

Income Strategy Map

Definitions:

Result-(or outcome or goal) is a population condition of well-being for children, adults, families and communities, stated in plain language

Indicator-(or benchmark) is a community measure that helps quantify the achievement of a result

Strategy-is a coherent collection of actions that has a reasonable chance of improving results

Program Performance Measure-is a universal measure of how well a program is working. The most important performance measures tell us whether program customers are better off. After each strategy are examples of performance measures used by United Way of Central Iowa. There are three types of performance measures:

1. Quadrant 1 (Q1) - performance measure that answers the question "How much did we do?"
 2. Quadrant 2 (Q2) - performance measure that answers the question "How well did we do it?"
 3. Quadrant 3 & 4 (Q3 & Q4) – performance measure that answers the question "Is anyone better off?"
- To determine if clients are better off, programs measure changes in four categories: Skills/Knowledge, Attitude/Opinion, Behavior, and Circumstance.

INCOME

GOAL: ALL INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES ARE ECONOMICALLY SELF SUFFICIENT

Headline Indicator: Percent of Families in central Iowa who are at or above 250% of poverty

Result 1: Increase income through access to education and employment

Indicator 1: Percent of families in central Iowa at or above 250% of poverty

Indicator 2: Percent of population 25-64 years with less than a high school diploma or equivalent

Indicator 3: Unemployment rate

Indicator 4: Median household income

Indicator 5: Percent of population 25 and over with less than 1 year college to an Associate's Degree

Strategy 1.1: Reengagement in Education (Adult Basic Education, back to high school or HISET attainment)¹

Program Performance Measures:

1. Number of individuals enrolled in reengagement activities (Q1)
2. Number/percent of high school diplomas earned (not on-time graduation) (Q3/Q4)
3. Number/percent of HISET certificates earned (Q3/Q4)

Strategy 1.2: Postsecondary education (apprenticeship, credential, certification, 2-year degree)

¹ HISET testing is considered an alternative to attaining a high school diploma and a reengagement strategy. (*Strategy for Improving Graduation Outcomes: Policy and Practice Considerations for Wisconsin 2009*)

Income Strategy Map

Program Performance Measures:

1. Number of young adults enrolled in post-secondary education. (Q1)
2. Percent of young adults enrolled in an accredited post-secondary education program (Q2)
3. Number/percent who have a plan for post-secondary education (Q3/Q4)
4. Number/percent of young adults who complete/earn post-secondary credential or degree (Q3/Q4)

Strategy 1.3: Strengthen skills for workforce preparation for individuals²

Program Performance Measures:

1. Number of clients in workforce preparation program (Q1)
2. Percent of staff who are certified as job developer (Q2)
3. Number/percent of clients ready for work (Q3/Q4)

Strategy 1.4: Increase income through job placement, retention and advancement³

Program Performance Measures:

1. Number of clients in workforce program (Q1)
2. Percent of staff who are certified as job developers. (Q2)
3. Number/percent of job placements (Q3/Q4)
4. Average hourly wage at placement (Q2)
5. Number/percent job retention at 6 months (Q3/Q4)
6. Number/percent with career advancement (increase wage, hours, or occupational advancement) at 6 months (Q3/Q4)

Result 2: Individuals/families have access to food, shelter, and other income/work supports

Indicator 1: Percent of families earning 185% of poverty or less⁴

Indicator 2: Data Development: Percent of households eligible for EITC

Strategy 2.1: Maximize use of tax credits for low-income working individuals/families⁵

Program Performance Measures:

² Job training and readiness programs remain critical to advancing low-wage, low-skilled workers in to self-sustaining jobs (*UW Metrics report, p24*). One of the clearest paths to economic self-sufficiency is education and training. Wages are strongly linked to basic skill levels and educational credentials (*Poverty Despite Work in Minnesota-Minnesota Budget Project p5*)

³ Workforce development needs to be regional in order to best match workers (*Mind the Gap: Reducing Disparities to Improve Regional Competitiveness in the Twin Cities. Brookings Institute Metropolitan Policy Program, p36*). Sector-based approaches have been designed to target specific industries to improve opportunities for workers while working to build stronger regional economies. The field of sector-based Strategy has witnessed significant gains in uptake to develop opportunities for low-wage workers in local labor markets. Strategic investments in sector-based strategy have proven to be one of the more successful workforce development strategies. Practitioners work with specific industries and employers to develop appropriate training programs to build career pathways to help low-wage workers advance into better jobs. Aligning workforce development with the economic trends and needs of employers increases the likelihood of job placement, retention, and advancement. (*UW Metrics Report, p25*)

⁴ This measure was chosen because a family at 100% of poverty or less will qualify for all public benefits even though many public benefits have income eligibility above 100% of poverty

⁵ Tax credits such as Earned Income Tax Credit — is seen as a potentially powerful tool in helping low-income workers move toward economic self-sufficiency because it puts money directly into the pockets of low-wage workers and provides a direct incentive to work (*Next Step Economic Self Sufficiency Ventura County, CA WIB p29*). Thus, federal and state “work supports”— such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), child care, Food Stamps, health insurance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and child support — have become increasingly important in the national effort to encourage and support employment and to help low-earning families make ends meet. The availability of such benefits makes it more possible for a parent to enter a job, to retain employment, and to better provide for family needs (*Making Ends Meet: Six programs that help working families and employers- Center for Law and Social Policy, p1*).

Note: Tax credits are a Public Benefit that fall under Strategy 1.3. The reason this strategy is standalone is because UWCI directly helps clients with tax credits.

