

# **Can Philadelphia's Poverty Action Plan succeed in raising 100,000 residents out of poverty by 2024?**

A review of the current anti-poverty efforts by the City of Philadelphia

## **Abstract**

Despite efforts to combat poverty and its effects on our City, Philadelphia continues to have the highest poverty rate and deep poverty rate among the nation's 10 largest cities - nearly 1 in 4 Philadelphians live below the poverty line. Under the Shared Prosperity Plan the Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) has been responsible for leading the City's anti-poverty efforts since 2013. The poverty rate decreased from 28.4% in 2011 to 24.5% in 2018 - a decrease of 3.9%, which equates to less than 50,000 people across seven years. The Poverty Action Plan issued in March 2020 has a stated goal of reducing the number of residents living below the poverty line by 100,000 by 2024. This report is an evaluation of the latest plan, expected obstacles it faces, and includes recommendations to improve its chances for success.

## **Introduction**

The stated goal of Philadelphia's latest anti-poverty efforts, the Poverty Action Plan, is to reduce the number of Philadelphians living below the poverty line by 100,000 people within 4 years. To achieve this goal, the Plan will need to be drastically more aggressive than the current efforts under the Shared Prosperity Plan authored in 2013. There are currently 387,980<sup>1</sup> Philadelphians living below the federal poverty line. Reducing this count by 100,000 represents a reduction in the poverty rate from 24.5% to 18.2% of City residents assuming the population base remains constant. The Shared Prosperity Plan was based on data through 2011-2012. This data indicates 2011 was the year with the highest poverty rate (28.4%) and number of residents living below poverty (437,492)<sup>2</sup>. Comparative measures through 2018 indicate a reduction in the poverty rate (24.5%) and number of residents living below poverty (387,980)<sup>3</sup>. During this seven-year period, the City's anti-poverty efforts and general economic expansion reduced the number of residents living in poverty by 3.9% or fewer than 50,000 people. For the Poverty Action Plan to succeed, a commitment to the programming and policy changes recommended by the Plan must be adopted across all organizations operating in the region. There are far too many organizations in the Philadelphia region to permit inclusion of all when creating the Plan. Establishing a Community of Practice that supports and aligns with the Plan will increase engagement with organizations that did not participate in authoring the new plan, and ultimately improve the chances of achieving the stated poverty reduction goals.

## **History**

Philadelphia has a long and storied history of efforts to combat the effects of Poverty. Dating to 1705, the officers of Philadelphia's Corporation were empowered to appoint "Overseers of the Poor" who were to "collect a poor tax and distribute its proceeds among the City's indigent."<sup>4</sup> The office was renamed the Guardians of the Poor in 1788, which was abolished and replaced by the Bullitt Bill in 1887 with the creation of the Department of Charities and Correction, which was in turn replaced in 1903 by the Department of Public Health and Charities. In 1919, the Bureau of Charities was transferred to the Department of Public Welfare until 1984, when the name was changed to the Department of Human Services.

In addition to the Department of Public Welfare, in 1965 Mayor James H.J. Tate created the Philadelphia Anti-Poverty Action Committee, and charged the committee with the power to establish policies necessary to guide the City's Anti-Poverty Campaign under the Economic Opportunity Act, and to exercise supervision over the total program. In 1967, the Mayor approved an ordinance replacing the committee with the Philadelphia Anti-Poverty Action Commission. The Commission was given the power "to conduct, administer and coordinate Federal anti-poverty programs in Philadelphia, to create a community action program to combat poverty, and to provide services and assistance aimed at eliminating poverty in the city."<sup>5</sup> It was named the Designated Community Action Agency which receives the Federal Community Service Block Grant created in U.S. President Lyndon Baines Johnson's War on Poverty. The commission was comprised of between 31 and 45 members, with representation from the Mayor's Office, City Council, representatives from each of 12 Community Action Councils established in the various high-poverty areas of the City, and "representatives from 11 additional public agencies, including AFL-CIO, Chamber of Commerce, Congress of Racial Equality, Delaware Valley Settlement Alliance, Federation of Jewish Agencies, Greater Philadelphia Movement, Health & Welfare Council, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Philadelphia Archdiocese, the Philadelphia Council of Churches, and the Urban League."<sup>4</sup> In 1976, Mayor Frank Rizzo replaced the Anti-Poverty Action commission with the Philadelphia Allied Action Commission and restructured the board representation to include 35 members. Representation from the 12 Community Action Councils and 11 additional public agencies remained, but the composition of representatives from the City on the commission was modified to include the President of the Board of Education among others. From 1965 until 1984, this organization was a partnership between the City, representative agencies from across the City, and members of the Community.

A unique feature of Philadelphia's Anti-Poverty Committee/Commission at creation was the direct election of members to the commission by members of the poor community. At the time, "Philadelphia alone met the federal requirement of the "maximum feasible participation" of the poor by having the poor elect representatives to the Philadelphia Antipoverty Action Committee."<sup>6</sup>

However, in 1985 the functions of the Allied Action Commission were taken over by the Mayor's Office of Community Services (MOCS). This structural change moved responsibility for the City's anti-poverty efforts to the Mayor's office. It continued many of the programs initially started by PAAC and worked with three advisory committees - the Mayor's Office of Community Services Advisory Committee (the successor to PAAC), the Foster Grandparents Advisory Council, and the West Oak Lane Senior Center Advisory Council.

In 2013, the MOCS was rebranded as the Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) and issued "Shared Prosperity Philadelphia, Our Plan to Fight Poverty". The foreword of the Shared Prosperity Plan includes:

*"Shared Prosperity Philadelphia focuses on maximizing the impact of every federal, state and philanthropic anti-poverty dollar coming into the City while pursuing additional funding. To aid collaboration among the many individuals, organizations and agencies involved in fighting poverty, it promotes a philosophy of "collective impact" that establishes a common agenda, a shared measurement system and continuous communication. The Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) will play a key role in this effort. The City launched CEO by executive order in January 2013 with an ambitious goal: to organize and implement a coordinated approach to reduce poverty, an approach that could begin quickly and extend beyond this Administration."*<sup>2</sup>

The Shared Prosperity Plan created a set of actionable strategies and promoted “Collective Impact”, a concept adapted from a series of articles in the Stanford Social Innovation Review.<sup>789</sup> “Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem... Unlike most collaborations, collective impact initiatives involve a centralized infrastructure, a dedicated staff, and a structured process that leads to a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication, and mutually reinforcing activities among all participants.”<sup>7</sup> In other words, Collective Impact necessitates leaders of various organizations committing to work with a multitude of cross-sector organizations for a common goal.

The Shared Prosperity plan yielded incremental improvements, but never fully integrated the various actors around the backbone support for the program. “Collective impact poses many challenges, of course: the difficulty of bringing together people who have never collaborated before, the competition and mistrust among funders and grantees, the struggle of agreeing on shared metrics, the risk of multiple self-anointed backbone organizations, and the perennial obstacles of local politics.”<sup>7</sup> Perceptions of the CEO, responsible for the implementation of Shared Prosperity Plan, were not favorable. In an article printed in the Philadelphia Inquirer in September 2018, current and former staffers described the CEO as having “no direction”, “no strategy”, and lacking “a concise, clear, and accurate way to describe the purpose of the office.”<sup>10</sup> For Collective Impact initiatives to succeed, the lead backbone organization must provide strategic leadership and vision consistent with the core mission, yet staff from the CEO felt this was missing.

