The Community Anti-Crime Program: A Preliminary Assessment of the Concept

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Prepared for the National Institute of Justice,
Washington, D.C.

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ABSTRACT

This document provides a brief, non-technical assessment of three components of the Community Anti-Crime Program -- characteristics of grantees and their settings, the role of citizen participation in the development and implementation of community crime prevention projects, and the nature and extent of the activities chosen by grantees for implementation. Data for the report are drawn from the applications of grantees, a mail survey sent to all grantees, and site visits to 36 projects. The report focuses on the formative stages in the development of the Community Anti-Crime Program more than on the impact of the crime prevention activities undertaken.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In November 1979, the National Institute of Justice asked the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to reflect on our evaluation of the Community Anti-Crime Program (CAC) and produce a *brief non-technical report on how we think the program is doing.* The report was not to be *evaluative* in the summative sense of stating how much impact the CAC program and projects have had on crime and urban communities, but rather *descriptive* of how the projects were developed and how their activities have been implemented. In short, we were to analyze the *output* of the program, if not all of its *outcomes*.

To pause and reflect on the CAC program in mid-point in the evaluation was a valuable experience. It caused us to think about the program's overall development to date, the problems it has faced, and how it has sought to overcome them. And it has given us an opportunity to reflect on whether we, as evaluators, are still asking the right questions and getting the right answers.

In considering a variety of formats for presenting our findings, we kept coming back to the fact that, to put it mildly, a lot of people simply did not think that this program was going to work. There was not much consensus, however, as to *why* it would not work. In each of the areas chosen for examination in this report -- project selection, citizen participation, activity implementation -- many, often contradictory criticisms were voiced to the evaluators. The following are paraphrases of these criticisms.

On *project selection*, we heard remarks such as:

- If the federal government is involved, you can be sure that it will choose cities where crime is not a major problem, where there already exists a tradition of crime prevention activities, where the police have been active in crime prevention and community relations, and where there has been a lot of community organizing.

- If the federal government is involved, you can be sure that institutionalized do-goodism will put the money in neighborhoods where the problems are so massive that the CAC program cannot conceivably have an effect.

- Grants will go to many projects in cities where the police either couldn't care less about community crime prevention -- or where they actively oppose it -- with the result that little can be accomplished.

- The groups selected will not be in areas that are too run-down. They will be from areas where crime is a manageable problem -- where some effect can be demonstrated. You can also be sure that experienced groups will be selected to implement these activities, groups with proven management skills, not those with little or no proven track record.

- Money will be given to groups that are so new or so inexperienced that they will never get off the ground.

On *citizen participation*, we heard:

- Citizen participation will be a charade. Most of these projects have some kind of board with "community" representation. Most of the time, these are made up of those who want a cut of the money, and the division of the pie is the only real decision in which they are involved. Other than that, they tend to rubberstamp what the project staff wants and call what they do "citizen participation." Typically, the project staff tends to view citizens as clients, not as participants in program development and implementation.

- "Citizen participation" will be used as an excuse for amateur night. There will probably be very few experienced professionals on the project staffs in any event, and even if they are on the staff, their own decisions will be obstructed by the need to cater to inchoate "community interests."

And on *activity implementation*, we heard:

- Community groups are just looking for a different federal teat to milk. They all undertake a certain core set of activities. If HEW has money, their recreation programs are sold as education. When it is LEAA's turn, they turn into delinquency prevention programs. Since most of these groups are social service oriented, that is where the bulk of the activities will lie. Groups will continue to do just what they have always done, and very little crime prevention *qua* opportunity reduction activity will be generated.

- The CAC program will take community groups that may actually be learning how to do something well, and divert them into opportunity reduction activities, because that's where the money is.

Each of these criticisms implies that the evaluators should expect to find *skewed* distributions on the major contextual variables that they examine -- that is, the CAC program will be systematically biased in one direction or the other. This report examines the extent to which our preliminary data shed light on these criticisms. For readers not familiar with the background of the CAC program and the general approach taken in its evaluation, we offer first a brief description. Our purpose is to provide both a programmatic *context* within which to evaluate the information presented on the program and an historical *perspective* on progress.

II. THE CAC PROGRAM AND ITS EVALUATION

The Community Anti-Crime Program

In 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice urged that:

> Every American can translate his concern about, or fear of crime into positive action. Every American should. Specialists alone cannot control crime. Controlling crime is the business of every American. Direct citizen action to improve law enforcement has become an absolute necessity.[1]

The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 mentioned the concept of "community anti-crime activities," but no federal funds were allocated for them at that time. In 1973, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals wrote a report on community crime prevention that strongly advocated citizen participation in anti-crime activity:

> Action by citizens is at the heart of community crime prevention....The Commission recommends that every citizen contribute to local community crime prevention efforts. Government agencies should encourage and support citizen action programs. Existing community organizations should explore ways they can relate their activities to crime prevention.[2]

Congressional hearings were held before the Crime Control Act of 1976 was passed. Testimony was given by private citizens and members of community-based organizations that indicated their concern about crime in their neighborhoods. These citizen groups sought federal recognition of their independently initiated anti-crime activities. In an effort to promote and support these locally organized crime prevention activities, Congress amended the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to include a provision for direct federal funding of such activities. This amendment (PL 94-503: Crime Control Act of 1976) mandated the establishment of the Office of Community Anti-

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[1]The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. *The challenge of crime in a free society*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967, p. 35.

[2]National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. *A national strategy to reduce crime*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973, pp.46-48.

Crime Programs (OCACP) within the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. The stated purpose of OCACP is:

- to provide appropriate technical assistance to community and citizen groups to enable such groups to apply for grants to encourage community and citizen participation in crime prevention and other law enforcement and criminal justice activities;

- to coordinate its activities with other federal agencies and programs (including the Community Relations Division of the Department of Justice) designed to encourage and assist citizen participation in law enforcement and criminal justice activities; and

- to provide information on successful programs of citizen and community participation to citizens and community groups.[3]

To implement this mandate, Congress allocated $15 million to OCACP for grants to community groups for each of the fiscal years 1977 and 1978. The Community Anti-Crime Program is designed to assist the efforts of community groups by providing resources for organizing and implementing their activities. As stated in the CAC program guidelines:

> Emphasis is placed on community-based organizations that have substantial grassroots input or a membership base of neighborhood groups. In addition, already established or new neighborhood groups may come together in a coalition to apply under the name of one applicant community organization. The central applicant would serve as the grantee and would normally assume fiscal administration and other program coordination responsibilities for the project. Under such arrangements, *unincorporated* neighborhood groups would be eligible participants because the applicant organization has nonprofit, incorporated status. Eligible grantees, therefore, might include: (1) locally based chapters of national organizations involved in community improvement efforts; (2) community-based organizations (having no national affiliation) currently conducting community improvement efforts; (3) community development corporations, and other established community/neighborhood organizations; and (4) existing community anti-crime organizations.[4]

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[3]Community Anti-Crime Program Guidelines, LEAA Manual M4500.1F, 21 December 1977, Chapter 2, Section 2, Part 4.

[4]*Ibid.*

The guidelines suggested for illustrative purposes two categories of activities that would be eligible -- those that stressed reduction of opportunities for crime, and those that addressed the causes of crime. Examples of projects in the first category were block watch programs, escort services for the elderly, and residential security education. The second category of projects included youth crisis centers, victim assistance programs, volunteer-based recreation programs, and juvenile counseling services. The design of the project was to be the responsibility of the community organization, and applicants were encouraged to develop innovative approaches.

LEAA funded 150 CAC projects during FY1978. Of these, 146 were action grants to community organizations and four were technical assistance grants. Two additional technical assistance grants had already been funded in FY1977. The 146 action grants were selected from over 1,000 organizations. Twenty-six million dollars were spent on the action grants, with the average award being $183,721.