Income Strategy Map

1. Number of clients who file their income taxes through a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site(Q1)
2. Number who claim Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) (Q1)
3. Total amount claimed for Earned Income Tax Credit (Q1)
4. Number who claim Child Tax Credit (CTC) (Q1)
5. Total amount claimed for Child Tax Credit (Q1)
6. Average refund per client (Q1)
7. Average household income of clients who file their taxes through VITA (Q1)
8. Percent of tax preparers who complete the IRS certified tax preparation program (Q2)
9. Total amount of federal refund (Q1)

Strategy 2.2 Provide response to urgent needs for food and shelter ⁶

Program Performance Measures:

1. Number of families served (Q1)
2. Number of food items distributed (Q1)
3. Number of meals distributed/served (Q1)
4. Number of individuals/families who are homeless or in emergency housing (Q1)
5. Percent of trained staff who provide case management to help qualify families to obtain affordable housing (Q2)
6. Number/percent of individuals/families who have improved their housing situation to stable housing (Q3/Q4)

Result 3: Individuals/families build financial stability

Indicator 1: Percent of households who are unbanked

Indicator 2: Percent of low-income working individuals/families who spend more than 40% of their income on housing (rental/homeownership)

Strategy 3.1: Low-income individuals/families have access to mainstream financial products and services⁷

Program Performance Measures:

1. Number of individuals/families who are participating in a financial literacy program (Q1)

⁶ According to a study done by Child & Family Policy Institute of California conducted across five counties in California, they found fourteen barriers to employment. Material hardships constitute a barrier for employment. Material hardships include food, shelter and transportation (*Addressing barriers on the path to self-sufficiency, CFPIC Policy Brief, p2*). Human Capital and social supports variables such as adequate housing, food, transportation and child care can predict employment & Income (*Strategy to Empower People: A Step Towards Self-Reliance for Low-Income Families Receiving Public Assistance – Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education, p2*).

⁷ The report done for The Brookings Institution and Harvard University state that paycheck to paycheck living with no financial margin of safety increases the risk of missing scheduled payments such as credit cards, rent, etc. thus improving credit history and increasing debt burden. When these households need short-term loans for emergencies, they get roped into predatory lending practices (*Bringing Unbanked Households into the Banking System, p4*). Significantly higher proportions of Americans report "living paycheck to paycheck" (47%) ²⁹ and record levels of household debt are contributing the mortgage foreclosure and credit crises that have decimated the financial industry and pushed the U.S. economy into a tailspin (*UW Metrics Report, p35; September 3, 2008, Sacramento Business Journal*). Therefore savings can be the bridge that helps individuals and families move from a short-term focus on paying bills and decreasing debt to a longer-term focus on financial well-being. Savings are especially critical for low- and moderate-income families who often have no assets or access to credit and thus have difficulty remaining financially stable during fluctuations in income such as those precipitated by illness, job loss, divorce or other events (*United Way Metrics report, p15*).

Income Strategy Map

2. *Number/percent of individuals/families who open an account at a bank, credit union, or other mainstream financial institution (Q3/Q4)*
3. *Number/percent of clients who change on their attitude/behavior about financial literacy/skills (Q3/Q4)*
4. *Number/percent of individuals who improve 25% at the end of the financial literacy program from the pretest to posttest (Q3/Q4)*

Strategy 3.2: Individuals demonstrate an increase of financial management, skills and tools⁸

Program Performance Measures:

1. *Number of individuals who are participating in financial coaching (Q1)*
2. *Percent of staff who have credentials to teach financial literacy (Q2)*
3. *Number/percent of families who maintain their budget as defined by paying all household/utility bills on time for three consecutive months (Q3/Q4)*
4. *Number/percent of individuals/families who report that they reduced their debt (Q3/Q4)*
5. *Number/percent of individuals/families who receive their credit report with score and develop a plan to improve their score (Q3/Q4)*
6. *Number/percent of individuals/families who obtain an asset using an IDA (Q3/Q4)*
7. *Number/percent of households who are receiving financial coaching meet their personal financial goals at exit (Q3/Q4)*

Strategy 3.3: Provide supportive services to remove barriers

Program Performance Measures:

1. *Number of public benefit screenings completed (Q1)*
2. *Number of public benefit applications completed (Q1)*
3. *Number/percent of families who receive public benefits (i.e. food assistance, child care assistance, FIP, WIC, SCHIP, Medicaid, energy assistance, etc.) based on screening (Q3/Q4)*
4. *Number of trips for employment (Q1)*
5. *Number/percent of clients receiving extended service who have barriers removed or reduced enabling them to maintain or increase financial stability (Q3/Q4)*

Strategy 3.4: Low-income working families/individuals obtain and maintain affordable stable housing

Program Performance Measures:

1. *Number of clients served (Q1)*
2. *Number/percent of individuals/families who stabilize in affordable housing (rent/ownership) (Q3/Q4)*
3. *Percent of trained staff who provide case management to help qualify families to obtain affordable housing (Q2)*

⁸ Workforce development approaches through training and education are not enough to address the complex financial challenges facing today's low- and moderate-income individuals and families. Approaches to improve financial management and literacy, manage debt, and improve credit worthiness can be used as a multi-faceted strategy to address complex financial challenges. National research conducted for the America Saves Campaign highlight lack of knowledge as one of the primary barriers to saving (*UW Metrics Report, p18 & p35*). Providing low-income working families with targeted financial education, appropriate financial products, and easy, low cost opportunities to save, combined with strategy and approaches to reduce their debt and expenses, will help them to build a financial foundation that lends itself to savings and asset accumulation (*United Way's Income Strategy and Approaches, p3*).

Income Strategy Map



United Way
of Central Iowa

4. *Number/percent of individuals/families that retain their stable housing situation for at least 1 year (Q3/Q4)*