The 2018 study “*Does Collective Impact Really Make an Impact*” evaluated the impact of Collective Impact strategies and found that “Collective impact undoubtedly contributed to changes in target populations or places” and “Quality of implementation matters.”<sup>11</sup> More specifically, “Collective impact is defined by a set of five conditions: backbone support, common agenda, mutually reinforcing activities, shared measurement system, and continuous communication... Several findings in the study suggest that more complete implementation of these conditions results in greater impact.”<sup>11</sup> These findings suggest the limited impact of the Shared Prosperity program is not due to the Collective Impact initiative but due to deficiencies in the implementation or execution of the plan.

### **Similarities between the “Shared Prosperity Plan” and “Poverty Action Plan”**

In many ways, the Poverty Action Plan aligns closely with the Shared Prosperity Plan and programs that were previously established. The initiatives of the Poverty Action Plan are organized across three strategic themes: the Social Safety Net; Housing; and Jobs and Education. The Shared Prosperity Plan’s main areas of focus were 1) Workforce Development and Job Creation, 2) Expand Access to Public Benefits and Essential Services, 3) Ensure Children Enter School Prepared to Learn and Expand Opportunities for Year-Round Learning, 4) Increase Housing Security and Affordability, And 5) Strengthen Economic Security and Asset-Building. These focus areas align with the three strategic themes of Poverty Action Plan:

Poverty Action Plan Strategic Themes	Shared Prosperity Plan Core Goals
- Social Safety Net	- Expanded access to public benefits - Strengthen Economic Security and Asset-Building
- Housing	- Increase Housing Security and Affordability
- Jobs and Education	- Workforce Development - Ensure Children Enter School Prepared to Learn and Expand Opportunities for Year-Round Learning

Specific programs begun under the Shared Prosperity Plan will be continued and/or expanded. For example, under the Shared Prosperity Plan, CEO sponsored “Outreach Centers” were established in different areas of the city to connect citizens with the various City, State, and Federal programs. The original goal for these centers was “Each outreach center will use technology that provides a single application and assessment tool to streamline eligibility determination across the full complement of available benefits and link people to physical and behavioral health, social, and employment services. Access to benefits and services will not require physical access to the outreach center.”<sup>2</sup> The Poverty Action Plan’s goal is to “Grow Benefits Access, by investing in a single benefits application, more enrollment sites, and a targeted outreach campaign... A single application will allow Philadelphians to simultaneously access federal, state, and city benefit programs, many of which maintain not only separate forms, but also separate income definitions and eligibility thresholds.”<sup>3</sup> The goal of using technology to enable access to benefits without requiring physical access to the enrollment centers was not met by the CEO under Shared Prosperity Plan. This unmet goal is included in the Poverty Action Plan, as well as increasing the number of enrollment sites and leveraging partnerships with other community partners including Neighborhood Advisory Councils, Energy Centers, and Housing Counseling Agencies.<sup>3</sup>

### Differences between the “Shared Prosperity Plan” and “Poverty Action Plan”

The most glaring differences between the two plans is the composition of the working groups responsible for authoring these plans. The Shared Prosperity Plan was largely authored by Fairmount Ventures Inc, a consultant firm that gathered feedback from “200 individuals, City agencies and organization who participated in the planning process through group meetings, focus groups, telephone and face-to-face interviews, and surveys.”<sup>2</sup> The Shared Prosperity Plan was created by executive order that also established an Oversight Board for the CEO. This Board “shall be composed of no fewer than 15 members and no more than 30, appointed by the Mayor. The membership shall represent elected officials, City departments, community stakeholders, advocates, business, academic, and foundation leadership, along with representatives of low-income communities and individuals.”<sup>2</sup>

The Poverty Action Plan however was created by the “Special Committee on Poverty Reduction and Prevention”, created by City Council resolution following “Narrowing the Gap, Strategies to alleviate and prevent poverty in Philadelphia”, a report also released by City Council “that outlined best practices for preventing and alleviating poverty that have been successful in

other cities or at smaller scale.”<sup>12</sup> While creating the new Poverty Action Plan, “City Council called for extensive public engagement” and “consultation with a diverse array of subject matter experts.”<sup>3</sup> Subcommittees were formed for each of the three strategic themes identified, and each of these subcommittees included leading subject matter experts. The subcommittees also regularly held meetings internally as well as hosted neighborhood public hearings, to ensure feedback from Philadelphians with “lived experience” was captured during the development phase of the plan.

Additionally, the new Plan was created by a special committee that included input and support from four members of the Philadelphia House Delegation, City, State and Federal employees, as well as numerous representatives of nonprofit, non-governmental and for-profit organizations. In total, 97 individuals contributed to the full committee, one of the three subcommittees, or as project support staff. In short, although the term Collective Impact is not included in the Poverty Action Plan, the breadth of representation on these committees and alignment of key actors to the goals of the new plan are much more in keeping with the Collective Impact strategy attempted by the Shared Prosperity Plan.

By involving such an assortment of representatives in the creation of the Poverty Action Plan, the various members who participated will be more invested in the success of the Plan, and by extension the organizations they represent will be more engaged.

### **Challenges facing the Poverty Action Plan implementation**

One of the key elements of the Poverty Action Plan is support from the State in enacting various legislation, including<sup>3</sup>:

- Statewide Minimum Wage Update: A \$15 per hour living wage for all workers in the state.
- State Low Income Housing Tax Credit: New resource to leverage affordable preservation and production, and to align with basis cap and building standard modifications for existing credits.
- Increased Temporary Assistance to Needy Families: A statewide increase in the monthly benefit, to raise the primary income source for 50,000 Philadelphians for the first time in 30 years.
- Restored Pennsylvania General Assistance: A restored statewide program with greater stipends over a longer period, to support economic independence for 5,600 Philadelphians.
- Expanded State Earned Income Tax Credit: An increased state credit against income tax, to complement the existing federal tax credit and a new city wage tax refund.
- Expanded Clean Slate Legislation: Automation and expansion of record sealing for non-violent offenses

On November 20, 2019, the Pennsylvania State Senate passed Senate Bill 79 (SB 79), incrementally increasing the minimum wage in Pennsylvania every 6 months to \$9.50 an hour by January 1, 2022. For SB79 to become law it needs to be approved by the PA House and signed by the Governor. However, “the House’s Republican majority has steadfastly opposed raising Pennsylvania’s minimum wage, and caucus leaders have publicly offered no support for it since a bill passed the Senate on Nov. 20”<sup>13</sup> and as of this writing has not yet been approved by the PA House. On January 28, 2020 Governor Wolf proposed an increase to the State’s minimum wage for the sixth time.<sup>14</sup> The proposed bill would raise the minimum wage to \$12 per hour on July 1, 2020 with \$.50 per hour increases annually until 2026 when it reaches \$15 per hour. Although this

proposed Bill is consistent with the Poverty Action Plan, given recent experience it is unlikely to pass the Senate intact and even less likely to pass the House.

Senate Bill 1185 was introduced on September 19, 2018 “to create a state housing tax credit to incentivize private investment to create new and preserve existing affordable rental housing.”<sup>15</sup> This Bill was re-referred to the Appropriations committee on October 3, 2018 and is not listed as legislation currently in this committee.

Although “Fourteen states plus the District of Columbia raised TANF benefit levels between July 1, 2018 and July 1, 2019”<sup>16</sup> there is currently no separate legislation seeking State-supported increases in TANF benefits in Pennsylvania, and the only reference to TANF appropriations in the current State budget refers to Federal appropriations.

“The \$40 million Pennsylvania General Assistance program, essentially cash welfare for people without minor children, was eliminated on Aug. 1 after a seven-year campaign by Republicans in the state legislature who decried GA as wasteful.”<sup>17</sup> There is currently no legislation proposed in the House or Senate to reinstate the General Assistance program. Approximately 5,600 of the 11,000 Pennsylvanians served by this program were Philadelphia residents. With such a disproportionate number of program participants living in Philadelphia and such fierce opposition by the Republican-controlled House, it is unlikely this program will be reinstated.

