NYU WAGNER’S CAPSTONE PROGRAM: LEARNING IN ACTION

ABOUT CAPSTONE
Capstone, in architecture, is the crowning piece of an arch, the center stone that holds the arch together, giving it shape and strength. Similarly, NYU Wagner’s Capstone Program provides students with the centerpiece of their graduate education where they translate their classroom learning into practice. Capstone teams spend an academic year addressing challenges and identifying opportunities for clients or conducting research on a pressing social question—in a complex and real-world environment. Students must quickly become familiar with an issue or content area; demonstrate process skills such as project management and teamwork; and effectively gather, analyze, and present data.

The Capstone Program was originally funded with a generous grant from the Ford Foundation in 1995. Since then, more than 5,300 students have completed nearly 1,200 projects for more than 800 organizations.

The summaries in this booklet represent the 79 Capstone projects from the 2015-2016 academic year.

A special thanks to FJC: A Foundation of Philanthropic Funds for its financial support of this year’s Capstone Program.

BE A CAPSTONE CLIENT
Organizations—from the public, nonprofit, or private sector—interested in being a Capstone client should visit wagner.nyu.edu/capstone for more information.

ABOUT NYU WAGNER
New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service prepares public service leaders to translate ideas into actions that have an effective and lasting impact. We ensure that our students learn critical analytic skills and frameworks, use New York City as a learning laboratory that can be applied anywhere in the world, and understand the distinct contexts in which they’re working. Ranked 11th nationally among all schools of public affairs, NYU Wagner has been teaching students rigorous methods of management, policy, and planning for over 75 years. We offer Master of Public Administration, Master of Urban Planning, Executive Master of Public Administration, and Doctor of Philosophy degree programs.

wagner.nyu.edu
“PUBLIC SERVICE IS THE HIGHEST GOOD AND, WHEN DONE HONORABLY AND WELL, THE MOST REWARDING.”

-ROBERT F. WAGNER, MAYOR OF NEW YORK CITY 1953-1965
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- Healthcare in Accountable Care Organizations
- U.S. Nonprofit International Development Industry Response to United Nations Millennium Development Goal Adoption

Capstone Faculty and Directors

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ASIAN WOMEN GIVING CIRCLE
ENHANCING PHILANTHROPIC IMPACT

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Nicole Moriarty
David Joshua Portalatin
Carlos Rodriguez
Paulina Toro

FACULTY:
Rona Affoumado

The Asian Women Giving Circle (AWGC) is committed to effecting social change and transformation by funding traditionally underfunded art projects led by Asian American women throughout New York City. The Capstone team was engaged to leverage AWGC's position in the philanthropic community by identifying improvements in its grant making process, assisting the organization in better engaging with its grantees, and providing recommendations to scale up its impact in the Asian American community. The team designed standardized questions for administering interviews as well as pre- and post-perception change surveys to AWGC grantees. The team revised AWGC’s end-of-year reporting structure and provided actionable management recommendations. From its findings, the team created a quotebook containing compelling grantees’ stories for marketing purposes.

BOWERY RESIDENTS’ COMMITTEE
OPERATIONALIZING CODE BLUE FOR SUBWAY OUTREACH

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FACULTY:
Erica Hamilton

Founded in 1971, the Bowery Residents’ Committee (BRC) is one of New York’s leading housing and homeless services providers. With its $68 million budget, BRC operates 27 programs designed to help clients achieve self-sufficiency. Last July, BRC contracted with the NYC Department of Homeless Services and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to oversee expanded outreach efforts throughout New York City’s subway system. Recognizing that outreach is even more critical during times of extreme weather, BRC engaged a Capstone team to evaluate the City’s Code Blue policy—an emergency procedure designed to
protect the most vulnerable New Yorkers. Originally developed for street homelessness, Code Blue needed to be retrofitted in order for BRC to meet continued contractual obligations and protect at-risk clients from exposure-related injuries or death. The Capstone team interviewed BRC staff, shadowed outreach teams, analyzed data, examined Code Blue documents, and conducted industry research. The team’s final report sought to modify Code Blue for subway operations, placing a greater emphasis on high-density locations.

BREAK A DIFFERENCE
ORGANIZATIONAL EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Geshawn L. Williams
Camille Wynter

FACULTY:
Geoff Davenport

Break a Difference (B.A.D.) is a fiscally-sponsored nonprofit organization whose mission is to make positive impact in communities by engaging individuals through service. Working with the United Way, the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and other local groups, B.A.D.'s signature program is Alternative Spring Break (ASB), where thousands of student volunteers participate in week-long immersive service programs at one of nine sites nationwide. As B.A.D. adds additional sites, the organization faces the challenge of scaling rapidly while simultaneously maintaining the quality of service. A Capstone team was tasked with creating a business plan that can function as a blueprint for sustainable growth. The team conducted an analysis of existing systems and financials, researched best practices, and attended a local ASB. The team’s final report included a detailed marketing plan, an operational toolkit, a fiscal policy manual, and an outline for how to establish an independent nonprofit organization with 501(c)3 status.
The Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) has brought world-renowned programming in theater, dance, music, opera, and film to New York City for more than 150 years. The organization is programmatically diverse, with more than 32 departments submitting all expenses, revenues, and budgets for review and processing by an 11-person Finance Department. BAM engaged a Capstone team to evaluate its outdated vendor payment process and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and robustness. Through interviews with BAM employees and peer organizations, the team determined industry best practices and tested the feasibility of business process improvements and new technologies under consideration. The team’s final recommendations outlined strategies for increasing automation, streamlining review procedures, and enhancing end-use trainings and tools.

