would benefit other CSBG agencies.

Under **Action Plan** (See section E of Tool) address any challenges as well as a plan to share your successes. Action Plans may include T&TA from CSD, may include restructuring your policies and procedure and/ or disseminating best practices to the entire Network. The Action Plan should be drafted in order to help guide your agency towards excellence. The Action Plan should be attainable and realistic. When the CSD Staff person reviews the tool, they are committed to working with you to develop and attain these goals for improvement.

Please use the box titled **Other Considerations** (See Section F of Tool) to include all additional information not captured in the above sections. Additionally, please utilize this area to indicate any outstanding CSBG compliance monitoring findings noted in the most recent CSD monitoring report.

Role of CSD Staff:

CSD staff is available to assist each agency in completion of the assessment tool. Following completion of the process, CSD will review the assessment tool and will visit each agency with the intent of reviewing documentation, collecting best practices and offer resource support when necessary.

Prior to visiting an agency to review the assessment report, CSD staff will familiarize themselves with relevant agency documents such as the CAP report, Strategic and other assessment and planning documents.

The role of the CSD Staff in the follow-up review of the assessment tool will be to assess completeness in conducting the assessment, verify supporting documentation listed in the assessment, review the Action Plans documented and offer guidance and/or assistance in addressing identified issues.

Copies of the Assessment Tool will be placed in the agency file and CSD Staff will review and perform status checks to assist with the achievement of Action Plans.

Following the Assessment Process:

Continue to monitor your progress towards meeting your desired goals as stated in the Action Plan.

Continue to identify challenges and successes and update the tool.

Section Five – Program Delivery; Performance Outcomes

A. Result: Agency can demonstrate that programs serve two separate functions; agency programs assist clients in moving towards self-sufficiency and agency programs have a positive impact on the community.

Core Elements Include:
- Programs are evaluated on a regular basis
- Programs are results oriented
- Program results are effectively tracked and reported

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation** • IDA Program: 3 families purchased homes (Case management files) • WIA Program: 105% of placement goal achieved (Monthly reports, case management reports) • Charter School Program: 75% of students graduate (Diplomas, transcripts) • Energy Program: Average energy saving of 25% • Head Start Program: 15% improvement in test scores over previous year (Annual reports) • At-Risk Youth Program: 85% graduation rate (Programmatic reports, daily attendance records)

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation** • WIA Program: Design of training to match changing job market (Employment Development Department Reports, Department of Commerce Reports, Chamber of Commerce Reports) • Nutrition Program: Difficult to track long-term outcomes of a short term program (Board Reports) • Child Care Program: Need for full-day care and resources only available for part-day care. This makes it difficult to track results. (Child Care Planning Council Report, First Five Planning Council Reports) • Under enrolled programs

D.	**Best Practices:**
	Please identify agency best practices
	• Extensive home ownership and budget counseling services tied to IDA Program
	• Professional training and certification of staff with excellent job development/ marketing program
	• Strong partnership with local university offering tutoring
	• Intense one-on-one mentoring model

E.	**Action Plan:**
	Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes
	<u>IDA Program Action Plan</u>
	• Apply for renewal of IDA Program
	• Obtain three additional banks to sign on for support of IDA Program
	• Obtain additional support from banks to provide financial literacy workshops
	• Become Certified VIDA Site
	<u>Nutrition Program Action Plan</u>
	• Identify funding to support longitudinal studies
	<u>Under Enrolled Programs Action Plan</u>
	• Hold focus group sessions of current enrollees to assess program model and determine new outreach strategies and funding sources
	• Connect with new partners to assist with recruitment

F.	**Other Considerations:**
	Please use this area to identify elements not captured above

Section One – Board Governance; Effective Board Oversight

A. Result: Each Agency has effective board oversight through:
            Core Elements Include:
- Formalized planning process
- Ability to demonstrate Board is active in decision making process
- Board is able to demonstrate that a training and orientation process is in place
- Board utilizes knowledge/ techniques demonstrated in training and orientation process

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Two – Leadership; Responsiveness

A. Result: Agency leaders exhibit necessary skills to effectively administer the organization.
Core Elements Include:
- Agency leaders can demonstrate responsiveness in times of crisis
- Agency leaders possess skills necessary to effectively function in the current complex and evolving environment
- Plan in place to identify changing needs
- Agency leaders address community needs with innovative programs as necessary
- Agency leaders are proactive
- Agency acts as catalyst in community

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Two –Leadership; Staff Development/ Planning