The Evaluation

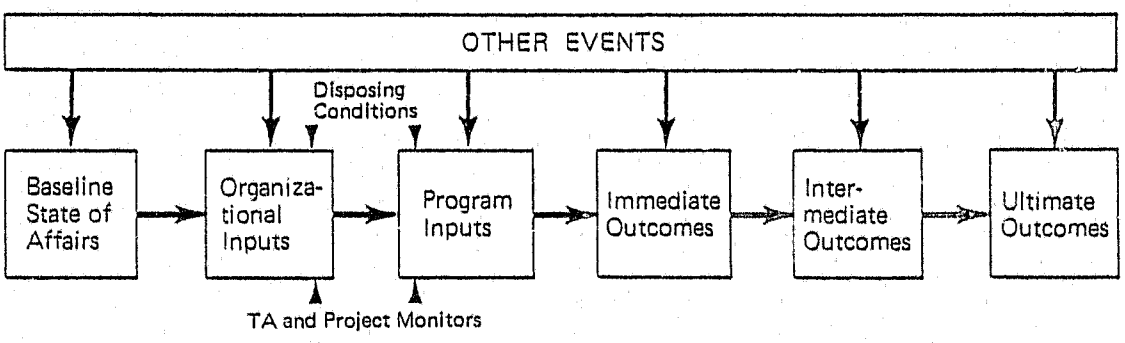
The CAC evaluation, like many others, had its real beginning long after the program was formulated at the national level and considerably after most of the local projects had begun operation. When AIR undertook the evaluation in October 1978, it was evident that information on the program would have to be produced quickly. OCACP was expecting Congressional review to begin in January 1979 and had to start making refunding decisions in the same month. It was obvious that the evaluation design could not afford the luxury of extensive first round site visits or other time-consuming data collection efforts. On the other hand, we did not want to base our evaluation on archival sources simply because it was more expedient. The task of the design was to meet the information needs of policy makers while at the same time generating the scientific data necessary for a valid evaluation effort.

The model that we employ to guide our evaluation analysis corresponds directly with our view of the program process as a multi-stage sequence of interrelated conditions and events. This model as applied to the Community Anti-Crime evaluation is presented on the next page in Figure 1.

The CAC evaluation is examining the following questions:

- What are the *specific functions* that residents and resident groups can most appropriately and usefully perform in the process of crime prevention?

- What are the *structural and organizational characteristics* of resident groups that increase or limit their effectiveness in the performance of these functions?



BASELINE STATE OF AFFAIRS: Problems to be addressed in terms of (1) crime levels; (2) fear of crime; and (3) level of cooperation among residents and criminal justice officials. Most of the data for this come from the grant applications or from official records and interviews.

ORGANIZATIONAL INPUTS: The process of developing the components of a viable organization as well as structural characteristics of the group. The former would include financial systems, chains of authority, hiring staff, etc., the latter such things as the degree of hierarchy, patterns of leadership, etc.

PROGRAM INPUTS: All steps in program planning and development leading up to actually engaging in crime prevention activities. Examples would be planning activities, needs assessments, surveys of citizens, talking with neighborhood groups, getting groups organized, buying equipment for marking property, etc.

DISPOSING CONDITIONS: Local circumstances affecting the development of organizational and programmatic capabilities over which the project has little or no direct control. These include both demographic characteristics such as racial and ethnic composition, SES levels of the community, etc. as well as the existence and relative strength of other organizations, political realities, willingness of groups to cooperate, experiences of residents with previous interventions in community, etc.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES: Actual levels of crime prevention activity engaged in, e.g., hours of surveillance, amount of property engraved, numbers of youths counseled.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES: Intended and unintended consequences of crime prevention activities having taken place (except for those direct impacts on crime, fear of crime, and level of CJ system cooperation). Examples would be increases in sense of community, increasing use of streets, increases in security feelings, lower transiency levels, political clout of group, new tensions in community at large, changes in the political agenda, etc.

ULTIMATE OUTCOMES: Changes in the baseline state of affairs in terms of crime levels, fear of crime, and cooperation among residents and the CJ community.

OTHER EVENTS: Events taking place outside the immediate project environment which affect its ability to develop and implement its crime prevention program. For example, a change in city administration (Other Event) might affect the Disposing Condition of groups' willingness to cooperate. In addition, a particular violent wave of crime (as an Other Event) might have an effect on the number of security precautions taken by residents (Immediate Outcome) which is independent of project efforts. Similar events can also effect intermediate and ultimate outcomes.

TA AND OTHER INPUTS: The CAC program is one that has built in intervention int eh project development and implementation process. The role of TA groups and project monitors is expected to be crucial and we are concerned with their roles at all stages.

FIGURE 1. Basic Parameters of the CAC Program Evaluation.

- What has been the *impact*, positive and negative, of the LEAA grants on the development of resident groups with these kinds of characteristics, and on their capacity for performing the various functions?

- What *other types of support*, local or federal, seem necessary, in addition to the inputs that LEAA provides, to enable resident groups to overcome the specific problems and difficulties that they encounter?

- What are the *generalizable implications* of the CAC experience for the role and functions of resident groups and for the related local and federal policy issues?

To answer these questions, we undertook a *process-oriented evaluation* involving three levels of analysis.

The first level (Level I) involves data collection on and from all CAC projects. First, we collected demographic data on the cities and on the target areas chosen by the projects. We also coded information presented by the projects in their initial grant applications. The bulk of the data at this level will come, however, from two surveys of all projects. The first of these took place in the spring of 1979. The second will be mailed to projects as close as possible to the end of their funding periods. Since these are surveys of all projects, they have been labeled *Global Surveys* and are referred to as such in the rest of this report. Of the 141 surveys mailed in the first wave, 128 were returned (a 90.8% rate). The data from the surveys were combined with the demographic data and the grant proposal data in the Management Information System (MIS) that enables us to cross-reference data elements from the different sources. It is the complete data from these 128 CAC projects that form the *descriptive* data base for this report, providing us with two snapshots of the program. The proposal data give us a picture of the conditions that the projects were trying to address and what they intended to do, and the Global Survey data give us a picture of where the projects are after approximately one year of operation. Level I data are the most descriptive of the CAC project as a whole, but they do not provide a great deal of insight into how specific projects are implementing specific crime prevention activities and with what effects. In short, descriptive data do not enable one to make *evaluative* statements. For that, on-site data collection efforts -- and thus the other two levels of evaluation effort -- are necessary.

Just as Level I sites constitute the basis of our *Global* evaluation, Level II sites are the units of analysis for the *Focused* evaluation, and Level III sites for the *Intensive*. There are 24 Level II sites and each is being visited twice. Each of the 12 Level III sites is being visited several times. At each site, we are specifying the results of the *Global* evaluation by gathering additional detail on the contexts within which the projects are operating, their organizational characteristics and problems, their activities, and their impacts. As of this writing, we have visited all Level II and Level III sites.

Site visit data provide us with a third snapshot of the program. First round site visits generally included interviews with staff, tours of the target area, meetings with board members and project directors, and discussions of key activities. Data were collected from both structured interviews and observation of the project and its environmental context. After each site visit, an extensive report was written to supplement the material in our files from the proposals and the Global Survey. Clearly, it is the 36 projects that we have visited that we know best, and in the analyses that follow we will first ask questions about these projects and then, where appropriate, supplement the analysis with data from the proposals and the Global Surveys from other projects.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF PROJECT SETTINGS

In this section, we examine the results of site and grantee selection as conducted by OCACP. One of the more frequently heard criticisms of federal programs is that bureaucrats often try to influence the success of their programs by "creaming off" for funding those most likely to succeed. In the case of the CAC program, there were really three kinds of creaming that could have occurred. The program could have chosen *cities* with low crime rates and/or a history of crime prevention and community organizing activities. It could have chosen groups working in *target areas* with exceptionally low levels of crime and social problems, or it could have selected only *groups with extensive experience* and a proven record in management.