The only recent legislation touching on the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is HB 820, proposing the elimination of filing requirements for taxpayers over age 65 who otherwise qualify for 100% tax forgiveness under the EITC. Under the current PA EITC plan a family of four can earn up to \$32,000 and still receive 100% tax forgiveness.<sup>18</sup> In 2018, the poverty line for a household of four was \$25,100.<sup>1</sup> Although raising the threshold for PA EITC eligibility would help low-income families, families living below the poverty line are currently eligible for 100% tax forgiveness.

HB 440, An Act that proposes “in criminal history record information, further providing for expungement, for petition for limited access, for clean slate limited access and for effects of expunged records and records subject to limited access”<sup>19</sup> was originally introduced on February 11, 2019 and is currently in the Senate Judiciary committee. Of the six pieces of legislation requiring support at the State level to effectively implement the Poverty Action Plan, only HB 440 appears to have traction.

Expanded support for all six pieces of legislation outside the five County area will be required if the Program goal of lifting 100,000 residents out of poverty by 2024 is to be met, and current support for these measures is insufficient to enact the necessary measures to support the Plan.

Additional obstacles to the Poverty Action Plan include the 1) the Public-Private Partnership (P3) structure, 2) increasing access to building trades, 3) the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic, and 4) anticipated longevity of the plan.

First, P3s are capable of effectively bring together public and private organizations to achieve a common goal. However, ongoing participation by partner organizations is voluntary unless contractual agreements are in place. “P3s are most often formalized through non-binding memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or memoranda of agreement (MOAs), and sometimes through contracts. Additionally, some P3s are not formalized at all, but rather arise through informal understandings between the agency and private partner.”<sup>20</sup> Without a contractual agreement, anchor partners can elect to cease participation if they disagree with the vision or goals of the oversight board. “The Philadelphia Poverty Commission is a public-private partnership designed to drive

investments and implementation strategy pursuant to a vision of equitable communities shared by City Council’s senior leadership, the Kenney administration, partners in state government, and leaders from philanthropies, universities, communities, and civic institutions.”<sup>33</sup> The Philadelphia Poverty Plan does not provide specific information on the formalization or composition of the Philadelphia Poverty Commission P3. This is an area of risk in the context of local politics, competition for resources between member organizations, and maintaining a shared vision for all partners. With contractual agreements in place, there are still numerous risks associated with P3s including transparency of financial transactions, agreement on the measures and evaluation of outcomes, personal and organizational conflicts of interest, and ethical considerations.<sup>20</sup> Without contractual agreements in place, these risks are magnified in addition to the risk of decreased engagement with the P3 when consensus on goals and implementation strategy cannot be reached.

Second, membership in the Philadelphia area building trades is overwhelmingly dominated by white men. According to the U.S Census bureau, the racial composition in Philadelphia County is 35% White, and 41% Black or African American, and 15% Hispanic or Latino.<sup>21</sup> However, representation in “Construction and Extraction Employment” in Philadelphia is 47% White, 19% Black or African American, and 32% LatinX/Hispanic.<sup>22</sup> Conversely, 20% of the population living below the federal poverty line is White, while 51% is Black or African American and 22% is Hispanic or Latino.<sup>23</sup> Consistent with this measure, employment data indicates employment rates across all occupations is at 74% for White residents while only 57% for Black or African American residents and 58% for Hispanic or Latino residents.<sup>24</sup>

	<b>Population</b>	<b>Building Trades</b>	<b>Below poverty level</b>	<b>Employed</b>
White	35%	47%	20%	74%
Black or African American	41%	19%	51%	57%
Hispanic or Latino	15%	32%	22%	58%

Although the representation of Minority Men and Women in the building trades in Philadelphia has improved to levels recommended in 2009 by the Mayor's Advisory Commission on Construction Industry Diversity<sup>25</sup>, there continues to be disproportionate representation compared to the population. “There are more than 50 construction labor unions in the Greater Philadelphia region, and only one — the Laborers District Council Local 332 — has predominantly Black membership.”<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, although minority representation in trades employment has increased, minority and women owned construction firms continue to be underrepresented. “The Philadelphia metropolitan region was home to some 12,048 construction firms with employees in 2016, according to the latest available figures from the U.S. Census. Of those, an estimated 841 companies (6.9 percent) were minority-owned.”<sup>26</sup> However, Philadelphia’s Rebuild program continues to meet its diversity goals, with 42% of contract dollars going to minority owned firms and 24% going to women owned business.<sup>27</sup> Although this City-run program is meeting the stated diversity goals, it remains to be seen if this will translate into greater representation in the region.

Third, the impact of the COVID-19 shutdown on the City of Philadelphia is expected to create a \$649M gap in the original budget presented on March 5, 2020<sup>28</sup>. To address this shortfall, the revised budget includes increased revenue through tax changes and reduced expenses through layoffs and reductions in program expenses. One component of the Poverty Action Plan included increased funding for the Community College of Philadelphia to expand the footprint and provide a

range or programs in every neighborhood. In the revised budget, funding for CCP was reduced from the original budget causing a delayed start and reduced program size for the Octavius Catto Scholarship.<sup>28</sup> As the shutdown drags on, further funding shortages are likely to be realized, further impacting the City's ability to launch new programs. As such, the City's increased support for CCP and the initial contribution to the Philadelphia Poverty Fund<sup>3</sup> may be in jeopardy.

The Building Trades Council has reported an unemployment rate of 60% across members organizations for April, 2020<sup>22</sup>, due in large part to the suspension of construction activities included in the State's COVID-19 response. Although there is some optimism that construction will resume at the same level as before the COVID-19 response, the long-term impact cannot yet be gauged.

As recently as May 29, 2020 the City Council Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development and The Homeless decided to take no action on six bills that would have halted all evictions in the City through August 31<sup>st</sup>.<sup>29</sup> "The pandemic has created a devastating financial hardship for many residents but has taken the greatest toll on people of color and exacerbated the long-time structural and systematic inequalities targeting them."<sup>29</sup> The proposed legislation would have offered this already disadvantaged population some measure of Housing security, consistent with the goals of Poverty Action Plan. However, there was insufficient support in the Housing committee due to the absence of protection for small landlords, and leaders in the building industry said the protections for renters would hurt landlords across the city.<sup>29</sup> This opposition to a temporary moratorium on evictions and limits to increases on fees and rent during the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to continue once the City ceases restrictions due to COVID-19.

Finally, the recent history of anti-poverty efforts in the city suggests that programs do not normally last beyond the Administration that proposes them. The Shared Prosperity Plan created under Mayor Nutter is being replaced by the Poverty Action Plan created during the Kenney Administration. Mayor Kenney began his second term in January, so a new Administration will take office in January 2024. The Poverty Action Plan must yield significant improvement in the Plan's key metrics to remain viable under the next Mayor and beyond. The plan impact will be measured over a relatively short window that has begun with a devastating health and financial crisis that will bring with it future changes to business practices that will likely increase operating costs while reducing revenues for businesses. The risk of losing many small businesses during this time is very high, potentially increasing the number of city residents living below the poverty line.

## **Survey Results**

Our survey targeted leaders of Philadelphia-area organizations engaged in anti-poverty efforts and was intended to capture responses from leaders familiar with current and past anti-poverty efforts. The purpose of this data collection is to evaluate the perception of local leaders of the Poverty Action Plan. Specifically, the survey aims to measure local leaders:

- Confidence in the new plan achieving the stated goal of raising 100,000 residents out of poverty within five years
- Confidence it will succeed in increasing engagement between local government and nonprofit and for-profit organizations.
- Perception of alignment between the mission and programs of the respondent organizations and the Plan.

