

**FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF JOB CLUBS
OPERATED BY FAITH- AND COMMUNITY-BASED
ORGANIZATIONS: FINDINGS FROM SITE VISITS
AND OPTIONS FOR FUTURE EVALUATION**

FINAL REPORT

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ABSTRACT

Over the past several decades, job search support groups, commonly referred to as “job clubs,” have evolved into one of several important activities used by the public workforce system and faith- and community-based organizations to enhance worker readiness and employability, as well as to provide ongoing support to unemployed and underemployed individuals as they search for jobs. The U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) contracted in September 2012 with Capital Research Corporation, Inc. and George Washington University to conduct an assessment of job clubs sponsored by faith-based and community-based organizations (FBOs/CBOs). The overall purpose of this evaluation effort was to systematically describe the key characteristics of job clubs being offered by a range of faith- and community-based organizations, document how they differ from and are similar to the job clubs operated by publicly-funded workforce agencies (such as at American Job Centers [AJCs]), and identify potential approaches that might be used for more rigorous formal evaluation of impacts and effectiveness.

Findings from the telephone interviews with stakeholders and in-person interviews with facilitators during the site visits indicate that job clubs operated by FBOs, CBOs and public workforce agencies are alike in many ways, with all of them emphasizing the critical importance of: (1) networking during the job search; (2) offering ongoing peer support and sharing of similar experiences among participants; and (3) providing instruction and guidance on the basics of the job search process (e.g., elevator pitches, resume development, job interview practice). Noteworthy differences between the FBO/CBO job clubs and those operated by public workforce agencies are related to staffing patterns and available resources for program operations and services. While public workforce agency job clubs are led by paid professional staff, supported by the full complement of workshops, activities, and other services typically available through AJCs/One-Stop Centers, FBO/CBO job clubs, in most cases, operate with limited budgets or no funding whatsoever. Additionally, compared with public sector agencies, FBOs/CBOs typically collect little in the way of participant-level data, such as participant identifiers, demographic characteristics, service receipt, or outcomes. Finally, although this report suggests several approaches to future rigorous experimental/non-experimental and process/implementation evaluation of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs, there are likely to be formidable challenges to implementation of rigorous evaluation methods because these job clubs rarely collect identifying information on participants, such as Social Security numbers, and are generally opposed to random assignment for their programs.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past several decades, job search support groups, commonly referred to as “job clubs,” have evolved into one of several important activities used by the public workforce system and faith- and community-based organizations (FBOs/CBOs) to enhance worker readiness and employability, as well as to provide ongoing support to unemployed and underemployed individuals as they search for jobs. In 2011, the Department of Labor’s Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships launched the Job Clubs Initiative to reach out to FBO/CBO job clubs and better connect them and their job seeker members to the public workforce system. Activities in job clubs, which often meet weekly or bi-weekly, include sharing information, job leads, knowledge, networking possibilities, and other job search-related activities. While there have been past experimental evaluations of the impacts of participation in public sector-operated job clubs, there have been few formal evaluations or assessments of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs.

The U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) contracted in September 2012 with Capital Research Corporation, Inc. and George Washington University to conduct an assessment of job clubs sponsored by faith-based and community-based organizations. The overall purpose of this evaluation effort was to (1) systematically describe the key characteristics of job clubs being offered by a range of faith- and community-based organizations; (2) document how they differ from and are similar to the job clubs operated by publicly-funded workforce agencies (such as at American Job Centers); and (3) identify potential approaches that might be used in the future for more rigorous evaluation of the impacts and effectiveness of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. This evaluation effort, conducted over a 20-month period, included three main research activities: (1) a literature review; (2) an “environmental scan,” with a particular focus on conducting interviews with key stakeholders knowledgeable about job clubs and site visits to FBO/CBO organizations sponsoring job clubs in six localities; and (3) the identification and exploration of alternative evaluation designs for future rigorous study of FBO/CBO job clubs. Key study findings from each of these research activities are highlighted below.

Literature Review. The literature review was aimed at summarizing what is known about the job clubs operated by public sector agencies and FBOs/CBOs, including the results of available experimental and non-experimental research studies. The evaluations of public sector job clubs indicate that it is possible to apply experimental methods (involving random assignment of job club participants) to assess the impacts of various job club interventions. Such experimental studies of job clubs have demonstrated significant positive impacts on earlier return to work and job placement rates. For example, with funding from the U.S. Department of Labor, Azrin et al. (1980) conducted a large-scale experiment to determine whether job clubs were effective for welfare recipients participating in the Work Incentive (WIN) program (the national welfare-to-work program operating at the time). The study was carried out in five cities, and nearly 1,000 welfare recipients were randomly assigned to receive either group job search assistance through job clubs or the usual employment services provided to welfare recipients in their cities. The impact results were large and statistically significant -- at the 12-month follow-

up point, 87 percent of the job club treatment group had obtained jobs compared to 59 percent of the control sample. There were statistically significant differences favoring the treatment group in all five sites and for every subgroup examined. In a follow-up to the 1980 WIN study, Azrin et al. (1983a) found that after six months about half the treatment group members were no longer receiving welfare, while only 22 percent of the control group had left welfare. The Azrin studies, as well as an MDRC replication of the Azrin work and other more recent experimental studies, have helped change the workforce community's perception about whether job seekers should be served individually or in groups. In part as a result of the positive impacts reported in these studies, group job search activities and job clubs are now widely used in the public sector workforce system, and, increasingly, faith-based and community-based organizations are offering such group-based work search assistance.

Unlike the experimental research studies that have been conducted since the 1970s on job search assistance and job clubs provided by the public sector, there appear to be no rigorous experimental studies (or even non-experimental studies) of the impacts of FBO/CBO-affiliated job clubs on employment outcomes for job seekers. The lack of experimental studies of FBO/CBO job clubs may be because there is little funding available to sponsor such evaluations, because there is a lack of expertise in setting up and implementing random assignment-type studies, or because FBOs/CBOs sponsoring such initiatives are unwilling or unable to subject their job clubs to more rigorous study.

Environmental Scan – Findings from the Stakeholder Interviews. As part of the environmental scan, the research team conducted telephone interviews with seven stakeholders knowledgeable about the operation of job clubs, including those sponsored by FBOs/CBOs. These interviews provided an opportunity to question each stakeholder on a range of topics related to job clubs operated by FBO/CBOs. Among the study findings that emerged from these interviews were the following:

- **According to several stakeholders, the steep downturn of the U.S. economy in 2007-08 and surging numbers of unemployed and underemployed workers created a strong demand for job search assistance, providing an impetus for FBOs/CBOs to form job clubs to meet urgent needs within their communities.** Stakeholders cited several other contributing factors for the apparent expansion of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs, including the desire of churches/congregations to help unemployed individuals within their own congregations as well as the surrounding communities and the relatively low costs for establishing and maintaining job clubs. However, despite an apparent surge in numbers of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs, stakeholders observed that there was little empirical data to support this apparent trend.
- **Stakeholders maintained that there is substantial diversity across FBOs and CBOs in the format, content, and operation of job clubs.** Several stakeholders noted that while some faith-based organizations might begin and end their job clubs with a prayer, the job club session itself might have little or no faith-based/religious content. Even those FBO-sponsored job clubs infused with religious/spiritual references tend to focus the bulk of their job club meetings on many of the same

principles and instructional techniques as those covered in secular job clubs operated by CBOs and public sector organizations – e.g., the importance of networking, developing/practicing “elevator speeches,” basics of developing an effective resume, job interviewing techniques, and effective job search approaches. Several stakeholders noted that compared to the public sector, faith-based job clubs often place more emphasis on personal encouragement, raising self-esteem, providing time for peer group discussions related to job search challenges, and generally responding to emotional needs of participants.

- **None of the stakeholders interviewed were able to identify past or ongoing evaluations of FBO/CBO job clubs.** According to stakeholders, many of the FBOs operate their programs with only volunteer staff and on a shoestring budget and, consequently, lack computer equipment and/or the technical knowledge or staffing to set-up and manage an automated participant-level data system. None of the stakeholders felt it would be feasible to apply a random assignment-type experimental design to explore FBO/CBO-sponsored job club impacts (in part, because of concerns over denial of services to control group members and data collection burden/complexity associated with random assignment-type studies).

Environmental Scan – Findings from the Site Visits. The second component of the environmental scan focused on site visits conducted in Fall 2013 to six localities across the country where job clubs are operated by FBOs and CBOs: (1) Northern New Jersey; (2) Cleveland/Akron, OH; (3) Atlanta, GA; (4) Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN; (5) Washington, DC Metro (MD/VA); and (6) San Francisco/Bay Area (CA). Within these six areas selected for visits, the site visit team observed regularly-scheduled job clubs and conducted in-depth interviews with staff in 16 organizations – eight FBOs, four CBOs, and four public workforce agencies – selected purposively to represent the range of characteristics, formats, and activities of job clubs currently operated by FBOs, CBOs, and public workforce agencies. Key findings that emerged from the site visits included the following:

- **Most of the 16 organizations visited as part of this study had no eligibility criteria for attendance at their job club sessions, with an overall aim of serving any and all unemployed job seekers within their service area or community.** The group of workers most represented in the FBO/CBO job clubs visited was middle- and upper-aged, white collar technical/professional workers. Job clubs also sought to serve new entrants to the labor market (such as recent college graduates) and employed individuals looking to change careers, increase earnings, or move from part- to full-time work (though typically, these individuals made up a very small share of job seekers attending job clubs). Most often, FBOs/CBOs simply indicated in their brochures and outreach efforts that “all job seekers are welcome.”
- **The job clubs operated by FBOs and CBOs were held at community locations made available free-of-charge by either the sponsoring organization or other neighborhood institutions, thereby eliminating any operating costs for meeting rooms but also making the sessions convenient for participants to attend.** All the FBO-sponsored job clubs held their main sessions in meeting/conference rooms or

fellowship halls in the church or on the church's campus. Job clubs sponsored by CBOs met in a variety of rent-free locations; for example two of the CBO job clubs (Career Transition Group for Women and Neighbors-helping-Neighbors) held sessions in community meeting rooms in local public libraries.

- **Most typically, FBOs/CBOs visited as part of this study had between 10 and 30 attendees at job club sessions, though all the job clubs visited indicated that there was variability in the numbers of attendees from session to session.** Among the 12 FBO/CBO job clubs visited, there were three outliers in terms of attendance at job club sessions: (1) Roswell United Methodist Church's Job Networking typically had up to 300 participants at their regular bi-monthly meeting, although they often saw from 350 to 375 attendees when they included job fairs in the program; (2) the McLean Bible Church averaged 150 attendees each week at its Career Network Ministry job clubs (ranging from 125 to 160 each week); and (3) ProMatch, often had over 100 attendees (including around 45 first-time participants) at General Membership meetings.
- **Nearly all the 16 job clubs observed held group job club sessions either weekly or twice a month.** The majority (nine) of the job clubs observed held sessions that met for approximately two hours. Most of the FBO, CBO, and public workforce agency job clubs observed followed an "open entry, open exit" format for participation in their job club sessions. Because their job clubs were designed to be open-entry, open-exit sessions (rather than a set number of meetings covering a specific list of instructional topics and issues), most of the FBO/CBO job clubs (as well as those operated by the public workforce agencies) visited did not use a formal curriculum or facilitator's guide to structure the sequence or the content of the activities and/or the instructional material presented in their job club sessions. However, most of the job clubs observed followed a standard format, and, in some cases, a fixed agenda, to guide and structure their sessions.
- **One critical difference between the job clubs sponsored by FBOs and CBOs and those operated by public workforce agencies is the staffing arrangements.** Job clubs held at AJC/One-Stop Centers are led by paid professional staff, often with the help of support staff and an array of equipment and tools (e.g., computers, printers) to support the job search. Although a few of the FBO-sponsored job clubs received limited assistance from paid church staff, the vast majority of these clubs were organized, managed, and facilitated solely by unpaid volunteers. Most of the FBO/CBO job clubs rotated a small group of volunteer facilitators or used two or three facilitators to lead each meeting. Larger job clubs such as the McLean Bible Church's Career Network Ministry needed up to 30 volunteers to operate multiple sessions and breakout groups at a single meeting.
- **The FBO/CBO job clubs visited operated with little or no external funding, and most functioned with only a limited budget, particularly when compared to job clubs operated by professional staff in a public workforce center.** Because they were able to keep their expenses to a minimum, FBOs/CBOs did not require grants or

major funders to initiate or maintain their job clubs – and most of the administrators/staff preferred structuring and operating their job clubs so that they would not require outside fund raising or solicitation of government/foundation grants.

- **FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs rarely collect in-depth information on participants, activities, and outcomes; in addition, they have not participated in evaluations in the past and would likely have deep reservations about participation in future evaluation efforts.** While collecting name and other contact information, CBOs and FBOs do not typically collect other identifying information, such as Social Security numbers, that would enable an evaluator to link individual data to administrative data such as the Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records. Many FBOs/CBOs (and all those visited as part of this study) do not maintain automated management information systems that provide information about participants’ background characteristics, services received, and outcomes. Finally, FBOs and CBOs are generally opposed to participating in an evaluation that involves random assignment and typically do not have excess demand for their services – hence, for most FBOs/CBOs, random assignment would mean turning away job seekers who could have been served.

Future Evaluation of FBO/CBO-Sponsored Job Clubs. Based on the results of the environmental scan, the prospects for rigorous, particularly experimental, evaluation of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs appear to be bleak. It is a remote possibility that a select group of FBOs/CBOs could be enticed to be part of an enhancement type experimental study, though such a study would not be helpful in determining the net impact of enrollment versus non-enrollment in a job club, but rather only would explore the incremental effects of some added feature to an existing job club. Such a study would need to carefully select among CBO/FBOs serving sufficient numbers of job seekers (likely to be in the neighborhood of 400 to 500 job seekers, unless pooling of samples is possible across sites) and provide substantial levels of technical assistance to ensure that: (1) an appropriate point of randomization is established, (2) treatment group members receive the enhanced services in an appropriate dosage and there is no contamination of individuals assigned to the control group, (3) participating organizations collect data elements necessary to support the analysis component of the study (including necessary personal identifiers, services received, and, if appropriate, outcomes, all of which organizations may be reluctant to collect), and (4) a participant tracking system is designed and implemented to support random assignment and ensure maintenance of participant characteristics, services, and outcomes.

With respect to non-experimental study designs, while before/after, regression discontinuity, and interrupted time series research designs do not appear appropriate or feasible, there is some potential for using “randomized encouragement” and propensity score matching (PSM). Most promising of these two non-experimental methods is the random encouragement approach, though even this approach is likely to run into a host of implementation challenges. Under a randomized encouragement approach, potential FBO/CBO job club users would be divided into a treatment and a control group using random assignment. The treatment group would then be encouraged to participate in a FBO/CBO-sponsored job club by providing them

with information about the program and perhaps a small allowance to defray the costs of attending, while the control group would receive nothing. The evaluation would be conducted as follows. First, a pool of potential job club users must be identified and randomly assigned to encouragement treatment or control status. If a state unemployment insurance (UI) office were willing to participate, targeted claimants could be assigned to encouragement status at the time of their initial claim or at some other pre-designated time, e.g., after the sixth week of the claim. Those in the treatment group would receive an inducement to enroll in a FBO/CBO job club, while those in the control group would receive no inducement. The inducement would include, at a minimum, information on the job club(s) of interest, including the time and location of meetings. Stronger encouragement could include financial inducements such as a transportation allowance to attend the job club. There are, however, both practical and statistical issues that must be investigated before it can be determined if the approach is an appropriate choice for an evaluation. On the practical side, one key problem is that the strategy requires the FBO/CBO job clubs that are to be evaluated to provide the evaluator with the participation status of all claimants randomly assigned to treatment and control encouragement status. As noted previously, FBO/CBO job clubs are generally reluctant to collect Social Security numbers, but that would be the most accurate way to identify members of the treatment and control groups who participate in the job club. A second potential problem is that the state Unemployment Insurance agency may balk at providing any form of encouragement to attend a private sector job club, particularly at a faith-based institution.

Building on this exploratory study, perhaps the most promising (and feasible) next step from an evaluation perspective would be to conduct a more detailed process/implementation study of FBO/CBO job clubs, possibly in conjunction with AJC job clubs, to better define what the distinctions are across the different types of job clubs. A process/implementation study would be appropriate for periodic efforts to assess and track implementation of the job clubs over time, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses/challenges of the job clubs from varying perspectives (e.g., job club attendees, job club facilitators, and other organizational administrators/other staff). The strength of such studies is in obtaining contextual information for understanding the environment in which interventions occur, as well as gaining rich qualitative perspectives on the intervention. Such information, particularly if collected over time, can help to identify ways in which job clubs are exceeding or falling short of expectations from various perspectives, and identify potential approaches to improving workshop content, facilitation, facilities, and participant outcomes.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Over the past several decades, job clubs have evolved to become one of several important activities used by the public workforce system and faith and community-based organizations to enhance job search skills and work readiness, as well as to provide ongoing support to unemployed and underemployed individuals as they search for jobs. Job clubs, which typically meet on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, may be sponsored by the public workforce system – through the approximately 2,500 American Job Centers (AJCs) and over 500 local workforce investment areas (LWIAs) across the nation – or a considerable range of faith-based or community-based organizations (FBO/CBOs). The focus of this report is on better understanding the types of job clubs operated by FBOs/CBOs and determining the extent to which such job clubs could be more rigorously evaluated in the future (for employment and other impacts on job seekers attending such job clubs). Often such job clubs (whether operated by the public or non-profit entities) are open to any and all unemployed and underemployed individuals in a local workforce area or community in which they serve. However, some job clubs may be aimed at more narrowly-defined subpopulations of job seekers -- for example, recruiting and serving public assistance recipients (e.g., those subjected to work requirements under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) programs), formerly incarcerated individuals, separating or retiring active duty military personnel, unemployed/underemployed veterans, older workers and other seniors, persons with disabilities, unemployed white-collar workers, and individuals dislocated from various manufacturing or service sectors.

The “club” dimension of group job search sessions, whether they are formally called job clubs or not, implies that participants share information, job leads, knowledge, networking possibilities, and other job search-related activities. In 2011, a U.S. Department of Labor Training and Employment Notice (TEN) catalogued key features of job clubs:

- **Facilitated meeting-based approach:** Job clubs are typically organized around regular meetings, which take place on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis, in most cases. Meetings often occur in the evenings or weekends and generally seem to provide coffee/tea and refreshments. Job club meetings are led and organized by a facilitator, often a volunteer or member of the church or community organization.
- **Small group and inclusive setting:** Most job clubs work in small group settings, with meetings of 5 to 30 participants for at least a three-month period. While job clubs often advertise to their congregation or community members, they tend to be open to the broad public.
- **Peer support:** A central tenet of most job clubs is to act as a support group for unemployed people. In many (though not all) cases, job clubs view their work as more closely aligned with a grieving process model or 12-step treatment model rather than a workforce development model, where there are various stages of unemployment (grief, anger, denial, acceptance, etc.). The facilitator’s role is to help participants work through these various stages.
- **Network and education models:** In addition to peer support, job clubs also offer assistance in the areas of job search and career development. Often times, they take a networking approach where participants share their various networks to help each other identify job opportunities. Job clubs will also use an education model where they provide participants with information and skills in areas such as job search techniques, résumé building, and interview preparation.
- **Guest speakers:** A hallmark of job clubs is to invite outside guests and experts to speak to participants. Guest speakers could be human resources experts, small business owners, employer representatives, and former, employed job club participants.

(Oates and Tom, 2011, TEN 42-10)

Job clubs, whether they are sponsored by the public workforce system or faith-based organizations and community-based organizations (FBO/CBOs), offer a variety of activities aimed at helping job seekers to better plan and execute their job search activities, answering questions or troubleshooting job search challenges that may emerge, and allowing job seekers to

share their experiences and provide support for one another. Though there is much variability across job clubs, some typical activities include:

- classroom instruction on job readiness and effective job search strategies;
- information about labor market conditions, industry sectors, and job openings;
- planning job search activities for an upcoming period and identifying job leads (through discussion among job club members, searches of Internet job boards and employer websites, and other networking activities);
- resume and cover letter development/refinement;
- peer group discussion among job club participants about available job openings, job search challenges, and strategies for dealing with rejection and other job search challenges;
- employer recruitment sessions and presentations to share information about industry sectors and potential job openings; and
- mock or actual interviews for jobs.

An important accompanying goal of job clubs is to break the isolation that can often accompany lengthy periods of unemployment and counter the discouragement and anxiety that can set in during the job search process (e.g., as a result of unsuccessful job interviews, unanswered correspondences, and exhausting job leads or networking opportunities).

As is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, a substantial number of job clubs have sprung up across the country in recent years, often affiliated with community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and congregations. These FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs provide an opportunity for such organizations to serve their communities and bring much needed employment/job placement-related services to job seekers within their communities. Such clubs may also target and serve job seekers who may not be aware of or are reluctant to use similar services available at American Job Centers and or through other public sector agencies. FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs may also be offered at times and venues that are more convenient

than those provided by AJCs or other public employment agencies. Finally, some job seekers may be simply more comfortable and willing to attend job clubs held by a church or community-based organization conveniently located within their neighborhood.

While there have been some past evaluations of the impacts of participation in public sector-operated job clubs on job placement, there has been little assessment of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. As discussed in greater detail in the literature review (in Chapter 2), during the 1980s, there was a great deal of interest in job clubs designed to help a wide variety of unemployed workers including older workers, welfare recipients, and reentrants from the criminal justice system. A number of evaluations found that job clubs operated by the public workforce system had a large impact on speeding up participants' return to work.¹ For example, older workers who were Employment Service customers were assigned to either a job club treatment or control group; after 12 weeks, 74 percent of the job club treatment group participants were employed, compared to 22 percent for the control group (Gray 1983). Work Incentive Program (WIN) welfare clients in five cities were randomly assigned to a job club program; of those assigned to the treatment group, 87 percent found jobs within 12 months compared to 58 percent in the control group (Azrin et al. 1980). A follow-up study found that after six months, about half of the treatment group members were no longer receiving welfare while only 22 percent of the control group had left welfare. Based on these earlier studies, job

¹ N.H Azrin, R.A. Philip, P Thienes-Hontos, V.A. Besalel. 1980. "Comparative Evaluation of the Job Club Program for Welfare Recipients." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 16(2) 133-145 (April). N.H Azrin, R.A. Philip, P Thienes-Hontos, V.A. Besalel. 1983. "Follow-up on Welfare Benefits Received by Job Club Clients." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 18(3) 253-254 (June). Gray, Denis. 1983. "A Job Club for Older Job Seekers: An Experimental Evaluation." *Journal of Gerontology* 38 (3) 363-368. Also: "Improving Job-Seeking Skills of Adolescents with Handicaps Through Job Clubs." *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*. 1988 11(2):118-125. "Assisting Unemployed Older Workers to Become Reemployed: An Experimental evaluation." *Research on Social Work Practice* 1994 4(1): 3-13. "Retraining the Older Worker: Michigan's Experience with Senior Employment Services." *Journal of Career Development* 1986 13(2):14-22.

clubs offered by public employment and welfare agencies generally appear to connect job seekers to the labor market more quickly, though there is no evidence from these studies that attendance in such job clubs has any effect on earnings or job retention.² While it would seem likely that FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs could have similar effects in terms of speeding the return to work for unemployed individuals, there have been few (if any) rigorous empirical studies completed on this subject. As discussed in the next section, an important focus of this report is exploring the possibilities for future rigorous experimental studies to gauge the employment and earnings impacts of participating in FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs.

B. STUDY OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY, AND ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

As stated in DOL's original statement of work (SOW), the purpose of this formative evaluation effort was to systematically describe the key characteristics of the job clubs being offered by a range of faith- and community-based organizations, document how they differ from and are similar to the job clubs operated by publicly-funded workforce agencies (such as the American Job Centers), and identify promising practices in FBO/CBO-based job clubs that might warrant more rigorous formal evaluation of individual impacts and effectiveness. Primary research questions that were the focus of this exploratory study were the following (based in part on questions provided in DOL's original Statement of Work for this study):

- What types of community-based and faith-based organizations sponsor job clubs? Why do they operate these clubs?
- What are the various program designs and key characteristics of these jobs clubs? For example, how often do the clubs meet and for how long? Do individuals start and end as a cohort or is there open entry/open exit? How are individual club sessions structured and what topics are covered? What role does agency staff play in coordinating and running job club sessions?

² Chapter 2 of this report provides a literature review, which includes more in-depth discussion of key findings from the literature on job clubs.

- What are the targeted subpopulations (if any) served by such clubs and how might the groups served differ from job clubs sponsored by public sector organizations?
- What resources are used by and for job clubs (e.g., staff, volunteers, cash and in-kind donations, technology, facilities/space, public funding)? What are the costs associated with developing and implementing job clubs? How much are the ongoing costs of job clubs for sponsoring organizations?
- How do the job clubs interact with the public workforce development system? For example, are there referrals to and from the workforce development system? Are job seekers attending FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs encouraged to visit American Job Centers and make full and appropriate use public workforce development resources?
- What types of data are being collected on participant characteristics and outcomes by job clubs? For example, have FBOs/CBOs developed data systems to track participant characteristics, services received, and outcomes (in terms of job placement, earnings, and job retention)? Have these organizations conducted any evaluations of the results of the job clubs they have held?
- Are FBOs/CBOs interested in more rigorously evaluating their job clubs for impacts on participant employment and earnings outcomes, and if so, are there outcome/impact evaluation designs that could be practically applied to assess FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs?

The data collection, analysis, and report preparation tasks under this effort, conducted over a 20-month period, included three main research activities: (1) a literature review (see Chapter 2); (2) an “environmental scan,” with a particular focus on conducting interviews with key stakeholders knowledgeable about job clubs and site visits to FBO/CBO organizations sponsoring job clubs in six localities (see Chapter 3); and (3) the identification and exploration of alternative evaluation designs for future rigorous study of FBO/CBO job clubs (see Chapter 4).³

³ Specifics about the methodology for the environmental scan, including selection of locations and specific FBO/CBO job clubs for visits is included in Chapter 3 of this report.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY-BASED SPONSORED JOB CLUBS

The literature review for this project is aimed at summarizing what is known about the job clubs operated by public sector agencies and FBO/CBOs, including the results of available experimental/non-experimental research studies. This literature review begins with a brief discussion of job search theory and what is known from the research about job clubs provided by public sector organizations. A key focus of this initial section is on impacts on return to work, employment, and earnings of job club participation. This is followed by a review of available literature on FBO/CBO provision of job search assistance and other employment-related and support services. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of literature review findings for future evaluation of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs.

A. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON JOB SEARCH AND JOB CLUBS PROVIDED BY THE PUBLIC WORKFORCE SYSTEM

1. Job Search Theory

Neo-classical economists view labor markets as governed by the forces of supply (by workers) and demand (by employers), which determine wage rates and the quantity of labor the workers provide.⁴ In conventional labor market theory, workers (seeking to maximize their well-being or “utility” function) make choices between income and leisure (i.e., they will work when working seems more attractive than not working). The advantage of working more hours for the individual is that he or she will have higher earnings. The trade-off in working more, however, is a loss of leisure time, potentially a loss of public benefits (such as unemployment insurance benefits or means-tested welfare payments), added costs (e.g., added expenses

⁴ Portions of Sections A and B focusing on job search theory and research results on job clubs are based on a recent review of job search theory and findings by Klerman et.al. (2012).

associated with traveling to and from work, child care, and work clothing and tools/equipment), and other physical and psychological costs of working. From an employer's perspective, the neo-classical model holds that a firm will hire additional workers as long as the additional product from the last hired worker exceeds total wages paid the worker (e.g., the value of the marginal product of labor exceeds the total marginal cost in terms of wages, fringe benefits, taxes, etc.).

Over the past several decades, research on job search behavior has substantially expanded and refined our understanding of the process by which unemployed workers search for, find, and retain jobs. Economists have tried to understand and explain the fact that at any time there are both unemployed workers and posted job vacancies. Job search theory said that the contemporaneous occurrence of both unemployed workers and posted vacancies does not necessarily mean a serious mismatch between workers and jobs or that wages are not set at a reasonable level. Rather, job search theory suggests that the search for work is a sequential process, involving obtaining information about available job openings, then contacting and interviewing with one or more firms. In the early 1960s, in a seminal work, Stiglitz (1961) examined the role of information in determining labor market behavior, for example, examining the role that imperfect, incomplete, and asymmetric information plays in labor markets and in producing inefficient market outcomes. Building on the work of Stiglitz (1961, 1962) and others, McCall (1970) examined the relationship between information and job search behavior and developed a dynamic model of job search behavior, proposing a "reservation wage" whereby the worker is willing to accept job offers with wages above a reservation wage and, at which time, job search activity is terminated. This dynamic model of job search has been further refined over the past couple of decades using "matching theory," culminating in the award of the

2010 Nobel prize in economics to Diamond (2010), Mortensen (1994), and Pissarides (2000). The job search process takes time, involves the gathering of information, and has costs for the job seeker, involving three critical steps: (1) identifying job openings, (2) converting job openings to job offers, and (3) deciding whether to accept job offers or continue searching (Klerman et al., 2012).

Job search theory, thus, suggests the possibility that job search assistance – for example, in the form of a job club – could provide instruction and support to improve labor market outcomes during each of the three critical steps identified above (e.g., generating more job offers with higher wages, encouraging more intensive job search, and better informing job seekers about whether to accept specific job offers). Typically, workers with better skills and with better job vacancy information are likely to have better search outcomes and shorter job search periods (Diamond 2010).

A more in-depth and practical understanding of the process by which workers search for and secure jobs has been derived in part from the job search questions administered by Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) as part of the Current Population Survey (CPS),⁵ and other data sources such as the American Time Use Survey. For example, using data from the American Time Use Survey between 2003 and 2007, Krueger and Mueller (2010) reported that, on a given weekday, roughly one-quarter of the unemployed engage in job search activities. On average, the unemployed searched for about 41 minutes per day. Conditional on engaging in at least some search activity, the average increases to about 2¾ hours (167 minutes). Krueger and Mueller (2011) estimated that during a period of high unemployment (in late 2009 and early 2010), New

⁵ In 1962, the Gordon Committee, a presidential appointed committee on employment and unemployment statistics, recommended that the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) begin to ask job search questions as part of the Current Population Survey (CPS), which is an important source of monthly U.S. unemployment and employment statistics. Explicit job search questions were added to the CPS in 1967.

Jersey UI recipients spent, on average, between 65 and 100 minutes a day on job searches. As a result, Klerman et al. (2012) concluded that job search intensity among unemployed job seekers is low – “standard advice is to treat job search like a job, but the reality is quite different.”

Hence, given such low levels of job search intensity among many unemployed job seekers, it is possible that job clubs and other types of job search assistance could play a role in increasing the intensity of job search activity among unemployed job seekers, as well as the quality and productivity of their job search approach and strategies utilized.