Since 1967, Legal Services of New York City’s Brooklyn programs have provided legal advocacy and information on a broad range of topics to low-income residents. Working on behalf of both individual clients and client groups, Brooklyn Legal Services (BLS) partners with neighborhood and legal organizations to promote racial, social, and economic justice. In 2015, BLS undertook its first borough-wide needs assessment in order to better understand neighborhood needs and the challenges that residents in low-income communities face in accessing legal services. BLS engaged the services of a Capstone team to analyze the data gathered during the needs assessment and provide guidance on how to leverage this data in its strategic plan. The team provided feedback on surveys, advised BLS on focus group design, participated in focus groups, interviewed BLS staff, analyzed data, and conducted best practice research on strategic planning.
The Child Center of New York’s (CCNY) mission is to support children and families by providing opportunities, training, and the emotional support needed for them to lead happy, healthy, and successful lives. In addition to offering behavioral health and child abuse prevention programs at clinics across New York City, CCNY collaborates with City public schools to provide early childhood day and afterschool programs, as well as youth development programs. The Capstone team was engaged to evaluate existing job descriptions of the organization’s 1,000+ frontline staff. The team collected data from an organization-wide survey and staff interviews to assess discrepancies and inconsistencies in existing position descriptions and titles. Based on data analysis, a literature review on job descriptions, and the organizational structure, the Capstone team designed new job descriptions and streamlined titles that promote standardization and consistency across the organization. The revised job descriptions will ensure clarity of expectations for employees and managers, and form the basis for developing a performance measurement and management system at CCNY.

Citizens Union is one of New York City’s oldest civic watchdog organizations. Since 1897, it has worked to ensure fair and open elections, honest and efficient government, and a civically-engaged public. In 2014, Citizens Union released a blueprint for New York City’s elected officials with principles to guide their decision-making towards making democracy work for all New Yorkers. These principles included creating a culture of transparency, holding open and accessible elections, effectively and efficiently administering services, and maintaining a merit-based city workforce. Citizens Union engaged a Capstone
team to create an evaluation framework to measure whether city officials are adhering to these principles. The team conducted industry research, analyzed available data sources, and created evaluation metrics. The final report outlined recommended metrics to track the City’s adherence to the good governance principles and recommended missing data that Citizens Union could lobby the City to include as a part of the annual Mayor’s Management Report.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE EXCHANGE
SOLICITING CLIENT FEEDBACK TO GUIDE STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Sarah Kukin
Marvin Lalin
Richard Laraway
Chelsea Sexton

FACULTY: Mel Raoul

For over 30 years, Community Resource Exchange (CRE) has provided management consulting services to New York City’s community-based nonprofit organizations with a vision to create a more equitable and livable city for all New Yorkers by reducing poverty and advancing social justice. To better assess its impact, CRE requires a comprehensive system to collect, aggregate, and analyze client engagement data. Such a system will help CRE to assess the effectiveness of CRE consultants, communicate client satisfaction for marketing and funding efforts, guide strategic decision making, and assess the impact of its service portfolio. CRE engaged a Capstone team to evaluate the organization’s existing data collection methods and to offer recommendations for improvement. The team conducted a market scan of competing firms’ strategies and tactics, authored a literature review of industry best practices, developed a new survey system to better capture client satisfaction, and provided a framework for implementation and inclusion into current CRE programs.
COMMON CAUSE NY & COMMUNITY VOTES
NONPROFIT VOTER ENGAGEMENT

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Alexia Makrigiannis
Michael Manoucherian
Ilyssa Meyer

FACULTY:
Thehbia Hiwot

Common Cause NY provides a voice for citizens in support of open, honest, and accountable government at all levels. Community Votes, a nonprofit organization, partners with community-based social service organizations to conduct nonpartisan voter mobilization so more underrepresented citizens participate in our democracy. Both committed to civic engagement, the two organizations partnered to enlist and enable nonprofit organizations to participate in voter engagement work. The organizations engaged a Capstone team to develop a deeper understanding of nonprofit employees’ attitudes and relationships toward the promotion of voting and civic engagement. The team developed and implemented a survey of nonprofit employees. They analyzed and synthesized the results in a clear and digestible way so that Community Votes and Common Cause NY could use the data to recruit more nonprofit organizations to participate in voter engagement work with their clients.

ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY PARTNERS
AGING IN PLACE IN NEW YORK CITY

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Katherine Fitzpatrick
Jessica Kalache
Safina Shao

FACULTY:
Elizabeth Hoagland

Enterprise Community Partners (ECP) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to ending housing insecurity through strategic investment, partnerships, and advocacy for improved housing policies. Considering New York City’s growing senior population and an extreme shortage of affordable senior housing, ECP tasked the Capstone team with conducting a gaps and needs analysis and developing policy recommendations on housing, services, and funding solutions that improve seniors’ ability to live safely and independently in their homes and communities. The Capstone team performed a literature review and interviewed housing providers, service providers, and public agencies to understand the needs of seniors aging
in place and the landscape of senior housing and services. Based on these findings, the team developed a toolkit to serve as a resource for market-rate housing developers on best practices for senior service provision, engaging residents, and partnership strategies.

