



STANDARDS FOR SUCCESS: TAKING DATA COLLECTION TO THE NEXT LEVEL

The Grants Management and Oversight Division (GMO) provides guidance and establishes policies related to competitive grant programs at HUD. This includes issuing guidance for Notices of Funding Availability (NOFAs), ensuring compliance with pertinent regulations, and ensuring consistency with HUD's strategic goals and policies. GMO also undertakes multiple initiatives in support of the federal-wide Cross Agency Priority Goal on Results-Oriented Accountability for Grants. One of the initiatives is the modernization of grants management.

What was the challenge?

Historically, HUD's various discretionary grant programs maintained separate and manual performance data collection processes to meet their performance reporting needs and compliance requirements. While this was adequate at a time of paper-based report submissions, as HUD moved toward electronic grants management systems, it became more evident that the manual processes had become antiquated, burdensome, and did not link data amongst various programs with similar target populations.

What was the solution?

HUD sought to develop and implement standardized data collection reporting requirements for HUD's grant programs to help streamline administrative costs and burdensome compliance requirements and allow for more effective analysis and monitoring. At the same time, they needed to be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of all the various discretionary grant programs. With this objective in mind, HUD systematically surveyed the existing data measures collected across programs and developed Standards for Success.

Standards for Success are standardized performance reporting requirements used to streamline data collection for HUD. Standards for Success is a way to collect consistent performance reporting data from multiple HUD programs by instituting common data elements, reporting, and a shared system. Participating programs are now able to leverage HUD's shared-services online data collection and reporting tool, GrantSolutions inForm, to collect data. This system allows programs to save on costs and reduce administrative burdens, because they no longer have to administer their own data collection systems. This allows HUD to focus valuable staff time more on managing program-critical activities.

In terms of policy, Standards for Success is achieved through three main tenets:

- 1) Standardization of data elements, measures, definitions, and reporting periods across discretionary programs;
- 2) Alignment of programmatic data elements and measures with higher-level agency priority goals and objectives; and
- 3) The utilization of "individual-level" (rather than aggregate) reports for greater analysis and responsiveness of programs.

What was the result?

In fiscal year 2017, Standards for Success was first implemented for a limited number of grant programs. Since then, HUD has continually upgraded and expanded Standards for Success to refine the data collected, improve the GrantSolutions inForm tool, and increase the number of participants among the included



programs. Subsequent upgrades have allowed for not only direct data input, but Extensible Markup Language (XML) and Microsoft Excel data file uploads for funding recipients to upload data from case management system providers. This functionality gives grantees continuity and flexibility in their data collection efforts. Through Standards for Success, HUD also partnered with the American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) and FamilyMetrics to better assist, train, and orient affected funding recipients reporting under the new approach.

By 2019, all Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency Service Coordinator (ROSS) grants, Multifamily Housing Service Coordinator grants, and Multifamily Housing Budget-Based Service Coordinator Sites are reporting under Standards for Success requirements. These programs are utilizing Standards for Success to better analyze their portfolios at the service recipient level, provide better oversight and technical assistance to improve performance, and choose performance outcomes to both drive performance and determine future funding recipients.

Future Steps

In future years, HUD is seeking to expand implementation of Standards for Success to other discretionary programs. Such adoption will allow for further cost savings and increased ability to see how programs complement each other in serving similar populations. HUD will also continue to upgrade the online data collection and reporting tool GrantSolutions inForm by providing the ability to render customizable reports that HUD program staff will be able to use in their continual monitoring and oversight efforts. Other upgrades will enhance the user experience and reduce burden for grantees, enabling grantees to spend more time and attention on the people they serve. Further out into the future, HUD would like to link and align the Standards for Success effort with other federal agencies to further leverage data for programs that serve similar populations.