Analysis of the CPS data reveals the various methods that job seekers typically use during the job search process to identify job leads. The most commonly reported job search methods are direct employer contact and sending out a resume/filling out a job application. Contacting and working with an employment service/job placement agency, networking with friends or family to identify job openings, and looking at ads are also common job search methods. Some studies have emphasized the importance of informal job search methods, such as networking with family, relatives, and friends to obtain information about employers and job vacancies (Rosenfeld 1977, Bortnick and Ports 1992). Bishop, Barron, and Hollenbeck (1993) found large variations between the employment likelihoods resulting from different job search methods. They suggested that job search methods such as contact with employers directly and with friends or relatives are more likely to lead job seekers to employment. A considerable literature exists on networking (e.g., through family, friends, co-workers, and other contacts), and increasingly about use of social media to expand a job seeker’s network and improve job search outcomes. Below are some highlights of the research that has been conducted on networking and using other job search methods:

- In a study of status attainment using social network analysis, Granovetter (1974) interviewed 282 professional and managerial men in Newton, Massachusetts. He found

that individuals who used interpersonal channels found jobs that were more satisfactory to them and yielded higher incomes. This analysis of higher income men led to other studies to determine whether Granovetter's findings could be generalized, and especially what the implications were for low-wage workers.⁶

- A number of job search studies have found that race, ethnicity, income, and geographic location play a role in the extent of networking and the way individuals search for work. For example, Elliott and Sims (2001) found that race and income play important roles in the way unemployed workers search for and find new jobs, with Latinos being significantly more likely to use friends, relatives, and eventual coworkers than blacks. However, Elliott and Sims found that the difference in use of informal methods between Latinos and blacks declines as income decreases, particularly for individuals living in more segregated neighborhoods.
- A number of other studies also have found lower incidence of informal employment networks among minorities, and also that Latinos were much more likely to find jobs through friends, relatives and other personal contacts than blacks (Falcon and Melendez 1996; Green, Tigges, and Diaz 1999; Holzer 1987, 1988; Marx and Leicht 1992). Elliott (1999) came to a different conclusion. He found that among low-wage individuals with a high school education or less in urban areas of Atlanta, Boston, and Los Angeles, the highest paid jobs during the early 1990s were acquired through formal job search methods. Elliott suggests that the use of personal contacts as a search strategy is used as a last resort, rather than being a means to find a better job.
- On the other hand, in a study looking at unemployed youth in the Youth Cohort of the National Longitudinal Survey for the year 1981, Holzer (1988) found methods such as networking with friends and relatives, as well as direct employer applications, were the most frequently used search methods and also the most productive at generating job offers and acceptances. Rosenbaum et al. (1999) examined the long-term effects of search methods used when youth leave high school. They found that American high schools sometimes help students find work, and blacks and females were more likely to get their first job through school placements than white males. They found that placements made through relatives and friends had small effects on early earnings, but jobs found through relatives led to higher earnings nine years later.

The literature appears to confirm that low-wage workers and most minority workers have weaker employment networks than most white and high-wage workers. Studies of job search methods and variation in utilization by various subpopulations suggest that job clubs could play a pivotal role in assisting job seekers in learning about various job search methods and structuring job

⁶ Research also found international differences in job search. De Graff and Flap (1988) found that many more American men used personal social contacts to find jobs than Dutch or German men. Other studies examined search methods used in countries including Germany, Italy, Spain and Taiwan (Lin 1999).

search activities to improve probabilities of earlier return to employment. The next section examines in more detail the role job clubs can play in helping job seekers to find and secure jobs, with a particular focus on the net impacts on employment outcomes of attending a job club, based on results from experimental research studies.

2. Research Findings on Job Clubs

Job search assistance (JSA) provided by public and non-profit organizations is typically characterized as relatively short-term, low-intensity, and low-cost assistance to help job seekers find and secure jobs. Klerman et al. (2012) have identified four main types of job search assistance, described below; job clubs fit into the second category, “facilitated group activities”:

...we identify group specific program activities, or components, into four modes, or methods, of service provision: (i) *self-directed activities* (e.g., consulting with social networks, filling out job applications); (ii) facilitated *group activities* such as the group process in job club and classes in job search and soft skills; (iii) *one-on-one meetings*, including counseling related to job search strategies (e.g., assessment of skills and goals, help using computer search tools and completing job applications), conveying job leads (from past experience or from job developers), and monitoring of job search activities (checking job search logs and copies of job applications completed, contacting employers to verify claimed activities); and (iv) *job development*, in which a program staff person works with employers to identify (i.e., develop) job openings, without direct contact with the job seeker. (Klerman et al., 2012)

Although facilitated group job search activities, such as job clubs or job search workshops, are commonly used by public sector workforce and welfare programs today, they were rarely used prior to the 1970s. Over the past several decades, job clubs have evolved to be one of several important activities used by the public workforce system (and increasingly, community- and faith-based organizations) to enhance worker readiness, improve job search skills, coordinate and intensify job search activities, and provide ongoing support for job seekers. Such job clubs offer a variety of activities that are aimed at helping unemployed individuals to better plan and execute

their job search activities, to answer questions or troubleshoot problems that may emerge during the active job search period, and to allow workers to share their experiences and provide emotional support to one another. There is a group dynamic involved in these job clubs, with guidance provided by a job coach or workforce development official (e.g., in American Job Centers it might be a Wagner-Peyser or Workforce Investment Act-funded staff person) and also substantial interaction among job club participants.

Beginning in the mid-1970s, there was a great deal of interest in public sector-sponsored job clubs to help a wide variety of unemployed workers, particularly welfare recipients, unemployment insurance (UI) claimants/exhaustees, and certain hard-to-employ subpopulations with special needs (e.g., older workers and reentrants from the criminal justice system). The structure and activities involved in job clubs has remained relatively unchanged since job clubs were established in the 1970s and 1980s.⁷ Goldman (1989) provides a basic description of the structure and main activities involved in job clubs, which remain applicable today:

...Participants were told to treat job search as a full-time job and were encouraged to use friends and relatives to obtain leads. They were trained in interviewing and social skills and used standardized scripts on the telephone to uncover job openings and get interviews. The basic philosophy is that there are many jobs that become vacant and subsequently filled without going through an elaborate job referral network. Frequent telephone calls will locate these vacancies and provide participants with opportunities they would not have had had they relied on job developers or want ads. As part of the program, they were also given regular staff supervision and assistance and were involved in a peer support network. (Goldman, 1989)

Klerman et al. (2012) provide additional details about the job club process:

...We make several observations about this characterization of the job club process. First, the formal assistance component usually covers all three stages of our

⁷However, over the past decade, there have been substantial changes in the focus and content of job club sessions to keep up with changes in the ways in which job seekers network and search for jobs. For example, job club curriculum is now typically infused with instruction on how to effectively use the Internet and various social media tools (especially LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) to build/expand the job seeker's network, conduct research on occupations and obtain relevant labor market information, and search for and make application for job openings.

conceptualization of individual job search: identifying job openings, converting job openings into job offers, and deciding which job offers to accept. However, the focus has traditionally been on identifying job openings. There is also some attention to how to convert identified job openings into job offers (training in and help with filling out job applications; mock job interviews; guidance on appropriate dress and behavior). In most JSA programs for AFDC/TANF recipients (and only slightly less so for UI), there has been little focus on which job offers to accept; the guidance is to accept all job offers. Second, note that this description of a job club is that it is clearly a group process; it is neither exclusively one-on-one work with a counselor, nor self-directed job search. However, the mutual support group aspect is only part of the job club process. Note also the emphasis on hidden jobs.

With the increased emphasis on moving welfare recipients into jobs, particularly since the enactment of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program in 1997, job clubs have been used both as an activity to assist welfare participants in improving their job search methods and effectiveness, as well as an enforcement mechanism to increase job search intensity and to meet work search requirements under TANF. Brown (1997) and Holcomb (1998) observe that job clubs operated by TANF tend to be relatively short in duration and to combine the group process and meetings with classroom activities or instruction focused on job readiness skills with active job search, as well as access to resource room materials such as computers, phone, banks, and a variety of job listings. Klerman et al. (2012) note that TANF-sponsored job clubs may include an assessment component to identify and resolve participants' barriers to employment, such as limited English proficiency, limited computer skills, lack of appropriate work clothing/tools, lack of childcare, and transportation-related issues. Additionally, TANF job clubs tend to meet daily and more closely approximate the idea of treating job search like a job (e.g., requiring regular attendance).

A number of evaluations of demonstration projects found that job clubs have a large impact on speeding up job club participants' return to work as well as other benefits for workers. In a series of social experiments conducted by Nathan Azrin and colleagues, group job search

was tested against the more conventional (at the time) individual-oriented approach. In the first such study, a job-finding club was established in the early 1970s in a small college town. The main criterion for selecting participants was that individuals desired a permanent, full-time job and were not currently employed full-time. The participants also could not be currently collecting unemployment insurance. Individuals desiring to participate in the job-finding club were selected as matched pairs based on demographic and labor market characteristics. Matched pairs were dropped if the individuals in the treatment group did not attend at least five sessions. The result was 60 treatment and 60 control group members with similar characteristics. The treatment group showed significantly better employment outcomes than the control group. Although the analysis was not up to the standards commonly used today, the results were very strong—within two months, 90 percent of the treatment group members had a job, but only 55 percent of the control group was employed.⁸ The treatment group also had a mean starting salary that was significantly greater than the control group. Additionally, the speed of finding a job was greater for clients who attended the job-finding club regularly than for those who attended irregularly. The researchers concluded that while the job-finding clubs worked for a general population, the results for more disadvantaged populations were uncertain (Azrin et al. 1975).

Azrin replicated his efforts with two specialized target groups. Azrin and Philip (1979) tested the job club approach against an individualized assistance approach for individuals with disabilities – individuals referred from a state hospital for the mentally ill and developmentally

⁸ Possible concerns with the analysis include failure to control for participant characteristics, which could be important given the small sample size, and the fact that participants who attended four sessions or less (and their matched pair person) were excluded from the analysis. (The published article does not indicate what proportion of the treatment group was excluded because of this criterion.) Also, the control group received no job search services, so while the study establishes that group job search is superior to no counseling, it does not compare group job search to individualized services. Finally, the study was carried out in a single small town in Southern Illinois, so there could be external validity concerns.

disabled – in Southern Illinois. Again using random assignment methods, the study included 154 job seekers who desired a full-time job, attended two or more sessions of the job club, and had job-finding problems or had been unsuccessfully looking for work for at least two months. Once again, the results were striking – 95 percent of the treatment group was employed at the six-month follow-up point compared to only 28 percent of the control group. The speed of obtaining jobs correlated with the consistency of session attendance and the number of interviews obtained. About 90 percent of clients received jobs after attending 15 sessions and conducting 15 interviews.

With funding from the U.S. Department of Labor, Azrin et al. (1980) conducted a much larger scale experiment to determine whether job clubs are effective for welfare recipients participating in the Work Incentive (WIN) program. This study was carried out in five cities, and nearly 1,000 welfare recipients were randomly assigned to receive either group job search through job clubs or the usual employment services provided to welfare recipients in their city. The impact results were large and statistically significant -- at the 12-month follow-up point, 87 percent of the job club treatment group had obtained jobs compared to 59 percent of the control sample. There were statistically significant differences favoring the treatment group in all five sites and for every subgroup examined. In a follow-up to the 1980 WIN study, Azrin et al. (1983a) found that after six months, about half the treatment group members were no longer receiving welfare, while only 22 percent of the control group had left welfare.

The Azrin group (1983b) also tested two different pedagogical approaches intended to help workers find jobs through job clubs presenting the same material. One approach, “informational counseling,” consisted of explaining and discussing job search techniques; it was advisory rather than participatory. The second “supervision” approach involved practicing and

performing job search techniques under direct supervision. A total of 346 clients participated in the project, with 196 clients in the supervision group and 150 in the advisory group. There was no control group. The results revealed that the supervision approach was more successful than the advisory group for a number of outcomes. After six months, 88 percent of the supervision group had found a job compared to 71 percent for the advisory group; the supervision group had worked 75 percent of all work days compared to 61 percent for the advisory group; the mean number of days to obtain a job was 32 days for the supervision group but 61 days for the advisory group; and the mean salary was \$4.99 per hour for the supervision group but \$3.93 for the advisory group.

The U.S. Department of Labor retained the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (now MDRC) to replicate a group job search assistance (or job club) demonstration on a large scale in Louisville, Kentucky, a site that had agreed to serve as a laboratory to test promising strategies for female welfare recipients registering for the WIN program. Welfare recipients who registered in Louisville between October 1980 and May 1981 were eligible to participate in the experiment.⁹ Wolfhagen and Goldman (1983) found that a total of 750 individuals participated. Two calendar quarters after random assignment, 49 percent of the treatment group members who were ever employed compared to 34 percent of the control group; earnings for the treatment group over this period were \$550 for the treatment group and \$144 for the control group. There was, however, no significant decline in total average Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) payment for the treatment group.

Finally, Klerman et al. (2012) note that with respect to the Unemployment Insurance program, evidence on the separate effect of a job search workshop or job club is mixed, citing ⁹~~Starting in April 1980, the Louisville group job search program was piloted and researchers conducted case studies using informal interview techniques. Researchers also attended the group job search program sessions as participant-observers (Gould-Stuart 1982).~~

results from two demonstration efforts:

- The Maryland Unemployment Insurance Work Search Demonstration included a treatment arm that added a four-day job search workshop to the regular job search requirement. The evaluation found that doing so cut UI durations by 0.6 weeks (on a base of about 12 weeks). (Klepinger et al., 1998).
- In contrast, the Charleston Demonstration included a treatment arm that added a job search workshop in addition to other services—a strong work test and enhanced placement services. The differential effect of adding the job search workshop was to cut UI durations by only an additional 0.15 weeks (i.e., Treatment 2 had an impact of -0.61 weeks while Treatment 3 which added the workshop had an impact of -0.76 weeks). A formal test of the incremental impact is not provided, but it seems unlikely that the incremental impact of the workshop was statistically significant.

The Azrin studies, the MDRC replication, and other more recent experimental studies have helped change the workforce community's perception about whether job seekers should be served individually or in groups, including in job clubs. In part as a result of the positive impacts reported in these studies, group job search activities and job clubs are now a widely used strategy within the public sector workforce system, and increasingly, faith-based and community-based organizations are offering such group-based work search assistance, which is the focus of the next section of this report.

B. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON JOB SEARCH AND EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING-RELATED ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY FBO/CBOs

1. Extent of FBO/CBO-Affiliated Job Clubs

There is some evidence suggesting that job clubs affiliated with community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, congregations, and other community groups have expanded substantially throughout the United States over the past decade, particularly in response to the deep recession of 2007-08. There are no precise counts of the number of job clubs currently in operation nor the number of clubs that have been formed only recently,

although in a 2011 Training and Employment Notice (Oates and Tom, 2011), the U.S. Department of Labor estimated that there were over 3,000 nationwide at that time (though it is not clear what portion of these job clubs in this estimate are operated by FBO/CBOs):

...Job Clubs grow in number during economic downturns. Through its own research, CFBNP (Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships) estimates that there are at least as many Job Clubs in operation across the country as there are One-Stop Career Centers (approximately 3,000).

The Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships launched the Job Clubs Initiative in 2011. The initiative has three primary purposes: (1) create a community of practice for job club leaders and volunteers to share practices, lessons learned, and resources; (2) facilitate partnerships among job clubs, the public workforce system, and other public and private programs; and (3) provide technical assistance and training to individuals interested in starting or expanding job clubs. The Center manages a community of practice web site at www.dol.gov/jobclubs that includes a web-based “State Job Club Directory,” which invites FBOs/CBOs to register active job clubs on-line at the CFBNP website.¹⁰ This website also provides FBOs/CBOs with resources and toolkits aimed at helping FBOs/CBOs establish and enhance job clubs in their communities, as well as a blog, discussion board, and a calendar board of job club-related events to spur sharing of information among FBO/CBO-affiliated job clubs. While not necessarily representative of the total number or distribution of job clubs across the country (i.e., organizations voluntarily list job clubs to this website and so many operating job clubs are likely not included), as of March 2014, the CFBNP directory included 679 job clubs spread across 31 states. (Note: A total of 20 states, mostly less populous states, had no listings on this directory.) Most (but not all) of the listings in this directory appear to be job clubs affiliated with FBO/CBOs, often operating out of churches, congregations, local libraries, and

¹⁰ The CFBNP directory of job clubs is available at:

[https://partnerships.workforce3one.org/page/](https://partnerships.workforce3one.org/page/resources/1001107639349545113)

other community locations. Though far from complete or representative, the CFBNP listing shows the considerable reach of FBO/CBO-affiliated job clubs across the country. Among the states with the most listings of job clubs in this directory are: Minnesota (62 job clubs listed), Texas (53), Georgia (48), California (41), Ohio (40), Illinois (35), New Jersey (33), North Carolina (29), Missouri (28) and Florida (24).

These FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs provide an opportunity to reach groups of unemployed workers who may not come to public employment agencies for a variety of reasons. Such job clubs may be offered at times and places that are more convenient than those offered at American Job Centers or other public employment agencies. Attendees may be more willing and comfortable attending job clubs held, for example, at a congregation or community-based organization with which they are already familiar. Job club attendees, for example, may be part of the congregation that is sponsoring the job club or may know a family or friend that is a member of the congregation who recommends that they attend the job club; they may also hear about the job club from acquaintances who have themselves participated in the job club. Additionally, it is possible that the more religiously/spiritually-infused job club environment offered by some FBOs/CBOs may resonate with some attendees more than the secular curriculum used by public sector organizations.

2. Background on Curriculum Used in FBOC-Affiliated Job Clubs

Much of the existing literature on FBO/CBO-affiliated job clubs is not evaluative, but rather advocates for establishment of job clubs by FBO/CBOs; provides step-by-step guidance on how to plan, initiate, and sustain a job club; and/or provides a curriculum to guide the structure, substantive content, and instructional methods used in job clubs. For example, there is

an emerging body of material to guide instructors of job club sessions and workbooks that can be distributed to job club participants.¹¹ A review of several curriculum guides available on the CFBNP website suggests that the substantive topics covered and the step-by-step instructions provided in curriculum guides used in FBO/CBO-affiliated job clubs are similar to what would be included in curriculum used in job clubs held at American Job Centers and other public workforce agencies, with one important exception: to varying degrees, the faith-based curricula are often infused with spiritual and/or explicitly religious guidance. For example, one curriculum guide available on the CFBNP website, “Career Network Ministry (CNM) Handbook: A Guide to Discovering Your Gifts and Pursuing Your Professional Career Search” is infused quite substantially with spiritual and religious guidance, and provides a side-by-side comparison of what is termed to be a secular versus a Christian way of finding a job:

- **“Finding a Job the Secular Way.** Most of us have been taught to approach the professional job search in a secular way:
 - ❖ Get over anger, disappointment, and fear, and “get on with it”
 - ❖ Prepare a resume and job hunt materials
 - ❖ Research your options
 - ❖ Identify the job you want, where you want
 - ❖ Research companies/participate in informational interviews
 - ❖ Target best options
 - ❖ Go for it! Make the best deal for you!”
- **“Finding a Job the Christian Way.** At the CNM, we encourage you to discover your Gifts and find a job in the Christian Way:
 - ❖ Recognize that God knows what’s going on. He has a place for you. *Jeremiah 1:5, Psalms 25:12, Psalms 27:11, Psalms 32:8, Psalms 37:5,23, Isaiah 30:21*
 - ❖ Pray over your anger, fear, and disappointment
 - ❖ Pray and invite others to pray
 - ❖ Relax, invite God to intercede for you
 - ❖ Identify the job/vocation to which you are led
 - ❖ Prepare a resume, job hunt materials

¹¹ See the CFBNP website for examples of curriculum available at (see especially the “Resources” tab): <https://partnerships.workforce3one.org/page/resources/1001109738191140636>

- ❖ Research your options
- ❖ Research companies/informational interviews
- ❖ Target best options based on where God leads.
- ❖ Wait! Expect a miracle!”

(Career Network Ministry, 2009, p. 3)

Despite blending in references to daily prayer, spiritual encouragement, and specific references to proverbs from the Bible, the job search topics covered are quite similar in tone and content to those likely to be covered in a more secular setting and offer common sense strategies for effective job search. For example, this same *Career Network Ministry* guide that highlights differences for “Finding a Job the Christian Way” includes chapters on the following: (1) Marketing Strategy (including subsections on Research, Elevator Speech, Resume Creation, Business Cards, and Define Your Target Market/Industry/Companies); (2) Traditional and Non-Traditional Approach (Responding to Ads; Cover Letter Writing; Internet Usage; Using Recruiters; Associations; Networking; and Accountability); and Interviewing (Preparing for the Interview; Thank You Letters and Follow-up; and Rejection). When this guide narrows the focus to the specifics of how to search for a job, interview, and negotiate a salary, it dispassionately dispenses guidance and common sense approaches to job search that would similarly be covered in a job club held at a public agency. For example, none of the 13 tips provided in the CNM curriculum with regard to social networking are infused with spiritual references; several examples of these tips follow:

- ❖ “Ensure that your profile is complete and compelling. Conversely, "an incomplete profile makes you appear lazy and does not showcase all your accomplishments and abilities," cautions Christine Hassler of The Huffington Post.
- ❖ Let your network know through your status updates that you seek a job and what kind.
- ❖ If you blog, link your blog content to your profiles and status updates.
- ❖ Include links to your Website/portfolio/blog in your profiles.
- ❖ Ask and answer questions through LinkedIn Answers .
- ❖ Research employers through company pages on Facebook and LinkedIn.
- ❖ Recommend people on LinkedIn and ask your contacts to recommend you.
- ❖ Participate in discussion forums and boards in your career field.

- ❖ See if professional organizations in your field offer social-networking tools.
- ❖ Always offer help to those with whom you connect and thank your contacts for their assistance and advice.”

(Career Network Ministry, 2009, p. 28)

Another guide available on the CFBNP website, *Empowering Job Seekers – A Ministry of the Hills* (2011), similarly devotes several pages of its curriculum to “Why God may not be answering your prayer for a new job, By Billy Graham,” which is very much spiritually-focused.

For example:

“Q: How do I know God is listening to me when I pray? To be honest, I've about given up on prayer because it doesn't seem to make any difference. Has God turned His back on me?

A: No! God has not turned His back on you. He loves you and wants you to bring your burdens and cares to Him in prayer. The Bible says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Philippians 4:6. Only two things can keep God from giving us what we ask for in our prayers. The first is sin - and the reason is because sin erects a barrier between us and God. Until that barrier is torn down, God can't answer our prayers. The Bible says, "The Lord is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous." Proverbs 15:29. This is why the first step you need to take is to turn by faith to Jesus Christ and ask Him to forgive your sins and come into your life. When we do that, the barrier of sin is removed - and God hears our prayers.”

(A Ministry of The Hills, p. 6)

The next section of this curriculum guide, however, provides very down-to-earth guidance on “20 things to take 10 to 15 years off your image and be perceived as more youthful in the interview or in the office,” which includes, for example, the following four “rules” (from the list of 20 rules):

- ❖ **“Rule #1: Crest Whitestrips.** Yup, this is a shallow, cosmetic-based tip. But I get so many letters from people who just don't understand that having coffee-stained teeth doesn't do you any favors in the interview department. Stop rolling your eyes; go buy the strips (use the store brand for all I care – I'm not picky); and whiten those teeth. Then smile. Smiling makes you look and feel younger – not bitter, old and unemployed. I don't care if you really are bitter, old and unemployed. It's about perception, remember?
- ❖ **Rule #2:** If you are over 40, make sure you have an appropriate LinkedIn profile and Facebook page today. If you don't know how to join, let your kids show you, or even better, have a young person at work "reverse mentor" you on how it works. Let that same person help you choose your profile picture.
- ❖ **Rule #3:** Know about and frequently use Google and Wikipedia. Bookmark them on

your computer, and set one as your homepage.

- ❖ **Rule #4:** Peruse your local Apple store. At least learn the difference between an iPod, an iPhone and an iPad. It's all about perception.”

(A Ministry of The Hills, p. 9)

Findings from the site visits to FBOs/CBOs during this study, which are discussed in Chapter 3, suggest that there is considerable variability in the extent to which spirituality and religious content are infused into job clubs delivered by faith-based organizations.

3. Research Findings on Employment and Training Services Provided by FBO/CBOs

Unlike the steady stream of experimental research studies that have been conducted since the 1970s on job search assistance and job clubs in the public sector (discussed earlier), there appear to be no rigorous experimental studies (or even non-experimental studies) of the effects/impacts of FBO/CBO-affiliated job clubs on employment outcomes for job seekers. Despite the lack of empirical studies on the differences that FBO/CBO-affiliated job clubs might make in terms of improving job search methods, intensifying job search activities, and ultimately speeding the return to work for unemployed individuals, there have been some implementation studies of the role of community-based and faith-based organizations in providing employment/training services and other human services. For example, a study for DOL conducted early in the implementation of the George W. Bush Administration's faith-based initiatives documented and assessed the role of faith-based organizations in providing employment-related services, based on telephone interviews conducted in five cities with congregations and other faith-based organizations and local WIA officials (Kramer et al., 2003a). This study assessed the role of these organizations in delivering employment-related services broadly defined, which could include job postings, clothing or transportation assistance for job

interviews or more programmatic or extensive services. At the time, only a few large congregations provided programmatic services, and none used government funds. Since that study, small grants issued under the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Compassion Capital Fund (CCF) have provided mentoring, ministerial counseling, and other types of assistance to help with transitioning unemployed individuals into the workforce, but none of these grant-funded efforts have as yet been evaluated.

The limited literature on other employment programs operated by faith-based organizations suggests some specific attributes that might broadly apply to FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. Three assessments offer similar findings on differences in the nature of services provided by secular and faith-based programs, and a glimpse of the possible effects of the infusion of faith-based/spiritual content into job club curriculum:

- In a study of the comparative effectiveness of faith-based and secular (government, nonprofit, and for-profit) welfare-to-work programs, Monsma (2006) found that the secular programs studied emphasized vocational and hard skills training and had, particularly among for-profit providers, significantly higher completion and employment rates, and that overall, faith-based programs were not more effective.¹² However, the faith-based programs emphasized soft skills training, and, as expressed by client perceptions, were especially effective in providing a sympathetic understanding and emotional support.
- Kennedy and Bielefeld (2007) studied the Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) program, Indiana's welfare-to-work program. They developed dimensions of religiosity in contractors providing employment services under Charitable Choice and then assessed the characteristics of non-faith based (NFB), moderately faith-based (MFB), and strongly faith-based (SFB) programs in providing services. They found SFB providers reported more clients participated in religious activity, but also reported more negative reactions to religious elements of programming. They also found SFB organizations were somewhat less connected to community networks than MFB organizations and provided fewer job-related services than MFB or NFB providers. Taken together with the Monsma findings above, strongly faith-based

¹² Monsma notes that these findings are similar to those from another study of faith-based and secular welfare-to-work programs (Bielefeld, Littlepage and Thelin, 2003 cited in Monsma 2006), in which the non-faith-influenced programs provided twice the number of hard skills services than the faith-influenced programs.

programs may have less emphasis on direct job services and weaker connections with community and workforce networks.

- An evaluation funded by the Department of Labor of Reclamando Nuestro Futuro (Reclaiming Our Future, or RNF), assessed outcomes for 28 programs (22 faith-based and 6 community-based) to assist at-risk and adjudicated Latino youth obtain education or training, find employment, and avoid involvement with the juvenile justice system. RNF was a three-year, \$10 million effort administered by the Latino Coalition for Faith and Community Initiatives, and the programs operated in six cities under sub-grants from the Coalition, which functioned as an intermediary for the sub-grantees. Program participants engaged in job skills training (classes and other hard skills training), job readiness or job preparation (e.g., soft skills, resume writing, interviewing, anger management), and mentoring (with adult volunteers or program case managers). Monsma and Smidt (2009) assessed RNF program outcomes as well as the relationship between the small FBOs/CBOs and the intermediary organization, a typical model used to provide technical assistance to engage small and grassroots organizations in public programming. Although the target population in RNF was more challenging than in many adult employment programs, and only about one-fifth to one-quarter of the participants engaged in substantial hours of skills or job preparation training, the study found about 28 percent experienced positive employment outcomes (entered an occupational training course or full-time post-secondary education, or unsubsidized employment) and 91 percent did not recidivate. Time spent in the program was associated with the largest positive outcomes. An interesting finding from this study is that the standards, systems, and training provided by the Latino Coalition greatly increased subgrantees' level of professionalism, their ability to serve needy youths, and their ability to sustain their programs using a variety of funding sources. The authors also noted that the subgrantees whose funding was discontinued by the Coalition tended to have worse outcomes than those whose funding had continued.

The findings from these employment-related efforts suggest that FBOs/CBOs may be particularly effective at providing more personalized and supportive job club environments, which may be appealing to and more effective for certain subpopulations of job seekers. Additionally, they suggest the need to examine linkages between FBOs/CBOs and the public workforce system, in that some FBO/CBO job club participants may require more substantive remedial education and occupational training services before job search assistance provided by a FBO/CBO or public sector job club might be an effective intervention.

4. Research Findings About Other Human Services Provided by FBO/CBOs

Although there is a sparse literature on FBOs/CBOs providing job clubs and other employment-related services, the literature on FBO/CBO provision of human services is more plentiful and addresses several other issues applicable to the evaluation of FBO/CBO-provided job clubs. The research is instructive regarding services in which grassroots organizations, including faith-based organizations, may have particular expertise, including the role of religion/spirituality in the content/provision of human services; as well as the capacity of FBOs/CBOs to deliver desired services and, in particular, to operate under public rules.

Researchers have noted that FBOs/CBOs with deep roots in the community and perceived legitimacy may have a particular advantage in engaging individuals who are not motivated to seek assistance from large programs that feel less familiar or more bureaucratic, or who are resistant to any intervention at all. Monsma (2006) found that participants in faith-based welfare-to-work programs reported a more supportive environment than welfare recipients participating in public or for-profit programs. For programs that serve hard-to-reach populations, such as runaway youth or substance abusers, establishing contact and building trust are the difficult but essential first steps to making connections to needed treatment, and FBOs/CBOs may be especially equipped to do so (Kramer et al., 2003a). Individuals already involved with a local congregation or other community groups may be more inclined to join a job club operated by such a congregation or community organization, compared to joining a job club at a public workforce agency with which they are unfamiliar.

FBOs/CBOs themselves represent a broad array of organizational types. FBOs/CBOs can have active religious connections or not. Organizations with reference to religion in their name may reflect long lost religious affiliations, or they may maintain a connection to religion in

mission or governing structure but deliver primarily or only secular services.¹³ Or they may be driven by faith issues and provide religious/spiritual-infused services. Religion can be a defining feature of the mission, structure, and administrative processes of an organization, which affects the style and content of services, or it can be an explicit component of the services themselves. Further, FBOs/CBOs can offer informal services or more programmatic and structured services. They can be small, locally-based and regarded as grassroots but have highly professional staff, or they can be large but still be locally-based and maintain an intimate connection to the community they serve. FBOs/CBOs tend to extensively use volunteers in the provision of services (e.g., volunteer job club instructors or case managers/mentors provided by a congregation).

Faith itself is sometimes touted as a potentially powerful tool in personal transformation and may be inferred to play a role in helping job seekers to emotionally cope with job loss and challenges (such as rejection) during the job search period. The role of faith may have particular relevance for jobs clubs in which faith and prayer may be used as part of job search skills training and motivational techniques to intensify job search efforts. The important role of faith and prayer in dealing with job loss and reconnecting to the job market is to varying degrees emphasized in the curriculum that guides job clubs (as illustrated earlier). For definitional and methodological reasons, identifying the “faith factor” has proven to be more problematic, and determining its effect on outcomes correspondingly difficult. Similar to faith-based organizations, it should be noted that “secular” job clubs operated by the public sector and community-based organizations rely on peer support, fellowship, and case management to provide participants with emotional/psychological support. It is possible that the fellowship and support that is part of job clubs (and in the case of faith-based job clubs, spiritual/faith content

¹³ The term faith-based arose during welfare reform in the 1990s.

infused in job clubs) may help to mitigate the potentially deleterious psychological consequences of long-term spells of unemployment. For example, Diette et al. (2012) have documented that long-term unemployment can be associated with psychological and emotional distress:

...The fundamental idea is that if involuntary joblessness leads to psychological distress, then persons moving from an employed to an unemployed state will exhibit a decline in mental health, and those switching over time from an unemployed to a working state will experience an improvement in psychological well-being. Numerous researchers report evidence consistent with this perspective. Their findings, although compelling, are not definitive evidence in favor of the hypothesis that unemployment causes deterioration in mental health. (Diette et.al, in Appelbaum, 2012).