EPISCOPAL CHARITIES OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK
IMPROVING VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND MANAGEMENT

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Victoria Oyaniran
Kenza Sijelmassi

FACULTY:
Erica Hamilton

Representing the outreach arm of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, Episcopal Charities provides grants and support for over 90 program sites in New York City and the Hudson Valley. Programs range from children’s education and skills building to meals programs and health and wellness. Exploring more effective ways to support its programs, Episcopal Charities engaged a Capstone team to determine the feasibility of creating a volunteer clearinghouse. The team performed a literature review, feasibility study, case study, and cost benefit analysis. It also conducted a survey of program leaders and other stakeholders. In its final report, the team recommended establishing an online volunteer matching service, the hiring of a full-time volunteer coordinator, and the creation of new volunteer development procedures. The team’s recommendations are intended to create a stronger infrastructure for supporting Episcopal Charities’ affiliate programs.
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
ANALYZING AND EVALUATING THE DISASTER GRANTS MANAGEMENT PROCESS

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Cong Cong
Emmanuel Hernandez
Elisabeth Young

FACULTY:
Norman Steisel

An agency of the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for coordinating the U.S. government’s response to disasters. Its mission is to ensure that the nation is adequately prepared for, protected against, and capable of responding to and recovering from disasters. An important aspect of FEMA’s work involves grants administration. It provides Individual and Public Assistance (PA) Grants, which support larger-scale cost-intensive projects, such as infrastructure reconstruction. FEMA engaged a Capstone team to generate evidence-based information about the expenses and human resource investments involved in the PA grant administration process. The team conducted an extensive literature review of FEMA’s PA grant process, used data to quantify costs associated with various components of grants administration, and determined important patterns and trends that are associated with the process. The team’s final report outlined recommendations for streamlining and enhancing the efficiency of the grants administration process, specifically the management of time, money, and personnel.

GALLOPNYC
THERAPEUTIC HORSEMANSHIP PROGRAMS EXPANSION TOOLKIT

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Zoya Kolkin
Namrata Puri
Asuka Qin

FACULTY:
Norman Steisel

GallopNYC, a nonprofit organization that provides therapeutic horsemanship programs to children and adults with disabilities, has an ambitious plan to expand its programs to serve more people across New York City. This expansion involves setting up new sites across four boroughs, primarily serving clients with disabilities as well as the broader community. GallopNYC engaged a Capstone team to develop a toolkit for all new potential sites that assesses the feasibility of services
and operations. The toolkit provides GallopNYC with methods and frameworks for assessing community needs, analyzing competitors and partners, and conducting financial modeling that includes different pricing strategies and sensitivity analyses. The team also completed a case study that applied the toolkit to a potential new site in order to determine its feasibility and recommend potential program design and pricing.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
NEW YORK CITY
COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP IN NEW YORK CITY

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Ruoxi Liu
Ling Ye

FACULTY:
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Habitat for Humanity New York City (Habitat NYC) serves low- and middle-income working families in New York City by building affordable and quality homes and rebuilding homes devastated by natural disasters. New York City has a long history of providing affordable housing to its residents, but affordable homeownership has been omitted from recent policy approaches. In order to raise awareness of the value in affordable homeownership, Habitat NYC engaged a Capstone team to conduct a data-driven research project on its benefits. Through the study’s findings, Habitat NYC hopes to increase funding and policy support for affordable homeownership as a key tactic in tackling the city’s housing crisis and also gain more investment in its current housing plan. The Capstone team reviewed existing literature to identify the academic and theoretical context of housing issues. Based on the data collected from affordable housing organizations and city databases, the team also conducted quantitative research to evaluate the characteristics of affordable homeownership in New York City and the impact of homeownership on neighborhoods.
HIDDEN SPARKS
VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS OF A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Peter Collazo
Kathryn Gonzalez
Jacob Stolar

FACULTY:
Merle McGee

Founded in 2005, Hidden Sparks aims to meet the needs of diverse learners within Jewish day schools both in and beyond New York City. Its pedagogy and model, informed by the work of educational researcher Mel Levine, provides educators and administrators with the tools and strategies to better understand and teach children with social, emotional, and learning differences. Hidden Sparks enlisted the services of a Capstone team to assess whether its professional development model is sustainable and viable within its partner schools. The team interviewed teachers, administrators, and professional development coaches in three day schools, shadowed professional development sessions to view the trainings in action and participants’ responses, and developed case studies based on interviews and observations from each of the day schools.

JOHNSON & JOHNSON
CONSUMER COMPANIES
AN INGREDIENT PLAYBOOK

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Marissa Semkiw
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FACULTY:
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Founded in 1886, Johnson & Johnson is one of the world’s oldest and most trusted providers of consumer care products. Over the last decade, however, Johnson & Johnson has faced significant challenges in shaping perceptions of the health, safety, and environmental sustainability of its personal care products. As a result, Johnson & Johnson has faced public policy, regulatory, and reputational challenges. To assist the client in understanding the origin and escalation of product ingredient issues, the Capstone team examined three cases—parabens, microbeads, and the “toxic tub”—in which public concern about ingredients resulted in policy responses or reputational issues. The team’s review identified key stakeholders, trigger points, and milestones in each case. Based on this analysis, the Capstone team crafted a “playbook” to...
highlight key points of engagement and to guide Johnson & Johnson on strategies for addressing ingredient issues more effectively.

LEGAL SERVICES NYC
MEASURING PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVING WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS

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FACULTY: Mel Raoul

Legal Services NYC (LSNYC) was established in 1967 to fight poverty and seek racial, social, and economic justice for low-income New Yorkers. As part of its mission, LSNYC’s Learning Center offers legal education workshops to attorneys, paralegals, and LSNYC staff. The Learning Center is the largest poverty law education program in the country. LSNYC engaged a Capstone team to assess and enhance the Learning Center’s current performance measurement and workshop evaluation system. The team conducted interviews with staff members to identify LSNYC’s desired outcomes and held focus groups with workshop participants. The team combined this data with a literature review of best practices for educational program evaluation and a study of similar organizations in the field of legal education. They proposed a new digitized evaluation form and process, as well as recommendations for implementation.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CREDIT UNIONS
BEST PRACTICE ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS LENDING CREDIT UNIONS