A. Result: Leadership ensures that the necessary systems are in place to ensure competent staff
 Core Elements Include:
- Basic Systems (grievance procedures, organization chart, job descriptions, etc) are in place and utilized
- Continuous learning occurs
- Staff recognition programs are in place
- Agency can demonstrate a development plan is in place
- Staff morale is a consideration in agency operations
- Staff turnover is not excessive
- Agency can demonstrate effective internal communication

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Two –Leadership; Communications

A. Result: Effective communication regarding agency activities is taking place within the community.
Core Elements Include:
- Public relations plan in place
- Staff are engaged in public relations efforts
- Community recognition regarding the value of the work of the agency is present

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Two –Leadership; Technological Infrastructure

A. Result: Agency can demonstrate that an appropriate technological infrastructure is in place
          Core Elements Include:
- Technological infrastructure is adequate to meet the needs of the agency

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

<u>Section Three –</u>Financial Stability; Board Involvement

A. Result: Board is able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding pertaining to financial issues
Core Elements Include:
- Board is actively engaged in financial issues
- Board receives financial training
- Action plans in place to identify and address issues

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

<u>Section Three –</u>Financial Stability; Financial & Administrative Systems

A. Result: Agency has effective financial systems in place
             Core Elements Include:
- Updates/ changes are made to financial statements as necessary to ensure all programs are compliant and effective
- Ability to track and justify costs
- System demonstrates costs are allocated appropriately

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Three – Financial Stability; Staffing

A. Result: Agency has appropriate staff to ensure effective financial management
Core Elements Include:
- Financial requirements are met in a timely manner
- Agency can demonstrate a history clear of significant financial problems and issues
- Key financial positions are filled and staff is sufficiently trained

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Three –Financial Stability; Cash Management

A. Result: Agency can demonstrate effective cash flow management
Core Elements Include:
- Strong asset-to-liability ratio
- Timely payment of bills
- Agency is able to cope with late payments from funding sources

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Four –Linkages; Resource Development/ Leveraging

A. Result: Resources are adequate to meet stated agency goals and to be administered in an effective and efficient manner.
Core Elements Include:
- Diversified funding exists
- Resources allow for meeting critical needs
- Demonstrated resource development activity
- Leveraged funds exist
- Financial development component in plan (strategic plan, CAP, fiscal plan)
- Agency can demonstrate appropriate selection of programs and funding

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Four –Linkages; Partnerships (both informal & formal)
A. Result: Agency can demonstrate partnerships exist which further plan/ mission of the organization
Core Elements Include:

- Partnerships and collaborations enhance resources and/ or services to clients
- Agency can demonstrate partnerships are sustainable

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Four –Linkages; Stability/ Change Management

A. Result: Agency can demonstrate that partnerships aid in continuity of services within the community in case of changes in funding environment
Core Elements Include:
- Agency has a plan to address continuity of services

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Five – Program Delivery; Program Design

A. Result: Agency can demonstrate that program design is effective in meeting the intended need
Core Elements Include:
- Programs are administered by capable and trained staff
- Programs are run smoothly with maximum effect and efficiency
- There is maximum feasible participation by eligible individuals
- Community input is utilized in the development and implementation of programs

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Five – Program Delivery; Performance Outcomes

A. Result: Agency can demonstrate that programs serve two separate functions; agency programs assist clients in moving towards self-sufficiency and agency programs have a positive impact on the community.
Core Elements Include:
- Programs are evaluated on a regular basis
- Programs are results oriented
- Program results are effectively tracked and reported

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Five – Program Delivery; Community Outreach

A. Result: Agency, programs and services are appropriately known throughout the community
Core Elements Include:
- Agency has procedures in place to ensure programs and services ensure maximum feasible participation
- Agency can demonstrate outreach efforts occur

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Five – Program Delivery; Customer Satisfaction

A. Result: Agency can demonstrate customer satisfaction
Core Elements Include:
- Customer feedback is encouraged and collected on a regular basis
- Customers express satisfaction
- Collected comments are utilized to improve agency activities

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**

Section Five – Program Delivery; Continuity of Programs

A. Result: Agency can effectively respond to changes in resource levels.
            Core Elements Include:
- Agency is able to identify avenues and strategies to support minimal disruption in program services

B.	**Successes:** **Please identify agency successes and applicable supporting documentation**

C.	**Challenges:** **Please identify agency challenges and applicable supporting documentation**

D.	**Best Practices:** **Please identify agency best practices**

E.	**Action Plan:** **Please list all applicable action plans addressing both challenges and successes**

F.	**Other Considerations:** **Please use this area to identify elements not captured above**