Drawing on data from two large nationally-representative data sources – the National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R) and the National Latino and Asian American Study (NLAAS), Diette et al. (2012) estimate the impact of short- and long-term unemployment on a broad measure of emotional health. Diette et al. (2012) find that short- and long-term unemployment is associated with psychological distress among “vulnerable” individuals and that “buffers” can help to mitigate effects of unemployment for this group:

Among these persons, exposure to either short- or long-term unemployment over the past year leads to a significant increase in their reporting to have experienced poor emotional health in the past year relative to similar persons who worked throughout the past year. For instance, vulnerable individuals who were subject to long-term unemployment were 58 percent more likely (Model 3) to experience psychological distress compared to those vulnerable persons in the labor force who worked the entire past year. Consistent with our theory, we find that a number of buffers—being married, having adult children, having friends with whom you are in regular contact, and being part of a religious community—significantly reduce the odds of experiencing psychological distress over the past year, regardless of exposure to unemployment, for vulnerable persons (see Appendix Table 4A.4). However, emotional health does not appear to be directly related to such buffers for resilient persons. (Diette et al., 2012)

In some recent work, researchers have attempted to develop dimensions of religiosity, including formal and informal religious affiliation or financial support, religious presence in mission, and governing structures and administrative processes (Green and Sherman 2002; Kennedy and Bielefeld 2003; Monsma 2004; Kramer et al. 2005; Noyes 2008; Gais 2008). A

recent attempt to characterize the faith components in 20 substance abuse services delivered by Gospel Rescue Missions illustrates the complexities (De Jong and Horn 2008). Gais (2008) attempted to use random assignment to study the dimensions of program attributes, including faith, which might explain treatment outcomes of substance abusers in faith-infused and secular treatment programs. Randomization of study participants could not be completed, but reported findings illustrate the challenge of isolating the effects of religion on treatment outcomes, given the variation in the nature and intensity of religious elements and variation in client characteristics and subtle client/staff interactions (Gais and Arria 2010; Gais et al. 2010).

Noyes (2008) reviewed outcome studies of faith-based interventions and cites selection bias, lack of attention to intervening variables, challenges disentangling the effect of faith from other program characteristics, and imprecision around measuring the intensity of the treatment. In addition, reviewers have observed that faith-based and secular organizations have different perspectives on measures of success—religiously-based interventions tend to focus on personal transformation informed by religious teaching, while secular organizations focus on tangible outcomes such as job attainment or parenting skills (Noyes 2008 and Smith 2006).

Two major efforts considering a broad swath of research have attempted to assess the comparative effectiveness of faith-based and secular services. Boddie and Cnaan (2006) produced an edited volume that addressed methodological challenges in evaluating the effects of faith-infused services and the comparative effectiveness of social services delivered by faith-based and secular organizations. As in other research, specifying faith content, measuring the degree of faith integration in administration and service delivery, and specifying outcome measures across interventions were common challenges raised. In this volume, Grettenberger et al. cite small sample sizes, selection bias (a particular challenge when faith adherents may be

predisposed to choose faith-infused programs), attrition and lack of long-term tracking, and receipt of multiple treatments all make it difficult to decipher the effects of faith-infused services on outcomes. Boddie and Cnaan conclude from the multiple papers that the research does not permit a clear understanding of the comparative effectiveness of faith-based interventions. The editors cite the need for more research to classify religious and spiritual content, to tease out the effects of organizational characteristics on the content and effectiveness of services, to better specify outcome variables in order to refine the measurement of effectiveness, and to address internal and external validity problems arising from high attrition rates. It is clear from the literature that there have been formidable challenges both to planning and executing rigorous studies of FBO/CBO-based human services.

C. IMPLICATIONS OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW FOR EVALUATION OF FBO/CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS

This literature review – and the lack of empirical impact findings on FBO/CBO-affiliated job clubs – underscore the importance and need for additional rigorous evaluations to better understand the interventions offered by FBO/CBO job clubs and the results for participants of such job clubs in comparison to job clubs offered by public employment agencies. The evaluations of public sector job clubs indicate that it is possible to apply experimental methods (involving random assignment of job club participants) to assess the impacts of various job club interventions. As discussed earlier in this report, such experimental studies of job clubs have demonstrated significant positive impacts on earlier return to work and job placement rates – and it is likely that such impacts would translate to FBO/CBO-affiliated job clubs. However, the fact that there have not been experimental studies of FBO/CBO job clubs may be because there is a lack of resources available to sponsor such evaluations, lack of expertise in setting up and

implementing random assignment-type studies, or because FBO/CBO sponsoring such initiatives are unwilling or unable to subject their job clubs to more rigorous study. For example, there may be an unwillingness or inability for churches/congregations to randomly assign job seekers to treatment and control groups for ethical reasons (e.g., unwillingness to withhold much needed job search assistance to unemployed individuals). Further, such initiatives may not serve sufficient numbers of participants within a year or several-year period to generate minimal detectable effects under experimental research designs.

Based on the lack of systematic and empirical-based findings about FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs, it is important for this study (and subsequent evaluations) to: (1) provide a more detailed understanding of the differences/similarities between FBO/CBO- and public sector-based job clubs, (2) gain input from FBO/CBO job club operators about the types of data collected on participants and perspectives on whether their organizations would be willing and capable of participating in experimental/non-experimental studies, and (3) examine the potential challenges for mounting future rigorous, experimental evaluations to assess the net impacts of FBO/CBO job clubs. Though not exhaustive, some of the evaluation-related issues not addressed by the existing literature that need to be further explored (and which were the subject of discussions with key stakeholders and program staff during site visits conducted under this study) include the following:

- Are there existing quantifiable measures of the extent to which job club curriculum and instruction are infused with religiosity/spirituality or secular forms of fellowship?
- In developing alternative evaluation designs for the future study of FBO/CBO job clubs, what is the best strategy for classifying faith-based job clubs for evaluation purposes? For example, should all faith-based clubs be studied as a group, or are there natural groupings that would permit an evaluation to explore the efficacy of alternative types of faith-based job clubs?
- Why have there been few studies of FBO/CBO job clubs and, in particular, why have

experimental studies not been mounted to explore net impacts of FBO/CBO job clubs? Was it because it was not feasible to mount such rigorous studies or because the researchers have not been interested in impacts?

- Are there difficulties inherent in obtaining job club participant data and tracking participants over extended follow-up periods that are specific to FBO/CBO job clubs versus public sector operated job clubs (e.g., difficulty collecting intake/background data or establishing automated participant tracking systems, difficulties conducting follow-up surveys and obtaining satisfactory response rates, unavailability of earnings data similar to Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage record data and other programmatic/administrative data that can sometimes be secured for evaluations of public sector initiatives (e.g., for UI claimants, TANF participants, etc.)?
- The literature indicates that it is likely that people who enroll in faith-based job clubs are different from those who participate in secular job clubs: is it feasible and/or ethical to use random assignment to determine which type of job club participants are offered?
- If random assignment is not feasible, what are the most promising nonexperimental strategies for evaluating FBO/CBO-based job clubs, noting the problems of selection bias, measuring key variables, and other factors that can lead to biased evaluations?

The next two chapters of this report provide some exploratory findings with respect to FBO/CBO views on evaluation and data collection necessary to support more rigorous evaluation, as well as assesses the potential for implementing more rigorous experimental study of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs.

CHAPTER 3: KEY FINDING FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

This chapter provides a synthesis of key findings from an “environmental scan” that included: (1) interviews with seven stakeholders knowledgeable about job clubs; and (2) site visits conducted in six localities, focusing on job clubs operated by FBOs/CBOs. This chapter first highlights results of the stakeholder interviews and then provides a more detailed and expansive synthesis of the key findings from the site visits. The final section of this chapter offers some final thoughts and conclusions based on the key findings from the stakeholder interviews and site visits, especially with regard to more rigorous study of the impacts on job seekers of participation in FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs.

A. KEY FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

As part of the environmental scan, the research team conducted telephone interviews with seven stakeholders knowledgeable about the operation of job clubs, including those sponsored by FBOs/CBOs. Using a semi-structured discussion guide (see Appendix A for a copy of this guide), the evaluation team completed interviews with stakeholders lasting 60 to 90 minutes. These interviews provided an opportunity to question each stakeholder on a range of topics related to job clubs operated by FBO/CBOs, including types of individuals targeted and served by these job clubs (and whether there has been an increase/decrease in the numbers/types of individuals served and in the number of FBOs/CBOs sponsoring job clubs); differences in format/characteristics/strategies of FBO/CBO versus public sector (American Job Centers) operated job clubs; and the extent to which FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs have been evaluated in the past and the prospects for evaluating such job clubs in the future. The stakeholders interviewed were: (1) Lisa Rice, Brevard (Florida) Workforce; (2) Brad Turner-Little, Goodwill

Industries International; (3) Elizabeth Wilson, Church of God in Christ (COGIC); (4) Joy Maguire-Dooley, Lisle Township (Illinois), an operator of job clubs for over 20 years; (5) Peter Weddle of Weddles.com and the International Association of Employment Web Sites; (6) Stephen Monsma, Research Fellow, Paul B. Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics, Calvin College (formerly of Pepperdine University); and (7) Jennifer Noyes, Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin–Madison. Stakeholders were identified through the literature review conducted as part of this study and based on input from DOL. Key findings from these stakeholder interviews are briefly highlighted below.

Stakeholders See General Increase in Number of Job Clubs Operated by FBOs/CBOs and Other Organizations in Recent Years. Several stakeholders indicated that they believe there has been growth in the number of job clubs in operation across the country, especially in response to the massive dislocations occurring as a result of the deep recession of 2007/08 and the continuing elevated levels of unemployment and underemployment that have persisted during the recovery. According to some stakeholders, increases in the number of job clubs and individuals attending job clubs have occurred for public sector-sponsored job clubs, as well as among those sponsored by faith-based and community-based organizations. For example, one stakeholder observed the following: *“Yes, there is an increase in the number of people participating as well as the number of Job Clubs...The faith-based community has done a great job with this, providing a space in their congregations as well as in the community at large for people who have lost jobs or [their] jobs have gone away. They’ve provided a good safe place for people to go – so you’ve seen growth. When the economy recovers, it may be that this type of service [job clubs] offered by CBOs and FBOs, and the need for it, may go away.”*

Despite a Perceived Increase in the Number of Job Clubs (and the Number of Attendees), There Is a Lack of Systematic Data Available to Document This Change.

Several stakeholders noted there is a lack of systematic data available to document just how much of a change has occurred in recent years in both the number of job clubs run by FBOs/CBOs and the number of attendees at FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. A number of stakeholders reported that they were unaware of any reliable registry or count of the number of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs held on a weekly/monthly basis, or the attendance at such job clubs. Overall, job clubs run by FBOs/CBOs are constantly in flux, with new job clubs coming into existence each month and others disbanding for a variety of reasons (e.g., lack of attendees, loss of volunteer facilitators, and changing priorities of congregations). Further, while many job clubs keep lists of attendees and contact information for each job club held, according to several stakeholders interviewed, it is very unusual for FBOs/CBOs to maintain participant-level automated data systems (similar to public sector organizations, such as American Job Centers, or what is maintained by some well-established CBOs, such as Goodwill). Consequently, there is no reliable way to systematically document the number or types of job seekers attending such job clubs during a given year or over time.

The Apparent Increase in the Number of FBO/CBO-Sponsored Job Clubs Is Due to Several Factors, Including the Deep Recession and Interest of FBOs/CBOs in Addressing Critical Needs of Community Members. According to several stakeholders, the steep downturn of the U.S. economy in 2007-08 and surging numbers of unemployed and underemployed workers created strong demand for job search assistance, providing an impetus for FBOs/CBOs to form job clubs to meet urgent needs within their communities. Stakeholders cited several other contributing factors for the apparent expansion of FBO/CBO-sponsored job

clubs, including the desire of churches/congregations to help unemployed individuals within their own congregations as well as the surrounding communities and the relatively low costs for establishing and maintaining job clubs (i.e., with volunteers and a donated church meeting room, initial start-up costs of a job club are quite low for a congregation). Further, the formation of a job club conforms well to the mission of many FBOs/CBOs to serve their communities and, particularly in the case of churches, may provide meaningful, ongoing volunteer service opportunities for members of the congregation.

FBO/CBO Job Clubs Tend to Draw Job Seekers Reflective of the Area Served and Sometimes Attract a Somewhat Different Group of Job Seekers Compared to Public Sector Sponsored Job Clubs. One stakeholder observed that FBO/CBO job clubs may offer an attractive alternative to similar clubs operated by the public sector: *“Job Clubs sponsored by FBOs/CBOs provide a sense of community and connectedness; it is safe place. That’s been an important tactic that their job clubs are based on – it appeals to this population. These are people who had been in the middle class and are teetering on moving down; they are the long-term unemployed, including white-collar professionals. The job club strategy is not threatening; it is welcoming. It doesn’t have the look and feel of the traditional public workforce system with a case management component.”* Job clubs offered by FBOs/CBOs may be held in locations (e.g., at a nearby church meeting room) and at times (e.g., in the evening) that are more convenient than those operated by the public sector. The lack of paperwork burden may also appeal to some job seekers (versus intake forms and other documentation that might be required by public sector agencies operating job clubs).

There is Significant Diversity in the Structure and Content of FBO/CBO-Sponsored Job Clubs, with Varying Degrees of Emphasis on Spirituality/Religious Content.

Stakeholders maintained there is substantial diversity across FBOs and CBOs in the format, content, and operation of job clubs. Several stakeholders noted that while some faith-based organizations might begin and end their job clubs with a prayer, the job club session itself might have little or no faith-based/religious content. Even those FBO-sponsored job clubs infused with religious/spiritual references tend to focus the bulk of their 60- to 90-minute job club meetings on many of the same principles and instructional techniques as those covered in secular job clubs operated by CBOs and public sector organizations – e.g., the importance of networking, developing/practicing “elevator speeches,” basics of developing an effective resume, job interviewing techniques, and effective job search approaches. According to some stakeholders, one important difference in job clubs operated by FBOs/CBOs is that they may provide more opportunity than those operated by public-sector organizations for peer group discussions, including discussion of the emotional stress involved in job loss and the frustrations accompanying job search, as well as the role that faith and prayer (particularly in FBOs) can play in helping job seekers cope with stress and feelings of despair and hopelessness. Several of the stakeholders highlighted what they perceived as potential differences in the format and content of job clubs, while emphasizing that there is a lot of variability across FBOs/CBOs. Some of the stakeholder observations about possible structural/operational differences between job clubs sponsored by FBOs/CBOs and public sector organizations are highlighted below:

- **Size/numbers attending job club sessions/operation of sessions.** One stakeholder observed that FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs can be quite small in terms of attendance compared with those held at American Job Centers. For example, one or two FBO/CBO volunteers may operate a job club, which serves no more than 10 participants each week. Another stakeholder reported that attendance at the job clubs operated by the FBOs/CBOs in her area averages from 10-15 participants, with no more than 30 attendees in the largest. Attendance at the job club at the local public workforce agency ranges from 10 to 30. Another stakeholder noted that a FBO job club may operate on a shoestring budget out of a church basement; in comparison, public sector-sponsored job

clubs tend to be held in larger government-operated facilities and run by larger/more professional paid staff (capable of serving larger numbers of job seekers).

- **Curriculum used and topics covered during job clubs.** According to several stakeholders interviewed, facilitators for FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs may or may not be guided by a curriculum, although they will typically follow a basic structure and format during each meeting. Several stakeholders noted that compared to the public sector, faith-based job clubs often place more emphasis on personal encouragement, raising self-esteem, providing time for peer group discussions related to job search challenges, and generally responding to emotional needs of participants. One stakeholder noted that some, but not all, FBOs infuse religion and spiritual content as a support for job club attendees – for example, emphasizing: *“God loves you and has a plan for you – and we are here to help you discover that plan.”* Another stakeholder noted the important focus FBOs often place on motivation and positive re-enforcement for job club attendees (in comparison to public sector organizations): *“More emphasis is placed on the positive, helping people stay motivated, encouraging them through positive affirmations. FBOs are more likely to provide touchy support as opposed to dealing only with the facts and figures of resumes. That is the juice that keeps people coming back to FBO job clubs. It feels good. The door is open, welcoming. Individuals don’t have to stand in line or take a number to get services...It is totally different in FBOs – they are open, welcoming, they provide food, are encouraging, they look beyond fault lines and help in a much more positive manner. They are more engaging, faith-friendly and much less regimented about providing services. Document requirements are important for public sector workforce organizations – less stringent with FBOs. There is no turn away because you don’t have the paper requirements. These are the things that make being unemployed unpleasant – you are already unemployed and then you have to feel bad about it. FBOs do a better job at acknowledging the pain people are in.”*
- **Kinds of instructional methods used during job clubs.** FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs typically emphasize peer group and small group discussions, often in direct response to the immediate challenges that attendees are experiencing as they search for a job. Often such sessions offer ample time for participants to share experiences and pose questions – and often attendees will have the opportunity to address questions and share feedback with others attending the job club. For example, one stakeholder observed: *“FBOs are more interactive – they are sharing a lot more, the hurt and grief over the loss of the job. The FBO is trying to move them through all of that with a more holistic approach.”* Another stakeholder added: *“FBO job clubs are more likely to be in small groups – more feedback, open dialogue, more sharing as opposed to lecture style in the public workforce development system...[There is] more interaction in FBOs where there is not as much restriction to get through a discussion within a quick framework. Web-based instruction is more likely in the public sector – they have more access to that. FBOs do not have as many resources.”*
- **Types of instructors/facilitators used.** Several stakeholders noted faith-based organizations are more likely to rely on volunteers to lead their job clubs, whereas public sector organizations and larger CBOs typically rely upon paid professional staff. They

felt that facilitators leading job clubs at FBOs may have little formal training or past experience in providing workforce services (e.g., and may even come to their facilitation roles from being a former participant of the job club): *“Sometimes job club facilitators have struggled with joblessness themselves and may draw on their personal experiences...job club participants may be linked up with a volunteer from the church...Often there are discussions in FBO job clubs to talk through issues faced by participants.”* A second stakeholder noted: *“...FBOs are volunteer-based. CBOs also have volunteers to help out as well, but CBOs have people who are trained in workforce development strategies. Local congregations have a minister or lay person who is responsible for job clubs but they are volunteer-based.”* Other stakeholders noted that FBOs often identify and recruit speakers to make presentations on their area of expertise (e.g., a corporate hiring manager) for periodic job club sessions.

- **Job development/placement assistance provided.** According to one stakeholder, public sector-operated job clubs tend to make more systematic efforts in terms of identifying job openings in their localities and providing job leads, including making available automated job bank databases. In comparison, FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs are likely to provide more informal job placement assistance: *“...[FBO-operated] job clubs may provide some job leads; support is important in FBO job club – participants may get a hug and told maybe tomorrow will be better even if they do not find a job.”* One stakeholder noted that FBOs typically have fewer links with employers and less comprehensive listings of job vacancies in their locality: *“FBOs don’t have as many connections with employers who are hiring. They refer back to the public workforce system. Some FBOs scan the Internet for [job] openings. But if the job club is only meeting monthly or quarterly, they might not be as accurate, up-to-date [as listings available through the public workforce system] – so there is not as much referral to employers.”* However, stakeholders reported that as part of job club discussions at FBOs/CBOs as well as in the public sector, job seekers are often encouraged to share job openings that they identify in the course of their searches that might be appropriate for other attendees.
- **Availability of training, support services and case management.** According to several stakeholders, compared to what is available via the public workforce system and larger CBOs, there are typically fewer resources available in faith-based organizations to provide ongoing case management, training, childcare, transportation, housing, and other assistance/support services needed by job seekers. When training is needed, FBOs are likely to refer participants to an American Job Center, community college, or other education/training provider for help (and rarely have resources available to support short- or longer-term training). Sometimes churches and congregations will have clothing closets on-site or will stock emergency food supplies that can be made available for job club participants; they may also be able to offer participants bus passes or gas reimbursement on a limited basis. However, for longer-term and more sustained types of assistance to overcome barriers to finding or retaining a job (such as housing, childcare, education, training, and health care assistance), churches and congregations typically refer job club participants to more deeply-funded partners within the public sector or to larger and better funded CBOs within their communities.

- Nature of religious and spiritual content in FBO job clubs.** Stakeholders observed that the extent to which FBOs infuse religious or spiritual content in their job clubs varies substantially and provided several examples of the ways in which faith-based organizations included such content. One stakeholder observed: *“Some FBOs offer a bible study class, but typically as a separate activity from the job club – bible study class may precede the job club and job club members may want to attend prior to the job club. FBOs may stress during job clubs that ‘God has a plan for your life; He loves you; you may have made a mistake in the past, but He forgives you; informal references may be made to a loving God...FBO job clubs tend to be aimed at building confidence and self-esteem and sense of self-worth and may use religious references to achieve this.”* A second stakeholder commented on the differences in content of job clubs run by CBOs versus some FBOs: *“One of the critical differences between CBOs and FBOs is that FBOs [sometimes] ground the job club experience from the ‘place of call’ – you are on this Earth for a reason and that reason is connected to a divine purpose or objective. You have that element of spirituality that gets woven into FBO job clubs. We don’t do that at [our CBO]. We try to help people to understand what their interests are but the language of call is a filter that the FBO community applies to the job club strategy – ‘God loves you, He is part of this process.’ The public workforce system does not talk about that and most CBOs don’t get into that component. Our organization looks at the sense of self-discovery/re-discovery and purpose but that lens of spirituality/religious-connectivity is not there.”*

Stakeholders Indicate There Is a Paucity of Past Evaluations of FBO/CBO Job

Clubs and Are Not Optimistic About the Feasibility of Implementing Experimental or Quasi-Experimental Evaluation Designs to Explore Impacts of FBO/CBO Job Clubs. None of the stakeholders interviewed were able to identify past or ongoing evaluations of FBO/CBO job clubs, including non-experimental or experimental studies. Several of the stakeholders indicated that FBOs and smaller CBOs generally collect very little participant-level data, usually limited to the job club attendee’s name, date(s) of job club attendance, contact information (usually a telephone and email contact), and, in some cases, occupation/type of job the individual is seeking. Virtually no outcome data are collected, although some FBOs/CBOs maintain anecdotal information about job club attendees who find jobs (in part, to be able to share “success stories” with other job club attendees). FBOs and smaller CBOs do not typically maintain, and appear not likely to be interested in maintaining, a participant-level data system,

though some do maintain rudimentary registries of attendees (for example, a listing of attendees in an Excel spreadsheet). One stakeholder reported that she keeps a handwritten log of all job club attendees and the number who have found jobs after participating in her job club.

According to several of the stakeholders interviewed, one of the most attractive aspects of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs for attendees (and the FBOs/CBOs sponsoring such clubs) is the lack of paperwork/bureaucracy associated with such programs. Further, many of the FBOs operate their programs with only volunteer staff and on a shoestring budget and, consequently, lack computer equipment and/or the technical knowledge or staffing to set-up and manage an automated participant-level data system. Further, few (if any), FBO-sponsored job clubs collect identifying information (such as Social Security number) that could be used to match to administrative data maintained by the government (such as the Unemployment Insurance wage record data). It should, however, be noted that one stakeholder interviewed (from a large, nationwide CBO) indicated that his organization maintained a fairly sophisticated participant-level data system, which included participant characteristics, services received, and some tracking of participant outcomes over a limited period (in part, in response to requests for such data from major funders). Overall, none of the stakeholders were optimistic about the prospects for faith-based organizations (and most CBOs, except for the largest and most well-funded) to collect additional and systematic participant characteristics data at the time of job seeker entry into job clubs, nor to be able to collect employment outcomes over time in a systematic manner for job club attendees. Additionally, when asked, none of the stakeholders felt it would be feasible to apply a random assignment-type experimental design to explore FBO/CBO-sponsored job club impacts (in part, because of concerns over denial of services to control group members and data collection burden/complexity associated with random assignment-type studies). None

of the stakeholders had suggestions for how to apply either experimental or a range of non-experimental methods to evaluate FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs in the future.

B. KEY FINDINGS FROM SITE VISITS TO JOB CLUBS IN SIX LOCAL AREAS

The second component of the environmental scan focused on site visits conducted in Fall 2013 to six localities across the country where job clubs are operated by FBOs and CBOs. Two-person research teams spent two to three days in each selected local area, observing at least one (and, in some sites, two) job club(s) sponsored by an FBO, one job club operated by a CBO (in most sites) and, if possible, one job club operated by a local public workforce agency. In addition to the observations, team members also met with job club facilitators/leaders either before or after the job club session and, using a semi-structured discussion guide, conducted a 1.5 to 2 hour interview that covered various topics and issues related to the job club's organizational structure, program objectives, services and activities provided, and data collection efforts (see Appendices B and C for copies of site visit discussion guides). If the local public workforce agency/AJC did not sponsor a job club at the time of the visit, team members still met with agency staff and completed an interview to learn about any experiences operating job clubs in the past, reasons for not offering a job club currently, and any linkages with FBOs/CBOs sponsoring job clubs.¹⁴ This section summarizes key findings from the observations and interviews conducted during these site visits.

¹⁴ If the public sector organization ran a job club (which occurred in four of the six localities visited), then the site visit team interviewed administrators/staff about the job club and observed the job club (similar to the visits conducted with the FBO/CBO job clubs that were the main focus of the study).

1. Overview of Job Clubs Visited

In selecting the locations for the six site visits, the research team relied on a number of resources, including recommendations from the key stakeholders who participated in the telephone interviews conducted earlier, a review of the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (CFBNP) website's state-by-state directory of job clubs, and input from DOL's CFBNP staff. Criteria considered for site selection included: geographic diversity (e.g., region of the country, urban/ suburban/rural service area); targeted populations for the job clubs; extent of religious influence in the job clubs (i.e., use of strongly faith-based curriculum vs. more secular instructional material); length of time job clubs have been in operation (i.e., newly-formed vs. more established); size of job clubs (i.e., under 20 versus over 100 attendees per job club); job clubs' use of innovative strategies for serving job seekers; and presence of job clubs operated by and/or linked with the public workforce agencies. A purposive site selection process was used to select the following six localities for visits:

- Northern New Jersey
- Cleveland/Akron, OH
- Atlanta, GA
- Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
- Washington, DC Metro (MD/VA)
- San Francisco/Bay Area (CA)

Within these six areas selected for site visits, the research team identified 21 local organizations (ten FBOs, four CBOs, and seven local public workforce agencies/WIBs) for site visits. As shown in Table 3-1, the team ultimately observed regularly-scheduled job clubs and conducted in-depth interviews with staff in 16 of these organizations – eight FBOs, four CBOs, and four public workforce agencies – selected to represent the range of characteristics, formats, and activities of job clubs currently operated by FBOs, CBOs, and public workforce agencies.

TABLE 3-1: OVERVIEW OF JOB CLUB SITES VISITED

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Site Visit Location
FBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS		
JobSeekers	Trinity Church of Princeton, NJ	Northern New Jersey
Job Partnership of Cleveland (JPC)	Mt. Zion Congregational Church	Cleveland/Akron, OH
Crossroads Career Network	Snellville United Methodist Church	Atlanta, GA
Roswell United Methodist Church (RUMC) Job Networking	Roswell United Methodist Church	Atlanta, GA
SOAR 4 Jobs	St. Odilia Catholic Community	Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
Career Network Ministry (CNM)	McLean Bible Church	Washington, DC Metro (MD/VA)
Severna Park United Methodist Church Employment Network Group	Severna Park United Methodist Church	Washington, DC Metro (MD/VA)
Christ the King (CTK) Parish Job Networking Ministry	Christ The King Parish in Pleasant Hill, CA	San Francisco/Bay Area (CA)
CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS		
Neighbors-helping-Neighbors (NhN)	Neighbors-helping-Neighbors USA, Inc.	Northern New Jersey
Community Job Club of Stow	Community Job Club, Inc.	Cleveland/Akron, OH
Career Transition Group for Women	None – the job club is organized and operated by one volunteer	Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
The Job Forum	San Francisco Chamber of Commerce	San Francisco/Bay Area (CA)
PUBLIC SECTOR-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS		
Jersey Job Club	New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development	Northern New Jersey
Veterans Networking Group	Hennepin South Workforce Center	Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
Arnold Station Job Club	Arnold Career Center/Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation	Washington, DC Metro (MD/VA)
ProMatch (a Chapter of Experience Unlimited)	NOVA WIB and California Employment Development Department (EDD)	San Francisco/Bay Area (CA)

The other five organizations, including three public workforce agencies and two FBOs, offer employment/job search services in the selected localities, but were not operating job clubs (or the team was unable to observe the job club) at the time of the site visits. Team members conducted interviews with administrators and staff in these organizations to obtain additional background information about local job club activities and program linkages. These five organizations were: Atlanta Regional Workforce Board; DeKalb Career Center/Georgia Department of Labor (Atlanta, GA); Employment Connections (Cleveland/Akron, OH); Employment Network Ministry at the New Birth Missionary Baptist Church (Atlanta, GA); and Jewish Vocational Service (San Francisco/Bay Area).¹⁵ While information from the interviews with staff in these organizations is incorporated where appropriate, the focus of the analysis summarized in this section of the report (and detailed in the accompanying tables) is on the job clubs observed during the visits.

The following section provides an overview of selected background characteristics of the job clubs visited as part of this study.

Location of Job Clubs and Service Areas. The majority of the job clubs observed were held in facilities located in suburban areas, particularly the FBO-sponsored job clubs that convene sessions in meeting rooms in neighborhood churches. However, a few held their sessions in urban locations – including the Job Forum, which is supported by the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and meets in their offices in downtown San Francisco, and the Job Partnership of Cleveland’s (JPC) Mt. Zion Congregational Church job club site, meeting on the

¹⁵ Tables presented in this section of the report provide data for the 16 sites where job clubs were observed during the site visits. Data on the other five organizations where no job clubs were observed is not included.

east side of the City of Cleveland.¹⁶ In general, the job club administrators and facilitators viewed their service area as the geographic area from which the bulk of their job club attendees resided or worked, which was typically within a 25- to 30-mile radius of the job club's facility. As discussed in the next section of this report, job club participants typically reflected the demographic characteristics of the geographic areas from which they were drawn, and, for the most part, faced the labor market conditions of the local area served. For example, most of the participants in the Job Partnership of Cleveland's job club at the Mt. Zion Congregational Church were African Americans from the surrounding neighborhoods. However, some facilitators, including those with Christ the King Parish Networking Ministry in California and with Roswell United Methodist Church Job Networking near Atlanta, noted that a number of participants travelled great distances to attend meetings. Facilitators at the Career Network Ministry of the McLean Bible Church in Northern Virginia reported that some attendees regularly commuted for up to an hour to attend their weekly job club sessions.

Local Economic Conditions in Job Club Sites. The economic situation varied across the local areas at the time of the site visits, with the unemployment rate ranging from a low of a little over 4 percent in the areas served by the Career Network Ministry (Washington, DC Metro (MD/VA)) and the SOAR 4 Jobs program (Minneapolis/St. Paul) to a high of over 10 percent for the Neighbors-helping-Neighbors job club's service area in Essex County, NJ (see Table 3-2). The majority of the facilitators felt that local labor market conditions have improved since the 2007-08 economic downturn, resulting in increases in the number of available job openings and reflected by drops in overall attendance at job club sessions from the highs they experienced during and shortly after the recession. However, several facilitators reported that despite the

¹⁶ The Mt. Zion Congregational Church was the focus of the site visit; but the sponsoring organization – Job Partnership of Cleveland – also helped to administer and provide technical assistance to two other job club sites in the Cleveland area.