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Qinqi Yao
Mor Zoran

FACULTY: Norman Steisel

The National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions provides safe and responsible financial services to underserved communities. Since 1974, the Federation has been promoting financial inclusion by organizing, supporting, and investing in community development credit unions (CDCUs). Today, CDCUs face significant hurdles in developing a sustainable business lending division due to high costs and insufficient information. A Capstone team was tasked
to provide CDCUs with best practices of top-performing business lending credit unions and small banks, encouraging them to grant loans to small businesses. Through the analysis of financial data, the team’s report identified top-performing business lending credit unions and small banks. Additionally, the report included a best practice analysis in order to make operational recommendations for improving CDCUs’ business lending capacity. The report also compared growth projections of CDCUs that have not yet developed business lending operations with credit unions that have done so successfully.
NEW YORK CHORAL SOCIETY
DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES AT A VOLUNTEER-LED ORGANIZATION

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FACULTY:
Merle McGee

The New York Choral Society (NYChoral) is a vibrant musical community which believes in the power of music to impact lives and enrich the cultural life of New York and beyond through its world-class and creative performances. Since strategic fundraising can pose capacity challenges for volunteer-led organizations, NYChoral engaged a Capstone team to help develop a strategic fundraising plan. To understand how NYChoral’s mission-driven volunteers can contribute to the organization’s fundraising strategy, the team examined best practices for building organizational capacity through multiple fundraising and volunteer frameworks. They conducted an external scan consisting of both competitor and peer organizations to identify patterns in the sector. The team’s final recommendations reflect the best practices identified in the sector and include a plan to leverage existing fundraising structures and capacity while also cultivating new donors.

NEW YORK CITY ADMINISTRATION OF CHILDREN’S SERVICES
BEST PRACTICES FOR THE TRIAL DISCHARGE PROCESS

CAPSTONE TEAM:
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Mischa Karplus
Eveline Wong
Zheng Zhong

FACULTY:
Louisa Chafee

The Administration of Children’s Services (ACS) is a New York City government agency that ensures children’s safety and well-being, as well as family stability. Among other responsibilities, it ensures child welfare by overseeing services that support families in taking care of their children, as well as providing foster families when services are not sufficient. ACS also investigates cases of neglect and abuse. ACS engaged a Capstone team to determine best practices in trial discharge, which refers to reunifying children with their families on a trial basis to ensure families can take care of their children. Success means parents regain complete custody of their children. A Capstone team interviewed personnel and researched services
in other jurisdictions that focus on this trial discharge period to identify promising models that ACS can incorporate into its services. The team also interviewed ACS staff, and produced a final report including recommended best practices for ACS’s trial discharge process.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS & NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CITYWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
ENERGY REDUCTION STRATEGIES FOR NEW YORK CITY CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

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Lianna Reagan
Rick Suchan
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FACULTY:
Thehbia Hiwot

In accordance with the Mayor’s One City: Built to Last climate action plan, New York City aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from city buildings by 80% from 2005 levels by the year 2050. Complying with this plan poses unique challenges to each member of the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG), 33 institutions located on city property that receive funding from the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) and provide cultural services in exchange. In order to understand these challenges, the Capstone team used city-provided data to conduct a comprehensive analysis of energy usage by CIG buildings. The team also conducted an online survey of all 33 institutions to evaluate their interactions with DCLA, and conducted in-depth interviews with a select sample from the 33 institutions. Based on the data collected and the information provided by CIG, the team compiled a summary of findings and recommendations on how to increase energy efficiency with the assistance of city programs.
While leaders across city government have a strong desire to significantly increase the number of internships available to high school students, there are competing views about the specific objectives of these internships. Career and Technical Education (CTE), a program of the New York City Department of Education, provides students with valuable knowledge and necessary skills to enter the 21st century workforce. In order to ensure that CTE internships meet the learning and developmental needs of today’s high school students, and prepare them for higher education and eventual employment, CTE needed a clear statement of internship objectives. Taking into account perspectives from multiple stakeholders as well as a literature review, the Capstone team proposed objectives for CTE internship participants. These objectives can be used to design, modify, and evaluate CTE internships.

The Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON) brings together community organizations, government agencies, local businesses, and community residents to connect probation clients who live in target neighborhoods to opportunities, resources, and services. This unique initiative of the New York City Department of Probation is transforming the way probation works and helping clients reintegrate into their communities. Within NeON, NeON Arts is a program specifically using art to help connect clients to local resources and their communities while also giving them the tools to express themselves. NeON Arts engaged a Capstone team to look at
NeON through lenses that are popular in the world of philanthropy. Through the Capstone team’s analysis, NeON was provided with language and tools to communicate clearly and intentionally about the relationship between NeON Arts and a set of emerging and established policy frameworks.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ESTIMATING THE IMPACT OF STREET CUTS ON PAVEMENT LONGEVITY

The New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) works to provide safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible movement of people and goods, and to maintain and enhance the transportation infrastructure. Pavement management is a key part of this role. DOT uses techniques such as road resurfacing and reconstruction to keep the City’s roads in good condition. Street cuts are usually rectangular in shape, becoming defective when the street surface is no longer level because a filled-in cut has either sunk or has been mounded too high. To quantify the impact of street cuts on the quality of the pavement, DOT engaged a Capstone team to analyze data on road repair, reconstruction, ratings, defects, and permits issued for street-cuts. The team created the dataset, set up a regression analysis using STATA, and interpreted the results of the analysis. The team’s final report estimated the impact of street cuts on pavement longevity, created deterioration curves to inform future pavement management activities, and made recommendations to improve the objectivity and reliability of DOT’s data collection.
NEW YORK CITY MAYOR’S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS
STRENGTHENING NEW YORK CITY GOVERNMENT’S TIES WITH IMMIGRANT SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