It has been argued alternatively that well-intentioned attempts by OCACP to deal with the problems of the nation's most seriously deteriorated neighborhoods might lead them to find projects that have little real hope of achieving the desired results. We have looked for evidence of bias in regard to each of these issues by analyzing selected characteristics of the grantees. It should be noted that we are *not* comparing the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful CAC grant applicants. We are looking at only the distributions of funded organizations and the contexts in which they operate.

Characteristics of Grantees' Cities

1. Crime. Our site visits provide some limited data on community responses to crime. For each site, we determined if there was an active crime prevention unit in the police department and whether, in comparison with other cities visited, there was a history of active community organizing efforts. Of the 36 sites visited, 17 were judged to have *active* crime prevention units. Twenty-four projects were in cities with histories of community organizing. What is interesting, however, is that only eight projects were in cities that had *both*.

Official crime data can be used to assess the scope of the crime problem in cities with funded CAC projects. The data that we report are from the FBI's *Crime in the United States, 1977* (1977 is the base year for most project applications), and we have data on the 115 projects from jurisdictions with over 25,000 population reporting to the FBI. Our methodology was to compare the rates for Index crimes in the CAC cities with rates for populations living in cities with over 25,000 population (what we call urban rates). Our intention was to control for the lower rates typically found in rural areas, where there are also few CAC projects. The findings are presented below.

On *property crime*, we found the following:

- The burglary rate for cities over 25,000 population was 1,824 per 100,000 residents. The median rate for CAC cities was 2,344. Seventy-six (67%) of the CAC cities had burglary rates higher than the urban rate.

- The urban larceny rate was 3,515 per 100,000 residents. The median rate for the CAC cities was 3,468. Only 57 (50%) of the CAC cities had larceny rates higher than the urban rate.

- The urban auto theft rate was 691 per 100,000 residents. The median rate for the CAC cities was 1,003. Seventy-five (65%) had auto theft rates higher than the urban rate.

- *The overall property crime rate for urban areas was 6,031 per 100,000 residents. The median rate for the CAC cities was 6,526. Eighty-two (71%) of the CAC cities had property crime rates higher than the urban rate.*

On *violent crime*, the data indicate:

- The urban murder rate was 17.5 per 100,000 residents. One hundred CAC cities (87%) had murder rates higher than the national rate. Eighty (69%) had murder rates higher than the urban rate.

- The urban rape rate for the nation was 42 incidents per 100,000 residents. The median rate for the CAC cities was 52.1. Seventy-nine CAC cities (69%) had rape rates higher than the urban rate.

- The urban robbery rate for the nation was 342 incidents per 100,000 residents. The median rate for the CAC cities was 254. Eighty (69%) CAC cities had robbery rates higher than the urban rate.

- The urban aggravated assault rate was 313 incidents per 100,000 residents. The median rate for the CAC cities was 381. Eighty CAC cities (69%) had assault rates higher than the urban rate.

- *The overall urban violent crime rate for the nation was 709 incidents per 100,000 residents. The median rate for the CAC cities was 997. Eighty-three CAC cities (72%) had violent crime rates higher than the urban rate.*

Thus, for *total crime*, we found:

- *The Crime Index for urban areas in 1977 was 6,740 incidents per 100,000 residents. In the CAC cities, it was 8,197. Eighty-five (74%) of the CAC cities had total crime rates higher than the urban rate.*

In addition to looking at individual crimes, one can ask how many CAC cities exceeded the urban rates *across* crimes. The seven crimes discussed above make up the National Crime Index. A city could have rates worse than the urban rates on from 0 to 7 of those crimes. Table 1 arrays the projects by the number of crimes for which the cities have higher rates than the urban rates.

TABLE 1
Crime Problem Index for CAC Cities

n = 114

No. of crimes where cities have above average rates	URBAN RATE No. of Projects	
0 – 1	13	(11.4%)
2 – 3	15	(13.1%)
4 – 5	28	(24.5%)
6 – 7	58	(50.9%)

Crime is clearly a problem for most of the cities where CAC projects are located. Most of the cities are above the urban rate on six or seven of the reported crimes.

2. Socio-Economic Characteristics. In addition to crime, there are several other dimensions along which OCACP could have chosen unrepresentative cities -- population size, unemployment rates, level of emigration, size of minority populations, or poverty levels. On these dimensions, the CAC cities have the following characteristics:

- Sixteen projects are in areas with less than 50,000 residents. Fourteen are in cities with between 50,000 and 100,000 population. Nineteen are in cities between 100,000 and 250,000. Another 19 are between 250,000 and 500,000. Twenty-five are in cities between one half million and a million, and the remaining 35 are in cities of over a million population. The median population size of the CAC cities is 487,000.

- In 1977, the national unemployment rate was 7.1%. Of the 114 sites for which we have data, 90 (79%) had higher rates. The median rate was 8.6%. Five projects were in areas with very low unemployment (less than 5%), and 23 were in areas with over 10% of the workforce unemployed.

- Ninety of the 117 projects for which we had complete data were located in cities characterized by emigration between 1970 and 1975. The median population loss was 7%.

- Blacks make up 11.1% of the national population. Eighty-eight (69%) of the CAC cities have higher proportions than that. The median percentage of Black population in CAC cities is 21%, with five projects being in cities with Black majorities.

- Hispanics comprise less than 5% of the national population. The majority of CAC projects are in cities that are less than 5% Hispanic, but nine projects are in cities with more than 20% Hispanic population.

- In 1969, 10.7% of all families in the United States were below the poverty level. Of the 117 projects for which we had data, 75 (64%) were in cities with larger proportions of poor families. At the extremes, three were in cities with less than 5% poor families, and six were in cities with over 20% poor families.

Characteristics of Target Neighborhoods

While the city data are instructive about site selection, it is the choice of target neighborhoods that sheds the most revealing light on the environments within which the CAC projects are working.

1. Crime problems in target neighborhoods. Actual crime rates for each project's target area(s) are not available, so we have no data that are directly comparable to those of the city-wide analysis. In the Global Survey, however, we asked project directors to indicate whether specific crimes could be classified as major problems in their target areas. These data do not directly address the question of "creaming," but they do provide information on the perceived severity of specific crimes. The figures in Table 2 indicate the number of project directors who consider particular crimes to be serious problems in their target areas.

TABLE 2

Project Directors' Perceptions: Major Crime Problems in Target Areas

n = 128 CRIME	FREQUENCY OF MENTION AS MAJOR PROBLEM	
Burglary	107	84%
Vandalism	94	73%
Robbery	88	69%
Assault	71	55%
Auto Theft	61	48%
Larceny	54	42%
Sex offenses/rape	44	34%
Arson	34	27%
Homicide	33	26%
Other	23	18%

In addition to determining what crimes are perceived as major problems, we can ascertain the *number* of crimes that project directors considered to be major problems. Table 3 presents these data.

TABLE 3

Number of Crimes in Target Areas Percieved as Major Problems by Project Directors

n = 115 NUMBER OF CRIMES	FREQUENCY	%
0–3	20	17
4–6	65	57
7–10	30	26

Clearly, most project directors perceive their target areas as having multiple crime problems. Without neighborhood level crime data, it is not possible to assess the validity of these perceptions. In addition to the data on perceived problems, during 14 of the site visits, specific incidents of violent crime, including rape, murder, and assault were mentioned as having had an impact on the community, and special activities had been organized in response to those crimes.