TABLE 3-2: OVERVIEW OF JOB CLUB SITES VISITED

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Geographic Area Served	Unemployment Rate for Area Served¹⁷	Year Club Founded
FBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS				
JobSeekers	Trinity Church of Princeton, NJ	Princeton, NJ (within 20-25 miles radius of Princeton)	7.2% (Mercer County)	1982
Job Partnership of Cleveland (JPC)	Mt. Zion Congregational Church	Cleveland, Ohio (principally east side area of Cleveland)	7.0% (Cleveland MSA)	2006
Crossroads Career Network	Snellville United Methodist Church	Snellville, GA (Gwinnett County/northeastern Atlanta suburbs)	7.1%	2002
Job Networking	Roswell United Methodist Church	Roswell, Georgia (northern Atlanta suburbs)	6.2%	1997
SOAR 4 Jobs	St. Odilia Catholic Community	Minneapolis, MN (primarily northeast suburbs/Shoreview area)	4.1%	2002
Career Network Ministry (CNM)	McLean Bible Church	McLean, VA (majority of the attendees are from Northern Virginia)	4.1%	1993 ¹⁸
Employment Network Group	Severna Park United Methodist Church	Anne Arundel County, MD (within 10-15 mile radius of Severna Park)	6.2%	2009
CTK Parish Job Networking Ministry	Christ The King (CTK) Parish in Pleasant Hill, CA	East Bay/Contra Costa county area east of San Francisco,	7.3%	2009
CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS				
Neighbors-helping-Neighbors	Neighbors-helping-Neighbors USA, Inc.	26 locations in 8 NJ Counties (note: Cranford, NJ library location visited)	10.1% (Essex Co, NJ)	2011
Community Job Club of Stow	Community Job Club, Inc.	Stow, Ohio (principally suburban areas south of Cleveland and north of Akron, including Stow, Kent, Ravenna)	6.7% (Akron MSA)	2010
Career Transition Group for Women	None – the job club is organized and operated by one volunteer	St. Paul, MN	5.3%	2012 ¹⁹

¹⁷ Unemployment rate is for service area of job club at the time of the site visit.

¹⁸ CNM – The job club was estimated by CNM administrators to have been formed about 20 years ago (at the time of the visit in 2013).

¹⁹ Career Transition Group for Women – Job club in its current form started in 2012, but this job club started at the initiating organization in 2003.

TABLE 3-2: OVERVIEW OF JOB CLUB SITES VISITED

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Geographic Area Served	Unemployment Rate for Area Served¹⁷	Year Club Founded
The Job Forum	SF Chamber of Commerce	San Francisco and the surrounding Bay area	5.6%	1951
PUBLIC SECTOR-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS				
Jersey Job Club	New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development	23 job clubs offered at American Job Centers across NJ (note: Essex County One-Stop Career Center visited, East Orange, NJ)	10.1% (Essex Co, NJ)	2012
Veterans Networking Group	Hennepin South Workforce Center	Bloomington, MN/southern Hennepin County	4.8%	2003
Arnold Station Job Club	Arnold Career Center/Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation	Middle Anne Arundel County (Annapolis, Severna Park, Arnold, MD)	6.2%	2010
ProMatch	NOVA WIB and California Employment Development Department (EDD)	NOVA WIB serves a consortium of seven cities (e.g., Palo Alto, Sunnyvale, Cupertino) in the Northern Silicon Valley.	5.8%	1993

improvements in the economy and the slowly decreasing unemployment rates, there were still many job seekers in need of the services that the job clubs provide. Facilitators also pointed to job seekers who find a job through the job club, are later laid off from that job or leave it looking for a better opportunity, and then return to the job club for help with a new job search. Although the sustainability of the current number of job clubs is unknown if unemployment rates fall further and attendance continues to drop (and if, as a result, the majority of the remaining attendees are the long-term unemployed with their accompanying challenges), the job clubs observed in areas with lower unemployment rates were still thriving at the time of the site visits. Several facilitators indicated that they would continue to operate their job clubs as long as one person showed up for the session looking for help.

Length of Time Job Clubs Have Been in Existence. Of the 16 job clubs visited, five have been in existence for over 15 years - Job Seekers at the Trinity Church of Princeton, Roswell United Methodist Church Job Networking, Career Networking Ministry/McLean Bible Church, ProMatch/Experience Unlimited, and the Job Forum of San Francisco. The oldest, the Job Forum in San Francisco, has been continually operating and holding weekly sessions since 1952. JobSeekers at the Trinity Church in Princeton has been in continual operation for slightly over 30 years, having been organized to address the fallout from the severe economic recession that took place in 1982. However, the majority of the job clubs visited were formed more recently, coinciding with downturns in the economy that resulted in increased numbers of unemployed job seekers. About half of the newer job clubs were formed in the early 2000s, around the time of the 2002-2003 recession and the remainder were started in the late 2000s after the severe economic downturn in 2007-08.

Motivations for Formation of Job Clubs. The majority of the FBO- and CBO-sponsored job clubs observed were launched around the time of and in response to economic downturns and the resulting increase in the number of job seekers looking for guidance and support in finding employment in the surrounding localities. Facilitators cited a number of additional motivations for creation of FBO- and CBO-sponsored job clubs that went beyond the desire to fill an unmet need for new sources of job search assistance for the newly-unemployed. For example, some reported that they wanted to offer a more supportive alternative to the services available through the local public workforce agency. Several identified the need for job search services focused on networking, provided in a “support group format” and aimed at middle-class job seekers who might not seek help through the traditional workforce agency office. Facilitators in some FBO-sponsored job clubs reported that they developed job networking ministries to help others in their congregations and communities, often linking their efforts to the teachings of the church. As one facilitator described her team’s motivation for operating the job club, “[we] hear the gospel and try to make a difference.” Others started job clubs to fill service gaps in their communities; one facilitator with an FBO-sponsored job club reported that several members of his church formed a job club upon learning that a fellow parishioner was traveling 30 miles to attend weekly job clubs meetings at another church.

2. Numbers and Types of Job Seekers Served by Job Clubs

The literature and several of the stakeholders interviewed for this study suggested that FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs may attract and serve job seekers who would not otherwise seek job search assistance through public sector workforce agencies and, in some instance, may target or serve somewhat different types of job seekers (e.g., placing more emphasis on serving older workers, technical/managerial workers, congregation members, and those in the immediate

surrounding neighborhood of the church or CBO). This section of the report explores patterns of attendance at job clubs visited under this study, including (1) eligibility and targeting criteria used by job clubs, (2) recruitment and referral methods used by job clubs, and (3) numbers and types of job seekers actually attending job clubs.

Most of the 16 organizations visited for this study had no eligibility criteria for attendance at their job club sessions, with an overall aim of serving any and all unemployed job seekers within their service area or community. Job clubs also sought to serve new entrants to the labor market (such as recent college graduates) and employed individuals looking to change careers, increase earnings, or move from part- to full-time work (though typically, these groups made up a very small share of job seekers attending job clubs). Most often, FBOs/CBOs simply indicated in their brochures and outreach efforts that “all job seekers are welcome.”²⁰ In the case of FBOs, none of the job clubs limited attendance to church members – and in fact, across the eight FBOs visited, church members represented either no current job club members or only a limited number. Several FBOs indicated that when they started their job clubs they had a higher concentration of church members among the attendees, but that over time congregation members came to represent a smaller (and in some case, none) portion of their total job club attendees. FBOs and CBOs indicated that the vast majority of job club attendees worked or lived within a 20- to 25-mile radius (i.e., a 30- to 45-minute drive) of the facility at which the job club was being held and that outreach and recruitment efforts typically targeted job seekers within that geographic area.

Among the four job clubs operated by public sector organizations, two of the four were open to all job seekers and career changers similar to most of the FBOs/CBOs visited; however, ²⁰ ~~With the exception of one CBO - the Career Transition Group for Women, which to date had served only female job seekers and primarily targeted outreach on serving female job seekers – the FBO/CBO job clubs visited indicated that all types of job seekers attended their sessions.~~

two other public sector-sponsored job clubs were more narrowly focused on specific subpopulations of the unemployed: (1) Hennepin South Workforce Center's Veterans Networking Group was restricted to unemployed and underemployed veterans; and (2) the NOVA WIB/California Employment Development's ProMatch job club required that job seekers interested in attending the job club be eligible and enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program, as well as registered with the CONNECT Job Seeker Center.

The FBO and CBO job clubs visited used similar outreach and recruitment methods as those often used by public sector workforce agencies – dissemination of flyers/brochures about the job club in the community, presentations by job club administrators/facilitators at other public and nonprofit agencies within the community to make staff and job seekers aware of the job club's existence and structure; and increasing use of the FBO/CBO's website and a variety of social media tools (including LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and Meetup Groups). Once established within a community, FBO/CBO job club administrators/facilitators indicated that word-of-mouth became an increasingly important (and low-cost) approach to getting the word out about the job club, with existing and former job club members informing job-seeking family members, relatives, and friends about the job club. With many FBOs/CBOs operating their job clubs on tight budgets (usually with little or no resources available for paid advertisements or to fund marketing/outreach staff), there was extensive reliance upon inexpensive methods of outreach, such as is illustrated by one of the CBO sites visited:

- ***Neighbors-helping-Neighbors (CBO-Northern New Jersey).*** According to the founder/President, NhN uses a variety of outreach and recruitment approaches, with an emphasis on using social media to the fullest extent possible: “We use patch.com, Facebook, and LinkedIn to drive awareness of our group. We ask members to spread the word; we attend community events and make connections with local businesses, Rotary Clubs, chambers (of commerce), Lions Clubs, and Knights of Columbus. We have flyers that we ask all our libraries to post, which include links to our web site. As we are zero-funded and work to be green, we use our website as a focal point of

all information. Zero funds forces us to use all forms of free social media. We have been very successful in getting local media coverage around events and other activities. We work with our one-stops, but the support varies from county to county. Word-of-mouth is our single most important advertising -- we keep all the 'success stories' and they are powerful to read and we have them on our website."

In addition to conducting their own outreach, the FBO/CBO job clubs that were visited relied to varying degrees on referrals from other community organizations and public sector agencies.

Several of the FBOs indicated that unemployment within their surrounding community, which, in some instances affected church members, had been an important factor spurring establishment of their job clubs. Hence, some early referrals of church members to FBO-sponsored job clubs came from the pastor or other congregation members, but over a relatively short period of time (once unemployed congregation members had been served) numbers of church members waned and nearly all attendees came from elsewhere in the community. However, churches/congregations sponsoring job clubs continued to make announcements of the job club meetings during church services and posted the schedule and information about upcoming job clubs meetings in weekly church bulletins, newsletters, websites, and on bulletin boards. Therefore, while directly serving relatively few church members, congregations often played an important role in getting the word out about the job club within the community.

Overall, the majority of FBOs and CBOs visited as part of this study, while aware of workforce and training services provided through the American Job Centers (AJCs) in their locality, did not identify AJCs as an important source of referrals. However, most of the FBOs/CBOs visited made staff at AJCs aware of the schedule for job club meetings and requested that AJC staff refer unemployed individuals in need of job club services to meetings. AJCs also sometimes helped to get out the word about upcoming FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs (and other events associated with these job clubs, such as job fairs) by posting information on

their websites or making flyers available in their offices about the job club and informing participants, where appropriate, that such job clubs were a valuable supplemental service available within the community. Several CBOs and FBOs characterized their linkages with local AJCs as “strong” in terms of receiving help from AJCs in getting the word out about upcoming job club meetings. Perhaps more important than helping with outreach and providing referrals, AJCs were available to provide supplemental employment services, and in some instances (if referred job seekers met eligibility requirements and funding was available), training services through programs such as the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). In one case, an Atlanta AJC worked with the Employment Network Ministry of the New Birth Missionary Baptist Church to conduct job fairs in the large church facility.

Table 3-3 highlights the number and types of participants attending job club sessions at the 16 job clubs visited. The job clubs generally attracted job seekers from within a 30- to 45-minute drive of the facility in which the job club was being held – and as such, subpopulations served were broadly reflective of the community served. For example, the job club operated by Job Partnership of Cleveland (JPC) at its Mount Zion Congregational Church site drew mostly active job seekers from the near east side of Cleveland, serving an almost entirely African-American population from the surrounding community. This program, however, attracted job seekers with a variety of characteristics, from those with less than high school degrees to those with postgraduate degrees, laborers and service workers as well as professional and technical workers, and substantial numbers of veterans, as well as ex-offenders re-entering the labor

TABLE 3-3: NUMBERS AND TYPES OF JOB SEEKERS ATTENDING JOB CLUBS

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Avg. # of Attendees per Meeting	Types of Job Seekers Typically Attending Job Club
FBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS			
JobSeekers	Trinity Church of Princeton, NJ	10-15	Most commonly, participants are middle to upper-middle aged job seekers; significant portion are long-term unemployed older workers
Job Partnership of Cleveland (JPC)	Mt. Zion Congregational Church	20-25	Nearly all participants are African-American from surrounding community, includes about 30% formerly incarcerated and some veterans
Crossroads Career Network	Snellville United Methodist Church	25-40	Most attendees are white and middle-class; about 1/3 are underemployed and/or trying to move out of a “bridge” job
Job Networking	Roswell United Methodist Church	Up to 300	Job seekers range from 20s to 55 plus
SOAR 4 Jobs	St. Odilia Catholic Community	20-30	Most attendees are middle-aged to older job seekers; the majority of current participants are not members of St. Odilia’s parish
Career Network Ministry (CNM)	McLean Bible Church	150	Most attendees are seeking white-collar jobs
Employment Network Group	Severna Park United Methodist Church	2-4	Although the types of jobs seekers have varied over time, the majority of attendees are seeking white-collar jobs
CTK Parish Job Networking Ministry	Christ The King Parish in Pleasant Hill, CA	20-60 (at large group general meetings)	Initially job club served some attendees seeking unskilled jobs, but most current attendees are older, white-collar professionals with significant experience in their career fields
CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS			
Neighbors-helping-Neighbors	Neighbors-helping-Neighbors USA, Inc.	10-15	Attendance reflects job seekers in each workforce area where NhN meetings are held; NhN attracts substantial numbers of older workers (50+) and white-collar, professional/technical workers; with peer group structure, NhN attracts and keeps job seekers interested in networking and helping others in the group
Community Job Club of Stow	Community Job Club, Inc.	16	Nearly all attendees are white; average age is 45; range of education levels represented (high school graduates to post-graduate degrees); substantial numbers of recently dislocated mature technical/professional workers (e.g., IT engineers)
Career Transition Group for Women	None	4-6	All participants are women, primarily from the St. Paul
The Job Forum	San Francisco Chamber of Commerce	5-10	Most attendees are white-collar professionals with college degrees, including some who have just completed college, while others are over 50 and out of work
PUBLIC SECTOR- SPONSORED JOB CLUBS			

TABLE 3-3: NUMBERS AND TYPES OF JOB SEEKERS ATTENDING JOB CLUBS

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Avg. # of Attendees per Meeting	Types of Job Seekers Typically Attending Job Club
Jersey Job Club	New Jersey Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development	10-20 (at Orientation Workshop)	About 60% of active JJC members are UI claimants; attendees reflect job seekers served by the AJC within each locality; referrals come from TANF, TAA, WIA/Wagner-Peyser programs, other AJC partners, correctional system, and job fairs
Veterans Networking Group	Hennepin South Workforce Center	20-25	All participants are veterans; most are from the Bloomington area; most are over 40
Arnold Station Job Club	Arnold Career Center/Anne Arundel WDC	6	Attendees represent a wide range of income and skills levels, although the job club attracts slightly lower-income individuals than the Career Center does overall
ProMatch	NOVA WIB and California EDD	Over 100 at weekly General Membership Meetings	Most attendees are experienced, white-collar professionals over 40 (majority are over 55); most are UI claimants/exhaustees

market. It is interesting to note that a majority of the 12 FBO/CBO job clubs visited attracted a significant number of middle-age to older-age job seekers (i.e. age 40 and older), with several of the job clubs visited also tending to attract mostly white-collar professional, middle-management, and technical workers, for example:

- ***Neighbor’s-helping-Neighbors (CBO-NJ).*** *NhN job clubs, held weekly or bi-weekly in 26 mostly suburban localities across eight New Jersey counties, attracted substantial numbers of older workers (50 years of age older) dislocated from white-collar, professional and technical jobs. Because of its emphasis on peer group sharing during job clubs, NhN also tended to attract and keep job seekers interested in helping others within the group and willing to share their job search experiences with other job seekers.*
- ***Community Job Club of Stow (CBO-OH).*** *This job club, open to anyone in the community, mainly draws job seekers from Stow and surrounding communities to the south of Cleveland and north of Akron (including Kent and Ravenna). An outreach brochure notes that the organization offers services for “experienced mature professionals, new grads, veterans, and others who are actively seeking better career opportunities and support in their job search to secure employment faster.” The job club seems to attract middle-aged and older workers (with average age of attendees being about 45) – who are termed “mature professionals.” Nearly all attendees are white; there is a range of education levels (from high school graduates up to those with post-graduate degrees). There are also quite a few mid-manager and professional workers (such as IT engineers).*

Several facilitators/staff interviewed at FBOs/CBOs felt that some of the job seekers served by their job clubs would not have sought or used the public sector workforce services, but it was not possible to determine the extent to which FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs served as an alternative to job clubs operated by the public sector. Several of the staff interviewed indicated that it was not unusual for the job seekers they served to attend more than one job club at a time, including those run by FBOs, CBOs, and the public sector.

Table 3-3 (shown earlier) shows the considerable range in the number of job seekers attending individual job club sessions. Most typically, FBOs/CBOs visited as part of this study had between 10 and 30 attendees at job club sessions, though all of the job clubs visited indicated

that there was week-to-week variability in numbers of attendees. In some instances, job club attendance would peak when special speakers appeared at the job club or employers were brought in to conduct interviews with job club participants. Among the 12 FBO/CBO job clubs visited, there were three outliers in terms of attendance at job club sessions: (1) Roswell United Methodist Church's Job Networking typically had up to 300 participants at their regular bi-monthly meeting, although they often saw from 350 to 375 attendees when they included job fairs in the program; (2) the McLean Bible Church averaged 150 attendees each week at its Career Network Ministry job clubs (ranging from 125 to 160 each week); and (3) ProMatch, often had over 100 attendees (including around 45 first-time participants) at General Membership meetings. Some job club facilitators indicated that job clubs can become unwieldy and more formal when attendance at individual sessions is in excess of 20 to 25 participants, making it necessary to shift the format of the job club to become more lecture-based and less peer group-driven (unless the larger groups are broken down into smaller blocks of participants or workshops are offered). Several facilitators noted that 10 to 15 attendees is a good number for job club sessions because it allows for personal attention for each attendee, but also provides enough of a group dynamic for discussion and opportunities for productive networking among attendees. Roswell United Methodist Church's Job Networking program compensates for its large size by breaking into multiple workshops for the majority of each session, bringing the entire group of attendees together for dinner and a featured speaker.

It was difficult to obtain unduplicated counts of the number of job club participants served (some organizations did not collect such counts). Annually, in terms of unduplicated counts, it was most common for FBOs/CBOs to serve several hundred participants each year, with several new members (perhaps 3 to 5) joining the job club at each new session. Among the

FBOs/CBOs visited, McLean Bible Church's Career Network Ministry was an outlier, serving in excess of 2,000 (unduplicated) job club participants each year. Facilitators of FBOs/CBOs report there is lots of variation in how many times individuals attend job clubs – some attend just once and others linger for a year or longer. Not surprisingly, most job club attendees stop attending job clubs as soon as they get a job.

3. Job Club Structure and Format

Research findings and information collected during interviews with stakeholders suggest that there is significant diversity in the structure of and activities conducted by FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. Table 3-4 provides brief descriptions of each of the 16 job clubs visited as part of this study. This section of the report describes the format and content of the job club sessions observed, including: (1) location of meetings; (2) frequency, duration and timing of meetings; (3) participation requirements and patterns of attendance; (4) provision of other workshops and services; (5) use of curriculum to guide job club sessions; (6) agenda and specific content of job club sessions; (7) extent of case management and mentoring of job club attendees; (8) extent of religious/spiritual content in FBO-based job clubs; (9) other services provided; and (10) staffing patterns.

Location of Job Club Meetings. The job clubs operated by FBOs and CBOs were held at community locations made available free-of-charge by either the sponsoring organization or other neighborhood institutions, thereby eliminating any operating costs for meeting rooms but also making the sessions convenient for participants to attend. All the FBO-sponsored job clubs held their main sessions in meeting/conference rooms or fellowship halls in the church or on the church's campus. Christ the King Parish in Pleasant Hill, California, for example, held twice-

TABLE 3-4: OVERVIEW OF GENERAL FORMAT OF JOB CLUBS VISITED

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Overview of Format of the Job Club
FBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS		
JobSeekers	Trinity Church of Princeton, NJ	Weekly facilitated peer support group of job seekers; though congregation provides meeting space, there is no faith/religious content to the job club sessions – the 2-hour weekly job club focuses on facilitated peer group discussions and importance of networking in job search.
Job Partnership of Cleveland (JPC)	Mt. Zion Congregational Church	Mt. Zion Congregational Church is one of 4 Cleveland sites holding a 10-week (3 hours/week) job club using JPC curriculum that infuses faith/bible-based principals (“Keys”) with nuts and bolts of effective job search and retention workshop instruction, along with assignment of each participant for 1 year with a volunteer mentor.
Crossroads Career Network	Snellville United Methodist Church	Facilitated career networking/fellowship group that meets once a month for two hours and includes speakers, sharing of job listings, elevator pitches, testimonials and networking. 8-week series of Crossroads Career Network (CCN) workshops and twice-monthly small Christ-Centered Career Groups (C3G) also offered.
Job Networking	Roswell United Methodist Church	Comprehensive job networking/support program with multiple components including: an orientation session for first-time attendees; volunteer-led workshops on various job search topics (e.g., mock interviews, networking); a dinner program with accountability groups (similar to job clubs) for specific groups (e.g., job seekers 21-29, veterans) and job fairs. Also, have volunteer “industry guides” available to take calls/provide advice/network with job seekers.
SOAR 4 Jobs	St. Odilia Catholic Community	Job transition support/networking group that meets twice a month for two hours in a meeting room in a church and includes a presentation by one of a rotating group of speakers for one hour, followed by breakouts in the second hour into small discussion/networking groups to discuss job search progress/share job leads. One group is an orientation session for first-time attendees.
Career Network Ministry (CNM)	McLean Bible Church	Job networking/support group operated by a large group of volunteers; weekly sessions held in church meeting rooms consist of a Resource Hour with orientation sessions for first-time attendees, individual/small group information/assistance sessions as well as a variety of workshops, followed by a large group general meeting with announcements, a 1 to 1.5 hour headline presentation and additional time for networking.
Employment Network Group	Severna Park United Methodist Church	Job networking/support group led by facilitators meets weekly in church; meetings focus on discussions of/recommendations for attendees’ job search process and also include 30-minute presentations by one of a rotating group of speakers on various job search topics (e.g., government resumes).
CTK Parish Job Networking Ministry	Christ The King Parish in Pleasant Hill, CA	Job networking/support ministry that includes: 1) twice-monthly large group, general meetings with orientation sessions for first time attendees, presentations, testimonials and job search exercises; 2) small group “success teams” that meet weekly and address action items for each participant; and 3) access to the Career Action Network (on-line tool for posting resumes and job listings).
CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS		
Neighbors-helping-	Neighbors-helping-	NhN is a network of volunteer peer led job search networking and support groups that follow a community-based approach to help under-employed and

TABLE 3-4: OVERVIEW OF GENERAL FORMAT OF JOB CLUBS VISITED

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Overview of Format of the Job Club
Neighbors	Neighbors USA, Inc.	unemployed residents get back to work. NhN embraces a ‘pay it forward’ ethos, asking all associates to contribute to other members by sharing job search techniques, related professional career development resources, personal referrals and generally providing a forum where members feel empowered, energized and focused on the job search. Weekly job clubs typically held in libraries in eight NJ counties.
Community Job Club of Stow	Community Job Club, Inc.	CBO-operated job club meets 2 times a month in local office building in Stow; a facilitator and special speakers presents topics focused on effective job search, resumes, and other employment related topics and there is considerable time for peer sharing and networking. Individual job search assistance and workshops are available outside of the job club on a fee-for-service basis (using a sliding fee scale), including individual career coaching, resume development, and advanced interviewing techniques.
Career Transition Group for Women	None	Networking/support group for women only that meets twice a month for two hours at a library and includes time for each attendee to share job search experiences for feedback/suggestions/referrals from facilitator and other attendees.
The Job Forum	San Francisco Chamber of Commerce	Job networking/support roundtable forum facilitated by two volunteer panelists who provide customized advice/problem-solving/brainstorming on each attendee’s job search process, encouraging discussion, networking, and sharing of job leads among all participants.
PUBLIC SECTOR-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS		
Jersey Job Club	New Jersey Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development	Jersey Job Clubs offers series of workshops for job seekers to be completed in 6 months held at AJCs, including: 4 core workshops lasting 90 minutes each (an Orientation, a Job Search Skills, and Basic/ Advanced Resume Writing Workshops). Several “enrichment workshops” are also offered (Interviewing Skills, Networking Skills, Changing Employment Landscape, and Skills-Based Volunteering), as well as a weekly job club peer support session.
Veterans Networking Group	Hennepin South Workforce Center	Networking group for veterans that meets twice a month for two hours at the Workforce Center and includes one hour of presentations by speakers and a second hour during which job search progress and job leads are shared.
Arnold Station Job Club	Arnold Career Center/Anne Arundel WDC	Facilitated job club offering support, networking and access to resources that meets twice monthly for two hours in a workforce center and provides learning (through community speakers and instruction led by the Facilitator/Lead Career Advisor on job search topics) as well as networking opportunities; every fourth meeting is devoted to networking only.
ProMatch	NOVA WIB and California EDD	Member-run job search networking/support group that includes: (1) weekly General Membership meetings with speakers, success stories, sharing of job openings, and information about workshops; and (2) required participation (4 hours) in weekly meetings and activities for either program operations or training & development teams that operate various components of the program.

monthly, large group job club sessions in a conference room on the church grounds (see Exhibit 3-5). Some of their weekly small group “success team” job clubs also met in parish meetings rooms but others were held at nearby locations that were easily accessible to the participants, such as city office meeting rooms and, in one case, a Starbucks coffee shop. Job clubs sponsored by CBOs met in a variety of rent-free locations; two of the CBO job clubs (Career Transition Group for Women and Neighbors-helping-Neighbors) held sessions in community meeting rooms in local public libraries. The Job Forum convened weekly meetings in a conference room in the downtown offices of its sponsor, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. The Community Job Club of Stow initially held job club sessions in a local coffee house and a church meeting and, most recently, moved to donated space in a modern office building. The four job clubs sponsored by public workforce agencies operated from AJC/One-Stop Career Centers, thus providing attendees with direct exposure and access to the wide array of services, trained staff and resources available to job seekers at those locations. Due to space limitations, the ProMatch/Experience Unlimited job club held its general membership meetings (which are often attended by over 100 job seekers) in an auditorium in a city-owned building located across the street from the One-Stop Center; however, orientation sessions, workshops and related meetings were held at the One-Stop.

Frequency, Duration, and Timing of Meetings. Nearly all of the 16 job clubs observed held group job club sessions either weekly or twice a month; as also shown in Table 3-5, eight organizations (4 FBOs, 2 CBOs, and 2 Public Workforce Agencies) convened weekly meetings and seven (3 FBOs, 2 CBOs, and 2 Public Workforce Agencies) held meetings twice a month. One of the job clubs visited, Snellville United Methodist Church’s Crossroads Career Network, convened its main group networking event once a month. However, some of these organizations

TABLE 3-5: OVERVIEW OF JOB CLUB LOCATION, FREQUENCY, AND DURATION

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Location of Job Club	Frequency of Meetings	Average Duration of Job Club
FBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS				
JobSeekers	Trinity Church of Princeton, NJ	In church - meeting room.	Weekly	2 hours
Job Partnership of Cleveland (JPC)	Mt. Zion Congregational Church	In church – social hall attached to the church’s kitchen.	Weekly (for 10 Weeks)	3 hours
Crossroads Career Network	Snellville United Methodist Church	In church - large fellowship hall/meeting room.	Once a month/second Monday of the month	2 hours
Job Networking	Roswell United Methodist Church	All sessions are held in meeting rooms in the church.	Twice a month, 2 nd and 4 th Mondays	8.5 hours ²¹
SOAR 4 Jobs	St. Odilia Catholic Community	Regular evening sessions are held in the church’s community room; occasional special daytime sessions are held elsewhere in the community (e.g., public library).	Twice a month/ second and fourth Mondays	2 hours
Career Network Ministry (CNM)	McLean Bible Church	Orientation sessions for new attendees and individual/small group informational/assistance sessions are held during the first hour (the Resource Hour) in a large meeting room in the church. Other workshops/breakout sessions are held in other nearby meeting rooms at the same time. The large group general meeting is held in the large church meeting room.	Weekly; meetings are held Tuesday evenings 50 weeks a year	3.5 hours
Employment Network Group	Severna Park United Methodist Church	Sessions are held in a large meeting room in the church.	Weekly; every Monday morning	2 hours
CTK Parish Job Networking Ministry	Christ The King Parish in Pleasant Hill, CA	The large group general meeting is held in a meeting room on the church campus (30-minute orientation session is held in an adjoining room); small group success teams hold meetings in a variety of convenient locations, including parish meeting rooms, city office conference rooms, and Starbucks.	Large group meetings are held twice monthly on the first and third Thursdays; small group success teams meet weekly	2.5 hours ²²

²¹ RUMC Job Networking sessions are 12:30-9:00 PM -- workshops range from 45 minutes to 3.5 hours; dinner program is 1.5 hours; keynote speaker presentation is 1 hour.

²² CTK Parish: Large group meetings are 2.5 hours (including ½ hour for networking at beginning and end); small group success teams are 2 hours.

TABLE 3-5: OVERVIEW OF JOB CLUB LOCATION, FREQUENCY, AND DURATION

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Location of Job Club	Frequency of Meetings	Average Duration of Job Club
CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS				
Neighbors-helping-Neighbors	Neighbors-helping-Neighbors USA, Inc.	Public libraries (NhN also has plans to expand to Microsoft stores).	Weekly (a few locations meet every other week, but weekly is preferred)	1.5 hours
Community Job Club of Stow	Community Job Club, Inc.	In modern office building.	Two times a month	2 hours
Career Transition Group for Women	None	In a large meeting room at a community library.	Twice a month – second and fourth Tuesdays of the month	2 hours
The Job Forum	San Francisco Chamber of Commerce	In a meeting room in the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce’s offices.	Weekly; every Wednesday evening	2 hours
PUBLIC SECTOR-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS				
Jersey Job Club	New Jersey Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development	American Job Centers (workshops typically held in conference room at AJCs).	Weekly (~6 workshops held weekly at each AJC)	1.5 hours per workshop
Veterans Networking Group	Hennepin South Workforce Center	In workforce center – in a large meeting room with long tables set up in classroom format.	Twice a month – second and fourth Tuesdays of the month	2 hours
Arnold Station Job Club	Arnold Career Center/Anne Arundel WDC	In a large meeting room in the Arnold Career Center.	Twice a month – second and fourth Thursdays	2 hours
ProMatch	NOVA WIB and California EDD	General Membership Meetings are held in a large auditorium owned by the city and located across the street from the ProMatch and CONNECT Job Seeker Center Offices.	General Membership Meetings are held every Thursday; Individual Team and Business meetings (for everyone) are held on Monday	2.5 hours ²³

²³ ProMatch: General Membership Meeting: 2.5 hours; Individual Team/Business Meeting: 4 hours

operated additional (and typically smaller) job club sessions that met more frequently. In addition to the large group meetings held monthly, the Snellville Crossroads Career Network also sponsored small-group “Christ-Centered Career Group (C3G)” job clubs that met twice-monthly. Similarly, as noted above, Christ the King Parish Job Networking Ministry held large group job club meetings twice a month, but attendees were also invited to participate in small group success team job clubs that met weekly.