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FACULTY:
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The Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) is a city agency that promotes the well-being of immigrant communities. It aims to ensure that immigrant small business owners are aware of the city services available to them and that these services adequately address their needs. MOIA engaged a Capstone team to find ways to effectively reach this population. The team delivered a research paper on New York City immigrant-owned small businesses, focusing on the landscape and key players, contributions of immigrant-owned businesses, their interaction with various city entities, their needs and challenges, and how comparable cities serve this population. The team interviewed small business advocates and leaders to learn more about the successes and challenges of immigrant small business communities and what methods work best to engage owners and meet their needs. The final report identified specific strategies that MOIA can undertake to better engage and serve this constituency.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE
MEASURING LEADERSHIP SKILL DEVELOPMENT

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FACULTY:
Rona Affoumado

Created in November 2013 to enhance and coordinate leadership development and national scholarship opportunities across New York University (NYU), the NYU Leadership Initiative works with students, faculty, and administrators on several academic programs. The NYU Leadership Initiative engaged a Capstone team to design impact assessment surveys for two of its programs: the Undergraduate Leadership Fellows and the Social Sector Leadership Diversity Fellows. The team created an integrated logic model for the two programs, conducted background research on best evaluation practices,
Opening Act (OA) provides free after-school and extracurricular programs to high-need New York City public high schools without theater and arts programs. Founded in 2000, the organization strives to help students develop leadership, commitment, confidence, and community through theater. With a growing need to strengthen their programs and increase funding, the Capstone team identified and developed a measurement tool for OA to better understand the long-term impact of participation on OA alumni. The team helped OA supplement student and alumni anecdotes with tools for measuring impact, in part to become more competitive for new funding sources. Through a literature review and key stakeholder interviews, the team identified key metrics, developed a measurement tool, and created a training manual for staff members to help the growing organization demonstrate to its stakeholders how OA’s youth theater programming impacts student development.

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reached out to peer academic leadership programs across the country, identified crucial programmatic impact metrics for measurement, and designed pre- and post-program surveys to determine the improvement in student leadership abilities and behaviors that reflect the Leadership Initiative’s intended learning outcomes. The team’s final report also outlined recommendations for additional evaluation methods to support the work of the NYU Leadership Initiative.
Federal data indicates that almost 20% of the U.S. adult population is living with a mental or emotional disability. People With Disabilities Foundation (PWDF), a San Francisco-based nonprofit, has been providing public education and advocacy services related to psychiatric and/or developmental disabilities for over 15 years. Although PWDF is a very small organization (eight employees), its staff members are some of the nation’s foremost legal experts practicing in this area, specializing in the legal rights of people with disabilities as they relate to multiple federal issues, including social security benefits. The organization engaged a Capstone team to analyze and redesign the dissemination strategy of its public education program, with a specific goal of leveraging technology to increase geographic reach. The team conducted a detailed environmental scan and best-practices benchmarking analysis and provided PWDF with phased recommendations that can be implemented gradually as the organization obtains additional resources.

Reach the World (RTW) was founded in 1998 to make the benefits of travel and global education accessible to K-12 students in New York City. Partnering with the Gilman and Fulbright Scholarship programs, RTW connects university students and recent graduates studying abroad through video conferencing and an online platform. Given the growing interest in global education, the organization is expanding into New York City private schools and new cities across the U.S. RTW engaged a Capstone team to evaluate the experiences and perceptions of existing digital platform users and to outline a growth strategy for its online programming. The team interviewed RTW Board and staff members, surveyed existing users, analyzed
STUDENTS FOR SERVICE
EVALUATION OF SHORT-TERM OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE TEENS FOR FOOD JUSTICE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

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By educating and empowering youth, Teens for Food Justice (TFFJ), powered by Students for Service, brings food equity to urban communities where good nutrition and healthy food access are significant challenges. In TFFJ’s unique after-school program, students gain expertise in food justice advocacy, health and nutrition, and cutting-edge urban agricultural technology to build a grassroots movement for health and food equity in their own schools and communities. TFFJ engaged a Capstone team to evaluate their current program in terms of behavioral change, educational outcomes, and health implications for students and their families. The team conducted an in-depth literature review in the areas of food justice, advocacy, and the effects of after-school programs on low-income neighborhoods. The team also analyzed short-term outputs and outcomes collected from focus groups, surveys, and interviews with different stakeholders in the school community. The team focused its recommendations on long-term strategies of systematic data collection, as well as the analysis and refinement of the outcome indicators needed for the success of the program.

SUNSET BAY COMMUNITY SERVICES
ALTERNATIVE FINANCING MODEL FOR NEW CHILDCARE SITE

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Sunset Bay Community Services (SBCS) provides early childcare options for Sunset Park, a Brooklyn neighborhood with the highest birth rate in New York City and mainly comprised of new immigrants. SBCS is currently looking to open additional childcare service sites to accommodate the shortage
of affordable child care in this area. A Capstone team helped SCBS identify and finance new childcare sites, researching alternative financing methods and interviewing experts about various potential financing models. In addition, the Capstone team surveyed Sunset Park’s population childcare needs and financial constraints. The team incorporated its findings into a dynamic financial model that allows SBCS to adjust its financing assumptions based on each potential childcare site. The team’s final report included case study highlights of relevant financing examples, a rubric to evaluate potential sites, and an interactive financial model.