## Quantitative Analysis

In addition to evaluating the new Plan, we sought to gauge familiarity, confidence, and organizational alignment with the new Plan from leaders currently working in this sphere. We distributed a survey to the ListServ of the Social Innovations Journal, and the emails were opened by 1,705 recipients. Of these recipients, 59 (3.5%) completed the survey. 22 of the 59 respondents (37.3%) provided responses to the final, open-ended questions, generating valuable qualitative data.

71% of the respondent pool (42) work for non-profit organizations. 76.3% of the respondent pool (45) identified their industry as Social/Direct Services, Healthcare, or Education. Three of these respondents indicated their organization type was either for-profit healthcare or a Non-Governmental Organization. The high level of representation in these fields is consistent with the population of the Social Innovations Journal membership.

What type of Organization do you work for?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Non-profit	42	71%
For-profit	10	17%
Government	4	7%
Non-Governmental	2	3%
Unemployed	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100%</b>

What industry do you work in?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Social Services / Direct Support	16	27%
Healthcare	16	27%
Education	13	22%
City/State/Federal Government	4	7%
Philanthropy	3	5%
Economic Development	2	3%
Technology/Sciences	2	3%
Consulting	2	3%
Banking	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100%</b>

The first survey question (familiarity) is on a 1-5 scale, with 1 = not familiar at all and 5=subject matter expert. The number of respondents indicating substantial familiarity with the new Plan was very low, with only 10 respondents (16.9%) indicating they were very familiar with the plan or subject matter experts.

Descriptive Statistics	
Survey Questions	Mean
How familiar are you with the Poverty Action Plan?	2.4

All remaining questions are on a 1-5 scale, with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The remaining questions are broken into two categories – confidence and organizational alignment.

Summary descriptive statistics for the survey responses specific to confidence in the Plan indicate a general malaise from respondents. Only 4 respondents (6.8%) indicated confidence the new Plan will succeed in raising 100,000 residents out of poverty by 2024. All four respondents agreed they were confident the plan would succeed, with no respondent indicating they strongly agreed they were confident the plan would succeed.

Descriptive Statistics	
Survey Questions	Mean
I am confident the Plan will improve outcomes by increasing collaboration between the City and nonprofit organizations working to combat poverty.	2.7
I am confident the Mayor’s Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) and the newly created Philadelphia Poverty Commission will successfully implement the Poverty Action Plan.	2.7
I am confident the Poverty Action Dashboard will be maintained with current data and enable timely, informed decision making by nonprofit leaders.	2.7
I am confident the Plan will improve outcomes by increasing collaboration between the City and For-profit organizations operating in the Philadelphia region.	2.6
I am confident the new plan will succeed in reducing the number of Philadelphia's living in poverty by 100,000 over the next four years.	2.4

Responses for the survey responses specific to home organizations alignment to the Plan were generally higher. These higher scores indicate alignment with the Plan goals and interest in participation or a long-term engagement supporting the Philadelphia Poverty Commission

Descriptive Statistics	
Survey Questions	Mean
My organization supports raising the State minimum wage to \$15 per hour	3.8
My organization would be interested in participating in the Philadelphia Poverty Commission.	3.7
My Organization would be likely to commit to a long-term engagement supporting the Philadelphia Poverty Commission	3.5
The goals and mission of my organization align with the goals of the Poverty Action Plan.	3.5
Current programs conducted by my organization align with the programming proposed in the Poverty Action Plan.	3.3

I conducted an analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the responses received using both the Organization type and the Industry type as the dependent variables. The null hypothesis for both analyses was there would be no significant variation in responses across Organization or Industry type. The results of both analyses were unable to disprove the null hypothesis, indicating no significant differences across Organization or Industry type, and any of the confidence or organizational alignment questions.

Treating the full set of responses as a single sample however yielded some interesting results. I conducted regression analysis using confidence in the plan succeeding in raising 100,000 people out of poverty as the dependent variable. There is a statistically significant relationship between respondents' confidence in the plan and three of the remaining questions. The question of confidence in the Plan's ability to increase collaboration with non-profit organizations is a close predictor of confidence in the plan's success ( $p=.000$ ). Additionally, the questions of organizational mission and current organizational programs alignment with the plan were statistically significant predictors of confidence in the plan as well ( $p=.002$  and  $p=.013$ , respectively). Translated into practical terms:

- Respondents who believe the Plan can increase collaboration between the City and Non-profit organizations working to combat poverty also believe it will succeed in raising 100,000 residents out of poverty.
- Respondents who believe the Plan aligns with their Organization believe it will succeed in raising 100,000 residents out of poverty.

Although the second finding may represent some organizational bias, both findings support the assertion that increasing collaboration between like-minded organizations is critical to the Plan succeeding.

## Qualitative Analysis

The final question in the survey was an open-ended question asking: 'Is there any additional information you would like to add to better describe your confidence level in the Poverty Action Plan'. 22 people responded to this question with a wide range of responses. There were however some common themes in the text responses.

- **Lack of familiarity** - 9 of the 22 respondents (41%) indicated a lack of familiarity with the new plan, with one indicating "Our government rarely goes outside of its normal circles to seek input" and another indicating "I wish it was more widely distributed/talked about".
- **Maintaining adequate funding** - 4 of the 22 respondents (18%) mentioned current events and their impact on the plan's success, specifically in the context of maintaining adequate funding for the new Plan to succeed.
- **Previous efforts were unsuccessful** - Most significant in the qualitative responses, 9 of the 22 respondents (41%) made a reference to past efforts combatting poverty and their lack of success, including "The plan itself includes many things that could address poverty. My level of confidence is based on the ability to implement said items in the context of Philadelphia" and "Past history has shown plans that are locally based can have modest success but never are in a position to be scaled up so that many thousands can be positively impacted".

These text responses are consistent with the quantitative responses, indicating tempered expectations from many regional leaders and a need for greater market penetration. Many of these leaders indicate interest in participation and support for the measures contained in the plan, yet feelings of being excluded from the plan design and/or marketing efforts are apparent.

## **Limitations and Future Research Opportunities**

The survey was distributed to the Social Innovations Journal ListServ and reached 1,705 recipients. Only 59 responses were received, yielding a 3.5% response rate. Additionally, the survey was distributed to individuals already included in the Social Innovations Journal email distribution list, indicating a prior contact with the Journal. The survey pool therefore did not include representatives from each of the more than 400 organizations operating in the region, as many do not have a prior relationship with the journal. The relatively small response rate and convenience sampling method increase the risk that responses are not representative of the full population, raising concerns for the survey's reliability. Also, the responses were dominated by Social/Direct Services, Healthcare, or Education, increasing the risk of bias in the response. The response pool included only 4 respondents (7%) representing City, State or Federal government, further raising reliability concerns due to such low representation from this key group. However, the pool of potential respondents for the survey was selected because my expectation was that this population, many of whom are in leadership positions in Organizations with missions that align with Plan's goals, would be best qualified to provide feedback on the Plan's chances to succeed. This expectation was not fully met, as the market penetration was less than expected with less than 17% of respondents indicating they were very familiar or subject matter experts. I suspect this is a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The priority for most organizations between March (when the Plan was released) and June (when the survey was conducted) was maintaining operations while adhering to restrictions or modifications required by the pandemic.

An opportunity for future research is distributing the survey again at annual intervals, to gauge participation and confidence longitudinally. Expanding the survey pool to include a broader sample, especially City, State or Federal government and non-profit organizations not included in the original survey would test the reliability of the original survey as well as provide insight into the perceived performance of the plan over time.