The majority (nine) of the job clubs observed held sessions that met for approximately two hours. The shortest meeting was 1.5 hours and the longest session among the traditional job clubs, the Career Network Ministry at the McLean Bible Church, ran for about 3.5 hours with time for networking, a resource hour with individual and small group information sessions and workshops on a variety of job search topics, a group general meeting and a featured presentation. Unique among the job clubs visited, the Roswell United Methodist Church (RUMC) Job Networking Ministry held twice-monthly meetings, offering a comprehensive program of instructional, networking, and support activities and workshops which were scheduled throughout the afternoon and into the evening, starting at 12:30 pm and ending around 9:00 pm. Most job seekers typically participated in some portion of the sessions, including, in some cases, six-to-eight person accountability groups (similar to job clubs) for specific types of job seekers (e.g., veterans, individuals ages 21 to 29) that met for about an hour after the dinner program. Although the job clubs operated by public workforce agencies were held during regular business hours, most of the FBO and CBO job clubs met at the edges or outside of those hours, either early in the morning (as the Severna Park United Methodist Church’s Employment Network Group did) or in the late afternoon and early evening, in part to accommodate the schedules of the job seekers but also those of some of the volunteer facilitators. Christ the King Parish’s Job

Networking group held its large group meetings in the evenings, but scheduled the small group success teams meetings at other times that met the needs of the attendees.

Participation Requirements and Patterns of Attendance. Overall, most of the FBO, CBO, and public workforce agency job clubs observed followed an “open entry, open exit” format for participation in their job club sessions. Attendees at these job clubs did not typically start and end sessions as a cohort, participating in a fixed number of meetings in which a specific list of job search topics was covered sequentially from week to week; rather, they were welcome to join any session at any time. While most of the job clubs followed an agenda or established format (described in more detail below) in each meeting, job club meetings were typically structured as stand-alone sessions that job seekers could attend when, if and as often as they chose. As a result, some job seekers were consistent participants for a period of weeks or months, but others might have sporadic attendance patterns, attending a few meetings, skipping one or two and then returning a few weeks later, depending on the status of their job search process and other commitments. According to facilitators, some job seekers also attended (often encouraged by facilitators) multiple FBO, CBO, and public workforce job club meetings simultaneously, in some cases to address different needs and to find the best fit for their particular job search, but also to cast a wider net for networking opportunities. During job club sessions observed in the Washington, DC Metro and Minneapolis/St. Paul areas, for example, attendees shared their experiences participating in other job clubs currently operating in the community and often referred fellow job seekers to individual facilitators or staff for assistance with specific needs (e.g., a referral to a staff member at a local public workforce center who was particularly skilled in resume development for a specific career field). Job seekers participating

in FBO/CBO job clubs might also be concurrently enrolled and participating in workshops and/or other workforce services at the local AJC/One-Stop Center.

Among the FBO/CBO job clubs observed, one diverged from the open-entry, open-exit, standalone format and instead provided a structured sequential program of workshops on job search topics. The Mt Zion Congregational Church Job Partnership of Cleveland's (JPC) program, offered twice a year, was a 10-week, 3 hours per week, series of interrelated workshops that covered the basics of effective job search and retention. A cohort of 20-25 job seekers typically participated in these faith-infused workshops together throughout the 10-week period. One public workforce agency job club model observed – the ProMatch/Experience Unlimited program operated by NOVA WIB and California Employment Development Department – was also structured somewhat differently. Eligible participants were invited to join only as space became available when other members found employment and left the group; after joining, job seekers were required to volunteer their services for four hours per week on program operations or training and development teams that operated the member-run job club program.

Provision of Other Workshops. A few FBO job clubs visited went beyond the traditional job club networking/support sessions and expanded their services to also offer optional workshops or a series of interrelated workshops on relevant job search topics, scheduled either during their regular meetings or on other days and times. Many of these workshops covered topics not dissimilar to those covered in workshops offered at an AJC/One-Stop Center, although FBOs were not typically able to provide computer labs, multiple printers and telephones, etc. For example, the McLean Bible Church's Career Network Ministry operated a number of optional workshops during their 3.5 hour weekly meetings on topics such as LinkedIn, effective resume writing, federal job search, development of the elevator pitch, interviewing and

networking. Two examples of other FBOs that offered workshops in conjunction with their job clubs are provided below.

- ***Snellville United Methodist Church’s Crossroads Career Network (FBO-Atlanta).*** This program operated two-hour, monthly job club meetings and smaller (4-5 attendees) Christ-Centered Career Groups (C3G) support and accountability groups that met twice a month. In addition, this organization also offered an eight-week series of Crossroad Career Network (CCN) workshops, held on other evenings. This series of workshops, offered five times a year, began with an orientation session (“Are You at a Crossroads in Your Career?”) and included session topics such as “Discovering Your Unique Qualities,” “Finding Career Opportunities,” and “Interviewing and Evaluating Offers.” Facilitators felt that the workshops were the most effective of all of the job club activities they provided.
- ***Roswell United Methodist Church (RUMC) Job Networking Program (FBO-Atlanta).*** RUMC’s program, also a member of the Crossroads Career Network, provided a comprehensive menu of job networking/support services and activities for job seekers. Twice monthly sessions that ran throughout the afternoon and into the evening offered, in addition to a dinner program, presentations and accountability groups, a variety of volunteer-led (typically professional HR staff/Recruiters) workshops on topics of interest to job seekers (e.g., networking, franchise businesses, strategies for older job seekers.) A condensed version of the Crossroads Career Network Workshop was also offered. At the time of the site visit, 27 workshops were available; according to program administrators, it takes approximately 2 months of regular attendance to complete all workshops.

One of the four job clubs operated by public workforce agencies, Jersey Job Club, also provided a series of weekly workshops on an array of job search topics in conjunction with a peer support session; sequential attendance at these workshops was not a requirement for participation.

Use of Curriculum to Guide Job Club Sessions. Because their job clubs were designed to be open-entry, open-exit sessions (rather than a set number of meetings covering a specific list of instructional topics and issues), most of the FBO/CBO job clubs (as well as those operated by the public workforce agencies) visited did not use a formal curriculum or facilitator’s guide to structure the sequence or the content of the activities and/or the instructional material presented in their job club sessions. Some facilitators noted that they wanted to remain as flexible as

possible so they could best address the needs and individual concerns of the attendees at each meeting.

Among the FBO job clubs, only the Mt. Zion Congregational Church followed a standardized curriculum - the Job Partnership, Inc. curriculum - for the 10-week series of workshops that constituted its job club. One of the CBO-sponsored job clubs, the Community Job Club of Stow, also used portions of a curriculum – “Getting Over Job Search Hurdles – Preparation and Positioning” – to guide their sessions, albeit not systematically.²⁴ Although they did not follow or distribute a curriculum, other FBO and CBO job clubs provided attendees with notebooks, step-by-step guides, handouts and other resources to inform a systematic job search process; facilitators could refer to or draw from these materials during presentations and instructional activities. For example, the McLean Bible Church’s Career Network Ministry distributed to each participant a Job Search “Passport” which included a listing of recommended sequential steps in the job search process (e.g., elevator pitch, marketing plan, and networking), as well as a 90+ page handbook, “A Guide to Discovering Your Gifts and Pursuing Your Professional Career Search,” which has been updated and revised several times. The Severna Park United Methodist Church’s Employment Network Group provided to each participant a book on job search strategies (“So Do You Want a Job or What? Dirty Secrets of Resume Writing and Job Hunting”) written by one of the job club’s facilitators.

Agenda/Content of Job Clubs. As noted above, most of the job clubs observed followed a standard format, and, in some cases, a fixed agenda, to guide and structure their sessions. The agenda provided below for the Snellville United Methodist Church’s Crossroads

²⁴ The two FBO-operated job clubs that offered the Crossroads Career Network Workshop, Snellville United Methodist Church Crossroads Career Network and Roswell United Methodist Church Job Networking, followed a modified version of the Crossroads Career Workshop curriculum.

Career Network monthly networking event is representative of the format used in several of the FBO job club sessions observed:

- Welcome and Opening Prayer
- Facilitated Career Networking and Fellowship
- Presentation – Use of Library Resources in the Job Search
- Testimonial
- Presentation – “Six steps to walking through a crossroads in your career”
- Closing

While many of the job clubs observed shared a number of common elements, the content of the sessions and the number and types of activities often varied based on the size of the group. (See Table 3-4 [earlier] for descriptions of each job club visited.) Most of the job club sessions began with the facilitator providing an introduction to the job club, reviewing the rules and procedures for the session, and sharing general announcements. This was typically followed by introductions of the attendees, which in larger job clubs might be limited to new participants, then moving to delivery of elevator pitches by all members of the group. In smaller job clubs (e.g., The Job Forum, Career Transition Group for Women, Job Seekers) these introductions evolved and expanded into 10-15 minute discussions on the background, employment history and job search goals and experiences of each attendee. These discussions, together with feedback, suggestions, advice, and referrals provided by both the facilitator and the other job seekers in attendance, constituted the bulk of the job club sessions in the smaller job clubs observed. Some of the larger job clubs (including job clubs operated by public workforce agencies) typically included a 45-minute to one-hour presentation by a volunteer speaker (or speakers) on a topic relevant to the job search process, followed by a question-and-answer session. For example, at the SOAR 4 Jobs job club meeting observed by the research team, four employees (one was a member of the church) of a professional staffing firm gave a presentation on “Job Opportunities: Where to Look for Them,” which included guidance on job search

strategies, trends, sources, approaches, and techniques. Although the content and the format varied considerably across the job clubs, most sessions provided some type of instructional component related to the job search process (e.g., resume development, mock interviews), presented to the entire group or in smaller breakout groups and led either by the facilitator, other volunteers or other job club participants. Time also was set aside to recognize job club participants who found employment and returned to share their success stories, either through a quick report or a longer testimonial by the successful job seeker. Another component of the job clubs' meetings was time for sharing job leads and job listings, ranging from distribution of lists of openings (either in printed format or via email), to discussions among participants during networking time, to the formalized and energetic exchange of information about job openings and jobs sought that was part of the ProMatch group job club meeting. All of the job clubs observed placed a major emphasis on networking as the crucial component for a successful job search, with most job clubs setting aside ample time for group and one-on-one networking opportunities. Although the focus of the job club sessions was clearly on providing strategies and tools for securing a job, it was obvious that the emotional support provided, along with the sense of common purpose and shared experiences, played a critical role for the job club participants. While facilitators were key players in guiding and leading the sessions, the willingness of the participants to trade job leads, provide advice on career decisions, offer referrals to other community resources and offer enthusiastic encouragement contributed to the success of the job clubs.²⁵

²⁵ During the ProMatch general membership job club session, for example, one self-described “introverted engineer” shared the story of how he was reluctant to pursue a “cold call” with an employer, but pushed himself to do so because he was unwilling to disappoint the other group members who had encouraged him.

Case Management and Mentoring for Job Club Attendees. The majority of the job clubs sponsored by FBOs and CBOs did not provide case management or mentoring programs for participants as part of their regular job club activities. Only the Mt. Zion Congregational Church program operated a one-on-one mentoring program, providing participants with volunteer mentors during the 10-week workshop period and continued mentoring for one year after that. Other FBO and CBO job clubs, including SOAR 4 Jobs, the Career Network Ministry, and the Community Job Club of Stow, had volunteers available to provide one-on-one, in-person counseling and assistance with resume preparation and review and interview practice, if requested; several facilitators also reported that they often communicated by phone, email and in-person with participants outside of the regular meetings.

Extent of Religious/Spiritual Content into FBO-Based Job Clubs. Among the eight FBO-operated job clubs observed, were significant differences in the extent to which the sessions, as well as the materials distributed during the meetings, were infused with religious and or spiritual messages. At one end of the spectrum was the JobSeekers job club -- the Trinity Church of Princeton provided a meeting room but there were no prayers or religious references of any kind in the job club session itself. At the next level were the job club sessions (also held in church meeting rooms), which began and ended with prayers but contained little, if any, mention of religion or spirituality during the actual meeting. In one of the job clubs observed, prayers were offered at the opening and closing of the meeting; the only other spiritual references were made by a former participant who quoted a number of biblical passages in his testimonial on his successful job search. A few of the FBO job clubs which opened and closed with prayers did not discuss religious beliefs during their presentations or discussions of jobs search tools and strategies, but they did provide notebooks, brochures and other materials that

recommended prayer, worship and bible-study as part of the job search process, often including quotations from scripture. For example, one FBO-sponsored job club distributed eight “Prayers for Those Seeking Work” in handouts that also included the agenda for the session and notes from the last meeting. The McLean Bible Church’s Career Network Ministry’s Handbook emphasizes the role of God in the job search process, introducing the more traditional guidance on job search with topics such as “Discovering your Spiritual Gifts,” supplemented with numerous biblical quotations. Of the job clubs observed, Mt. Zion Congregational Church’s JPC job club was the most strongly faith-based program, using a curriculum that infused Bible-based principles with the nuts and bolts of an effective job search. Discussions and instructional activities during the workshop focused on the critical role of religious beliefs and practices in a successful job search process, as well as in long-term job retention.

Provision of Other Services. While the purpose of the FBO and CBO job clubs was to provide assistance and support in finding employment, some of these job clubs were also able to provide additional related support services, although not to the extent that they were available through the public workforce agencies. Some of the larger and more established FBO job clubs (e.g., Career Network Ministry, Roswell United Methodist Church) operated their own “clothes closets” with interview-ready clothing for participants, while others had access to those and other resources (e.g., food pantries) through their sponsoring churches. A few facilitators reported that they were able to provide some participants with limited bus passes or other assistance with transportation through donations from volunteers or church members. Other knowledgeable facilitators familiar with the community network of services were able to steer job seekers to the appropriate public and non-profit agencies for other needs perhaps not directly related to the job search (e.g., housing assistance).

Job Club Staffing. One critical difference between the job clubs sponsored by FBOs and CBOs and those operated by public workforce agencies is the staffing arrangements. Job clubs held at AJC/One-Stop Centers are led by paid professional staff, often with the help of support staff and an array of equipment and tools (e.g., computers, printers) to support the job search. Although a few of the FBO-sponsored job clubs received limited assistance from paid church staff, the vast majority of these clubs were organized, managed, and facilitated solely by unpaid volunteers. Most of the FBO/CBO job clubs rotated a small group of volunteer facilitators or used two or three facilitators to lead each meeting, although one job club had been organized and operated by only one facilitator for the past few years. Larger job clubs such as the McLean Bible Church's Career Network Ministry needed up to 30 volunteers to operate the multiple sessions and breakout groups conducted at a single meeting; staff with the Roswell United Methodist Church's Job Networking program reported that up to 70 volunteers were required for each meeting, including food preparation staff for the job club dinner. JPC's Mt. Zion site had 5 to 10 volunteers available for each job club meeting, including volunteers to help with signing-in participants, several volunteer guest speakers, food servers, mentors, and other volunteers to clean/set up the facility.

Facilitators varied in their level of experience and skills; some were self-taught former participants who wanted to give back. However, a somewhat surprising number of facilitators and workshop leaders were human resources professionals or recruiters for large corporations who volunteered their time. These human resources professionals and recruiters were able to share their expertise and experiences from the perspective of searching for and interviewing job candidates for a range of occupations and job openings. Many of the volunteers at the FBO job clubs were members of the sponsoring church who chose the job club as their opportunity for

volunteerism. Although it is difficult to quantify the total number of volunteer hours devoted to the operation of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs, it clearly is a large commitment of free labor. Examples of the roles played by volunteer facilitators at two FBO/CBO job clubs are provided below.

- ***The Job Forum (CBO – San Francisco).*** *Two volunteer panelists facilitate each job networking/support roundtable meeting, providing customized advice, feedback, and referrals and leading brainstorming sessions on each participant’s job search during a two-hour meeting. Approximately 35-40 professionals from business, academia, and nonprofits, many of whom are hiring managers, job coaches, or human resources professionals, rotate as panelists. Networking, discussion and sharing of job leads are encouraged among all attendees.*
- ***Severna Park United Methodist Church Employment Network Group (FBO-Washington, DC Metro.)*** *At least two (and sometimes three) volunteers facilitate these weekly meetings that include discussions of each attendee’s job search progress. One of the facilitators is a professional job search counselor who also volunteers with other area job clubs; the other two are current or former employers/small business owners.*

4. Funding and Funding Sources

The FBO/CBO job clubs visited operated with little or no external funding, and most functioned with only a limited budget, particularly when compared to job clubs operated by professional staff within a public workforce center. Even FBO/CBO job clubs such as the McLean Bible Church (serving an average of 150 job seekers each week) operated at extremely low costs, with a total annual budget of \$12,000 to \$15,000 provided mostly through donations from volunteers. Because they were able to keep their expenses to a minimum, FBOs/CBOs did not require grants or major funders to initiate or maintain their job clubs – and most of the administrators/staff preferred structuring and operating their job clubs so that they would not require outside fund raising or solicitation of government/foundation grants. None of the FBOs visited received government or foundation grants for their job clubs at the time of the visits. The

biggest in-kind contribution FBOs and CBOs operating job clubs received was the use of rent-free meeting space. For FBOs, this was usually in the form of a church/congregation meeting room or fellowship hall; for CBOs, free library space on a weekly basis was sometimes utilized. For example, Neighbors-helping-Neighbors mostly relies on meeting rooms made available free-of-charge at public libraries located in 26 communities spread across 8 counties in New Jersey for its weekly or bi-weekly job club meetings. Another CBO-sponsored job club, the Job Forum, is able to hold its weekly sessions in a conference room in the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce's downtown offices, also at no charge.

The other significant in-kind contribution that helped to contain costs, particularly in FBO-sponsored job clubs, was the use of volunteer facilitators and staff to operate job club sessions. For example, the Princeton Job Seekers job club relied upon five volunteers (mostly past Job Seeker participants) who rotated each week to facilitate job club sessions. The lead facilitator of this initiative credited the volunteer arrangement and weekly rotation of facilitator responsibility (i.e., so no facilitator had to cover more than one job club session per month) for the job club's resilience over nearly three decades. Similar to the several other FBO-sponsored job clubs visited as part of this study, the lead facilitator for Job Seekers acknowledged that because there was no external funding for the job club, the provision of a meeting room once a week by the Trinity Church of Princeton at no charge had been a critical ingredient (along with volunteer facilitators) contributing to the group's long-term survival. Donations of space and volunteer time have helped to keep costs for FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs extremely low compared to the public sector operation of job clubs, which typically operate these job clubs with paid, professional staff.

Several FBO job clubs received additional support in the form of modest financial contributions or staff time from their sponsoring churches and/or members of the congregation to get their job clubs started and to support continued operations. For example, the Snellville United Methodist Church provides its Crossroads Career Network job club with some staff support as well as a small budget, which is used to cover costs such as the annual Crossroads Career Network membership fee and materials for workshops. Christ the King Parish in Pleasant Hill, California also pays the fee required for the Job Networking Ministry's participants to access the Career Action Network, an online tool for posting resumes and job listings. On a larger scale, the Roswell United Methodist Church's Job Networking Ministry has funded its dinner programs (often attended by 275 - 300 job seekers) over the past five years with a combination of volunteer, private, and corporate donations, including garage sales organized by church members. Several examples of how FBO/CBO sponsored job clubs were able to start-up and continue to operate on very limited budgets follow:

- ***Career Transitions Group for Women (CBO-Minnesota).*** *This job club, which was re-started by a volunteer after it was discontinued by a local nonprofit organization providing services for women, does not receive funding or contributions from any outside sources. There are virtually no expenses associated with operating this job club that meets twice a month in a meeting room at a neighborhood public library at no cost. There is a single facilitator, who estimates that she donates about 12 hours each month to plan and facilitate the job club. The facilitator pays for name tags and, occasionally, printing costs for informational materials. During the job club session observed during the site visit, one participant suggested that attendees chip in a few dollars to offset the facilitator's expenditures.*
- ***Community Job Club of Stow (CBO-Ohio).*** *This job club was formed on and continues to operate on a shoestring. Initially, a church offered free meeting space and provided an \$800 grant to offset printing, refreshment, and other costs. With the support of a local real estate developer, this job club was able to move to new space free-of-charge inside a modern office building in Stow, which offers both a meeting area (for the job club) and office space for the lead facilitator and volunteers. Currently, with no expense for either office or staffing, this organization spends a total of about \$180/month to operate its job club, which includes \$80/month to cover cost of phone/Internet; and \$100/month to cover cost of office supplies, refreshments,*

and other miscellaneous costs. The executive director donates her time for planning and attending job club sessions. To help offset operational costs, the organization has received \$1,000 from an individual donor and \$250 from the local Lions Club. Additionally, the organization offers fee-for-service assistance to job club participants (in-person services tailored to individual needs, such as resume development, help with job search, etc.). For example, the organization is planning to offer an “active interviewing” workshop at \$10-15 per workshop in 2014. Finally, the organization is looking for grants from foundations and government to help with covering future operating costs.

- ***SOAR 4 Jobs- St. Odilia Catholic Church (FBO-Minnesota).*** *Operating for over 10 years in a Minneapolis suburb, this job club holds two-hour meetings twice a month while incurring virtually no out-of-pocket costs. Sessions are held in a meeting room made available by the church at no cost; the church also provides space for a resource room with books, handouts and other informational resources for job seekers, either donated or purchased by the church. The job club team also has access to the services of the church’s secretary and the copying equipment and supplies. A small group of volunteers rotate as facilitators; two volunteers also provide one-on-one counseling and assistance (e.g., resume preparation, interview practice) for participants, if requested. Volunteers supply the refreshments for the job club meetings. In addition, special presentations on topics of interest to job seekers are held during working hours at other no-cost locations in the community (e.g., public libraries) on an occasional basis.*

5. Job Club Participant Data Collection and Views on Evaluation

FBO and CBO-operated job clubs visited as part of this study collected and maintained minimal (and in most instances, virtually no) participant-level data, including data on job club participant demographic characteristics, job club services utilized, or individual outcomes (such as job placement/retention, hours worked, wage rates, or earnings). While there was some variation across FBOs/CBOs visited in the types of participant-level data maintained, overall, the identifying information and job club participant-level data maintained pales when compared to data maintained by public sector organizations (such as AJCs) operating job clubs, and particularly, in comparison to data currently collected on UI claimants and participants enrolled in the WIA, Wagner-Peyser, and TAA programs. Appendix E provides two tables that provide

for each of the 12 FBOs and CBOs visited as part of this study (1) an overview of the types of data collected on job club participants (Table E-1) and (2) an overview of the use of participant data forms and management information systems (MIS), as well as views on the potential for future evaluation of job clubs (Table E-2).

Few of the FBOs/CBOs visited collected much beyond using an attendance sign-in sheet, which typically included the date of the job club, job club attendee's name, occupation/job interest, and basic contact information (such as an e-mail address and phone number). Several FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs did not even keep track of ongoing attendance at each job club session, collecting only the names and e-mail addresses of each first time attendee at a job club session. While stressing the need to keep paperwork and administrative tasks to an absolute minimum, several FBO/CBO facilitators/leaders indicated that it was important to collect basic contact information on job club attendees so they could (with the permission of attendees) share this information (typically name and e-mail address, and possibly telephone number) among job club attendees to spur networking among active job club participants, and especially to share job leads that job seekers might come across during their own job search activities. In addition, facilitators for some job clubs noted that they collected this information so they could alert current and former job club attendees of upcoming networking and job search events, including job fairs and presentations by speakers.

Several of the FBO/CBO representatives interviewed during visits viewed their lack of paperwork requirements imposed on job club participants as a strength and an attractive feature of their job clubs when compared to job clubs (and other workforce services) offered through the public workforce system in their locality. FBO/CBO administrators/facilitators did not want to unnecessarily burden participants with intake forms or other reporting requirements (such as

whether a job club participant was employed at a certain point in time after they began attending the job club). None of the FBO/CBO administrators interviewed indicated that they would be comfortable asking participants to provide Social Security Numbers (SSNs) as part of the intake process. Further, FBOs/CBOs sponsoring job clubs were not eager to collect additional background/intake data on job club participants, in part, because they did not want to be viewed as bureaucratic (or in similar terms as a public workforce organization) and because they feared that asking for such confidential data might be viewed as intrusive, inappropriate, and/or dampen interest in job club participation. Further, beyond collecting names, contact information, and job interest, FBO and CBO representatives did not feel that they had a need or justifiable use for collecting additional information; most did not maintain hardcopy case files or automated client data systems in which to securely store any personal information collected (such as SSN, date of birth, etc.). Given the volunteer staffing and shoe-string budgets that most of the CBO/FBO job clubs operated under, FBOs/CBOs also expressed concerns about the staff time and effort involved in collecting additional and more detailed information from participants and inputting such data into an automated data system. Some FBO/CBO administrators/facilitators also were unsure about the appropriateness of prying into personal details (e.g., asking about age, race/ethnicity, ex-offender status, barriers to employment, etc.).

There were, however, a few FBO/CBO organizations visited which went beyond a simple sign-in/attendance sheet and had job club participants complete an intake form or participation agreement form, although these forms were streamlined in comparison to those normally used in the public workforce system for job club participants and those served by WIA or the Wagner Peyser programs. For example, Stow's Community Job Club (a CBO-based job club) has

participants complete a two-page intake form prior to attending their first job club, providing the following data items:

- contact information – address, phone, email address;
- current/past employment information -- current employment status, current/last position held, length of time in current/past job, current/last annual income, name/address of current/last employer, reason for unemployment (e.g., laid-off, quit, etc.);
- education (type of degree, certifications);
- number living in household (including number under age 18);
- current marital status;
- type of industry sector and position/occupation being sought;
- challenges faced in job search;
- interest in volunteering at Community Job Club (including type of volunteer activity and hours willing to volunteer per week);
- how the job club participant heard about the Community Job Club;
- family income and primary source of income; and
- information about type of occupation/job the individual is interested in obtaining.

In part, the collection of additional data at this particular site was intended to support more individualized job placement assistance that is offered (some of which is provided on a fee-for-service basis), as well as to target job club session topics and discussions on the specific needs of those attending each job club session. A second site that collected more detailed participant-level data at the time of intake was the Jobs Partnership Cleveland’s (JPC) Mt. Zion Congregational Church site, which also uses a two-page intake form (referred to as a “student profile”) that collects the following data items:

- contact information – address, phone, email address;
- emergency contact information;
- current/past employment information -- current employment status, and if employed, whether it is full/part-time, name of employer, job title, job duties/responsibilities, date of employment, and current salary;
- marital status and name of spouse;
- household composition, including number living in household, and then a breakdown of the name, relationship, age and sex of each household member);
- housing arrangement;
- primary language spoken in household;
- church affiliation;

- explanation of family issues that need to be addressed (e.g., housing employment, social service referrals, chemical dependency, medical, etc.);
- whether individual has been convicted of felony, and if so, charges and length of time served;
- barriers to employment;
- whether there have been gaps between employment, and if so, why;
- whether participant has need for any special assistance to obtain/sustain employment; and
- whether the participant has dependencies on drugs, alcohol, smoking, or other type (with explanation).

The background information collected on the JPC/Mt. Zion intake form was used by workshop instructors as well as mentors to whom each JPC/Mt. Zion participant was assigned, to assess individual barriers to employment and target assistance and outside referrals for support services on the specific needs of each participant over the 10 weeks of workshops. As is discussed later in this section, despite collecting this more detailed background information during the intake process, these two sites do not enter data from these forms into an automated participant tracking data system for analytical purposes (though some data are entered onto an Excel spreadsheet at the two sites), but rather are used for case management purposes and guiding service delivery.

None of the FBO or CBO job clubs visited had an automated participant data system to systematically capture receipt of services or outcomes for each participant. With regard to service utilization, some FBOs/CBOs maintained a listing of attendees at job club sessions (typically on an Excel spreadsheet or in a Microsoft Word file). For example, in several sites, administrators could provide a count of the total number of job club attendees for the year (and in some instances, for several years or even since inception of the job club), most recent month, or an individual session. Some FBOs/CBOs also were able to provide an unduplicated count of the number of individuals attending job club sessions over the past year. Although most FBO/CBO job clubs did not have the staff or resources to examine attendance patterns or participant characteristics in any detail, one facilitator conducted an analysis of area codes for

evening phone numbers to determine the geographic areas from which the majority of attendees were drawn. None of the FBOs/CBOs visited maintained data on referrals of participants to the public workforce system or other service providers (or received confirmation that referred participants had been enrolled or received services from other providers).

While most of the FBOs/CBOs encouraged participants to share their “success” stories when they obtained a job – including coming to a job club session for a “victory lap” to discuss their placement and the job search activities that helped in securing the new position – none of the FBOs/CBOs visited systematically collected job placement or job retention data (i.e., job placement date, wage amount, and number of hours working per week). Collection of job placement/retention data tended to be anecdotal, with some participants emailing or calling the facilitator or fellow job club participants to inform them of their good fortune. In many instances, job club participants would attend one or several job club sessions and then simply stop coming – without letting the facilitator know whether they were successful or unsuccessful in finding a job. Though interested in job placement outcomes for job club participants, FBOs/CBOs visited as part of this study lacked the staffing, procedures, and data systems to track and systematically collect placement or retention data. They also did not in many cases feel it was appropriate to follow-up with participants to find out what had happened or to check in with participants periodically (e.g., six months after they leave the job club) to determine whether they had been able to retain the job. The lack of systematic collection of job placement/retention data, however, did not stand in the way of some FBOs/CBOs boasting of their success in assisting job club attendees to secure and keep jobs (and in some instances, making claims of achieving a specific job placement rate). Finally, in interviews, FBO/CBO job club administrators/facilitators – while interested in better understanding their job placement

results – did not feel it was feasible for their organizations (given staffing/funding constraints and their emphasis on minimal paperwork burden for participants and mostly volunteer staff) to expand efforts to collect additional data on participant characteristics, service utilization, or outcomes.

With regard to evaluation, none of the FBO, CBO, or public sector job clubs visited had been part of a formal evaluation effort, and there was little enthusiasm for rigorous (random assignment-type) impact studies or even implementation or outcomes evaluation efforts. Among the reasons that FBOs/CBOs have not been involved in rigorous evaluation efforts and were generally pessimistic about prospects for being part of future impact/outcome evaluation efforts were the following:

- Lack staff time and expertise to collect/maintain/analyze data to support outcome/impact type studies;
- Unwillingness to burden staff or participants with more extensive/intrusive data collection;
- Concern that asking participants for identifying information (such as SSN) or other sensitive participant background/characteristics data, would be perceived as inappropriate and dampen participant interest in the program;
- Concerns about costs of entering/maintaining data in an automated system, as well as concerns over safeguarding participant data in manual and automated data files; and
- Unwillingness to randomly assign individuals to treatment and control groups – CBOs/FBOs would be loath to deny job club services to job seekers in need within their communities.