VOYA FINANCIAL
DESIGNING A CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAM

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Voya Financial helps Americans plan, invest, and protect their savings for retirement. An integral part of Voya is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which is carried out through the Voya Foundation. The Voya Foundation reinvests in the community through grants for financial and children’s education. In December 2015, Voya’s signature partnership was ending, providing the opportunity for a new CSR program. In order to identify a program framework for Voya’s next CSR initiative, the Capstone team interviewed key Voya staff and professionals, surveyed literature, analyzed data, and created a program design. This data helped Voya to better understand its competitive environment, the leading indicators of retirement readiness, ideal target demographics, and the timeline of when target populations benefit from financial education interventions. Utilizing the previously-described metrics to inform the program design and framework, the team’s report outlines recommendations for the Foundation to write an RFP and find a partner organization to carry out a new financial education signature program.
Based in Washington, D.C., Z Street Consulting is a shared services consulting firm for federal government clients. In an era where federal government agencies face increased demands to do more with less, senior administrators seek to reduce management services costs in order to focus resources on core functions. While prior centralization of services focused on financial management, information technology, and payroll systems, recent Office of Management and Budget directives have emphasized expanding the scope of shared services to include the whole suite of human resources. A Capstone team was tasked with capturing best practices for the transition to human resources shared services and developing recommendations in this arena. The team conducted extensive research on shared services literature and practices and also interviewed shared services practitioners in the federal government. The team developed a series of best practices to inform future shared services implementations in human resources and created infographics to translate these best practices for quick reference.
With state and federal dollars, healthcare providers are increasingly incentivized to address the socioeconomic factors leading to poor health through partnerships with community-based social service organizations (CBOs). Yet access to such financial incentives has been limited for CBOs. CAMBA, a Brooklyn-based CBO, delivers services that providers and managed care organizations (MCOs) are required to offer in emerging value-based reimbursement models that pay for services not traditionally considered healthcare. Yet CAMBA, like most CBOs, has struggled to establish reimbursement agreements with providers and MCOs. CAMBA engaged a Capstone team to develop a plan to establish such reimbursement agreements. The team also advised CAMBA on which of its 160+ programs are the best candidates for the value-based payment model. The team reviewed existing literature and evaluated the New York market through a series of qualitative interviews with experts in the field. The team made recommendations about which of CAMBA’s existing services are the best candidates for provider or MCO partnerships and how these programs can best position themselves for such partnerships.
COMMUNITY ACCESS
EVALUATION OF HOWIE THE HARP PEER SPECIALIST TRAINING PROGRAM

Community Access is a nonprofit organization committed to helping individuals with mental health issues make the transition from shelters and institutions to independent living. The organization’s Howie the Harp Peer Specialist Training Program (HTH) helps individuals with serious mental illness and histories of homelessness and incarceration train to become peer specialists. As peer specialists, individuals use their experiences to assist others going through recovery. Given the changing healthcare landscape in New York, peer specialist training programs are in high demand. Community Access engaged a Capstone team to evaluate the HTH program. Specifically, the team created survey tools to measure the program’s effectiveness and its impact on HTH graduates and employers. The team also conducted a comparative analysis of similar peer programs around the country. Using the data collected through surveys, the comparative analysis, and a literature review, the Capstone team produced a detailed evaluation report and provided future recommendations for the program.

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DAVITA
NEW YORK DIALYSIS PROVIDER COALITION

DaVita is one of the major dialysis care providers in the United States and has the largest dialysis chain organization in New York. In addition to providing dialysis care, DaVita takes an active role in educating patients and lobbying for policy reforms to improve dialysis healthcare. In New York, DaVita provides dialysis care to over 6,000 patients across 53 clinics and 12 hospital partners. Providers in the dialysis market encounter many challenges, including inadequate reimbursements, non-emergency patient transportation, and emergency Medicaid care. DaVita seeks to ascertain the potential benefits of a coalition of dialysis providers, specifically in terms of improving patient care and mitigating the challenges faced by providers. The Capstone team performed a cost/benefit analysis based on litera-
ture reviews, an environmental scan, and market surveys on the benefits of forming the coalition that involves other chain organizations and independent providers. The team presented recommendations to DaVita on the benefits of forming/joining a coalition and the cost/risk this would entail. They also weighed the cost/benefit of a coalition against the alternative of standing alone as a chain organization.

METROPOLITAN JEWISH HEALTH SYSTEM INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION IN PALLIATIVE CARE
A FINANCIAL MODEL FOR HIGH-TOUCH COMMUNITY-BASED PALLIATIVE CARE

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A nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the needs of New Yorkers facing life-limiting illnesses, Metropolitan Jewish Health System (MJHS) Hospice and Palliative Care created a community-based palliative care program eight years ago. MJHS's most challenging and important home care program is called the High-Touch Model, which offers home visits by members of an interdisciplinary team (physician or nurse practitioner, social worker, and chaplain, if needed), telephonic outreach by a nurse specialist in palliative care, and 24/7 access to on-call services. MJHS's corporate commitment to in-home palliative care can only be sustained, however, if management develops clinical models that offer a clear value proposition to payers in the healthcare system. Through environmental scans, literature reviews, and an analysis of clinical and financial data, a Capstone team developed a financial model that can be flexed based on clinical acuity, patient census, and staffing type and levels, as well as a white paper outlining the model.
MONTEFIORE MEDICAL CENTER
REDUCING SURGICAL CANCELLATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY

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The Department of Orthopedic Surgery (DOS) at Montefiore Medical Center provides comprehensive care for all orthopedic and musculoskeletal conditions. The DOS consists of ten subspecialties and five surgical facilities, treating more than 130,000 patients across the New York City Metropolitan area in 2014. The DOS engaged a Capstone team to assess causes of surgical cancellations—a critical impediment to their care delivery model—and quantify the financial and resource implications of these cancellations, with the goal of developing a remediation plan. To achieve that objective, the team conducted stakeholder interviews, process walkthroughs, and a thorough analysis of financial and cancellation data. Based on the team’s findings and industry best practices identified in a literature review, the team outlined a series of process enhancements and a pilot intervention to target and mitigate preventable cancellations.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE
INCORPORATING COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS INTO EMERGENCY PLANNING