## **Recommendations**

In addition to the goals already stated in the Poverty Action Plan, the Philadelphia Poverty Commission and the CEO should:

1. Establish a "Community of Practice" aimed at increasing collective impact for Nonprofits operating in the Philadelphia region working to reduce poverty, that will include member organizations represented in the Philadelphia Poverty Commission. The Community of Practice should:
  - a. Maintain a current database of organizations working to combat the effects of poverty in the Philadelphia area and their programs
  - b. Promote and encourage opportunities for partnership between existing organizations through forums and incubator style events
  - c. Actively recruit organizations to align programs and reduce duplicated efforts
  - d. Incentivize successful program implementations

2. Immediately begin marketing to the various non-profit organizations not represented on the Special Committee on Poverty Reduction and Prevention to engage them in the early stages of the Plan's implementation
3. Establish P3 membership agreements and long-term commitments to the shared goals of poverty reduction and economic equality. Encourage member organizations to voluntarily implement the recommended changes to the State minimum wage in advance of the legislation.
4. Establish diversity goals for all members of the P3 consistent with the goals of the Rebuild program.
5. Engage professional lobbying services to engage State lawmakers who oppose the legislation proposed in the Plan.

## **Conclusion**

Any anti-poverty effort led by Philadelphia City Government will only succeed if the commitment to reducing poverty is adopted across all organizations operating in the region. The ability to engage additional Organizations will be crucial to the success of the plan. Private businesses and Nonprofit organizations will be greatly impacted by the proposed changes in the Plan and engaging these organizations to secure their support should be a top priority. Furthermore, gaining support across the State for minimum wage reform and expanded programs protecting residents living below poverty is necessary for the Plan to succeed. Growing political influence in Harrisburg by engaging representatives from outside of the Philadelphia region is the only way legislation required to support the Plan will pass. The Poverty Action Plan can succeed in raising 100,000 residents out of poverty by 2024 if these actions are successful. Without support regionally and at the State level, the differences in the two plans are too few to expect significantly different results than what was achieved under the Shared Prosperity Plan.

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# Appendix 1 - Survey

## Introductory Text for Survey

<p>Introduction FOR SURVEY</p>	<p>Good afternoon XXXXXX. I am a second year MPA candidate in the Fels Institute of Government at the University of Pennsylvania. I am conducting an evaluation of the Poverty Action Plan issued by Philadelphia City Council in March and prior anti-poverty initiatives in the region. You are invited to participate in a research survey designed to gather perceptions about the Poverty Action Plan. The purpose of the study is to identify the expected impact this new plan will have on key non-profit organizations currently engaged in efforts to combat poverty in the Philadelphia region. This study will provide valuable information for the evaluation of the new plan from the perspective of non-profit leaders and the plan’s anticipated impact on their organizations.</p> <p>Your participation in the study is voluntary and anonymous. The survey should take 5-10 minutes.</p> <p>Thank you for all that you do to serve our Region and your continued engagement with the Social Innovations Journal!</p>
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## Survey Questions

Indicator	#	Survey Question
Demographics	Questions 1-3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What type of Organization do you work for?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Non-profit</li> <li>b. For-profit</li> <li>c. Government</li> <li>d. Non-Governmental</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. What industry do you work in?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Social Services / Direct Support</li> <li>b. City/State/Federal Government</li> <li>c. Healthcare</li> <li>d. Education</li> <li>e. Banking</li> <li>f. Construction</li> <li>g. Other</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. On a scale of 1-5, with 1=not familiar at all and 5=subject matter expert, How familiar are you with the Poverty Action Plan issued by Philadelphia City Council in March 2020?</li> </ol>
% of respondents confident the new plan will improve	Questions 4 – 8	On a scale of 1-5, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree, please Evaluate the following statements:

<p>collaboration between the City and Non-profits</p> <p>% of respondents confident in City's ability to implement then new plan</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. I am confident the new plan will succeed in reducing the number of Philadelphians living in poverty by 100,000 over the next four years.</li> <li>5. I am confident the Plan will improve outcomes by increasing collaboration between the City and Non-profit organizations working to combat poverty</li> <li>6. I am confident the Plan will improve outcomes by increasing collaboration between the City and For-profit organizations operating in the Philadelphia region</li> <li>7. I am confident the Poverty Action Dashboard will be maintained with current data and enable timely, informed decision making by non-profit leaders</li> <li>8. I am confident the Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) and the newly created Philadelphia Poverty Commission will successfully implement the Poverty Action Plan.</li> </ol>
<p>% of respondents indicating alignment between Organizational goals and the goals of the Poverty Action Plan</p>	<p>Questions 9 - 14</p>	<p>On a scale of 1-5, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree, please Evaluate the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. The goals and mission of my organization align with the goals of Poverty Action Plan.</li> <li>10. Current programs conducted by my organization align with the programming proposed in the Poverty Action Plan.</li> <li>11. My organization would be interested in participating in the Philadelphia Poverty Commission</li> <li>12. My Organization would be likely to commit to a long-term engagement supporting the Philadelphia Poverty Commission</li> <li>13. My organization supports raising the State minimum wage to \$15 per hour</li> <li>14. (Open Ended) Is there anything you would like to add to better describe confidence level in the Poverty Action Plan? torr</li> </ol>

## Appendix 2 - Output of Survey Analysis

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Familiarity	59	1	5	2.36	1.242
Confidence_100K	59	1	4	2.41	0.893
Confidence_City_Nonprofit_Collab	58	1	4	2.71	0.879
Confidence_City_Forprofit_Collab	59	1	4	2.68	0.899
Confidence_Dashboard_Current	58	1	5	2.67	1.033
Confidence_CEO_and_PPC_Implementation	58	1	4	2.72	0.970
Org_Goals_Alignment	58	1	5	3.50	1.203
Org_Programs_Alignment	58	1	5	3.34	1.069
Org_Interest_PPC_Participation	58	1	5	3.74	1.001
Org_Interest_Long_Term_Support	58	1	5	3.53	1.063
Org_Support_Minimum_\$15	58	1	5	3.79	1.210
Valid N (listwise)	57				

## ANOVA by Organization Type

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Familiarity	Between Groups	3.506	4	0.877	0.550	0.700
	Within Groups	86.019	54	1.593		
	Total	89.525	58			
Confidence_100K	Between Groups	2.233	4	0.558	0.685	0.606
	Within Groups	44.005	54	0.815		
	Total	46.237	58			
Confidence_City_Nonprofit_Collab	Between Groups	3.356	4	0.839	1.094	0.369
	Within Groups	40.661	53	0.767		
	Total	44.017	57			
Confidence_City_Forprofit_Collab	Between Groups	1.310	4	0.327	0.388	0.816
	Within Groups	45.571	54	0.844		
	Total	46.881	58			
Confidence_Dashboard_Current	Between Groups	4.388	4	1.097	1.031	0.400
	Within Groups	56.388	53	1.064		
	Total	60.776	57			
Confidence_CEO_and_PPC_Implementation	Between Groups	3.047	4	0.762	0.799	0.531
	Within Groups	50.539	53	0.954		
	Total	53.586	57			
Org_Goals_Alignment	Between Groups	6.362	4	1.591	1.107	0.363
	Within Groups	76.138	53	1.437		
	Total	82.500	57			
Org_Programs_Alignment	Between Groups	7.656	4	1.914	1.766	0.150
	Within Groups	57.448	53	1.084		
	Total	65.103	57			
Org_Interest_PPC_Participation	Between Groups	5.380	4	1.345	1.378	0.254
	Within Groups	51.740	53	0.976		
	Total	57.121	57			
Org_Interest_Long_Term_Support	Between Groups	5.825	4	1.456	1.317	0.276
	Within Groups	58.606	53	1.106		
	Total	64.431	57			
Org_Support_Minimum_\$15	Between Groups	3.493	4	0.873	0.578	0.680
	Within Groups	80.024	53	1.510		
	Total	83.517	57			
ONEWAY Familiarity Confidence_100K Confidence_City_Nonprofit_Collab						
Confidence_City_Forprofit_Collab Confidence_Dashboard_Current Confidence_CEO_and_PPC_Implementation						
Org_Goals_Alignment Org_Programs_Alignment Org_Interest_PPC_Participation						
Org_Interest_Long_Term_Support Org_Support_Minimum_\$15 BY Org						