Some FBO/CBO administrators/facilitators recognized that it could potentially be useful to collect systematic outcome data for job club participants, for example, from the standpoint of being able to better inform church leaders of the success of their initiatives and to potentially attract additional funding from church members or even foundations for their efforts. They also acknowledged that while they felt reassured by their many past successes in helping job seekers

to secure a job, there might be a need for more systematic analysis of both job placement and job retention outcomes. While pessimistic about their prospects for increasing data collection or being part of more rigorous outcome/impact evaluation efforts, FBOs/CBOs indicated that they would need considerable technical assistance related to developing and implementing data collection forms (e.g., intake, service receipt, and outcomes forms), data collection procedures, and automated systems if they were to be part of more rigorous evaluation efforts. Given the lack of automated participant tracking systems, an effort to make available a low-cost/low-burden model of participant forms and a simplified automated participant tracking system that could be used on a stand-alone PC might be of interest to some FBOs/CBOs operating job clubs.

C. CONCLUSIONS

Although the exact number of job clubs currently being operated by FBOs and CBOs is unknown, information obtained during the stakeholder interviews as well as the site visits indicates that the number is likely growing (or, at the very least, not decreasing) reflecting the continued demand for the networking and peer support services provided by job clubs. For example, a 17-page spreadsheet (updated on 11/5/13) providing locations and meeting times for FBO and CBO (as well as public workforce agency) job clubs in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area included information for over 80 job clubs. Despite an overall decrease in the unemployment rate since the height of the 2007-08 economic downturn, the FBO/CBO job clubs continue to hold regularly-scheduled meetings and fill a need not currently being met by the job clubs operated by public sector job clubs. Although some of the job club facilitators indicated that overall attendance has fallen in recent years, they reported that they are willing to continue providing services as long as there are some participants who come to the meetings seeking help. While DOL's Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships on-line job clubs registry is

helpful in identifying a sample of job clubs operating across the country, there is no existing data source that provides an accurate count of the ebb and flow of FBO/CBO job clubs nationwide or by locality.

Findings from the interviews with stakeholders and facilitators during the site visits indicate that job clubs operated by FBOs, CBOs, and public workforce agencies are alike in many ways, with all of them emphasizing the critical importance of networking, offering ongoing peer support and sharing of similar experiences among participants, as well as providing instruction and guidance on the basics of the job search process (e.g., elevator pitches, resume development, interview practice). Noteworthy differences between the FBO/CBO job clubs and those operated by public workforce agencies are related to staffing patterns and available resources for program operations and services. While public workforce agency job clubs are led by paid professional staff, sometimes supported by the full complement of workshops, activities, and other services typically available through the AJC/One-Stop Center, FBO/CBO job clubs, in most cases, operate with limited budgets or no funding whatsoever. Meeting space is usually provided free-of-charge by the sponsoring church or community organization and teams of volunteers plan, manage and facilitate all aspects of the job clubs. Although the exact number of volunteer hours devoted to the operation of FBO/CBO job clubs is not known, the total amount of labor contributed by these volunteers is likely huge – and of great value to large numbers of job seekers seeking support and assistance. As discussed in the next chapter, additional implementation studies featuring site visits to a stratified random sample of FBO/CBO job clubs could provide a more detailed and representative account of the features of such job clubs in comparison to job clubs operated by AJC and other public sector agencies.

Although the focus of this study was on traditional job clubs (i.e., regularly-scheduled group meetings designed to enhance job search skills and provide ongoing support to individuals as they search for jobs), it is evident that many FBOs and CBOs have expanded their services for job seekers to include activities and instructional sessions that go beyond those of traditional job clubs. Some of the FBOs and CBOs visited during the site visits offered job clubs as only one component of a more comprehensive menu of services for job seekers that also included smaller “accountability groups” that met until all job seekers found employment, individual or a series of instructional workshops, one-on-one job search assistance and guidance, additional networking sessions, access to websites with job listings/jobs sought and job fairs. The New Birth Missionary Baptist Church’s Employment Network Ministry in Atlanta, for example, does not operate regularly scheduled job club meetings but instead has sponsored large job fairs and also links job seekers in the congregation with volunteer church members who can provide individual job search assistance.

Finally, the site visits shed considerable light on the extent to which FBOs and CBOs sponsoring job clubs collect data on program participants and the extent to which they have in the past and are likely in the future to embrace rigorous evaluation. Key findings with respect to data collection and evaluation are the following:

- FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs rarely collect in-depth information on participants, activities, and outcomes -- while collecting name and other contact information, CBOs and FBOs do not typically collect other identifying information, such as SSNs, that would enable an evaluator to link individual data to administrative data such as Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records;
- Many FBOs/CBOs (and all the ones visited for this study) do not maintain automated management information systems that provide information about participants’ background characteristics, services received, or outcomes; and
- FBOs and CBOs are generally opposed to participating in an evaluation that involves random assignment and often do not have excess demand for their services – hence,

for most FBOs/CBOs, random assignment would mean turning away job seekers who could have been served.

As discussed in the next chapter, these factors are likely to present substantial challenges to future efforts to implement experimental and non-experimental impact evaluations at FBOs/CBOs in order to rigorously evaluate the outcomes/impacts of their job clubs.

CHAPTER 4: ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION DESIGNS FOR POTENTIAL FUTURE RIGOROUS STUDY OF FBO/CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS

As was discussed earlier in the literature review (see Chapter 2), while public sector-sponsored job clubs have been rigorously evaluated through randomized controlled trial (RCT) impact studies in the past, no such studies have been conducted of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. If feasible, future experimental and/or non-experimental evaluation efforts would help to better understand the impacts and cost-effectiveness of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs, particularly given the low cost and considerable reach of these initiatives in serving job seekers who may not be served by the public workforce system. This chapter examines a range of experimental and non-experimental approaches to future evaluations of FBO/CBO-operated job clubs, with a particular focus on whether it would be feasible to rigorously estimate net impacts of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. This chapter is divided into the following sections: (a) an overview of potential outcomes and explanatory variables that could be the focus of rigorous evaluation; (b) an assessment of the potential for experimental research designs; (c) an exploration of the potential for non-experimental research designs; (d) discussion of the potential for process/implementation evaluations; and (e) conclusions and recommendations for future evaluations of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs.

Before considering alternative research designs, it is important to reiterate that there are some serious constraints on conducting rigorous experimental/non-experimental evaluations of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs, which have been highlighted in earlier sections of this report (particularly Chapter 3):

- FBOs/CBO job clubs rarely collect in-depth information on job club participant characteristics, activities and services received, and employment/earnings outcomes;

- CBOs and FBOs rarely collect identifying information, such as SSNs, that would enable an evaluator to link individual data to administrative data such as Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records;
- FBOs/CBOs (and all the ones visited for this study) do not typically maintain automated management information systems that track participants' background characteristics, services received, and outcomes; and
- FBOs and CBOs are unlikely to give consideration to participation in an evaluation that involves random assignment and often do not have excess demand for their services – hence, for most FBOs/CBOs, random assignment would mean turning away individuals who could have been served.

All these factors are likely to confound efforts to implement experimental and non-experimental impact evaluations at FBOs/CBOs – and may, in fact, make it impossible to conduct rigorous evaluations. Finally, even if it is possible to overcome these hurdles, the small number of participants served by most FBO/CBO job clubs is likely to make it challenging to rigorously estimate impacts, unless such impact studies combine observations across sites and/or the enrollment period for the evaluation lasts several (or even many) years. With these constraints in mind, this chapter examines a range of potentially feasible research designs.

A. POTENTIAL OUTCOME AND EXPLANATORY VARIABLES FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND NON-EXPERIMENTAL EVALUATIONS OF FBO/CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS

Potential outcome measures that should be collected for each job club participant to support an impact evaluation are the following:

- Employment status following participation in the job club (e.g., at 3, 6, 12, and 24 months from the first date of attendance at the job club or from the date of exit);
- Hourly wage rates and hours worked following participation in the job club (e.g., at 3, 6, 12, and 24 months from the first date of attendance at the job club or from the date of exit); and

- Quarterly earnings for up to three years after the first date of attendance or alternatively, after participation in the job club concludes²⁶.

While some impact evaluations use analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare outcomes for treatment and control group participants (e.g., the difference in means for the earnings between the treatment and control groups), often multivariate techniques such as multiple regression are used to compare outcomes after adjusting for a set of explanatory, or control, variables. There are several important reasons for using explanatory variables in multivariate models, including the following:

- to increase the precision of estimated program effects;
- to control for “confounding factors” in non-experimental designs that would otherwise result in biased estimates of program effects;
- to estimate interactions between individual characteristics (as captured by the explanatory variables) and program effects; and
- to generally improve understanding of the determinants of outcomes for intervention participants.

Among the potential explanatory variables (collected on each job club attendee) that would likely be needed and should be considered for collection to support experimental and nonexperimental evaluation efforts are the following:

- Demographic variables (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, disability status, etc.);
- Educational attainment and credentials;
- Previous work history and earnings (e.g., occupation, hours worked, wages/earnings, number of month unemployed prior to attending job club);

²⁶ It is possible to track employment and earnings outcomes from either the date of first attendance or at the time of exit from the job club. With regard to exit date, it often can be difficult to determine the exact date of exit for job club attendees because attendance patterns may be erratic, with participants missing sessions and then attending after several weeks, then missing sessions, and so on. The start of job club attendance is generally easier to establish, but it is possible that individuals will still be attending job clubs at 3, 6 or even 12 months after their start date. In random assignment experimental studies, often the date of random assignment is used to time subsequent points of follow-up data collection.

- Programmatic inputs (e.g., job club workshop sessions/hours attended, receipt of one-on-one assistance; completion of resume by the end of job club; receipt of other job club-related assistance; and receipt of other job readiness and training assistance from the Employment Service, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program, and the local public workforce system/American Job Centers); and
- Environmental-specific factors (e.g., economic characteristics of the labor market to which the job club participant is seeking employment).

Given the lack of participant data, service utilization, and outcome data currently being collected by FBOs/CBOs, as well as the lack of automated data systems and unwillingness to burden staff and participants with additional data collection, it is likely that considerable effort (accompanied by technical assistance) would be needed by interested FBOs/CBOs to collect even a portion of these data items. It is likely to be necessary if such rigorous studies were to be conducted that the funder would need to carefully recruit FBOs/CBOs and make certain of their willingness and capacity to implement new data collection forms and/or data systems. Based on our observations and analysis, it is unlikely that most FBOs/CBOs would be willing to obtain identifying information (i.e., SSNs) that has been used in past rigorous evaluation studies of public sector training initiatives to match participants with Unemployment Insurance wage record data (or National Directory of New Hires Data, NDNH). Overall, based on discussions conducted with stakeholders and with FBO/CBO administrators/staff during site visits, DOL, foundations, and others interested in funding such rigorous studies would need substantial cooperation on the part of FBOs/CBOs to overcome the very substantial hurdles to mounting experimental and non-experimental impact studies, which are the focus of the next two sections of this report.

B. POTENTIAL EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGNS FOR EVALUATING FBO/CBO JOB CLUBS

Randomized social science experiments are a type of controlled experiment that happens outside a laboratory environment; they use the same random assignment methods as are used for experiments in the physical and biological sciences. A substantial number of social science experiments have been conducted over the past 50 years. Experimental methods are used because they have a high degree of credibility, as randomization assures that those who experience the policy change (the experimental group) are like, in all important ways, those who do not experience it (the control group), except for the difference in treatment/policy itself. Randomized experiments can only be effective if the treatment is significantly different from the services received by the control group. The sample size must also be adequate to assure that differences in outcomes between the treatment and control groups are due to the treatment rather than chance.²⁷

The experimental method has weaknesses, but it should be noted that the weaknesses apply to non-experimental evaluations as well. A common weakness is that the results of the experiment may not generalize to types of individuals other than those enrolled in the experiment, or to different areas with different economic and programmatic environments, or to policies that differ slightly from those tested in the experiment. In evaluation terminology this is the “external validity” problem. The severity of this problem can be reduced if a large number of experiments are conducted in multiple sites, on different populations, and with different policy features. Despite these weaknesses, the strengths of experiments are great. Even if the results

²⁷ During the planning phase of experimental studies it is important to determine the “minimum detectable effect” (MDE) to ensure appropriate sample size. The concept of minimum detectable effect (MDE) was identified by Bloom (1995) and others as a practical way to summarize the statistical power of a particular evaluation design. Orr (1999) describes the MDE as “the smallest true impact that would be found to be statistically significantly different from zero at a specified level of significance with specified power.”

may not be completely generalizable and even if they do not always capture all the relevant effects of the program, they provide more credible evidence than other methods.

1. Types of Experiments

There are two ways to conduct random assignment experiments. The first involves denial of services to a control group in order to test the treatment. The second involves enhancing the treatment such that the offer of the normal treatment becomes the control group, while the enhanced treatment becomes the treatment for the experimental group.

Denial of services becomes more practical when resources are limited and the offer of the treatment is presented as a lottery in which the winners receive the treatment.²⁸ Even in these cases, however, resistance often develops to the implementation of the experiment. For example, the latest evaluation of the Job Corps involved denial of services – treatment group members were offered Job Corps slots, while controls were not – and strong objections were made by youth who were denied participation in the Job Corps program during the enrollment period for the experiment. This denial of service could be a serious obstacle to overcome with respect to implementation of random assignment to rigorously evaluate job clubs operated by FBO/CBOs, in part, because FBO/CBO staff and volunteers would likely be reluctant to deny job seekers within their community needed assistance. There is an added challenge that such organizations would have heightened concerns over being perceived within their communities as denying services to needy job seekers, and that such denial of services would cut against the grain of the

²⁸ Such denial of services may be more readily accepted by program operators and policy makers when there is excess demand for the services (e.g., a waiting list), so that in the absence of the experiment some individuals who might qualify for services cannot be served because of a lack of available resources to serve them. In this case (when there is excess demand for services than can be supplied), even with random assignment to treatment and control groups the same or similar numbers of individuals may be served as would be the case if an experiment was not used.

underlying mission of churches and other non-profit organizations to serve their communities. Particularly in the case of churches and congregations, there may be a strong resistance to incorporating random assignment (and denial of services) because of faith or spiritual beliefs related to not turning away anyone within the community in need of help.

“Bump ups” of services as an experimental method may be met with less resistance. The treatment group is offered enhanced services, while the control group continues to be offered the traditional services. For example, during the operation of eight Unemployment Insurance experiments, the control group was offered traditional job search assistance and training services. The treatment groups, on the other hand, were either offered enhanced job search assistance and training, or they were offered additional services such as relocation services, reemployment bonuses, or self-employment assistance. In no case was there an objection by members of the control groups about not being offered enhanced services (Wandner 2010). Although FBOs/CBOs are unlikely to object to an experimental evaluation where both groups receive a treatment, none of the sites visited offered, or had intentions of offering, more than one treatment, and none of the sites (with the possible exception of McLean Bible Church) included sufficient observations for an experiment to be likely to achieve statistically significant impact estimates.

2. Applying Experimental Methods to the Rigorous Evaluation of FBO/CBO-Sponsored Job Clubs

Given the recent history of experimental evaluations of employment and training initiatives in the United States and the ability of such studies to generate rigorous net impact estimates of intervention effects (e.g., on employment and earnings), it is sensible to consider using an experimental research design in evaluating the job clubs operated by FBOs and CBOs. Implementing an experimental design involves random assignment to treatment (i.e., eligibility

to attend the job club) and control (i.e., no attendance at the job club) groups is likely problematic for most FBOs/CBOs (perhaps all) because of the necessity of denying some job seekers access to the job club services. While it may be possible to convince a select group of larger FBOs or CBOs to be part of such an experimental study, discussions with stakeholders and site visits conducted under this study suggested a low probability of recruiting any such organizations to an experimental study featuring total denial of services to control group members.

The only potentially realistic experimental design option would appear to be a study involving an enhancement of services. This approach would make sense if there were an interest on the part of the participating organization (and the evaluation sponsor) in enhancing the current job club that is being offered. Such enhancements could be accomplished by extending the time/or intensity of a job club (e.g., offering a job club that meets once a week and another one that meets 2 or 3 times a week, or adding a supplementary series of workshops to a basic job club meeting that only the treatment group would receive). It could also be of use, for example, in testing the effectiveness of a new curriculum (or added components to a curriculum) versus an existing curriculum. However, such a design does not make sense if the objective is to evaluate the net impact of the current job club model versus the absence of attending the job club. If there is a desire to estimate the impact of the current program relative to no program, non-experimental methods would in most likelihood have to be used (and these are explored in the next section of this report).

C. POTENTIAL NON-EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGNS FOR EVALUATING FBO/CBO JOB CLUBS

As described in the previous section, the use of randomized controlled trials (RCTs) is only really feasible for evaluating job club programs for a differential impact analysis where the RCT is used to compare the impacts of alternative treatments rather than the impact of the program compared to no treatment. In this section, two potential non-experimental evaluation impact approaches are explored – an instrumental variables approach known as “randomized encouragement” and propensity score matching (PSM) – and we offer our assessment of the likely appropriateness of each of these non-experimental approaches. Additionally, it should be noted, several other non-experimental research designs – before/after, regression discontinuity, and interrupted time series designs – were examined but were found to be inappropriate or infeasible for assessing impacts of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs.

1. Instrumental Variables Using “Randomized Encouragement”

Given the difficulties of using the more common evaluation approaches, it is worth considering the use of an instrumental variables approach known as “randomized encouragement.”²⁹ In this approach, potential FBO/CBO job club users would be divided into a treatment and control group using random assignment. The treatment group would then be encouraged to participate in a FBO/CBO job club by providing them with information about the program and perhaps a small allowance to defray the costs of attending, while the control group would receive nothing. Note that in the randomized encouragement model, the treatment is not randomly assigned, but the encouragement to participate is; we use the terms treatment group and control group to refer to encouragement status, not job search club participation status. Assuming that data on actual participation in the job club can be obtained, two-stage least

²⁹ See West et al. (2008) for a description of randomized

squares, a form of instrumental variables estimation, can be used to estimate the impact of job club participation on the outcomes of interest. If the encouragement has the desired effect of increasing participation in the program, then the conditions for use of instrumental variables are met, namely that the instrument is correlated with the treatment variable of interest (participation in a job club), but is not related to the outcome variable of interest in any other way (which is assured by the random assignment to encouragement status).

The evaluation would be conducted as follows. First, a pool of potential job club users must be identified and randomly assigned to encouragement treatment or control status. If a state unemployment insurance (UI) office were willing to participate, targeted claimants could be assigned to encouragement status at the time of their initial claim or at some other pre-designated time, e.g., after the sixth week of the claim. Those in the treatment group would receive an inducement to enroll in a FBO/CBO job club, while those in the control group would receive no inducement. The inducement would include, at a minimum, information on the job club(s) of interest including the time and location of meetings. Stronger encouragement could include financial inducements such as a transportation allowance to attend the job club. The FBO/CBO job clubs participating would have to agree to provide the names and Social Security numbers of treatment and control group members who participate to the entity evaluating the program. The evaluation would make use of encouragement status, participation status, information on the individual from the UI claim application and wage records to estimate the impact of the job club on employment and earnings using two-stage least squares.

There are, however, both practical and statistical issues that must be investigated before it can be determined if this approach would be an appropriate choice for an evaluation. On the practical side, one key problem is that the strategy requires the FBO/CBO job clubs that are to be

evaluated to provide the evaluator with the participation status of all claimants randomly assigned to treatment and control encouragement status. As noted previously, FBO/CBO job clubs are generally reluctant to collect Social Security numbers, but that would be the most accurate way to identify members of the treatment and control groups who participate in the job club. A second potential problem is that the state Unemployment Insurance agency may balk at providing any form of encouragement to attend a private sector job club, particularly a faith-based job club.

The randomized encouragement model is subject to the dangers noted by Angrist and Krueger (2001) and Murray (2006). First, the instrument, random encouragement, may be a “weak instrument” in the sense that there is not a strong correlation between encouragement and participation; in this situation the evaluation is likely to produce very imprecise estimates or biased estimates. Second, the two-stage estimator is only asymptotically unbiased, so for small samples, it may produce biased estimates of the impact. Third, two-stage least squares may produce biased estimates of the standard errors, although there are approaches available to correct for this. Another limitation of this proposed approach is that it is applicable only for Unemployment Insurance claimants. There is no way to tell if the impacts estimated would apply to other groups of potential job club participants.

As is apparent from the limitations described above, the randomized encouragement approach is not ideal. However, given the unlikelihood of being able to perform random assignment on job club status and the difficulties in developing an appropriate propensity score matching approach (discussed in the next section), a randomized encouragement evaluation approach is worth exploring.

2. Propensity Score Matching (PSM)

Propensity score matching (PSM) is a commonly used method of developing a comparison group that is similar on characteristics that affect program participation and outcomes of interest. The primary motivation for using PSM is that those receiving the treatment of interest may differ systematically from those not receiving the treatment, so rather than compare all who receive the treatment with all who do not, one needs to restrict the comparison group to those who are as similar as possible to those who receive the treatment.

One way to obtain treatment and comparison groups that are similar is to match them on observed characteristics. As there are generally a large number of characteristics that could be matched on, and it would be difficult or impossible to match exactly on continuous variables, Rosenbaum and Rubin (1985) developed propensity score matching as a means to construct a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group where, instead of attempting to match on a large number of characteristics, the match is performed on a single variable, namely the propensity (probability) of participating in the treatment. Although there are many variations on propensity score matching, the basic approach follows the steps described by Caliendo and Kopeinig (2008):

- Using data for treatment group members and those who have not received the treatment, estimate a statistical model that produces an equation predicting the probability that a person with various characteristics will receive the treatment.³⁰
- Select a matching mechanism to determine which individuals who do not receive the treatment will be assigned to the comparison group.³¹

³⁰ Typically logistic regression analysis is used where the dependent variable is treatment status.

³¹ Caliendo and Kopeinig (2008) and Smith and Todd (2005) suggest a number of matching strategies. The simplest approach is one-to-one matching, where for each treatment group person, a comparison group person is selected on the basis of having the closest propensity score; a variation on this approach is many-to-one matching. Other approaches include kernel density matching and local linear regression matching where all or most of the nonparticipants are included in the analysis but those who are poor matches are assigned zero or low weight in the analysis. Other refinements to the matching procedure

- Check the data to make certain that the treatment and comparison group samples span the same range in their probabilities of receiving the treatment, and eliminate cases where there is no overlap.
- Determine if the quality of the match is adequate, and if it is not, refine the equation for estimating propensity scores until adequate matches are obtained.³²
- Estimate the impact using analysis of variance, regression analysis, or difference-in-difference regression analysis.
- Conduct sensitivity analysis to determine if variations in matching or analysis affect the estimated impacts.

The primary weakness of propensity score matching is that it relies on the strong assumption that all the variables that affect treatment status and the outcome variable are included in the match. Moreover, it is impossible to test whether this assumption is met. There is some disagreement in the research community as to how well results from propensity score matching are similar to the results from RCTs.

None of the studies that have analyzed impact estimates using propensity score matching conclude that the approach is always valid. Barnow (2010) notes that most of the studies find that propensity score matching works best when certain conditions are met:

- It is important to only include observations in the region of common support, where the probabilities of participating are nonzero for both treatment group members and comparison group members,
- Data for the treatment and comparison groups should be drawn from the same data source, or the same questions should be asked of both groups.
- Comparison group members should be drawn from the same geographic area as the treatment group.

include methods in which cases where there are no good matches are excluded and selection of observations with or without replacement.

³² One approach to determine if the groups are similar is to use t-tests to determine if the treatment and matched comparison groups have statistically significant differences on each of the explanatory variables.

- It is important to understand and statistically control for the variables used to select people into the treatment group and to control for variables correlated with the outcomes of interest.
- Differences in difference estimators appear to produce less bias than cross section matching in several of the studies, but it is not clear that this is always the case.

There are several reasons why propensity score matching is unlikely to be useful for evaluating FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. First, propensity score matching requires a rich set of variables that can explain how eligible individuals are selected for treatment and comparison group status; yet, FBOs/CBOs rarely collect any data on the characteristics of their participants, making it unlikely that suitable matching characteristics could be found. Second, these organizations do not collect outcome data and are generally unwilling to collect Social Security numbers that could be used to obtain outcome data from other sources such as state unemployment insurance wage records. Third, most FBO/CBO programs have few participants, typically less than 30 at any given time; thus, in most instances, the impact evaluation would be likely to have too few observations to generate statistically significant findings. Finally, Cook, Shadish, and Wong (2008) have noted that propensity score matching tends to work best when the selection process is well understood and the selection variables are available for the analysis; at this time we know little about how individuals select into such programs. Thus, while technically feasible, it is unlikely that in evaluating FBO/CBO job clubs propensity score matching can be used to isolate the effects of the job club from other factors that affect employment and earnings. Overall, we do not recommend that PSM be used as a method for estimating impacts of FBO/CBO job club attendance.

D. POTENTIAL PROCESS/IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION DESIGNS FOR EVALUATING FBO/CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS

A process or implementation evaluation³³ involves the systematic collection and synthesis of information on the program environment and processes. A recent World Bank publication (Gertler et.al., 2011) provides a working definition of “process evaluation”:

...A process evaluation is an evaluation that tries to establish the level of quality or success of the processes of a program; for example, adequacy of the administrative processes, acceptability of the program benefits, clarity of the information campaign, internal dynamics of implementing organizations, their policy instruments, their service delivery mechanisms, their management practices, and the linkages among these.

Similarly, Holcolmb and Nightingale (2003) note the “term implementation analysis is used as an umbrella term referring to a range of studies that address the ways public policies are developed and implemented – from the early stages when legislation is formulated and regulations developed, to the actual delivery of services at the grass roots level, and all administrative, political, and operational stages in between.”

With regard to assessing FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs, a process/implementation evaluation could be initiated as a stand-alone study or as a component of a comprehensive impact evaluation effort. Such process/implementation evaluations – which provide contextual information to support analyses of program outcomes, impacts, and costs – would be complementary to the various types of experimental/non-experimental evaluations of the job clubs discussed earlier. Additionally, such studies may also provide feedback that can be helpful in identifying differences across job clubs operated by the public sector, CBOs, and FBOs, as well as in efforts to refine the curriculum or instructional methods across job clubs.

A first step in planning a process evaluation of FBO/CBO-based job clubs would be to determine the key evaluation questions that would be the focus of the effort, and then to tailor the

³³ Holcomb and Nightingale (2003) observe that “research that describes and explains how programs, policies, and procedures are translated into operation goes by different names: implementation research, process analysis, management research, organizational analysis, case study research, or simply qualitative research.” In this memorandum we primarily use the term “process” or “implementation” research.

types of data collection and analysis activities to address each of the questions. Once the overall purpose and key evaluation questions have been determined, the next step in the planning process is to identify specific types of data collection to be undertaken. Common data collection methods employed in process evaluation, which could be readily applied to assessment of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs, include: (1) site visits; (2) focus groups with job club participants; (3) customer satisfaction surveys with job club participants; and (4) implementation of participant tracking systems. Each of these major types of data collection activities are briefly discussed below in relation to evaluating FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs (anticipating that a detailed process/implementation study design would be completed prior to conduct of any such evaluation effort).

1. Site Visits

An overall goal of observational visits is to determine how job clubs actually operate and the variation in structure, curriculum, instructional methods, etc. that are present across FBO/CBO job clubs. Such visits could also be used to examine the environmental context, including other services available within the local area, economic conditions in the local area, and the extent to which and how the FBO/CBO-operated job club is connected to the public workforce system/American Job Centers.

During the planning phase for such site visits, it will be critical to determine the number of job clubs to be observed and how job clubs will be selected. If the findings from the study are to be used to determine how FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs operate generally, a representative sample is desirable and can be selected by picking, a (possibly stratified) random sample of job clubs. In addition to selecting FBO/CBO job clubs for site visits, it also might be useful to

conduct visits to job clubs operated by public sector organizations in the same localities (to provide a comparison). If such job clubs do not exist, local workforce agencies in the same localities could be visited to learn more about why these organizations do not offer a job club and the extent to which the public sector workforce agency collaborates with the FBO/CBO job club(s) in its locality and to gain views from public sector officials on these FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. There is no exact number of site visits that should be selected, with the number to be conducted governed by available budget, the extent of variability in the implementation of job clubs, and the extent to which there is a desire to capture diversity of FBO/CBO implementation by type of workshop (e.g., religiously/spiritually infused versus more secularly based job clubs), numbers attending the job club, geographic location, and other characteristics. A good starting point might be to conduct site visits at 10 to 15 FBO/CBO job clubs, then gauge the extent of variation/diversity in implementation of the job clubs and extent to which job clubs are meeting the needs of job seekers.

An observational site visit guide(s) should be developed to ensure that site visitors are observing job clubs on the same factors/dimensions and using the same scale for their ratings on factors. It will also be critical to provide training for site visitors prior to conducting the visits to ensure there is similarity across sites in terms of how interviews are conducted, how site program components/activities (such as job club meetings) are observed and rated, and analyses and other products that emerge from each visit. In planning for site visits, separate discussion guides should be developed to guide discussions with different types of respondents (e.g., job club administrators, facilitators, etc.).³⁴ During visits, semi-structured interviews should be conducted with program administrators/facilitators to gain their input on their approach to

³⁴ Appendix B provides the discussion guides used during interviews with the FBO/CBO administrators/staff for this exploratory study. These guides serve as a sample of the structure and types of instruments that could be used – and may provide a starting point for developing such instrumentation.

facilitating job club sessions, the time allocated to various job club modules/activities, the challenges in conducting job clubs (e.g., issues with regard to the curriculum, the views on the workshop facility/equipment, etc.), and suggestions for improving job club activities or curriculum. During each visit, it will be important for the two- or three-person site visit team to observe the job club session or series of workshops, as a job club attendee would view the session. Following each visit, a brief site visit report or detailed tables on FBO/CBO site characteristics should be prepared, intended to support and facilitates cross-site analyses/synthesis.

2. Focus Groups with Job Club Participants

As part of the site visit, or separately, focus groups³⁵ could be conducted with job club participants to obtain their perspectives on the job club they attended. Focus groups would provide an excellent and relatively low-cost opportunity to collect job club attendee perspectives about the structure, substantive content, delivery, and helpfulness of the job club in helping each attendee in planning a job search and securing a job. Krueger and Casey (2010) note the importance of conducting focus groups for a variety of evaluation efforts: "...Focus groups are a wonderful method for gathering information for formative and summative evaluations. But don't limit your use of focus groups to the time after a program is implemented or completed. Focus group interviews are also valuable for getting information in the design phases of programs, policies, and even evaluations."

Such focus groups would likely provide further explanations of what might be observed during site visits to job clubs, as well as what might be found in analyses of customer satisfaction

³⁵ A focus group is defined as "a small group of people whose response to something (as a new product or a politician's image) is studied to determine the response that can be expected from a larger population." (Source: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary)

surveys and administrative data on participant outcomes, and other data collection activities. For example, focus groups with job club attendees may help in better understanding how participants react to each job club session/module and which are felt to be most/least important or helpful (and why), views on the job club facility, what exercises/activities were found to be most helpful, whether participants were able to complete their resume, and what participants would change about the workshop.

The steps involved in planning focus groups are relatively similar regardless of the types of individuals included in the group. The first planning step involves determining the scope and purpose of the focus groups, particularly in terms of the study questions each group can effectively address. Once the objectives of each focus group are determined, the next step would involve determining the number and location where each focus group would occur. The number of focus groups to conduct is somewhat subjective, though in all likelihood a good starting point would be to conduct five to seven focus groups (each involving eight to 12 participants). A third planning step involves the development of discussion guides to provide structure to focus groups and ensure that critical topics are covered. Krueger (2010) notes the importance of not only defining questions that are to be addressed but also the sequencing of questions:

...The questions used in a focus group interview are carefully sequenced so that they focus more and more specifically on the key topic of the study. That is, the questions progressively direct participants into discussing the topic in greater detail and more depth. In other interview environments the researcher might ask the most important questions first or use an informal, unstructured approach to interviewing. These strategies are not used in focus group interviews.