2. Socio-economic characteristics of target neighborhoods. Of the 108 projects for which we have data on target area income levels, 22 (20%) said that the current average family income in their areas was less than $5,000 per year, well below the official 1978 poverty level of $6,662 (U.S. Bureau of the Census). The average family income in 61 of the target areas (57%) is between $5,000 and $10,000. Twenty-five projects (23%) indicated that the average family income in their areas falls between $10,000 and $15,000.

Only 21 (16%) of the projects indicated that they have no public housing developments in their target areas. Ninety-eight percent of the projects that do have public housing in their target areas are operating various crime prevention activities in public housing.

Table 4 summarizes the racial characteristics of the target area populations. Of the 107 projects for which there was information, 29 have target area populations that are between 25% and 50% minority, and 50 projects have minority populations of 50% or more. Thirty-four of the 36 sample sites have at least one target area with a predominantly minority population or, if the population is not predominantly minority, several activities are directed to minority groups. The targeted minority groups include Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, and language minority groups such as Polish- and Portuguese-speaking people.

TABLE 4

Racial Characteristics of Target Area Population

n = 107

Percentage of Total Target Area Population	Asian American frequencies (%)	Black frequencies (%)	Hispanic frequencies (%)	Native American frequencies (%)	White frequencies (%)	Other frequencies (%)
Less than 10	102 (95)	28 (6)	64 (60)	106 (99)	25 (23)	103 (96)
10–24	3 (3)	20 (19)	25 (23)	1 (1)	13 (12)	4 (4)
25–49	0 (—)	20 (19)	9 (8)	0 (—)	19 (18)	0 (—)
50–74	0 (—)	19 (18)	6 (6)	0 (—)	22 (21)	0 (—)
More than 75	2 (2)	20 (19)	3 (3)	0 (—)	28 (26)	0 (—)

3. Social problems in the target areas. From observations made on tours of the target neighborhoods and from discussions with project staff in the thirty-six sites that we visited, it was apparent that target neighborhoods suffer from many of the social and physical symptoms of urban decay. We asked about or observed the following: youth problems, unemployment, run-down commercial strips, concentrations of poor elderly people, abandoned and run-down housing, trash, poor public transportation, and the absence of major grocery stores and shopping centers.

Unsupervised youth and a lack of activities for them were reported as a problem in 29 of the 36 projects visited. High unemployment was the next most frequently mentioned problem, being cited by staff members of 28 projects. Run-down commercial strips were visible in 25 of the target areas. Twenty-four projects reported concentrations of poor elderly people in their target areas, and abandoned and extremely run-down housing was evident in 23 projects' target areas. Other problems that were reported by the 36 sample projects include poor or non-existent public transportation (11 projects) and a lack of major grocery stores and shopping centers (8 projects). The number of projects with multiple social problems is reported in Table 5.

TABLE 5

Site Visit Reports of Social Problems

n = 36

NUMBER OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED	NUMBER OF PROJECTS
0 – 2	6
3 – 5	16
6 – 8	14

When the data on observed social problems were examined as profiles, three types of neighborhoods emerged. The 14 projects with from six to eight social problems tended to be in "hard-core," declining neighborhoods with major crime as well as social problems. The projects in the middle category (3-5 problems) tended to be in neighborhoods where residents were concerned about transition and signs of decay and were seeking to address the major problems that did exist. The six projects with less than three major social problems were in very stable neighborhoods where residents were concerned about early signs of decay or with a particular crime problem that they were trying to control.

In addition to social problems, police/community relations in the target neighborhoods were also cited as a problem by many of the projects that we visited. Police/community relations were described as poor by 21 of the 36 projects, and 20 of the projects had specific complaints about the police service, such as poor response time, few police or patrols in the area, or police insensitivity to minority groups.

We also found some supplemental data on target areas to report from the Global Survey. As with crime, we asked project directors to indicate which of several social problems in their target areas they perceived as being major. Table 6 presents these data.

TABLE 6
Distribution of Major Non-Crime Problems in the Target Area

n = 128

PROBLEM	FREQUENCY	%
Housing	94	73
Drug Addiction	72	56
Unsupervised Children	57	45
Police/Community Relations	53	41
Sanitation	51	40
Public Health	48	38
Transiency	41	32
Other	34	27

The proportion of projects that cited housing, youth, sanitation, and police/community relations in the Global Survey is very close to what we found in our 36 site visits. Following the analytic strategy used in the Global crime problem data, we also examined the number of projects with target areas perceived as having multiple problems. These data are presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7
Global Survey Reports of Social Problems

n = 116

NUMBER OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED	NUMBER OF PROJECTS	%
0 – 2	29	25
3 – 5	57	49
6 – 8	30	26

Twenty-five percent of the projects report that there are two or fewer social issues that have been identified as major problems. Three to five major problems were reported by 49% of the projects. As many as six to eight problems were identified in 26% of the projects' target areas. Thus, it appears that for at least 75% of the CAC projects, crime is only one problem among many that affect target area residents.

By cross-tabulating the indices of major crime and major social problems, we gain perspective on the types of target neighborhoods that we observed in the field. The data reported in Table 8 indicate that (at least according to project directors' perceptions) there are very few projects with target areas that have *both* few major social problems and few major crime problems. Those that tend to be low on one dimension are generally higher on the other.

TABLE 8

The Relationship Between Perceived Major Crime Problems and Perceived Major Social Problems

n = 115		NO. OF PERCEIVED MAJOR SOCIAL PROBLEMS		
		0 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 8
NO. OF PERCEIVED MAJOR CRIME PROBLEMS	0 – 3	8	10	2
	4 – 6	17	33	15
	7–10	3	14	13

C. Characteristics of grantee organizations. OCACP's decision to support locally administered crime prevention projects entails a certain amount of risk. To some extent, community organizations are an unknown quantity. They are highly disparate in terms of age, experience, structure, and management capability. There is no generally accepted definition of a community organization, but there are some defining characteristics -- i.e., accountability to residents, control by voluntary leadership, political but non-partisan orientation, and a high degree of political autonomy. In this section, we examine the relevant site visit data to determine the nature of the grantees in the CAC program.

The *explicit* funding criteria allowed considerable latitude in defining eligible grantees. Local chapters of national organizations involved in community improvement, community organizations with no national affiliation, community development corporations, and existing community anti-crime groups were among those specified as eligible. Even unincorporated groups were eligible if they formed a coalition and applied under a central, incorporated grantee. The Global Survey and our first round of site visits focused heavily on problems associated with program start-up and organizational development.

As a rule, most of the grantee organizations are young. For the 105 organizations reporting, 1971 was the median year of incorporation. Seven were incorporated in the 1950s, 31 in the 1960s, and 49 were incorporated between 1970 and 1976. A sizeable number of grantees (13) were incorporated in 1977 and 1978, usually to meet LEAA eligibility requirements. Evidence collected on-site is congruent with the survey findings, but it suggests that for some groups the survey data over-estimate the age of the community organizations. The CAC program encouraged small community organizations to enter into cooperative arrangements. Thus, a project's designated grantee is not always the only organization implementing a CAC project, but because of the eligibility requirements it is often the group with the most managerial experience.

In the Global Survey, we used two indirect measures to evaluate the grantees' experience at the local level. We asked projects about their previous experience with federal grants and about the size of their operating budgets (excluding the CAC grant). For both measures, the findings reflect only the experience of the *grantee* organization. Consequently, for some of the coalition projects, the findings present an inflated estimate of overall project experience. When asked if they had ever received a federal grant other than CAC, 45 (37%) of the grantees responded that they had not, and 78 (63%) said that they had. Only 14 grantees had received LEAA funds before. The median federal grant size was $200,000. A sizeable number of grants were awarded to groups with no track record in grant management.