## ANOVA by Industry

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Familiarity	Between Groups	3.874	5	0.775	0.479	0.790
	Within Groups	85.652	53	1.616		
	Total	89.525	58			
Confidence_100K	Between Groups	5.757	5	1.151	1.507	0.203
	Within Groups	40.480	53	0.764		
	Total	46.237	58			
Confidence_City_Nonprofit_Collab	Between Groups	6.395	5	1.279	1.768	0.136
	Within Groups	37.622	52	0.723		
	Total	44.017	57			
Confidence_City_Forprofit_Collab	Between Groups	5.017	5	1.003	1.270	0.291
	Within Groups	41.865	53	0.790		
	Total	46.881	58			
Confidence_Dashboard_Current	Between Groups	3.382	5	0.676	0.613	0.691
	Within Groups	57.394	52	1.104		
	Total	60.776	57			
Confidence_CEO_and_PPC_Implementation	Between Groups	5.841	5	1.168	1.272	0.290
	Within Groups	47.745	52	0.918		
	Total	53.586	57			
Org_Goals_Alignment	Between Groups	12.673	5	2.535	1.888	0.112
	Within Groups	69.827	52	1.343		
	Total	82.500	57			
Org_Programs_Alignment	Between Groups	8.964	5	1.793	1.661	0.161
	Within Groups	56.139	52	1.080		
	Total	65.103	57			
Org_Interest_PPC_Participation	Between Groups	10.698	5	2.140	2.397	0.052
	Within Groups	46.423	52	0.893		
	Total	57.121	57			
Org_Interest_Long_Term_Support	Between Groups	10.936	5	2.187	2.126	0.077
	Within Groups	53.495	52	1.029		
	Total	64.431	57			
Org_Support_Minimum_\$15	Between Groups	3.142	5	0.628	0.407	0.842
	Within Groups	80.375	52	1.546		
	Total	83.517	57			
ONEWAY Familiarity Confidence_100K Confidence_City_Nonprofit_Collab						
Confidence_City_Forprofit_Collab Confidence_Dashboard_Current Confidence_CEO_and_PPC_Implementation						
Org_Goals_Alignment Org_Programs_Alignment Org_Interest_PPC_Participation						
Org_Interest_Long_Term_Support Org_Support_Minimum_\$15 BY Industry						

### Linear Regression with Dependent Variable: Organization Type

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.746	0.606		2.882	0.006
	Familiarity	0.071	0.098	0.110	0.727	0.471
	Confidence_100K	-0.249	0.253	-0.277	-0.988	0.329
	Confidence_City_Nonprofit_Collab	0.324	0.261	0.359	1.240	0.221
	Confidence_City_Forprofit_Collab	-0.025	0.191	-0.027	-0.130	0.897
	Confidence_Dashboard_Current	0.003	0.176	0.004	0.016	0.987
	Confidence_CEO_and_PPC_Implementation	0.051	0.180	0.062	0.284	0.777
	Org_Goals_Alignment	-0.154	0.236	-0.230	-0.652	0.518
	Org_Programs_Alignment	-0.137	0.246	-0.182	-0.559	0.579
	Org_Interest_PPC_Participation	-0.232	0.219	-0.289	-1.055	0.297
	Org_Interest_Long_Term_Support	-0.005	0.208	-0.007	-0.024	0.981
	Org_Support_Minimum_\$15	0.266	0.132	0.403	2.015	0.060

a. Dependent Variable: Org

### Linear Regression with Dependent Variable: Industry Type

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.029	1.102		0.933	0.356
	Familiarity	-0.184	0.178	-0.157	-1.035	0.306
	Confidence_100K	0.349	0.459	0.214	0.760	0.451
	Confidence_City_Nonprofit_Collab	0.019	0.475	0.012	0.040	0.969
	Confidence_City_Forprofit_Collab	0.280	0.347	0.170	0.806	0.424
	Confidence_Dashboard_Current	-0.053	0.320	-0.038	-0.165	0.869
	Confidence_CEO_and_PPC_Implementation	-0.067	0.328	-0.045	-0.205	0.838
	Org_Goals_Alignment	-0.489	0.429	-0.405	-1.139	0.261
	Org_Programs_Alignment	0.387	0.447	0.282	0.865	0.392
	Org_Interest_PPC_Participation	0.741	0.399	0.510	1.857	0.070
	Org_Interest_Long_Term_Support	-0.515	0.378	-0.381	-1.361	0.180
	Org_Support_Minimum_\$15	-0.042	0.240	-0.036	-0.176	0.861

a. Dependent Variable: Industry

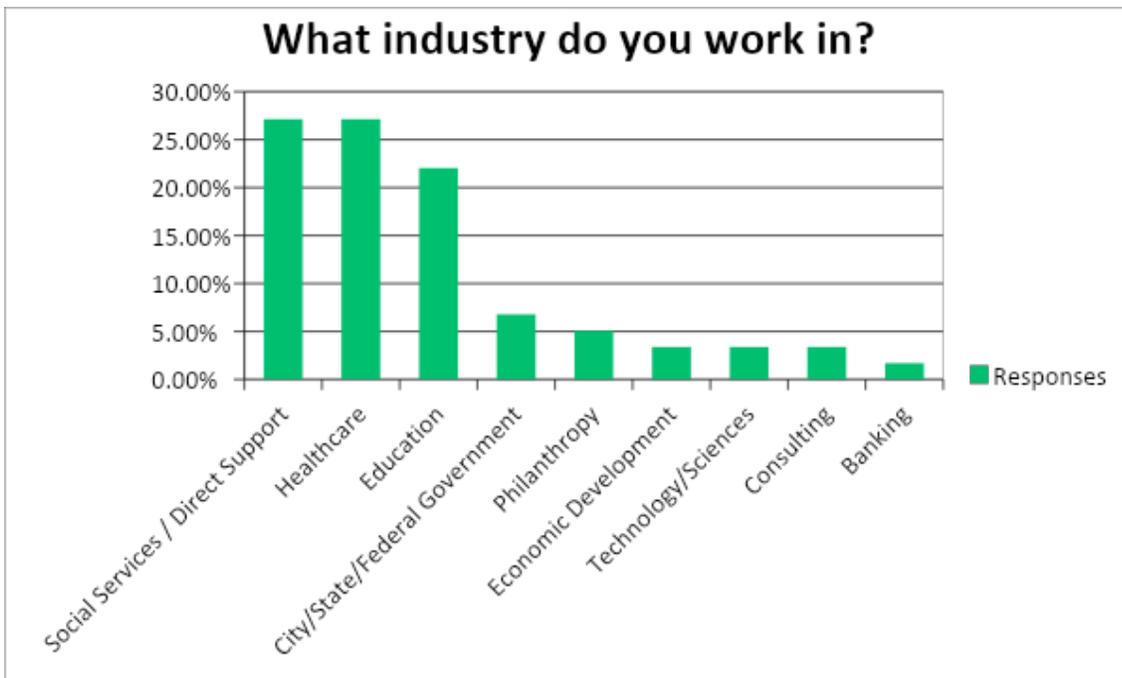
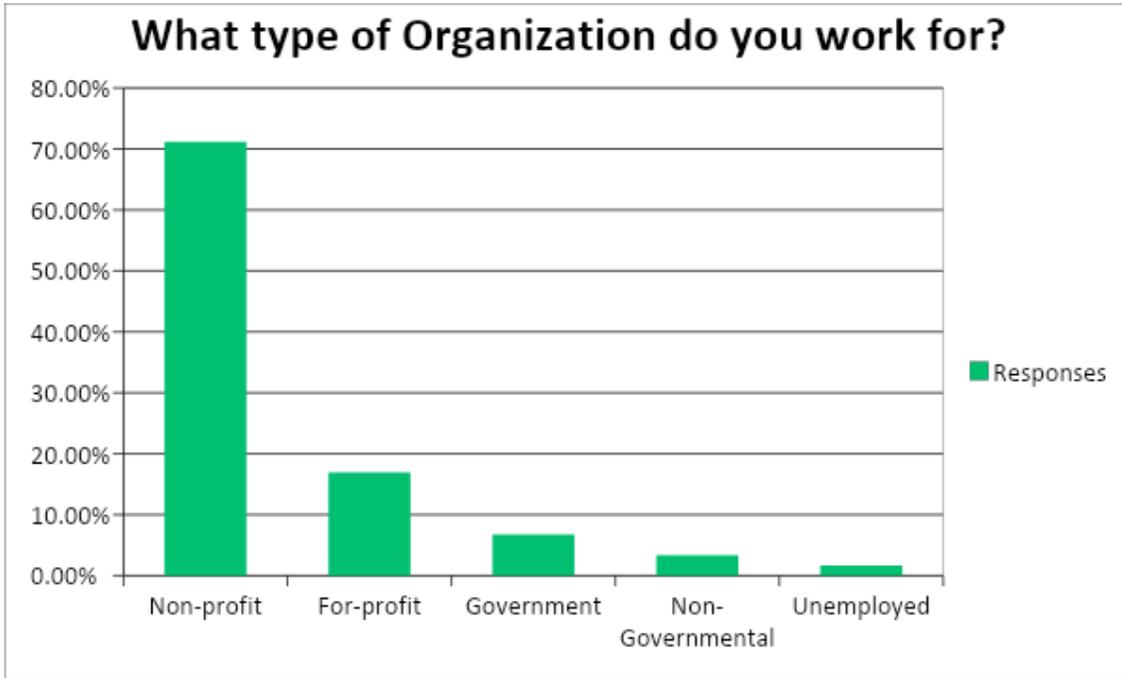
**Linear Regression with Dependent Variable: Confidence in raising 100K out of poverty**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