Once planning for the visits has been completed and agreement has been gained on where each of the focus groups should occur, the activities involved in conducting the focus groups are likely to include the following:

- **Recruitment of Focus Group Participants.** A strategy is needed for identifying and selecting job club participants for the focus groups. Selection should be conducted to produce to the extent possible a representative cross-section of workshop participants (i.e., so that focus group attendees are not “cherry-picked”). One potential cost-effective approach is to conduct focus groups at the conclusion of the observational site visits, and to randomly select eight to 12 participants from the roster of job club attendees over the past month or quarter. When selecting individuals to attend focus groups it is important to take into consideration the likelihood of no-shows (e.g., it may be necessary to select/invite 15 to 20 job club attendees to yield 8 to 12 focus group participants). To help encourage participation in the focus groups by those selected, it may also be necessary to offer an incentive payment (e.g., typically between \$25 and \$50), especially to recruit individuals who may have attended job clubs in the past but are now employed.
- **Identify an Appropriate Facility for the Focus Group.** It may be possible to conduct the focus group in the conference room where the job club is held or another nearby conference room on/near the organization sponsoring the job club. There also are professional focus group facilities (which are located throughout the country), as well as conference rooms at American Job Centers or other public employment agencies that could potentially host focus group sessions.
- **Conduct the Focus Group.** Within a focus group setting, a moderator guides the discussion, making sure to incorporate all of the focus group participants in the discussion. The moderator utilizes a discussion guide, but listens carefully to responses and follows up with questions to further probe participant responses. Krueger (2010) emphasizes the important role that the moderator plays in engaging focus group participants. Questions are usually open-ended and intended to generate a variety of viewpoints. Typically, focus group discussions last about 90 minutes, during which it is possible to cover six to eight major topics. Focus groups provide an ideal opportunity to gauge where views of group members converge or diverge and to probe in considerable detail the perspectives of focus group members. Krueger (2010, p. 381) notes the importance of obtaining a range of perspectives from focus group participants. Focus groups are often video- or audio-taped. In the absence of a video/audio recording, it is essential to keep careful notes of the dialogue throughout the session.
- **Summarize the Results of the Focus Group.** Immediately following each focus group, it is important to draft a summary of the focus group discussion. This synthesis should capture the main points made by participants on each of the subjects covered, including points of consensus and disagreement among focus group members. If available, this synthesis can be supplemented with an video or audiotape of the focus group session.³⁶

3. Customer Satisfaction and Participant Follow-up Surveys

³⁶For more detail on focus groups and the step-by-step instructions in planning and conducting focus groups see: Kreuger (2010).

Customer satisfaction surveys are one method available to determine and track job club attendees' engagement in and perspectives on an FBO/CBO-sponsored job club. Such a survey could be conducted periodically (once yearly or quarterly) or on job club participants once they exit the workshop. Such surveys can be conducted by having participants complete a form (manually), by sending out a mailing, by telephone, or Internet. Using an Internet application, it is possible to easily (and at very low cost) deliver the survey to participants and, depending upon the software used, it is possible to instantaneously tabulate results by question as survey responses are completed. The advantage of in-person completion of the survey (for example, the last 10 minutes of a job club meeting) is that response rate is likely to be high (though the particular meeting may not be representative of meeting held throughout a year or quarter). In developing customer satisfaction surveys, care should be taken to ensure that the survey is not overly burdensome (e.g., can be completed in not more than about 10 to 15 minutes). Often a 5-point Likert scale is used in customer satisfaction surveys. The instrument should also include several qualitative open-ended questions that allow for more detailed identification of strengths, weaknesses, and ways in which curriculum or facilitation of the job club could be enhanced.

While conducting a customer satisfaction survey at the conclusion of the workshop is useful for gauging participant views about the job club curriculum and facilitation, it might be useful to supplement such a customer satisfaction survey with a follow-up survey at six or 12 months after the participant begins or concludes attendance at the job club. Often the date of first attendance is a more solid date for timing follow-up surveys, as participants sometimes disappear and then re-engage with job clubs – making it difficult to fix a date of exit. However the issue with using begin date is that it is possible that a participant will not have become employed and is still attending the job club six months or a year after beginning the job club.

4. Job Club Participant Tracking System

The FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs visited as part of this study did not employ automated management information or participant tracking systems to support systematic and in-depth analysis of participant characteristics, services received, or employment/earnings outcomes. With a few exceptions, they also did not use detailed (manual) participant forms to collect data on job club participants at the time of entry into the program or during their participation, with the exception in some instances of documenting attendance at job club sessions. Most FBO/CBO administrators and staff indicated that their organizations did not need extensive data about job club attendees and that they did not want to burden staff or participants with completing additional forms and/or entering participant data into automated data systems.³⁷ However, it is possible that some FBOs and CBOs operating job clubs, similar to their public sector counterparts, would be interested in and benefit from collecting some additional participant-level data. Such collection of participant-level data could benefit sponsoring organizations from the standpoint of monitoring and assessing program performance, as well as (if interested) reporting on program results. For interested FBOs and CBOs, it might be useful to consider implementing two participant tracking forms: (1) a participant intake form to capture characteristics of new job club participants (e.g., several demographics, education and employment background, career/job interests, and potential barriers to employment) , and (2) a service receipt and employment/earnings outcomes tracking form. Examples of two fairly streamlined forms that interested job clubs could potentially implement are provided in

³⁷ See Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion of concerns of FBOs/CBOs toward implementing additional data collection forms and automated participant tracking systems.

Appendix F. (Note: The two forms in Appendix F are samples, which can and should be tailored to individual job club requirements, operations, and capabilities.). The collection of outcome data (on employment and earnings) could be timed to either the date job seekers start or exit from the job club (with the sample forms in Appendix F using date of exit from the job club). Finally, the sample forms (and other participant-level data collected) could be entered into automated participant data systems to facilitate data analysis and reporting, including using software applications that operate on stand-alone personal computers (such as Microsoft Access, STATA, SPSS-PC) or more complex web-based or mainframe software applications.³⁸

E. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE EVALUATION OF FBO/CBO JOB CLUBS

Overall, for reasons stated earlier and throughout this chapter – particularly FBO/CBO inability/unwillingness to collect significant amounts of data on job club participants and reluctance to consider random assignment of job seekers to treatment or control groups – the prospects for rigorous (experimental) evaluation of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs appear to be bleak. It is a remote possibility that a select group of FBOs/CBOs could be enticed to be part of an enhancement/bump-up type experimental study, though such a study would not be helpful in determining the net impact of enrollment versus non-enrollment in a job club – but rather would only explore incremental effects of some added feature to an existing job club. Such a study would need to carefully select among CBO/FBOs serving sufficient numbers of job seekers (likely to be in the neighborhood of 400 to 500 job seekers, unless pooling of samples is possible across sites) and provide substantial levels of technical assistance to ensure that: (1) an appropriate point of randomization is established, (2) treatment group members receive the enhanced services in an appropriate dosage and that there is no contamination of individuals

³⁸ If such participant forms or participant-level systems are implemented it is essential to also design and implement security procedures to protect participant confidentiality.

assigned to the control group, (3) participating organizations collect data elements necessary to support the analysis part of the study (including necessary personal identifiers, services received, and if appropriate outcomes, all of which organizations may be reluctant to collect), and (4) a participant tracking system is designed and implemented to support random assignment and secure maintenance of participant characteristics, services, and outcomes.

With respect to non-experimental study designs, while before/after, regression discontinuity, and interrupted time series research designs do not appear appropriate or feasible, there is some potential for using “randomized encouragement” and propensity score matching (PSM). Most promising of these two non-experimental methods is the random encouragement approach, though as discussed earlier in this chapter such an approach is likely to run into a host of implementation challenges.

Building on this exploratory study, perhaps the most promising (and feasible) next step from an evaluation perspective would be to conduct more detailed process/implementation study of FBO/CBO job clubs, possibly in conjunction with AJC job clubs to better define what the distinctions are. A process/implementation study would be applicable to periodic efforts to assess and track implementation of the job clubs over time, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses/challenges of the job clubs from varying perspectives (e.g., job club attendees, job club facilitators, and other organizational administrators/other staff). The strength of such studies is in obtaining contextual information for understanding the environment in which interventions occur, as well as in gaining rich qualitative perspectives on the intervention. Through not providing estimates of impacts of attendance at job clubs (on employment and earnings), such studies can be complementary to experimental/non-experimental studies and help to provide explanations for participant outcomes/impacts. Such information, particularly if

collected over time, can help to identify ways in which job clubs are exceeding or falling short of expectations from various perspectives, and identify potential approaches to improving workshop content, facilitation, facilities, and participant outcomes.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: JOB CLUB EVALUATIONSTAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION GUIDE

Introduction: I am (we are) researchers from the Capital Research Corporation, Inc., a private research organization based in Arlington, VA, which conducts policy-related research on a variety of social welfare and economic issues. Our telephone interview here today is part of an evaluation focusing on job clubs being administered by community-based and faith-based organizations. This project is being conducted by Capital Research Corporation and George Washington University, under contract to the U.S. Department of Labor. As part of this evaluation, we are conducting an initial round of telephone interviews with 7 to 9 individuals knowledgeable about faith-based organizational involvement in job clubs. We would like to take about one hour of your time to discuss your knowledge of job clubs. In our discussions, we have a particular interest in comparing job clubs sponsored by public sector organizations (such as local workforce investment boards or One-Stop Career Centers) with job clubs sponsored by faith-based and community-based organizations. [If your organization sponsors/operates job clubs, we are both interested in learning about your job club, as well as your wider perspectives on job clubs operated by public, community-based, and faith-based organizations.]

Before beginning the interview, I (we) want to thank you for agreeing to participate in the study. I (we) know that you are busy and we will try to be as focused as possible. Before we start, I want to let you know that though we will be taking notes during this interview, when we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all interviews is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified. Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. Before we begin, we'd like to get some general information about you --
 - a. Name
 - b. Organization
 - c. Contact information (address, telephone, e-mail)
 - d. Title/Role at Organization
 - e. For how long and in what capacity have you been involved with or studied job clubs (e.g., researcher, program developer, implementer, etc.) and faith based organizations.
2. Over the past decade, do you believe that the number of faith-based and community-based organizations sponsoring job clubs has increased, stayed the same, or decreased? What about the number of people participating in such job clubs? If there has been a change in either the number of job clubs or the number of participants, what factors are responsible for the increase/decrease? Please discuss and identify any literature/resource that provides data/statistics on the number of faith-based/community-based job clubs in existence or that have formed over the past five years.
3. What types of community-based and faith-based organizations sponsor such job clubs? Why do they hold these clubs?
4. What are the targeted subpopulations (if any) served by faith-based and community-based organizations? Do the subpopulations targeted or served by faith- and community-based organizations differ from the subpopulations targeted/served by public sector sponsored job clubs – and if yes, how?
5. We are particularly interested in identifying differences in the ways in which job clubs operated by faith-based and community-based organizations serve their participants versus those operated by public sector organizations, such as local workforce investment boards, America's Job Centers (or One-Stop Centers), or welfare agencies. Please discuss differences in terms of the following dimensions:

- a. How often and for how long job clubs meet
 - b. Size/numbers attending job club sessions
 - c. Duration/intensity of job club involvement for participants
 - d. Patterns of attendance/extent of attrition from job clubs
 - e. Curriculum used and topics covered during job clubs
 - f. Kinds of instructional methods used (e.g., lecture, small group instruction, peer group discussion, web-based/computer-based instruction)
 - g. Types of instructors/facilitators used
 - h. Extent of case management/peer support/mentoring provided
 - i. Job development/placement assistance provided
 - j. Additional services provided (e.g., transportation, clothing, referral to job training, other support services)
 - k. Inclusion of social and recreational activities
 - l. Inclusion of religious and spiritual activities
 - m. Activities that occur once the participant finds a job (e.g., are they encouraged to continue to attend job club sessions?)
6. To what extent and how do FBO/CBO-sponsored job club interact/partner with the public workforce development system/America's Job Centers? For example, are there referrals to and from the workforce development system? Are FBO/CBO job club participants encouraged to visit and use America's Job Centers/workforce development resources? If so, what public sector workforce services do job club participants use?
 7. What types of data do faith-based and community-based organizations typically collect on job club participant characteristics, services received, and outcomes? For example, are automated data systems being used to track participant characteristics, services received, and outcomes? Do you have any knowledge of how data collection differs between FBO/CBO job clubs and government-sponsored job clubs?
 8. What outcome measures (if any) are being used to assess job club performance in faith- and community-based job clubs and, if known, how do these compare to those collected by public sector organizations conducting job clubs? Some possibilities include:
 - o Number of participants attending job club sessions
 - o Number of participants dropping out of the job club prior to obtaining a job
 - o Average number of job club sessions attended (and range)
 - o Job placement outcomes
 - o Job retention outcomes
 - o Earnings/hourly wages/hours worked
 - o Other outcome measures, such as improved self-esteem or upgrading of skills/educational credentials
 9. Are you familiar with any past or current studies or research that focused on outcomes for participants of faith- or community-based job clubs? If so, please discuss and provide references for evaluations/literature that are specifically focused on this topic.
 - a. Are you aware of any faith-based or community-based organizations operating a job club that has been the focus of a formal evaluation? If yes, what type of evaluation was conducted (e.g., implementation/process evaluation, outcome evaluation, quasi-experimental or experimental net impact evaluation, cost-effectiveness/cost-benefit study)?

- b. Do you think it would be possible to conduct an evaluation involving randomized controlled trials (experimental) to systematically examine job club impacts on participants (i.e., which would involve random assignment of job club candidates to treatment and control groups, similar to experiments currently used to test new medical treatments)?
 - c. Do you have any suggestions with regard to how a future evaluation could be conducted to more systematically gather data on the outcomes of FBO/CBO job clubs?
10. Finally, is there any other information regarding the operations or potential effectiveness of FBO/CBO job clubs that you haven't shared/we haven't discussed?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX B: JOB CLUB EVALUATION SITE VISIT INTERVIEW GUIDE FBO/CBO-OPERATED JOB CLUBS

Introduction: I am (we are) researchers from the Capital Research Corporation, Inc., a private research organization based in Arlington, VA, which conducts policy-related research on a variety of social welfare and economic issues. Our visit here today is part of an evaluation focusing on job clubs being administered by community-based and faith-based organizations. This project is being conducted by Capital Research Corporation and George Washington University, under contract to the U.S. Department of Labor. A major aim of the evaluation effort is to identify lessons learned from your experiences in conducting job clubs for unemployed and underemployed individuals. As part of this evaluation, we are conducting site visits to six localities across the United States, during which we are interviewing administrators and staff involved in providing job club services. We are here to learn about your job club model, including how you recruit individuals to attend your job club, the services job club participants receive, how participation in your job club helps participants find and keep jobs, and how your job club activities are related to other services and activities your organization provides. Our aim is to learn from your experiences, not audit or judge your programs.

Privacy Statement: Before beginning the interview, I (we) want to thank you for agreeing to participate in the study. I (we) know that you are busy and we will try to be as focused as possible. We have many questions and are going to talk to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. And, we understand that your participation in this discussion is voluntary and you may choose to not answer questions you don't wish to. In addition, before we start, I want to let you know that though we take notes at these interviews, information is never repeated with the name of the respondent. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all interviews is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified. Do you have any questions before we begin? [Respond to questions.]

A. GENERAL JOB CLUB ORGANIZATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

1. Before we begin, we'd like to get some general information on you and verify some information about your organization.
 - a. Organization name
 - b. Contact information (address, telephone, fax, e-mail)
 - c. Website address
2. Obtain the following information on each respondent involved in the interview (note: request a business card from each interviewee):
 - a. Name
 - b. Organization
 - c. Contact information (address, telephone, e-mail)
 - d. Title
 - e. Position/role in the organization and in the job club
 - f. How long the individual has been involved in organization and the job club
3. Please provide background on your organization:
 - a. Type of organization operating the job club (e.g., CBO, church or congregation, 501-c-3)
 - b. In addition to the job club, what other types of services does your organization provide for unemployed or underemployed job seekers?
 -

- Other networking events (please describe.)
 - Resource room?
 - Job readiness, resume, interviewing, other types of workshops
 - One-on-one job placement assistance
 - Job development assistance
 - Job fairs
 - Training services
 - Other types of assistance
- c. Other relevant features about the organization that have affected the job club implementation/operations
4. What is the geographic area from which you principally draw your job club participants? Please generally describe the economic environment for this service area --
- a. Unemployment rate/availability of job openings in area served (generally and for particular population attending job club).
 - b. Other local economic conditions that may affect the job club's ability to recruit and retain participants and the ability of job club participants to find employment (e.g., in- or out-migration of major employers, major layoffs, and natural disasters)

B. JOB CLUB OBJECTIVES AND START-UP

1. When was your job club established?
2. Why did your organization establish the job club? If the job club has been in existence for several years, why does your organization continue to offer the job club?
3. What are the main goals of your job club? Have these goals changed since the establishment of your job club?
4. Please discuss start-up and early implementation experiences of your job club --
 - a. Did your organization start from scratch or draw upon the curriculum or experiences of another existing model?
 - b. Who took the lead in establishing your job club?
 - c. What challenges did your organization run into in planning and initiating your job club?
 - d. What factors facilitated project start-up?
 - e. What factors were barriers to starting the job club?
 - f. What organizations did you work most closely with during the design and start-up of your job club?

C. OUTREACH, INTAKE, AND ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES FOR THE JOB CLUB

1. What methods does your organization use to recruit unemployed/underemployed individuals to attend your job club? Possibilities include:
 - Announcement to the congregation/general membership of organization
 - Distribution of flyers, posters, or other educational/informational
 - Informational websites
 - Toll-free informational hotlines
 - Outreach campaigns using media (e.g., TV, radio, newspaper, ads on buses/bus shelters)

- Orientation workshops/presentations in the community (e.g., at nonprofit organizations, America's Job Centers/One-Stops, other workforce development agencies, neighborhood centers, libraries)
 - Word-of-mouth
 - Web-based recruitment (using Twitter, blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn)
2. Has your organization worked with any other organizations to obtain referrals to your program? Possibilities include:
- Churches/congregations/faith-based organizations
 - Community/nonprofit organizations
 - Workforce system (One-Stops)
 - Courts/correctional system
 - Other
3. Is recruitment for your job club broadly targeted on all unemployed/underemployed individuals in your service area or is it targeted on unemployed/underemployed individuals with specific characteristics? Possibilities include:
- Only members of a congregation
 - Specific neighborhoods/geographic areas
 - Low-income/disadvantaged individuals
 - Adults only
 - Youth only
 - Formerly incarcerated individuals
 - Separating/retiring active duty military personnel
 - Unemployed/underemployed veterans
 - Trade-affected/dislocated workers
 - Older workers/seniors
 - Persons with disabilities
 - Unemployed white-collar workers
 - Individuals dislocated from various manufacturing and service sectors
4. Has your job club experienced recruitment challenges (e.g., inability to find/recruit enough interested individuals for your job club)? If so, what challenges have been encountered and how have each of these challenges been addressed? Some possible challenges include:
- Had difficulty finding unemployed/underemployed individuals
 - Economic conditions have improved so there is not as much need for a job club in the locality
 - Some of the outreach strategies didn't result in many applicants
 - Partner organizations did not provide enough referrals
 - Some applicants had difficulty getting to job club facility (e.g., transportation difficulties)
 - Didn't have enough resources for recruitment
 - Other similar programs competing for the same pool of participants: provide description of the other organizations
5. What incentives and services (if any) have been used to encourage participation and/or retention in the job club? Possible incentives include:
- a. Bus passes/tokens
 - b. Food provided at job club
 - c. Supportive services
 - d. Other

6. Can anyone attend your job club, or is there a process by which individuals are assessed to be eligible or appropriate to attend your job club? If there is a process, who determines eligibility or whether an individual is appropriate to participate in your job club? What, if any, criteria are used to select among candidates recruited? (*ask for copies of any assessment materials*)

Possible criteria includes:

- Be unemployed/underemployed
 - Be referred from other specific organizations or agencies
 - Attend an orientation session
 - Complete a program application
 - Complete an interview with program staff
 - Meet income or other requirements
 - Meet education level requirement (e.g., high school diploma)
 - Take/pass a standardized skills assessment test (e.g., TABE, ABLE, BESI, WorkKeys)
 - Take/pass grantee's own customized skills assessment test
 - Other, please specify
7. Are there any efforts to determine the specific service needs of job club participants? If so, how are the service needs of job club participants determined? Please take us briefly through the assessment process, noting any formal assessment tests that you use prior to or during participation in your job club (e.g., TABE, interest inventories, substance abuse screening).
 8. Is an individual service strategy or employment development plan created for each participant (*note: request a blank copy of the form used*)? If yes, please briefly describe this plan or process.

D. DESCRIPTION OF THE JOB CLUB SERVICES/ACTIVITIES

1. Where (at what location) does the job club meet? Are there multiple locations? Does the location for your job club vary (e.g., from week-to-week)?
2. How often does the job club meet (weekly, bi-weekly, once a month)? For how many hours/minutes is the job club scheduled to meet? Is the actual duration of the job club about the same duration as it is scheduled (e.g., does it run over)? Is the actual duration of each job club variable or about the same?
3. In addition to formal club meetings, do job club members interact with staff or volunteers for assistance at other times or in other situations? If so, please describe purpose and frequency.
4. How is the job club structured? Do individuals start and end as a cohort or is there open entry/open exit to the job club? Is there, for example, a 6- or 10-week series of workshops during which a curriculum is presented systematically from week to week, or is each job club meeting a stand-alone workshop? Is there a separate series of workshops offered at other days/times? Do participants come and go as they please from session to session (e.g., attend a few sessions, skip several, come back) or are they expected to stay engaged in sessions until they secure a job? Once they obtain a job, can and do they continue to attend the job club?
5. What is the typical attendance at the job club (i.e., total number attending and percentage of members attending)? [Note: If available, please provide a table with the number of attendees of each job club held over the past 12 months). Is there much variation in number of job club

attendees each session (minimum/maximum attendees over the last 12 months)? What is the maximum number of attendees that can be handled for a given session? Does anyone ever get turned away because too many show for a particular job club session? What, if any, is the ideal number (or range) of attendees for a given job club session?

6. Is a curriculum used to guide the job club workshop sessions? If yes, could you provide us with a copy of the curriculum and discuss the following –
 - o What is the name of the curriculum? Who developed the curriculum? Was the curriculum purchased or obtained from another organization? Was the curriculum developed in-house? If so, describe the curriculum development process.
 - o Please discuss source(s) of the curriculum – and if more than one source was used, discuss how and the process by which the curriculum was developed.
 - o Please provide an overview of the curriculum – an outline of curriculum modules/key substantive topics covered, amount of time devoted to each module/topic
 - o What kinds of instructional methods are used (e.g., lecture, small group instruction, peer group discussion, web-based/computer-based instruction).

7. How is each job club meeting structured? Is the structure/activities of each meeting basically the same each time or is there substantial variation across job club meetings? Does the structure/activities depend on who is in attendance at each job club meeting? Can you please provide an overview of a typical job club meeting, including overall duration and sequencing/amount of time devoted to specific activities? Please discuss specific types of activities that are included in your job club, such as:
 - o instruction on job readiness and effective job search strategies;
 - o discussions about targeting certain occupations or industry sectors for employment;
 - o time set aside for job club members to plan their job search activities for an upcoming period and to identify specific job leads (through searches on the Internet on job boards and employer websites, discussion among job club members, reviews of classified advertisements, and other networking activities);
 - o assistance on resume and cover letter development/refinement;
 - o discussions among job club participants about challenges and opportunities with respect to job search activities;
 - o invitations to employers to share information on their industry sectors and potential job openings;
 - o conduct of mock (practice) or actual interviews with employers for jobs;
 - o speakers presenting on specific topics; and
 - o testimonials from former/current participants.

8. To what extent are job club sessions/workshops facilitated by a staff member? Who plays the role of the facilitator (e.g., staff, volunteer)? Is the facilitator the same from job club session to job club session? What role does the facilitator play (e.g., providing instruction/lectures, guiding group discussion, working one-on-one or in small groups with participants)?

9. Is there any kind of mentoring/case management component for participants that accompanies (or is offered in addition to) the job club? If there is a mentoring/case management component --
 - o Who provides mentoring/case management services?
 - o What are the credentials of mentors/case managers?
 - o When does the mentoring/case management occur?
 - o How is the match made between the participant and the mentor/case manager? What is the caseload for the case manager/mentor?

- How long does mentoring/case management last (e.g., 6 months, year, until an individual finds a job, etc.)? Is there variation in duration? How often does mentor/case manager meet in-person with participant (minimum, maximum, average)? What other types of contacts occur between participant and mentor/case manager (telephone, email, texting) and how often? What constitutes “completing” mentorship/case management?
 - What activities occur after a person obtains a job?
10. To what extent and how does the FBO/CBO-sponsored job club interact/partner with the public workforce development system/America’s Job Centers? State DOL/ES career centers? For example, are there referrals to and from the workforce development system? Are FBO/CBO job club participants encouraged to visit and use America’s Job Centers/workforce development resources? If so, what public sector workforce services do job club participants use?
11. What are the patterns of attendance at job clubs among participants (e.g., attend each job club until the participant finds a job, attend session and skip several and then attend)? Once individuals begin attending the job club do they continue to attend until they obtain a job? How much attrition is there before job placement? What are the specific reasons for dropping out/attrition prior to obtaining a job? Has job club taken any steps to reduce attrition and, if yes, what specific steps have been taken?
12. Once a participant obtains a job, are they encouraged to continue to attend job club sessions? What additional services, if any, are provided to those successful in obtaining jobs (e.g., job retention services, transportation services, clothing, referral to training and other workforce services, and other support services)? Are participants that find a job encouraged to upgrade their skills and credentials so they can move to better paying jobs? Do participants that find a job come back to the job club to share their experiences?

E. JOB CLUB PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS AND OUTCOMES

1. What types of data are being collected on job club participant characteristics, services received, and outcomes? What specific information do you collect (e.g., name, email address)? For example, is an automated data system being used to track participant characteristics, services received, and outcomes? If available --
 - Please provide copies of the participant forms being used (e.g., intake, assessment, services receipt/tracking, participant outcome forms).
 - Please provide documentation of the automated data system being used (e.g., systems manual, software program being used, whether it is a web-based application, sample screen shots and reports).
2. What outcome measures (if any) are being used to assess job club performance, and if available, please provide data on the following outcomes for the past year for job club attendees (or three years, if possible) –
 - Number of participants attending job club sessions
 - Number of participants dropping out of the job club prior to obtaining a job
 - Average number of job club sessions attended (and range)
 - Job placement outcomes
 - Job retention outcomes
 - Earnings/hourly wages/hours worked
 - Other outcome measures, such as improved self-esteem or upgrading of skills/educational credentials

- Discuss how each of these outcome measures are obtained (e.g., telephone calls conducted with participants/employers and the intervals at which data are collected).
3. Of the strategies or services that you provide through your job club program, which do you feel are most/least effective in helping job club participants to obtain jobs? Are there ways in which your job club has fallen short of its goals for helping participants cope with unemployment and obtain jobs? If yes, how? Are there other approaches, strategies, or services that you believe would contribute to better employment outcomes for the job club participants you serve?
 4. How does your job club differ from activities provided by the public workforce system? Please describe the major similarities and differences in philosophy, approach, characteristics of customers served, services provided, and outcomes.
 5. Has your job club been the focus of a formal evaluation? If yes, what type of evaluation was conducted (e.g., implementation/process evaluation, outcome evaluation, quasi-experimental or experimental net impact evaluation, cost-effectiveness/cost-benefit study)? Please provide final or interim reports that may have been produced under the evaluation effort(s)?
 6. If your job club has not been the subject of an evaluation in the past, would you be willing to be part of a future evaluation? Do you think your organization (or other FBO/CBOs) would be willing to be part of a randomized controlled trial (experimental) evaluation to systematically examine job club impacts on participants [i.e., which would involve random assignment of job club candidates to treatment and control groups, similar to experiments currently used to test new medical treatments)?
 7. Do you have any suggestions with regard to how a future evaluation could be conducted to more systematically gather data on the outcomes of FBO/CBO job clubs?

F. JOP CLUB STAFFING

1. Please describe your organizational structure and staffing arrangement for your job club (if available, please provide an organizational chart)
 - Paid administrators/staff involved in the job club initiative (i.e., role, number, and hours per month or FTE)
 - Number of volunteers (i.e., role, number, and hours per month or FTE)
 - Were there any new hires brought on for the job club initiative
 - What is the experience and/or credentials of administrators/staff/volunteers involved in job clubs
 - How much turnover has there been in job club staff (past 12 months)
2. What kinds of training/staff development activities have been provided for job club staff? Please describe the extent and types of training/staff development activities, including who has conducted the training. Are there areas in which you feel there should have been more staff development/training? If yes, what are those areas?

G. JOB CLUB COSTS/EXPENDITURES

1. If available, what are the costs associated with developing and implementing FBO/CBO job clubs?
2. What are the major ongoing costs/expenditures for the program? If available, please provide a line item budget and line item expenditures report for the most recent year (e.g., breaking down total expenditures for items such as project staff, rent, equipment purchase or rental, subcontracts, etc.)? Note: If expenditure data are not available, please estimate the resources for job clubs over the past year (e.g., staff, volunteers, cash and in-kind donations, technology, facilities/space)?
3. What kinds of funding have been used to pay for the costs of the job club?
 - a. Donations from congregation/budget line item from the sponsoring organization
 - b. Foundation grants
 - c. Government funding (describe if federal, state, or local and whether funding is grant or contract)
 - d. Other sources

K. CLOSING QUESTIONS

1. What are your organization's plans for the next several years with regard to the job club? Will the job club be expanded? Are there sufficient resources to sustain the initiative in the coming years? What sources of funding are likely to be used to sustain your job club?
2. To what extent do you think your program could be replicated in other localities? What features of your job club are most amenable to replication? What features of the project are least amenable to replication? How does location, the target population served, or other distinctive features of your program make it either non-transferable or limit transferability?
3. To date, what do you consider your most important accomplishments under your job club project? What do you believe to be the main lessons learned from your job club?

M. CHECKLIST OF ITEMS TO COLLECT FROM SITE (IF AVAILABLE)

- Background information about the locality
- Background information about the organization
- Additional documentation/reports detailing job club services/activities
- Diagram showing how participants flow through the job club
- Budget/expenditures data for the past 12 months

**APPENDIX C: JOB CLUB EVALUATION SITE VISIT INTERVIEW GUIDE –
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (WIB)/AMERICAN JOB CENTER (AJC)
OPERATED JOB CLUBS**

Introduction: I am (we are) researchers from the Capital Research Corporation, Inc., a private research organization based in Arlington, VA, which conducts policy-related research on a variety of social welfare and economic issues. Our visit here today is part of an evaluation focusing on job clubs being administered by community-based and faith-based organizations. This project is being conducted by Capital Research Corporation and George Washington University, under contract to the U.S. Department of Labor. As part of this evaluation, we are conducting site visits to public sector, faith-based, and community-based organizations conducting job clubs in six local workforce areas. With regard to our visits to WIBs/American Job Centers, we are interested in learning about (1) if your organization operates a job club, details about how this job club operates and the services it offers, and (2) whether your organization has linkages with faith-based or community-based organizations and the nature of these linkages.

Privacy Statement: Before beginning the interview, I (we) want to thank you for agreeing to participate in the study. I (we) know that you are busy and we will try to be as focused as possible. We have many questions and are going to talk to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. And, we understand that your participation in this discussion is voluntary and you may choose to not answer questions you don't wish to. In addition, before we start, I want to let you know that though we take notes at these interviews, information is never repeated with the name of the respondent. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all interviews is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified. Do you have any questions before we begin?