Our second indirect measure of fiscal management experience produced parallel evidence about the projects. We found that nearly 8% of the grantees had no funds other than the CAC grant. Twenty-five percent of the groups have annual budgets of $50,000 or less, excluding the CAC grant. About half the grantees had additional budgets less than $183,721, the size of the average CAC grant. Eighteen percent of the grantees had budgets larger than $1 million. In sum, our data show that in over half the cases the CAC award exceeds the grantees' total operating budgets from other sources.

Conclusion

In this section, we began our preliminary assessment of the CAC program by examining the *results* of the grantee selection process. Specifically, we examined the distribution of grantees along several dimensions:

- the crime problems they were facing
- the socio-economic contexts in which they were operating

- their experience managing federal programs.

In our analysis, we examined the distributions in light of alternative hypotheses about the CAC program. From the analyses presented above, we can draw the following conclusions:

- The distribution of the crime problems being addressed in the CAC cities *is* skewed -- property and violent crime are worse in CAC cities than in the urban areas of the country as a whole.

- Of the CAC projects we have visited, less than one-fourth have both a history of community organizing *and* an active crime prevention unit in the police department, though most projects have one or the other.

- While many CAC projects are located in communities facing multiple socio-economic and multiple crime problems, the distribution also includes many cities where the residents are concerned about halting the process of decay and transition in their very early stages.

- Working with the police has been a problem for some projects, as predicted, but in only a minority of cases. Over one-third of the projects that we visited had problems developing good working relations with the police. The majority of projects had worked closely with the police previously and were continuing to do so.

- The grantee organizations selected by OCACP ranged in experience from brand-new coalitions that had experience neither in crime prevention nor in working together to groups with a history of both crime prevention and community organizing. For most groups, the CAC grant represented more than half their total funds. One-fourth of the projects have less than $50,000 per year in non-CAC funds, but 18% have budgets over $1 million. There is broad variation along the dimension of grantee experience.

Studying the characteristics of projects selected by OCACP to participate in CAC is of interest for two reasons. First, one criticism of the program was that OCACP would select projects of one type over another. This criticism is not generally supported by our analysis of the data. But a second reason for looking at project characteristics is that

it is often hypothesized that these characteristics are correlated with problems that develop in the course of implementing the projects' crime prevention activities.

Our site visits suggest that, while there are significant problems at some of the sites, they are generally of a size only to cause delays and not to cripple the projects. To provide a balanced picture, we indicate below the number of projects that have specific problems and the number that definitely do not have each problem. The data reflect judgments by our field staff about each project in comparison to the others that they visited.

- For 12 projects, staff turnover has been a problem. For 13 projects, it has not been a problem at all.
- Fourteen projects had difficulty initiating a working relationship with the police, while 21 had no such problem.
- Eight groups have had conflicts with other community organizations in their cities, but for 12 this has definitely not been a problem.
- In seven projects, there have been major disagreements between paid staff and the citizen board. In 27, there has not.
- Seven projects had financial management problems, but 23 definitely did not.
- While seven projects had difficulty in developing a work plan acceptable to OCACP, this was definitely not a problem for 17 projects.
- Eight projects had to rely heavily on technical assistance during their start-up phases, but 27 did not.
- Ten project directors had little program management experience. Ten had a great deal of experience.
- In only seven projects were staff experienced in crime prevention.
- At 17 sites, the person(s) who wrote the grant proposal is not working on the funded project.

Of the 36 projects visited, 11 had none or only one of the problems listed above. Twenty-one had between two and four problems, and four had five or six of the ten. None had more than six. Where multiple problems exist, they are clearly serious. In some instances, they have caused substantial delays in program implementation and may impair the ability of the pro-

jects to meet their objectives by the end of their funding cycles. In only one or two instances, however, did the evaluation field staff feel that organizational problems might actually cripple the projects. In other projects, the problems have been met and dealt with effectively, with only minimal impact on program implementation.

Subsequent analyses for the final report will focus on the relationship between project characteristics, problems encountered, steps taken, and the impact of problems on the implementation of the projects.

IV. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

In this section, we examine the following sets of questions about the role of citizen participation in CAC projects:

- To what extent did the planning phase of projects include attempts to solicit expressions of citizens' needs and concerns? Were citizens involved in developing the program proposals?
- What is the role of community boards in setting policy, monitoring project operations, and deciding how grant money is allocated?
- Do staffing patterns of CAC projects reflect the composition of the target area populations?
- Do the crime prevention activities of the CAC projects include an active role for citizens in the implementation phase of the project?

Citizen Participation in Proposal Development

The LEAA Community Anti-Crime program guidelines called for "evidence of substantial input from neighborhood residents in the identification of crime problems and assessment of needs." The importance of citizen participation in planning can be viewed from two perspectives. Community organizations are voluntary associations that define their purpose in terms of the interests of a specific constituency. Therefore, citizen input is usually considered a requirement for program planning and development efforts. From a crime prevention perspective, citizen participation in planning is assumed to be vital because of its motivating effects. It can be hypothesized that, particularly at the community level, commitment is partly a function of participation in developing the program. When commitment is high, projects should be able to mobilize their constituencies effectively.

During the first round of site visits, we found that most projects had made some attempt to involve residents of the target areas in the planning of the projects and the development of the proposals that were submitted to LEAA. This involvement ranged from holding community meetings in which residents could voice their concerns, to having citizen volunteers planning the entire project and actually writing the proposal. From our discussions with project staff, we identified six major channels of citizen participation during the planning phase (see Table 9).

Thirty-one projects reported that they had organized or participated in some type of community meeting during the initial planning stages. This was the most common channel of participation. Within this category, the organization of meetings, the number of meetings, and attendance varied greatly. Some projects organized only one mass meeting where community concerns and the availability of CAC funds were discussed. Other projects organized meetings to obtain resident reactions after the proposal was drafted. A few projects held regular small meetings at which the final proposal was developed.

TABLE 9

Citizen Involvement in Planning and Proposal Preparation

(n = 36)	FREQUENCY
Citizens attended meetings to discuss community problems and needs	31
Citizens suggested ideas for the CAC proposal	27
Citizens reacted to plans formulated by professional staff of the grantee organization or plans written by outside consultants	22
Citizens surveyed opinions and attitudes of target area residents	15
Citizens provided supporting documentation or data to be included in proposal	14
Citizens drafted major protions of the proposal	11

The two categories of participation mentioned next most often were that citizens suggested ideas for the proposal or that they reacted to plans formulated by professionals. The three most common channels of citizen involvement represent a less intense degree of participation than do the remaining three categories. Attending meetings, suggesting ideas, or reacting to the ideas of others take less time and effort than surveying neighbors, collecting information, or writing a proposal.

Various small-scale surveys were conducted by citizens for 15 of the projects. These surveys were usually informal and consisted of residents interviewing their neighbors or interviewing people at local stores, shopping centers, or

community events. Several other projects mentioned that they had considered doing some kind of survey, but given the conditions in their target areas they did not think that residents would answer the door to people they did not know. Residents provided supporting documentation or data to be included in 14 of the projects' proposals. In several cities where crime statistics were not available on a neighborhood basis, volunteers pulled and coded crime reports. In other cities, volunteers were responsible for collecting housing and demographic data from municipal departments, and for some projects volunteers collected letters of support from local politicians, community leaders, and police officials.

For 11 projects, citizens actually drafted the entire proposal or major portions of it. Almost all these projects (nine) were coalitions, which appear to have encouraged more citizen involvement in this task because many of the newer member groups did not have any paid staff. In addition, one of the two single organizations where citizens wrote the proposal was organized in response to the availability of CAC funds.