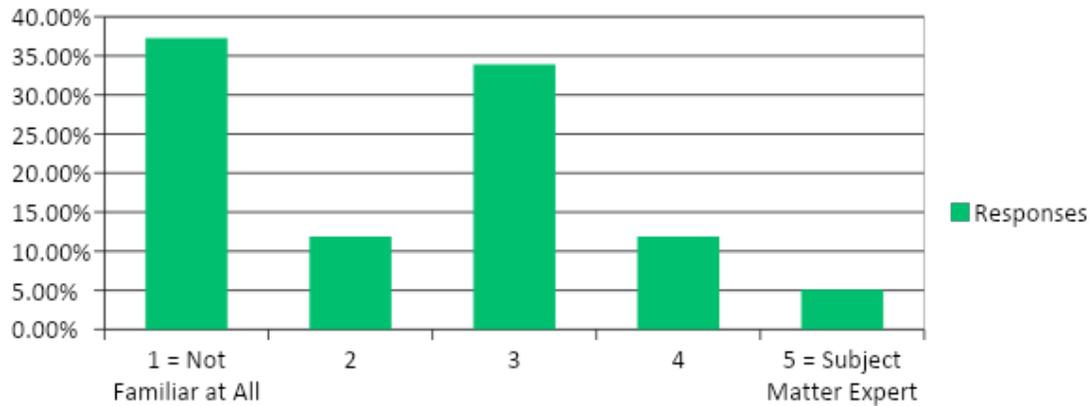
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0.010	0.354		-0.028	0.977
	Familiarity	-0.012	0.057	-0.016	-0.204	0.840
	Confidence_City_Nonprofit_Collab	0.712	0.110	0.712	6.442	0.000
	Confidence_City_Forprofit_Collab	0.042	0.111	0.042	0.378	0.707
	Confidence_Dashboard_Current	0.061	0.102	0.071	0.593	0.556
	Confidence_CEO_and_PPC_Implementation	0.162	0.103	0.176	1.577	0.122
	Org_Goals_Alignment	-0.401	0.124	-0.542	-3.227	0.002
	Org_Programs_Alignment	0.347	0.134	0.413	2.584	0.013
	Org_Interest_PPC_Participation	-0.095	0.127	-0.107	-0.749	0.458
	Org_Interest_Long_Term_Support	0.008	0.121	0.009	0.064	0.949
	Org_Support_Minimum_\$15	0.106	0.076	0.145	1.400	0.168

a. Dependent Variable: Confidence\_100K

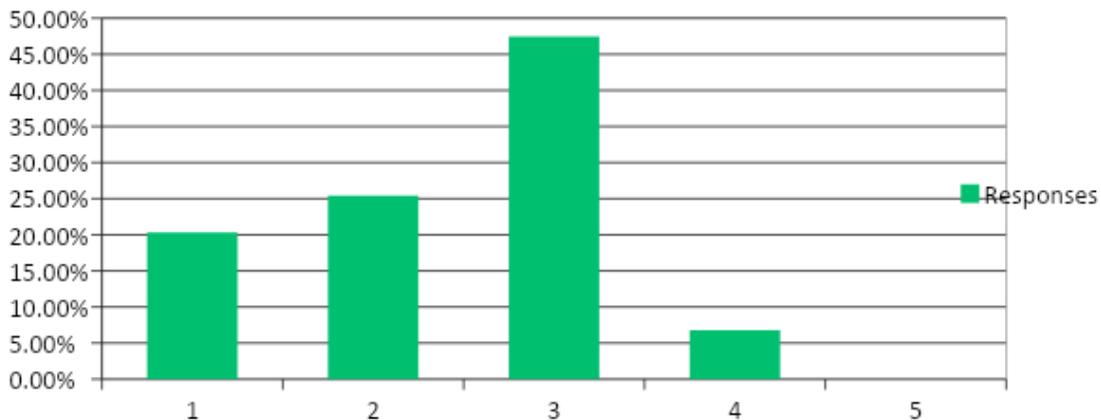
## Appendix 3 – Survey Results



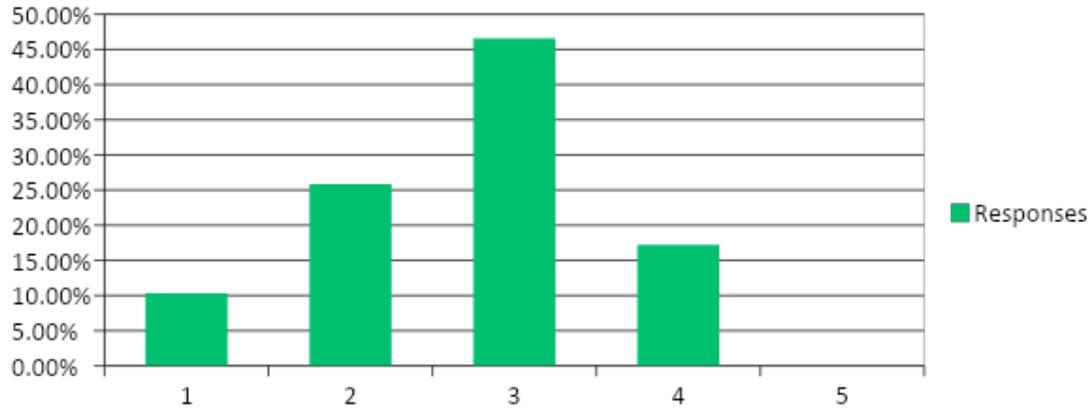
**On a scale of 1-5, with 1=not familiar at all and 5=subject matter expert, How familiar are you with the Poverty Action Plan issued by Philadelphia City Council in March 2020?**