A. BACKGROUND ON ORGANIZATION AND COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL JOB CLUBS

1. Before we begin, we'd like to get some general information on you and verify some information about your organization.
 - a. Organization name
 - b. Contact information (address, telephone, fax, e-mail)
 - c. Website address
2. Obtain the following information on each respondent involved in the interview (note: request a business card from each interviewee):
 - a. Name
 - b. Organization
 - c. Contact information (address, telephone, e-mail)
 - d. Title
 - e. Position/role in the organization
3. Please provide background on your organization]:
 - a. Type of organization (e.g., government agency, nonprofit established to operate the AJC, for-profit, etc.
 - b. Geographic area served

- c. Major sources of funding (funding from federal/state/city agencies, foundations, fee for service)
- d. Types of clients/customers served or targeted
- e. Major programs/initiatives operating
- f. What types of services does your organization provide for unemployed or underemployed job seekers?
 - Job club?
 - Resource room?
 - Job readiness, resume, other types of workshops
 - One-on-one job placement assistance
 - Job development assistance
 - Job fairs
 - Training services
 - Other types of assistance

NOTE: IF WIB/AMERICAN JOB CENTER DOES NOT OPERATE A JOB CLUB, SKIP SECTIONS B-G AND GO TO SECTION H (ADDITIONALLY: FIND OUT WHY THE ORGANIZATION DOES NOT OFFER A JOB CLUB).

B. JOB CLUB OBJECTIVES AND START-UP

1. When was your job club established?
2. Why did your organization establish the job club? If the job club has been in existence for several years, why does your organization continue to offer the job club?
3. What are the main goals of your job club?
4. Please discuss start-up and early implementation experiences of your job club --
 - a. Did your organization start from scratch or draw upon the curriculum or experiences of another existing model?
 - b. What challenges did your organization run into in planning and initiating your job club?

C. OUTREACH, INTAKE, AND ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES FOR THE JOB CLUB

1. What methods does your organization use to recruit unemployed/underemployed individuals to attend your job club? Possibilities include:
 - Distribution of flyers, posters, or other educational/informational
 - Announcements provided with unemployment insurance checks
 - Informational websites
 - Toll-free informational hotlines
 - Outreach campaigns using media (e.g., TV, radio, newspaper, ads on buses/bus shelters)
 - Orientation workshops/presentations in the community (e.g., at nonprofit organizations, other workforce development agencies, neighborhood centers, libraries)
 - Word-of-mouth
 - Web-based recruitment (using Twitter, blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn)
2. Has your organization worked with any other organizations to obtain referrals to your program? Possibilities include:

- Churches/congregations/faith-based organizations
 - Community/nonprofit organizations
 - Courts/correctional system
 - Other
3. Is recruitment for your job club broadly targeted on all unemployed/underemployed individuals in your service area or is it targeted on unemployed/underemployed individuals with specific characteristics? Possibilities include:
- Specific neighborhoods/geographic areas
 - Low-income/disadvantaged individuals
 - Unemployment insurance claimants
 - Welfare recipients
 - Adults only
 - Youth only
 - Formerly incarcerated individuals
 - Separating/retiring active duty military personnel
 - Unemployed/underemployed veterans
 - Trade-affected/dislocated workers
 - Older workers/seniors
 - Persons with disabilities
 - Unemployed white-collar workers
 - Individuals dislocated from various manufacturing and service sectors
4. Has your job club experienced recruitment challenges (e.g., inability to find/recruit enough interested individuals for your job club)? If so, what challenges have been encountered and how have each of these challenges been addressed? Some possible challenges include:
- Had difficulty finding unemployed/underemployed individuals
 - Economic conditions have improved so there is not as much need for a job club in the locality
 - Some of the outreach strategies didn't result in many applicants
 - Partner organizations did not provide enough referrals
 - Some applicants had difficulty getting to job club facility (e.g., transportation difficulties)
 - Didn't have enough resources for recruitment
 - Other similar programs competing for the same pool of participants: provide description of the other organizations
5. What incentives and services (if any) have been used to encourage participation and/or retention in the job club? Possible incentives include:
- a. Bus passes/tokens
 - b. Food provided at job club
 - c. Supportive services
 - d. Other
6. Can anyone attend your job club, or is there a process by which individuals are assessed to be eligible or appropriate to attend your job club? If there is a process, who determines eligibility or whether an individual is appropriate to participate in your job club? What, if any, criteria are used to select among candidates recruited? (*ask for copies of any assessment materials*)

Possible criteria include:

- Be unemployed/underemployed
- Be registered/enrolled with the Wagner-Peyser program or the Workforce Investment Act

- Be referred from other specific organizations or agencies
 - Attend an orientation session
 - Complete a program application
 - Complete an interview with program staff
 - Meet income or other requirements
 - Meet education level requirement (e.g., high school diploma)
 - Take/pass a standardized skills assessment test (e.g., TABE, ABLE, BESI, WorkKeys)
 - Take/pass grantee's own customized skills assessment test
 - Other, please specify
7. Are there any efforts to determine the specific service needs of job club participants? If so, how are the service needs of job club participants determined? Please take us briefly through the assessment process, noting any formal assessment tests that you use prior to or during participation in your job club (e.g., TABE, interest inventories, substance abuse screening).
 8. Is an individual service strategy or employment development plan created for each participant (*note: request a blank copy of the form used*)? If yes, please briefly describe this plan or process.

D. DESCRIPTION OF THE JOB CLUB SERVICES/ACTIVITIES

1. Where (at what location) does the job club meet? Are there multiple locations? Does the location for your job club vary (e.g., from week-to-week)?
2. How often does the job club meet (weekly, bi-weekly, once a month)? For how many hours/minutes is the job club scheduled to meet? Is the actual duration of the job club about the same duration as it is scheduled (e.g., does it run over)? Is the actual duration of each job club variable or about the same?
3. In addition to formal club meetings, do job club members interact with WIB/One-stop staff for assistance at other times or in other situations? If so, please describe purpose and frequency.
4. How is the job club structured? Do individuals start and end as a cohort or is there open entry/open exit to the job club? Is there, for example, a 6- or 10-week series of workshops during which a curriculum is presented systematically from week to week, or is each job club meeting a stand-alone workshop? Is there a separate series of workshops offered at other days/times? Do participants come and go as they please from session to session (e.g., attend a few sessions, skip several, come back) or are they expected to stay engaged in sessions until they secure a job? Once they obtain a job, can and do they continue to attend the job club?
5. What is the typical attendance at the job club (i.e., usual number attending each session)? Is there much variation in number of job club attendees each session (minimum/maximum attendees over the last 12 months)? What is the maximum number of attendees that can be handled for a given session? Does anyone ever get turned away because too many show for a particular job club session? What, if any, is the ideal number (or range) of attendees for a given job club session?
6. Is a curriculum used to guide the job club workshop sessions? If yes, could you provide us with a copy of the curriculum and discuss the following –
 - What is the name of the curriculum? Who developed the curriculum? Was the

- curriculum purchased or obtained from another organization? Was the curriculum developed in-house? If so, describe the curriculum development process.
- Please discuss source(s) of the curriculum – and if more than one source was used, discuss how and the process by which the curriculum was developed.
 - Please provide an overview of the curriculum – an outline of curriculum modules/key substantive topics covered, amount of time devoted to each module/topic
 - What kinds of instructional methods are used (e.g., lecture, small group instruction, peer group discussion, web-based/computer-based instruction).
7. How is each job club meeting structured? Is the structure/activities of each meeting basically the same each time, or is there substantial variation across job club meetings? Does the structure/activities depend on who is in attendance at each job club meeting? Can you please provide an overview of a typical job club meeting, including overall duration and sequencing/amount of time devoted to specific activities? Please discuss specific types of activities that are included in your job club, such as:
- instruction on job readiness and effective job search strategies;
 - discussions about targeting certain occupations or industry sectors for employment;
 - time set aside for job club members to plan their job search activities for an upcoming period and to identify specific job leads (through searches on the Internet on job boards and employer websites, discussion among job club members, reviews of classified advertisements, and other networking activities);
 - assistance on resume and cover letter development/refinement;
 - discussions among job club participants about challenges and opportunities with respect to job search activities;
 - invitations to employers to share information on their industry sectors and potential job openings;
 - conduct of mock (practice) or actual interviews with employers for jobs;
 - speakers presenting on specific topics; and
 - testimonials from former/current participants.
8. To what extent are job club sessions/workshops facilitated by a staff member? Who plays the role of the facilitator (e.g., staff, volunteer)? Is the facilitator the same from job club session to job club session? What role does the facilitator play (e.g., providing instruction/lectures, guiding group discussion, working one-on-one or in small groups with participants)?
9. Is there any kind of mentoring/case management component for participants that accompanies (or is offered in addition to) the job club? If there is a mentoring/case management component --
- Who provides mentoring/case management services?
 - What are the credentials of mentors/case managers?
 - When does the mentoring/case management occur?
 - How is the match made between the participant and the mentor/case manager? What is the caseload for the case manager/mentor?
 - How long does mentoring/case management last (e.g., 6 months, year, until an individual finds a job, etc.)?
 - What activities occur after a person obtains a job?
10. What are the patterns of attendance at job clubs among participants (e.g., attend each job club until the participant finds a job, attend session and skip several and then attend)? Once individuals begin attending the job club do they continue to attend until they obtain a job? How much attrition is there before job placement? What are the specific reasons for dropping out/attrition prior to obtaining a job? Have you taken any steps to reduce attrition from the job

club, and, if yes, what specific steps have been taken?

11. Once a participant obtains a job, are they encouraged to continue to attend job club sessions? What additional services, if any, are provided to those successful in obtaining jobs (e.g., job retention services, transportation services, clothing, referral to training and other workforce services, and other support services)? Are participants that find a job encouraged to upgrade their skills and credentials so they can move to better paying jobs? Do participants that find a job come back to the job club to share their experiences?

E. JOB CLUB PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS AND OUTCOMES

1. What types of data are being collected on job club participant characteristics, services received, and outcomes? What specific information do you collect (e.g., name, email address)? For example, is an automated data system being used to track participant characteristics, services received, and outcomes? If available --
 - o Please provide copies of the participant forms being used (e.g., intake, assessment, services receipt/tracking, participant outcome forms).
 - o Do you collect any data beyond what is required for Wagner-Peyser and WIA reporting? If so, what?
2. What outcome measures (if any) are being used to assess job club performance, and if available, please provide data on the following outcomes for the past year for job club attendees (or three years, if possible) –
 - o Number of participants attending job club sessions
 - o Number of participants dropping out of the job club prior to obtaining a job
 - o Average number of job club sessions attended (and range)
 - o Job placement outcomes
 - o Job retention outcomes
 - o Earnings/hourly wages/hours worked
 - o Other outcome measures, such as improved self-esteem or upgrading of skills/educational credentials
 - o Discuss how each of these outcome measures are obtained (e.g., telephone calls conducted with participants/employers and the intervals at which data are collected).
 - o Do you look at how job club participants do on the Common Measures used to measure performance for the Wagner-Peyser and WIA programs?
3. Of the strategies or services that you provide through your job club program, which do you feel are most/least effective in helping job club participants to obtain jobs? Are there ways in which your job club has fallen short of its goals for helping participants cope with unemployment and obtain jobs? If yes, how? Are there other approaches, strategies, or services that you believe would contribute to better employment outcomes for the job club participants you serve?
4. If there are other job clubs operated by FBOs/CBOs in your local workforce area, how does your job club differ from activities provided by these FBOs/CBOs? Please describe the major similarities and differences in philosophy, approach, characteristics of customers served, services provided, and outcomes.
5. Has your job club been the focus of a formal evaluation? If yes, what type of evaluation was conducted (e.g., implementation/process evaluation, outcome evaluation, quasi-experimental or

experimental net impact evaluation, cost-effectiveness/cost-benefit study)? Please provide final or interim reports that may have been produced under the evaluation effort(s)?

6. If your job club has not been the subject of an evaluation in the past, would you be willing to be part of a future evaluation? Do you think your organization would be willing to be part of a randomized controlled trial (experimental) evaluation to systematically examine job club impacts on participants [i.e., which would involve random assignment of job club candidates to treatment and control groups, similar to experiments currently used to test new medical treatments)?
7. Do you have any suggestions with regard to how a future evaluation could be conducted to more systematically gather data on the outcomes of participants of your job club?

F. JOB CLUB STAFFING

1. Please describe your organizational structure and staffing arrangement for your job club (if available, please provide an organizational chart)
 - Paid administrators/staff involved in the job club initiative (i.e., role, number, and hours per month or FTE)
 - Number of volunteers (i.e., role, number, and hours per month or FTE)
 - What is the experience and/or credentials of administrators/staff/volunteers involved in job clubs
 - How much turnover has there been in job club staff (past 12 months)
3. What kinds of training/staff development activities have been provided for job club staff? Please describe the extent and types of training/staff development activities, including who has conducted the training. Are there areas in which you feel there should have been more staff development/training? If yes, what are those areas?

G. JOB CLUB COSTS/EXPENDITURES

1. If available, what are the costs associated with running a job club? If available, please provide a breakdown or estimate of the major costs of running a job club by major cost (e.g., breaking down total expenditures for items such as project staff, rent, equipment purchase or rental, subcontracts, etc.)? If available, please provide an overall estimate of the costs of running your job club for the last 12 months.
2. What kinds of funding have been used to pay for the costs of the job club?
 - e. Government funding (describe if federal, state, or local and whether funding is grant or contract)
 - f. Other sources

H. QUESTIONS ABOUT LINKAGES WITH FBO/CBO-OPERATED JOB CLUBS IN THE LOCAL WORKFORCE AREA

1. Knowledge of and your organization's linkages with faith-based/community-based organization (FBO/CBO) job clubs in the workforce area:
 - a. Are you aware of other FBO/CBO job clubs operating in your local workforce area?
 - b. If FBO/CBO job clubs exist in your locality, does your job club interact/partner with these FBO/CBO-operated job clubs in your local workforce area? For example, are there referrals to and from other job clubs operating in your local area? Do job club

participants attending other FBO/CBO visit and use America's Job Centers/workforce development resources? If so, what public sector workforce services do job club participants of FBO/CBO use?

2. We are particularly interested in identifying differences in the ways in which job clubs operated by faith-based and community-based organizations serve their participants versus those operated by public sector organizations, such as local workforce investment boards, America's Job Centers (or One-Stop Centers), or welfare agencies. Please discuss differences in terms of the following dimensions:
 - a. How often and for how long job clubs meet
 - b. Size/numbers attending job club sessions
 - c. Duration/intensity of job club involvement for participants
 - d. Patterns of attendance/extent of attrition from job clubs
 - e. Curriculum used and topics covered during job clubs
 - f. Kinds of instructional methods used (e.g., lecture, small group instruction, peer group discussion, web-based/computer-based instruction)
 - g. Types of instructors/facilitators used
 - h. Extent of case management/peer support/mentoring provided
 - i. Job development/placement assistance provided
 - j. Additional services provided (e.g., transportation, clothing, referral to job training, other support services)
 - k. Inclusion of social and recreational activities
 - l. Inclusion of religious and spiritual activities
 - m. Activities that occur once the participant finds a job (e.g., are they encouraged to continue to attend job club sessions?)

CHECKLIST OF ITEMS TO COLLECT FROM SITE (IF AVAILABLE)

- Background information about the locality
- Background information about the organization
- Additional documentation/reports detailing job club services/activities
- Diagram showing how participants flow through the job club
- Budget/expenditures data on your organization's job club

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**APPENDIX E: OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANT DATA COLLECTION AND
EVALUATION OF JOB CLUBS BASED ON SITE VISITS**

APPENDIX E - TABLE 1: DATA ITEMS COLLECTED BY FBOS/CBOS ON JOB CLUB PARTICIPANTS

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Attendance at Job Club/Sign in Sheet?	Data Collected on Job Placement?	Data Collected on Wage at Placement?	Data Collected on Hours Worked at Placement?	Data Collected on Retained in Job?
FBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS						
JobSeekers	Trinity Church of Princeton, NJ	Yes (sign-in sheet) with name, e-mail address, phone #, occupation looking for	No (only if participants report back to the facilitators)	No	No	No
Job Partnership of Cleveland (JPC)	Mt. Zion Congregational Church	Yes	Yes (collected by mentor for up to 1 year after class)	No	No	No
Crossroads Career Network	Snellville United Methodist Church	Yes (Name, email address, phone number and job interest are collected so as to inform attendees of upcoming events.)	No (only if participants report back to the facilitators)	No	No	No
Job Networking	Roswell United Methodist Church	Name, e-mail address, and telephone number are collected for follow-up purposes. Attendance is not tracked.	No, although attendees who find jobs are encouraged to return and talk about their success	No	No	No
SOAR 4 Jobs	St. Odilia Catholic Community	Yes. Name, phone, email address, current/prior company, current/prior position and field/position seeking are collected and distributed as a networking tool for participants. Attendance is tracked in an Excel spreadsheet.	No – only if participants report back during a job club session	No	No	No
Career Network Ministry (CNM)	McLean Bible Church	Name, address, phone number, email address, how heard of CNM, whether attendee at MBC, whether member of LinkedIn/MeetUp and career field of interest are collected from first time attendees on Participant Information and Agreement Form. Attendance is not tracked.	No, but some participants (approximately 25-30%) share that information during general meeting	No	No	No

APPENDIX E - TABLE 1: DATA ITEMS COLLECTED BY FBOS/CBOS ON JOB CLUB PARTICIPANTS

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Attendance at Job Club/Sign in Sheet?	Data Collected on Job Placement?	Data Collected on Wage at Placement?	Data Collected on Hours Worked at Placement?	Data Collected on Retained in Job?
Employment Network Group	Severna Park United Methodist Church	Name and email address are collected from first time attendees but attendance is not tracked	No (but some participants may provide placement information)	No	No	No
CTK Parish Job Networking Ministry	Christ The King Parish in Pleasant Hill, CA	Name, phone number, email address, career field of interest, job search challenges and distance willing to commute for job are collected from first-time attendees at orientation. Attendance at large group meetings is not tracked; some facilitators track attendance for their success teams.	Job placement data for those who participated in a success team is tracked; however, the number who found a job after attending a large group meeting but who did not join a success team is not known	No	No	No
CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS						
Neighbors-helping-Neighbors	Neighbors-helping-Neighbors USA, Inc.	Yes (collect name, e-mail address, town, type of job seeking)	Not systematically, but try to get participants to call/leave word of placement	No	No	No
Community Job Club of Stow	Community Job Club, Inc.	Yes (sign-in sheet)	No (only if participant reports back to executive director)	No	No	No
Career Transition Group for Women	None	Yes – there is a sign-in sheet for name, email address, area of job interest and whether individual is a first-time attendee	No – only if individual reports back to the facilitator	No	No	No
The Job Forum	San Francisco Chamber of Commerce	Name, e-mail address and referral source are collected on sign-in sheet. Attendance is not tracked as job seekers typically attend only a few sessions.	No, although some individuals may contact panelists when they find a job	No	No	No

APPENDIX E - TABLE 2: OVERVIEW OF USE OF PARTICIPANT DATA FORMS, MIS, AND EVALUATION BY FBO/CBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS

Name of Job Club	Organization Sponsoring Job Club	Are Data Forms Completed on Job Club Attendees (Other than Attendance List)?	Participant Data System/ MIS Used?	Is Customer Satisfaction Survey Used?	Has Job Club Been Evaluated in Past?
FBO-SPONSORED JOB CLUBS					
JobSeekers	Trinity Church of Princeton, NJ	No	No	No	No
Job Partnership of Cleveland (JPC)	Mt. Zion Congregational Church	Yes (3-page intake form completed with characteristics and career interests)	Yes (by JPC)	Yes	No
Crossroads Career Network	Snellville United Methodist Church	No	No	No, but evaluation forms are distributed at meetings	No
Job Networking	Roswell United Methodist Church	No	No	No	No
SOAR 4 Jobs	St. Odilia Catholic Community	No	No	No – but an evaluation form is distributed at the close of every meeting	No
Career Network Ministry (CNM)	McLean Bible Church	No, other than the Participant Information and Agreement Form described above.	No	No	No
Employment Network Group	Severna Park United Methodist Church	No	No	No	No
CTK Parish Job Networking Ministry	Christ The King Parish in Pleasant Hill, CA	No.	No	No	No
CBO SPONSORED-JOB CLUBS					
Neighbors-helping-Neighbors	Neighbors-helping-Neighbors USA, Inc.	No	No	No	No
Community Job Club of Stow	Community Job Club, Inc.	Yes (2-page application completed (includes contact information, past employment education, # in household, family income, type of occupation/job sought)	No	No	No
Career Transition Group for Women	None	No	No	No	No
The Job Forum	SF Chamber of Commerce	No	No	No	No

APPENDIX F: SAMPLE JOB CLUB PARTICIPANT FORMS FOR TRACKING PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS, SERVICES RECEIVED, AND OUTCOMES

****FORM 1: JOB CLUB PARTICIPANT INTAKE FORM****

Name (Last Name, First, MI):	Participant Identifier (e.g., SSN or ID#):
Street Address, City: State: Zip:	Email Address: Facebook Page Address: Linked-In Address:
Home Phone: Work Phone: Cell Phone:	Alternative Contact: Name: Relationship: Phone: E-mail:
Race – Individual considers herself/himself to be one or more of the following (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No White <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Black/African American <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Native Hawaiian of Other Pacific Islander Individual is Hispanic/Latino: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female Birthdate (MM/DD/YYYY): ____/____/_____ Special Client Characteristics (at Time of Enrollment): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Individual with Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Ex-Offender <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Veteran Unemployment Insurance Compensation Recipient: <input type="checkbox"/> UI Claimant <input type="checkbox"/> UI Exhaustee <input type="checkbox"/> Not Claimant/Exhaustee
<p>Education Information:</p> School Status at Program Entry (Please check One) <input type="checkbox"/> Currently In School <input type="checkbox"/> Currently Not In School Highest Level of Education Completed (Please Enter One) <input type="checkbox"/> No Education <input type="checkbox"/> Grade (<i>enter</i> 1 to 12) <input type="checkbox"/> Years of college/full-time technical/vocational school (<i>enter</i> 1 to 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Education beyond Bachelor’s Degree	Degree or certificates Received (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No No Degree or Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Attained High School Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Attained GED or equivalent <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Attained Certificate of Attendance/Completion <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Attained Other Post-secondary Degree or Certification <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Baccalaureate Degree (4-year) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Occupational Skills Licensure, Certificate or Credential
<p>Employment and Earnings Information:</p> Currently employed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If currently working, for last week of employment: Number hours worked for week: ____ Hourly wage: \$____ per hour If not working, for most recent job (for last week of employment): Number hours worked for week: ____ Hourly wage: \$____ per hour Reason for leaving last job: <input type="checkbox"/> Laid-off <input type="checkbox"/> Left Voluntarily <input type="checkbox"/> Fired <input type="checkbox"/> Other Occupation/last job held: Type of job seeking/career field of interest:	Do the following make it hard to find or keep a job... <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Health problems or disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Lack of access to reliable transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Lack of a resume <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Trouble reading or writing <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Problems speaking English <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Lack of a green card <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Lack of child care <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Other: _____
Comments on type of job sought or help needed in obtaining job (use back or additional pages, if needed):	Forms Completed by (Staff Name/Initials): Date: ____/____/_____

****FORM 2: JOB CLUB PARTICIPANT SERVICES RECEIVED,
EXIT/FOLLOW-UP FORM****

First Name:	Last Name:
<p>Job Club Services Received: (Note: Update at Time of Exit from Job Club)</p> <p>Job Club Attendance: _____ <i>Service Never Received</i> # of Job Clubs Attended: _____ Total # of Hours of Job Club Attended: _____ Date of First Job Club: ____/____/_____ Date of Last Job Club: ____/____/_____</p>	<p>Other Employment Services: _____ <i>Service Never Received</i> ___ Job Readiness Workshop(s)/Assistance – # of total hours: _____ ___ Help with Resume Development (Review/Updating) ___ Practice/Mock Job Interviews ___ Job Development/Placement Services Was participant placed in a job? __ Yes __ No ___ Job Retention Services ___ Referral to Education/Occupational Training Services ___ Case Management/Mentoring ___ Other: _____</p>
<p>Outcome and Exit Information:</p> <p>Date of Exit (MM/DD/YY): ____/____/____</p> <p>Exit Reason (Check One): ___ Completed job club/services ___ Dropped out before completing job club/services ___ Other: _____</p>	<p>Employment Status Exit: ___ Employed ___ Not Employed ___ Unknown</p> <p>If employed at Exit: Occupation: _____ # of hours worked per week: ____ Hourly Wage: \$ _____</p>
<p>Employment Status 6 Months After Exit: ___ Employed ___ Not Employed ___ Unknown</p> <p>If employed at 6 Months After Exit: # of hours worked per week: ____ Hourly Wage: \$ _____</p>	<p>Employment Status 12 Months After Exit: ___ Employed ___ Not Employed ___ Unknown</p> <p>If employed at 12 Months After Exit: # of hours worked per week: ____ Hourly Wage: \$ _____</p>
<p>Additional Case Notes/Comments:</p>	<p>Forms Completed by (Staff Name/Initials):</p> <p>Date: ____/____/_____</p>

APPENDIX G: POLICY BRIEF – PROMISING PRACTICES IDENTIFIED IN JOB CLUBS OPERATED BY FAITH- AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

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POLICY BRIEF –PROMISING PRACTICES IDENTIFIED IN JOB CLUBS OPERATED BY FAITH- AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Over the past several decades, job search support groups, commonly referred to as “job clubs,” have evolved into one of several important activities used by the public workforce system and faith- and community-based organizations to enhance worker readiness and employability, as well as to provide ongoing support to unemployed and underemployed individuals as they search for jobs. The U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) contracted in September 2012 with Capital Research Corporation, Inc. and George Washington University to conduct an assessment of job clubs sponsored by faith-based and community-based organizations (FBOs/CBOs). The overall purpose of this evaluation effort was to systematically describe the key characteristics of job clubs being offered by a range of faith- and community-based organizations, document how they differ from and are similar to the job clubs operated by publicly-funded workforce agencies (such as at American Job Centers [AJCs]), and identify potential approaches that might be used for more rigorous formal evaluation of impacts and effectiveness. This evaluation effort, conducted over a 20-month period, included three main research activities: (1) a literature review; (2) an “environmental scan,” with a particular focus on conducting interviews with key stakeholders knowledgeable about job clubs and site visits to FBO/CBOs sponsoring job clubs in six localities; and (3) identification and exploration of alternative evaluation designs for future rigorous study of FBO/CBO job clubs. A few promising practices of faith-based and community-based organizations operating job clubs that were identified during the completion of the environmental scan merit further consideration and study. These are highlighted below.

Practice #1: Establishment of Strong Linkages with AJCs/One-Stops. Among the job clubs visited as part of this study, there was a wide range in terms of the strength of the collaboration between the FBO/CBO job clubs and the local public workforce agency. Facilitators in some FBO/CBO job clubs had few or no cross-referrals of job seekers and weak to no linkages with staff at the local AJC/One-Stop. Other facilitators for FBO/CBO job clubs, as well as staff at public workforce agencies, however, reported very successful connections with their counterparts, which appeared to benefit job seekers. For example, job club staff at the Arnold Station Job Club in Maryland worked closely with the facilitators for the Severna Park United Methodist Church’s Employment Network Group, attending each other’s job clubs and even sharing the services of one volunteer facilitator. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development posts the schedule for all ongoing FBO/CBO-operated job clubs on the Positively Minnesota website; a 17-page spreadsheet listing information for all existing job clubs (including those at the Workforce Centers) is also maintained for the entire Minneapolis/St. Paul area. A mutually-beneficial relationship with local One-Stop Center staff (who attended and made presentations at job club meetings) was also reported by facilitators at Christ the King (CTK) Parish Job Networking Ministry in Pleasant Hill, CA.

Practice #2: Expansion to Include Other Job Search Services in Addition to Traditional Job Clubs. Although the focus of this study was on traditional job clubs (i.e., regularly-scheduled group meetings designed to enhance job search skills and provide ongoing support to individuals as they search for jobs), many FBOs and CBOs have expanded their services for job seekers to include activities and instructional sessions that go beyond job clubs. Some of the FBOs and CBOs visited during the site visits offered job clubs as only one component of a more comprehensive menu of services for job seekers that also included individual or a series of instructional workshops, one-on-one job search assistance and guidance, additional networking sessions, and job fairs. Many of these workshops covered topics not dissimilar to those covered in workshops offered at an AJC/One-Stop Center, although FBOs/CBOs were not typically able to provide computer labs, multiple printers and telephones, etc. For example, the McLean Bible Church’s Career Network Ministry operated a number of optional workshops during their 3.5 hour weekly meetings on topics such as LinkedIn, effective resume writing, federal job search, development of the elevator pitch, interviewing and networking. Roswell United Methodist Church (RUMC) Job Networking Program, a member of the Crossroads Career Network, provided a comprehensive menu of job networking/support services and activities for job seekers. Twice monthly sessions that ran throughout the afternoon and into the evening offered, in addition to a dinner program, presentations and accountability groups, and a variety of volunteer-led (typically professional HR staff/Recruiters) workshops on topics of interest to job seekers (e.g., networking, franchise businesses, strategies for older job seekers.) The New Birth Missionary Baptist Church’s Employment Network Ministry in Atlanta does not operate regularly scheduled job club meetings but instead has sponsored large job fairs and also links job seekers in the congregation with volunteer church members who can provide individual job search assistance.

Practice #3: Supplementation of Traditional Job Club Large Group Meetings with Smaller Support Group Sessions. In addition to the large group job clubs meetings that typically met in the evenings and provided job search instruction and presentations by speakers, some of the FBOs and CBOs visited as part of this study also operated additional (and typically smaller) job club sessions that met more frequently, often serving as an additional support or “accountability” group for a few job seekers. In some cases, these smaller groups were made up of job seekers with similar goals or interests who often agreed to continue meeting until all participants found employment. For example, in addition to the large group job club sessions held monthly, the Snellville Crossroads Career Network also sponsored small-group “Christ-Centered Career Group (C3G)” job clubs that met twice-monthly. Similarly, Christ the King Parish Job Networking Ministry held large group job club meetings twice a month, but attendees were also invited to participate in small group success team job clubs that met weekly, providing an additional layer of support with a more individualized focus. As one of the components of its comprehensive job networking support program, Roswell United Methodist Church also convened multiple accountability groups for job seekers with specific needs (e.g., job seekers ages 21-29, veterans.)

Practice #4: Increased Reliance on Social Media as an Outreach Tool and an Ongoing Communication Strategy. While strongly encouraging job club participants to take advantage of social media in their own networking and job search efforts, many FBO/CBO job club facilitators were also moving towards increased usage of these tools for both outreach to

new job seekers and as a means to inform and stay connected with current participants. For example, the Neighbors-helping-Neighbors job club in New Jersey reported using social media “to the fullest extent possible”, relying on patch.com, Facebook, and LinkedIn to “drive awareness” of their group in the community. Other job clubs also used Twitter as well as Facebook and LinkedIn to share information about upcoming networking events, speakers and presentations. McLean Bible Church’s Career Network Ministry also used Meetup as to tool to alert job seekers about upcoming job search workshops and to enable them to register for the sessions.

Practice #5: Use of Online Networking Tools. One of the FBO sites visited as part of this study, Christ the King Parish Job Networking Ministry, provided its job club participants with access to the Career Actions Network, a web-based service that enables registered users to post both resumes and job listings. An online networking tool, this website connects job seekers with employment opportunities and also provides a mechanism for employed individuals as well as employers willing to share their knowledge and “insider” connections to share information about available, and in some cases, hidden job openings.