In addition to examining individual forms of participation, we can ask how many projects involved citizens in how many ways. One project reported no citizen involvement during this phase along the dimensions listed. Almost half the sites (17) reported that they involved local residents in one to three ways. None of these involved residents in the more intensive tasks, such as surveying target area residents, collecting supporting information, or writing the proposal. For these projects, though citizens were involved, participation was not an integral part of the planning process. Citizens played a greater role in the planning of the remaining projects. Eight projects reported that citizens were involved in four different ways, and eight reported five ways. For three projects, citizens were involved in all six channels of participation.

Conclusions as to the extent of citizen involvement in the development of the CAC projects that we studied are mixed. For half the projects, citizens seem to have played only a peripheral role in the planning phase, while in the remaining projects they were an integral part of the process.

The Role of the Advisory Board

One of the most familiar channels of citizen participation in community action programs is a community or advisory board. We found this to be the case in CAC, with all the projects that we visited having some kind of advisory board. Furthermore, of the 128 respondents to the Global Survey, 85% reported that they have a board with community representation.

The structure of boards for the projects that we visited varies considerably. For some projects, the boards are the existing board of directors of the grantee. For other projects, new boards were created specifically for the CAC project. Some projects that are being implemented by coalitions have an overall board for the project, while in other coalitions each organization has its own advisory board. The backgrounds and positions of the board members also vary widely. Some boards are composed primarily of community associations. The boards for other projects include representatives from social service agencies and police departments, ministers, school principals, and local political leaders. We were told that board members for these projects were usually chosen with the hope that the CAC project could benefit from their experience and draw on some of the resources -- such as equipment, space, and money -- that they represent.

From our initial site visit observations, it seemed that the boards composed of community residents generally try to maintain greater control over the project activities and paid staff than do boards made up of organization and agency representatives. In the latter case, the boards mainly give advice and serve as trouble-shooters. According to the information collected during the site visits, there are eight general categories that describe the ways that advisory boards are involved in the projects. These are given in Table 10.

TABLE 10
Advisory Board Involvement

n = 36	FREQUENCY
Citizens or citizen boards formulated goals for CAC project	25
Citizens or citizen board decided how the CAC funds were allocated	20
Paid staff must have major decisions about activities sanctioned by citizen board	19
Citizen board evaluates performance of CAC staff	18
Citizens or citizen board reviewed applicants and hired project staff	17
The citizen board or a member of the board must sign off on project expenditures	14
Citizen board members participate in day-to-day operations of the project	11
Citizens or the citizen board developed work plans to be implemented by paid staff	8

At most of the sites we visited, boards have participated not only in planning projects, but also in their day-to-day implementation. Conversations with board members at some sites indicated that they had acted as consultants to the staff on a variety of program issues. For example, board members have designed uniforms for patrols; planned and documented patrol routes and procedures; developed strategies for breaking down the target areas into smaller units for block club organizing; recruited and hired staff; conducted performance evaluations; and negotiated with city agencies over issues developed in community forums. We have also observed board participation in such day-to-day operations as folding flyers and lettering posters for project events.

To ascertain how many projects had high and low levels of board involvement, we developed an index based on the items above. The distribution of projects across levels of board involvement is shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11
Board Involvement Scale

n = 36	FREQUENCY
0	5
1–2	10
3–4	4
5–6	12
7–8	5

Five projects have little or no board involvement in their program. The grantee organization of all these existed before CAC, and all five used existing boards of the grantee, rather than a new board created specifically to provide advice and direction for the CAC project.

Site visit information shows that the boards of five projects act in seven or all eight of the capacities listed in Table 9. Four of these boards were created to oversee the CAC project. The members of these boards were also chosen as community representatives, rather than to provide links with other organizations and agencies. Furthermore, many of the members of these four boards played a large role in developing the CAC proposals. We have found, however, that having the board involved in developing work plans, evaluating staff, and participating in day-to-day activities does not necessarily

indicate a smoothly-running project. At several of the sites where the boards are involved in those ways, there are definite conflicts between the board members and the paid staff.

Staffing Patterns

The third item examined under citizen participation is the extent to which CAC projects have selected staff who reflect their constituencies. Our impression from the first round of site visits is that most of the projects seem to be fairly representative of the target area populations. Five of the 36 sample projects reported that residents who helped to develop the proposal were hired as paid staff, and 22 projects recruited staff members from their target areas. Nine of the projects are staffed at the management level exclusively by target area residents. One project said, however, that they had made a conscious decision not to recruit staff from the target area. They believed that outside persons would be better able to assess the area's problems and would not be involved in local conflicts.

Data collected in the Global Survey corroborate those from the site visits. In the Survey, we asked projects to indicate whether their key management personnel were target area residents. We also compared the racial composition of the staff with that of the target area population. Data on target area residency are presented in Table 12. On the average, projects reported that more than half (56%) of their management staff are residents of the target area. There are, however, substantial numbers of projects at both extremes. For 23 projects, less than one-quarter of the staff are target area residents, and for 29 projects all management staff are residents.

TABLE 12

Proportion of Management Staff Who Live in the Target Areas

n = 123

PROPORTION	FREQUENCY	%
Less than .25	23	(18.7)
.25 – .49	16	(13.0)
.50 – .74	45	(36.6)
.75 – .99	10	(8.1)
1.00		

We analyzed the data on race by correlating the reported proportions of staff and target area residents who are Black, white, and Hispanic. In general, there was a significant positive correlation between the proportion of the staff of one race and the proportion of that race in the target area (r = .80 for Blacks, .87 for Hispanics, and .82 for whites. We did not examine this relationship for Native Americans or Asian Americans, because neither group is adequately represented in our sample. To illustrate the match between staff race and resident race, the projects were divided into four groups according to the proportion of Black, Hispanic, and white staff. We used the same procedure to form four equal groups that reflect the proportions for target area residents. Our results are shown in Tables 13, 14, and 15 below.

By examining the numbers on the diagonal of Table 13, we can see that projects with the highest proportion of Black residents also had the highest proportion of Black staff, and vice versa. This is also true for Hispanic and white residents and staff. These data are evidence of a good fit between the racial distribution of the staff and the citizens.

TABLE 13

Percentage of Blacks in the Target Area Compared to Percentage of Blacks on the Staff

n = 105

% OF STAFF WHO ARE BLACK	FREQUENCY PERCENT	% OF TARGET AREA POPULATION WHO ARE BLACK: Less than 6%	7–26%	30–62%	63–100%	
Less than 7%		18	8	1	1	28
		66.7	29.6	3.8	4.0	
8 – 27%		7	13	4	2	26
		25.9	48.1	15.4	8.0	
28 – 69%		2	5	14	3	24
		7.4	18.5	53.8	12.0	
70 – 100%		0	1	7	19	27
		0	3.7	26.9	76.0	
		27	27	26	25	
		100	100	100	100	

TABLE 14

Percentage of Hispanics in the Target Area Compared to Percentage of Hispanics on the Staff

n = 105

% OF STAFF WHO ARE HISPANIC	% OF TARGET AREA POPULATION WHO ARE HISPANIC				
FREQUENCY PERCENT	Less than 1%	1–3%	4–18%	19–100%	
Less than 1%	24	23	13	4	64
	96.0	79.3	50.0	16.0	
1 –10%	0	4	7	3	14
	0	13.8	26.9	12.0	
11–22%	1	1	4	5	11
	4.0	3.4	15.4	20.0	
23–100%	0	1	2	13	16
	0	3.4	7.7	52.0	
	25	29	26	25	
	100	100	100	100	

TABLE 15

Percentage of Whites in the Target Area Compared to Percentage of Whites on the Staff

n = 105

% OF STAFF WHO ARE WHITE	% OF TARGET AREA POPULATION WHO ARE WHITE				
FREQUENCY PERCENT	0–9%	10–40%	41–74%	75–100%	
Less than 1%	16	8	2	0	26
	66.7	30.8	7.4	0	
1 –10%	6	14	3	3	26
	25.0	53.8	11.1	10.7	
11–22%	2	3	13	5	23
	8.3	11.5	48.1	17.9	
23 – 100%	0	1	9	20	30
	0	3.8	33.3	71.4	
	24	26	27	28	
	100	100	100	100	

Citizen Participation in Crime Prevention Activities

The CAC program was designed to mobilize community residents to conduct and participate in neighborhood crime prevention activities. To assess the extent of resident involvement, we collected information on how residents who are neither members of the board nor hired as staff members assist in various project activities. Table 16 presents six of the most often mentioned ways that residents have contributed to the program.