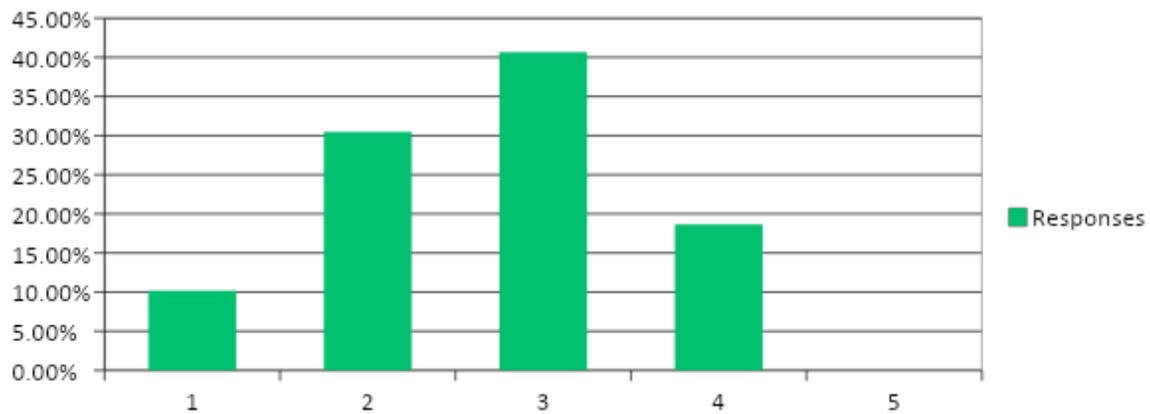
**On a scale of 1-5, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree, please Evaluate the following statement: I am confident the new plan will succeed in reducing the number of Philadelphia's living in poverty by 100,000 ove**



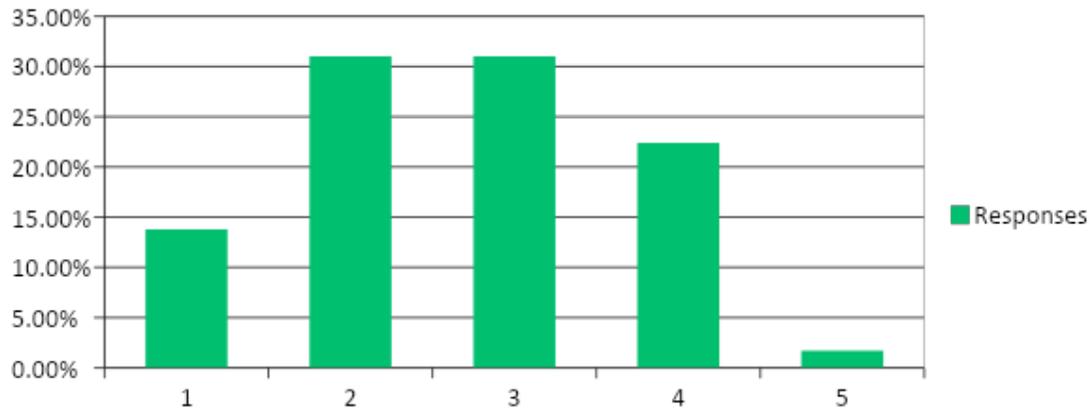
On a scale of 1-5, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree, please Evaluate the following statement: I am confident the Plan will improve outcomes by increasing collaboration between the City and Non-profit organiza



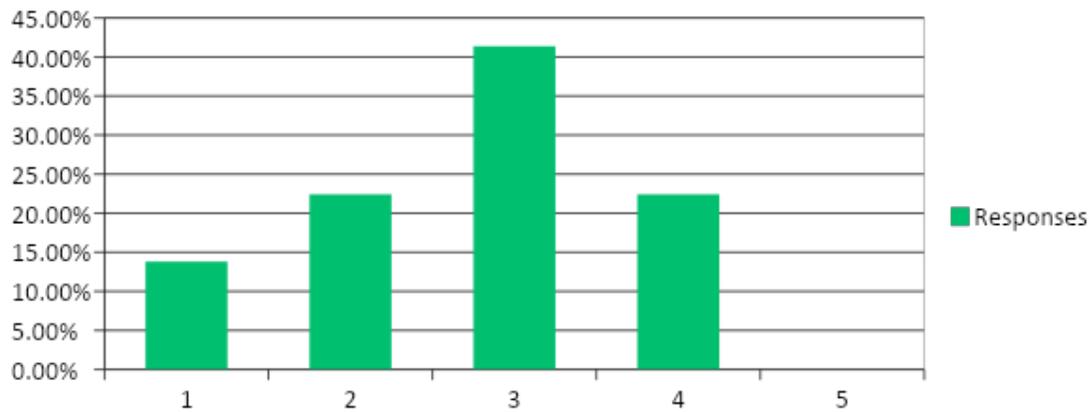
On a scale of 1-5, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree, please Evaluate the following statement: I am confident the Plan will improve outcomes by increasing collaboration between the City and For-profit organiza



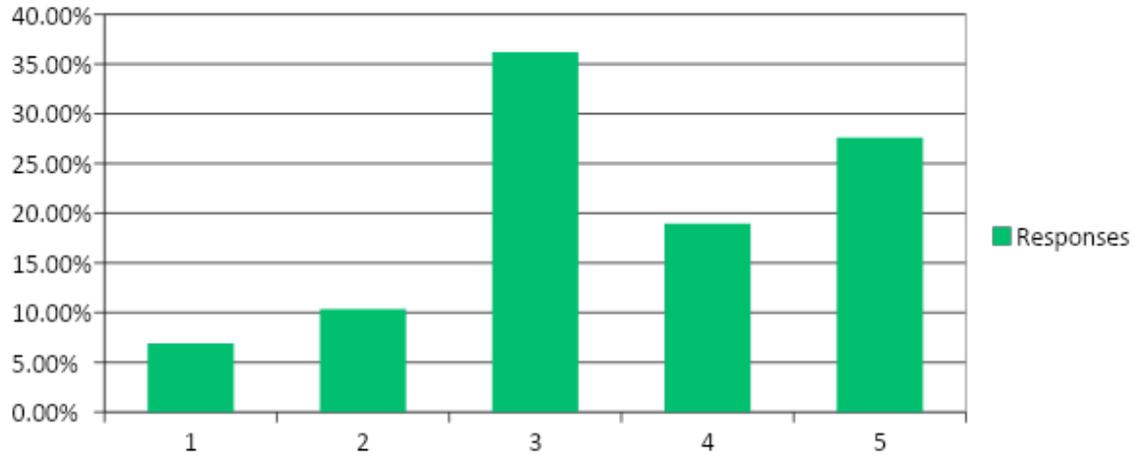
**On a scale of 1-5, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree, please Evaluate the following statement: I am confident the Poverty Action Dashboard will be maintained with current data and enable timely, informed decis**



**On a scale of 1-5, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree, please Evaluate the following statement: I am confident the Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) and the newly created Philadelphi**



**On a scale of 1-5, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree, please Evaluate the following statement: the goals and mission of my organization align with the goals of Poverty Action Plan.**



**On a scale of 1-5, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree, please Evaluate the following statement: Current programs conducted by my organization align with the programming proposed in the Poverty Action Plan.**