TABLE 16
Citizen Participation in Activities

n = 36

FORM OF PARTICIPATION	FREQUENCY
Serving as volunteer staff	28
Recruiting volunteers from the target area	25
Acting as liaisons between groups and initiating cooperative arrangements with other community organizations	25
Recruiting citizens to serve as paid staff	22
Providing project with in-kind resources, such as space, equipment, supplies, or printing	19
Serving as hired staff after participating in planning and/or developing the proposal	6

In two projects, citizens do not participate in any of the ways listed. Nine projects mentioned that citizens participate in one or two of the ways, and in 25 projects citizens participate in either three or four of the ways listed.

To obtain an overall view of citizen participation in the 36 projects, the items listed in Tables 9, 10, and 16 were added together and projects were rated as to how many of the 20 channels of participation were being used in each project (see Table 17). The index shows the projects to be fairly evenly distributed along the dimension of participation. Four

was the least number of ways that citizens were involved, and two projects had this score. The average was 10.4, and one project had a high of 19 different ways that residents were involved.

TABLE 17
Citizen Participation Index

n = 36		FREQUENCY
Low	1–6	11
Medium	7–13	15
High	14–20	10

Conclusion

The items discussed so far do not really indicate, however, to what extent the general population of a CAC target area is participating in the program. Rather, they illustrate what a small number of active community residents are doing. Most of the listed categories refer to the setting up of crime prevention activities and not to their day-to-day operation. The assumption remaining to be tested is that if there is a significant amount of citizen participation in the initial stages, it is more likely that large numbers of residents will become involved once the activities begin. Data to be collected during the next round of site visits will concentrate on the levels of participation in the community as a whole.

In this section, we have examined several propositions about citizen participation in CAC projects. We have found considerable variation in the roles of citizens and community boards in both the sites that we have visited and in the Global Survey data. For most projects:

- Citizens were involved in program planning.
- The community board has not concerned itself solely with the division of funds, but has taken an active role in program development and management. They have been more than rubberstamps.

- A large proportion of the staff live in the target areas. With very few exceptions, the racial make-up of the target area is reflected in that of the staff.

- Citizens have been recruited to aid in the implementation of project activities.

In sum, while the data on participation in the implementation of crime prevention activities are not yet in, there is considerable evidence that most projects have taken seriously the LEAA mandate for citizen input.

To assess the quantitative aspects of citizen involvement in CAC projects indicates neither the quality of citizen participation nor the impact of citizen participation on project operations or success. Thus, while our data tend to refute the criticism that citizen participation will not be taken seriously, we have not yet addressed the criticism that such participation will manifest itself as "amateur night." Subsequent analyses will address the implications of this criticism.

V. ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION

Every crime prevention strategy is based on a particular conception of the best means to reduce the incidence of criminal behavior. Some strategies emphasize the deterrent effect of stiff penalties and punishments. Other strategies address the complex of socio-economic and psychological factors that may predispose a person to commit crime. Still other strategies are aimed at making the commission of a crime more difficult and the apprehension of the criminal more likely.

Like other groups of professionals and experts, the law enforcement/criminal justice community has changed its conceptions and philosophical orientations in the light of new evidence. While each crime prevention strategy has always had its proponents, the focus has shifted over time. The 1960s and the War on Poverty brought what might be characterized as a "structural" approach to crime prevention. People commit crimes because a whole host of environmental factors make legitimate behavior unproductive or because psychological determinants predispose some persons to criminal behavior. This strategy addresses the *causes* of crime -- the influence of society, family, and peers on individual behavior.

In recent years, this strategy has come under attack. Some critics contend that a cause reduction approach simply does not work. They argue that criminal behavior involves rational decisions, that a potential criminal evaluates the costs and benefits of his actions just as any other decision maker does. The task of a good crime prevention strategy is to influence that decision in the right way. If the likelihood of committing a crime "successfully" is reduced, if the difficulty of committing a crime is increased, or if the chances of apprehension are raised, the potential criminal will be more likely to refrain from committing a particular crime in a particular neighborhood. The *opportunity* for crime is thus reduced.

CAC reflects the current interest in opportunity reduction strategies, but program implementation depends on actors -- community based organizations (CBO's) -- who have traditionally drawn support from and voiced allegiance to structural, cause reduction strategies.

Community-based organizations have tended, historically, to provide services designed to help a person cope with the social environment. Their approach has centered on helping people adjust to a society that is often perceived as hostile or unsupportive. Programs that emphasize the structural, cause reduction approach to social problems have been the bread and butter of many CBO's. In this context, concern for the possible unwillingness of CBO's to adopt the opportunity reduction

strategies of CAC is certainly relevant. The specific questions that we have examined are:

- Are the funded organizations primarily or predominantly social service groups?
- Do they have a core set of activities?
- To what extent do the CAC activities replicate those activities?

Previous Orientation of the Grantees

Our observations of the 36 grantees that we visited indicate that the majority did not have strong social service backgrounds. Sixteen of the grantees were social service groups. Of these, eight were generalists offering a wide range of social services. Three focused on providing social services to minority populations, and of the largest grantees in the sample were former Community Action Program (CAP) agencies.

Twenty groups were involved in a variety of issues and programs other than social services. Of these, seven had a history of community organizing activities. Four had a background in housing and community revitalization programs. Three projects are operated by multi-focus organizations that deal with a variety of issues. Two are oriented toward juvenile programs, and three projects are operated by groups that were formed in response to the CAC program and consequently had no previous orientation. Only one grantee could be described as having had crime prevention as a major focus.

Prior Activities of Grantees

In the Global Survey, we asked projects to list services that they provided prior to CAC funding. Those most frequently cited were community organizing (55 projects), employment and training (36), education (35), youth services (27), senior citizen programs (26), counseling (24), and housing assistance (21). Crime prevention or victim assistance activities were cited by 21 projects.

Of the 36 projects that we visited, 31 had organizational experience in activities aimed at the causes of crime. Only six projects stated that they had any experience in opportunity reduction activities such as escort services, security checks, lock installation for the handicapped, and court watch programs.

Current CAC-Funded Activities

Table 18 shows the types of activities that projects are implementing broken down into the cause and opportunity reduction classes. These data were obtained from responses to an open-ended question in the Global Survey. In order to analyze

TABLE 18

CAC Activities Broken Down Into Opportunity Reduction and Cause Reduction Strategies

OPPORTUNITY REDUCTION ACTIVITIES	No. of Citations	
Public Information/Education		203
Newsletters	26	
General Publicity	41	
Community Forums	13	
Crime, Drug, and Alcohol programs	11	
Crime Prevention Film Library	6	
Crime Prevention curricula	5	
Education programs	24	
Seminars	18	
Workshops	34	
Other information activities	25	
Blockwatch Activities		176
Blockwatch organizing	90	
Building watch organizing	20	
Business watch organizing	8	
Whistle Alert	8	
Safe houses	10	
Other Blockwatch organizing	40	
Target Hardening		160
Operation ID	46	
Home Security Survey	37	
Business Security Survey	7	
Installation of Hardware	11	
Direct deposit of social security checks	3	
Security training	10	
Painting numbers on curbs	6	
Self defense/rape prevention	14	
Arson prevention	3	
Other Target Hardening	23	
Escort Services		50
Criminal Justice/Community Relations		33
Police-community relations	13	
Monitoring/negotiating services	4	
Courtwatch	3	
Other CJ-community relations	13	
Patrols		29
Emergency Services		29
Hotlines	12	
Shelters	6	
Crisis Intervention/Counseling	7	
Emergency security repairs	1	
Other emergency services	3	
Total Opportunity Reducing Activities		**680**

CAUSE REDUCTION ACTIVITIES	No. of Citations	
Delinquency Prevention		125
Youth recreation	27	
Counseling, leadership training	27	
Academic Assistance	8	
Other delinquency prevention	63	
Social Services		46
Outreach/advocacy	18	
Child care	5	
Child abuse prevention	4	
Other social services	19	
Community Resource Development		33
Community organizing (non crime)	17	
Technical Assistance providers	2	
Needs assessment	10	
Other resource development	4	
Manpower Development		29
Job development	3	
Placement and referral	17	
Vocational training	6	
Other manpower development	3	
Victim/Witness Assistance		23
Victim model	16	
Witness model, court reporting	2	
Victim-witness model	5	
Physical Improvements		16
House repair	2	
Street cleanups	5	
Building renovation	1	
Other physical improvements	8	
Recreation		11
Intergenerational Programs		10
Community Revitalization		7
Total Cause Reducing Activities		**300**

the data, we identified 17 primary types of activities. The primary categories were then disaggregated into 58 specific activity sub-categories. The "other" categories represent generally-defined activities that could not be put into one of the more specific sub-categories. Thirty-one activities were described so imprecisely that they could be categorized only as "miscellaneous," and these are not included in the analysis. Opportunity reduction activities were selected far more often than cause reduction activities -- 680 vs. 300 citations. The most common opportunity reduction activities were public information and education, blockwatch, and target hardening. The most common cause reduction activities were delinquency prevention, social services, and community resource development.

These data indicate that the CAC projects are, at least collectively, making substantial investments in opportunity reduction strategies. But is the typical mix of opportunity and cause reduction activities for individual projects? All the 123 projects for which we have complete activity data are doing some opportunity reduction activities. The median number engaged in is five, but 14 projects are implementing more than ten. Twenty-five projects report that they are doing no activities oriented toward the causes of crime. Of those that are doing cause reduction activities, 48 are doing only one or two, and 17 are doing more than five.

In terms of the mix of strategies, opportunity reduction activities comprise the majority of efforts for 76% of the projects. Percentages of project activities in opportunity reduction range from 22% to 100%, with the median being 67%. It must be emphasized that *numbers of activities* are serving here as a very imperfect indicator for *level of effort*. Some activities require a greater investment of project resources than others. Some activities are on-going efforts, while others are one-shot affairs. A detailed examination of effort levels for individual activities and for projects as a whole will be a major emphasis in future site visits.

Are projects doing "the same old stuff?" To some extent, yes. But the fair and accurate answer is that projects are continuing some of their previous cause reduction activities *plus* a wide variety of new opportunity reduction activities.

Implementation Status

Federal programs are notoriously difficult to initiate, particularly those that seek to involve community groups. The process leading to final implementation is complicated and time-consuming. By the time the funds actually reach the community, local circumstances may have changed drastically and the most appropriate intervention strategy may bear little resemblance to the one that was planned.

To the outside observer, community organizations are often an unknown quantity. Their resources and staff capabilities change over time, and it is nearly impossible for a program administrator to evaluate fully a local organization's ability to conduct a given program. Critics of government social policy contend that the gulf between theory and practice is enormous, and that the well-intentioned federal dollars that flow into communities fail all too often to reach the people for whom they are intended.

More than many other programs, CAC was designed to get funds out on the streets. By placing those funds in the hands of people who know and understand their community, it was hoped that effective crime prevention would be instituted quickly. In addition to the data on the selected sites, the involvement of citizens, and the choice of activities, we took a preliminary look at what projects promised and what they have delivered so far.

In their original proposals to LEAA, the selected projects promised that they would, on the average, engage in almost 11 crime prevention activities. The questions that we ask here are:

- What happened to those promises?
- Have the projects reduced their planned efforts from what they promised?
- What have they actually implemented of what they said they were going to do?

The Global Survey asked projects how many activities they had either started or were still planning to undertake. This was, for many projects, over one year after they had submitted their original proposals. The projects that responded said that they still intended to implement an average of 10.2 activities, for a total of almost 1,200 crime prevention efforts. Of these, over 1,000 had already gone beyond the conceptual stage and were in various phases of implementation. At the time of the survey, 707 activities had already been fully implemented (an average of 5.7 per project). For an additional 66 activities, staff had been hired, but intensive planning efforts had not yet begun, and for another 183, staff had been hired and the activity was currently in the planning phase.

The number of activities already implemented varies considerably by project. Of the 123 projects for which we have complete activity data, ten had no activities in the implementation phase at the time of the Global Survey. Fifty-seven claimed to have between one and five activities in place. Forty-three claimed from six to ten activities already underway in their target areas, and 13 said that they had from 11 to 19 up and going. Part of this variation may be due to the

difference in starting dates for the projects, some of which had been underway for up to six months longer than others. While these are admittedly self-reported data, we did verify the status of activity implementation in the 36 sites that we visited. With very few exceptions, the reports on the Global Survey were accurate, and the exceptions were activities that had been interrupted or dropped for some reason.

Perhaps an even better way to measure the status of program implementation is to examine the percentage of proposed activities that projects claim to have already initiated in their target areas. Sixteen projects had implemented between none and 25% of their proposed activities at the time of the Global Survey. Eleven claimed to have implemented from one fourth to one-half of their proposed activities. Twenty claim to have implemented 50% to 75% of their activities, and 25 projects claim to have all their proposed activities in the implementation phase. Again, our site visit data tend to corroborate the findings of the Global Survey. Nineteen of the visited projects had implemented all or almost all of their activities, seven had implemented more than half, five "about half," and four less than half. Only one project could be characterized as having implemented few or none of its proposed activities.

Conclusion

In sum, while many projects are continuing to implement cause reduction activities, the majority of activities being implemented are opportunity reduction strategies. In addition, the vast majority of projects have been able to get most of their proposed activities up and running. What we do not yet know is the impact of choosing a particular configuration of activities. Such analyses will be a focus of our final report.

VI. CONCLUSION

It is too early to report on the Community Anti-Crime Program's efficacy in reducing crime and changing communities, but we can make some judgments about the overall validity of OCACP's approach. In this report, we have looked at data on the selected cities, target areas, and organizations. We have looked at the roles of citizens in the planning and implementation of the program, at what the supervisory boards do, and at the extent to which project staff reflect their constituencies. We have looked at project activities to see if projects are "doing the same old stuff" for a new federal agency. There is substantial evidence that community organizations *are* generally adequate to the tasks of designing, organizing, and implementing crime prevention activities.

The final questions remain, however -- "with what levels of citizen participation?" "for how long?" "with what effects on the groups themselves?" and "with what effects on the communities and their crime problems?" These are the evaluation questions that will be addressed in future rounds of site visits and in our final evaluation report.

END