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The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is one of the world’s oldest and largest public health agencies. The mission of the DOHMH Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response (OEPR) is to increase the preparedness of healthcare systems for public health emergencies in New York City. OEPR engaged a Capstone team to better incorporate community health needs into hazard vulnerability assessments (HVA). The team consulted with two types of healthcare coalitions, the Mount Sinai Network Coalition and the Staten Island Borough Coalition, to inform and develop a
methodology for this process. The team performed a gap analysis by conducting an extensive literature review, qualitative interviews with emergency planning experts, and data analysis. The final report outlined recommendations for streamlining the HVA process in order to better integrate community needs assessments in emergency planning, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

NEW YORK CITY HEALTH AND HOSPITALS CORPORATION
DETERMINING THE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT CARE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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New York City’s integrated health care system, New York City Health and Hospitals (H+H) Corporation, serves approximately 1.4 million New Yorkers annually, 479,000 of whom are uninsured. In September 2014, H+H was awarded a three-year $17.9 million grant through the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) to support the enhancement of H+H’s Emergency Department (ED) Care Management Program located in six of its 11 hospitals. Currently in the grant’s second year, H+H is required to develop a strategy for the program’s financial sustainability beyond grant funding. Initial plans include collaboration with MetroPlus, the wholly-owned subsidiary health plan of H+H, and Healthfirst. A Capstone team was engaged to provide recommendations concerning the long-term financial sustainability of H+H’s ED Management Program after the completion of the CMMI grant. The team assessed the program and developed a payment model to support the program beyond the grant funding expiration. Additionally, the team conducted a cost savings analysis utilizing insurance claims and hospital billing data to determine if the risk-based contracts can sustain the program.
NYU Langone Medical Center (NYULMC) is a top-tier academic medical center located in New York City, and the hospital has been a member of the U.S. News and World Report hospital honor roll since 2012. NYU Langone Cancer Center is looking to improve its continuum of care between inpatient and outpatient cancer treatment. NYULMC engaged a Capstone team to design and determine the viability of a palliative care model for the Cancer Center that will reduce end-of-life spending, while simultaneously maintaining or improving the quality of care for hematology patients. The team investigated current industry trends surrounding cancer care through a literature review, analyzed internal and external industry data, and conducted interviews with administrative and clinical staff. Recommendations of various care models were presented to the client, including a gap and financial analysis to investigate the financial feasibility of implementation in the clinical setting.

NYU Langone is an academic medical center located in New York City, and the Patient Experience department is dedicated to improving patient satisfaction, identifying unmet needs and values of patients and visitors, and identifying system issues that impact care and quality. Working throughout the entirety of the Medical Center, the Patient Experience department strives to improve performance related to these areas. Based on results of a 2014 survey, the Patient Experience department determined that the pediatric unit was an area that the Capstone team could analyze, map, and improve. With this department as a focus, the Capstone team analyzed previous survey data; interviewed staff, patients, and family members; performed site observations; and created a patient map that identifies stress points in the current state. The final delivera-
Staten Island Partnership for Community Wellness (SIPCW) works to identify and address emerging health needs on Staten Island. Through partnerships with the Office of the Borough President and myriad community organizations, SIPCW seeks to mobilize an aligned collaborative response to address the borough’s most urgent public health needs. Childhood obesity rates on Staten Island’s north shore are close to 40%, with even higher prevalence among minority children. As obese children are at risk for developing long-term chronic diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, and cancer, SIPCW has been tasked with mitigating this growing trend. SIPCW requested a Capstone team to assess key drivers of childhood obesity on Staten Island and research evidence-based models. Through metadata, key informant interviews, and focus groups, the team analyzed key Staten Island child health indicators, resources, norms, and barriers. The team also conducted research on effective community-based models and interventions in comparable communities that may be later tailored to Staten Island’s unique demography, culture, and resources. The team recommended a community-based strategy to improve childhood wellness on Staten Island.
The Urban Zen Integrative Therapy (UZIT) program is part of the Urban Zen Foundation, which was established by Donna Karan to raise awareness and inspire change in the areas of well-being. UZIT trains doctors, nurses, and allied healthcare professionals in an integrative approach to symptoms management through yoga therapy, essential oil therapy, Reiki, nutrition, and contemplative care. UZIT is exploring new settings for the provision of its services, such as skilled nursing facilities, corporate wellness programs, and home care. The organization engaged a Capstone team to refine its business strategy and plans for sustainable growth. The team conducted a market assessment, interviews, and industry research to determine the core areas of focus necessary to make the UZIT business model sustainable: online education, credentialing and certification, support resources, and data structures. The team’s final report outlined recommendations on prioritization of these focus areas and action items to move forward with each one.
Bloomberg Associates
GENTRIFICATION TOOLKITS

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Bloomberg Associates is an international consulting service founded by Michael R. Bloomberg in 2014 as a philanthropic venture. Directed by a team of globally recognized practitioners, Bloomberg Associates collaborates directly with mayors to help identify opportunities, diagnose challenges, set measurable goals for success, implement best practices, convene stakeholders, and foster key relationships in order to make a lasting impact in cities. Bloomberg Associates engaged a Capstone team to develop a toolkit that can help client cities diagnose their needs and challenges relating to gentrification and determine feasible, implementable solutions. The team conducted a literature review, case study, and interviews with experts and subjects in a selected city. The team created a toolkit that provides Bloomberg Associates and its clients with the best practices in diagnosing, preventing, and measuring progress in the prevention of involuntary displacement, tracking the success of policies aimed at preventing this displacement, and generating constructive public conversation on gentrification. The team members produced a presentation and booklet detailing their findings.
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 9
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN

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The largest community board in the Bronx, Bronx Community Board 9 (CB9), serves the communities of Bronx River, Castle Hill, Clason Point, Harding Park, Parkchester, Park Stratton, Soundview/Bruckner, and Unionport. CB9 is currently conducting a long-term planning initiative to understand existing resident needs and develop strategies for neighborhood revitalization and investment. Working with CB9 and local stakeholders, a Capstone team analyzed existing conditions within the community, identified strengths and opportunities, and formulated recommendations and implementation strategies to guide community development initiatives. The final plan laid the groundwork for future land use and public policy efforts aimed at creating a dynamic, mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood with affordable housing, job-rich commercial and retail uses, and new publicly accessible open space.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS
MOBILIZING TRANSIT-AVOIDED CARBON

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FACULTY: Kei Hayashi

Four out of every five New York City rush-hour commuters travel using public transportation, making the New York State Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) perhaps the single largest source of greenhouse gas avoidance in the nation. MTA’s Sustainability Initiatives office engaged a Capstone team to analyze the monetization of transit-avoided carbon and potential participation in a carbon market, an exchange of carbon credits designed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Recognition of this positive externality could contribute toward better maintained facilities and fleets, expansion of services, and additional funding for sustainable projects. The Capstone team investigated existing carbon trading models and green financing schemes, and conducted interviews with stakeholders. In its final report, the team provided
Brownfield sites occur where soil contaminants exceed the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation cleanup objectives. Clusters of Brownfields present a challenge to redevelopment, particularly in lower income communities where extrinsic market factors further suppress real estate values. The New York State Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) program provides financial and technical assistance to municipalities and community-based organizations to complete revitalization planning studies and implementation strategies. New Partners for Community Revitalization, a nonprofit organization dedicated to renewing low and moderate income neighborhoods through the redevelopment of Brownfield sites, engaged a Capstone team to conduct an assessment of BOA program performance. To assess the efficacy of the BOA program, the team used geospatial analysis to evaluate the program’s impact on land values. Additionally, the team tracked program funding flows, surveyed stakeholders, and developed case studies to highlight the strengths and challenges of this community-based planning program.

Recommendations on feasibility and potential routes, incorporating feedback from participants in industry, academia, and the public sector. The team also developed a presentation on MTA’s supply of transit-avoided carbon and its value in future sustainability initiatives.
The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is the largest municipal housing preservation and development agency in the nation. HPD promotes quality housing and thriving neighborhoods through preservation and development programs for affordable housing. HPD engaged a Capstone team to conduct an in-depth review of New York City’s interrelated regulatory, policy, and financial issues associated with accessory dwelling units (ADUs). ADUs are residential units that are often found in basements, attics, or garages in one- to four-family homes. ADUs can be a source of affordable housing and provide homeowners with rental income. The Capstone team was charged with reviewing best practices in ADU development nationally and internationally; identifying building typologies that are suitable for ADU development in New York City; investigating the potential for incentivizing New York City homeowners to develop and legalize ADUs in their properties; calculating the potential cost of ADU development; and identifying policy and regulatory implications of ADUs.
The Station Alliance is a nonprofit, privately funded organization established to improve the environment of New York City's subway stations. The Station Alliance requested a Capstone team to identify ways to upgrade the condition of the stations and develop strategies to provide long-term funding for those changes through a variety of sources: local partnerships, retail operations, sponsorships, donations, and improved technology. The team conducted research on current practices in subway stations nationally and internationally, as well as projections based on new, innovative ideas. The Capstone team developed a plan that provides recommendations for generating new services and amenities in stations, as well as funds to improve station conditions system-wide.
Action Against Hunger is an international humanitarian organization committed to ending world hunger. Through a system known as integrated community case management (iCCM) and nutrition, the organization seeks to expand the treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)—a leading cause of death among children under the age of five. SAM can be treated in outpatient settings with Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), such as Plumpy’Nut, which is difficult to transport. Action Against Hunger engaged a Capstone team to develop recommendations for how iCCM supply chains could be strengthened to support RUTF in remote, rural, or humanitarian contexts to ensure that patients receive the life-saving medicine. The team conducted a literature review and key informant interviews with logisticians, researchers, and program specialists in order to identify common challenges and possible means for improving drug management across settings. Based on its findings, the team drafted an innovative research proposal to field test its idea.
Begun in 2013, the European Union (EU) Thematic Program on Civil Society Organizations and Local Authorities (CSO & LA) fosters current and future EU development cooperation. Recognizing the need for, and the value of, multiple stakeholders’ contributions, the program seeks to eradicate poverty and support sustainable development through multi-actor approaches and inclusive partnerships. The European Commission (EC) engaged a Capstone team to pilot a new diagnostic tool to provide direction and guidance for its programming for decentralization and local governance. The EC selected Ghana as the priority country of focus, and the team traveled to Accra for interviews with members of government, donor agencies, academics, and civil society organizations. Synthesizing the interviews and academic research, the team populated the diagnostic tool assessing Ghana’s progress on decentralization. The tool will both guide future applications of the diagnostic in other geographic regions and inform the EC’s future work as it relates to decentralization in Ghana.
GLOBAL NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV
COSTING FOR PMTCT PROGRAMS

Established in 1986, the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+) supports equitable health and social services for people living with HIV. GNP+ recognizes that HIV communities, traditional/religious leaders, and community health workers play an essential role in reducing the prevalence of HIV, and these actors provide significant capacity in preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT). Without understanding the cost of a critical set of community-led interventions and the circumstances under which a community should use each intervention, many countries are missing the opportunity to capitalize on their community networks and resources. With the support of GNP+, a Capstone team travelled to Lusaka, Zambia to identify and collect costing and program information for community engagement PMTCT interventions, specifically peer support and/or advocacy activities. The research was compiled into a narrative and costing information to help both Zambian and global partners build a compelling case for greater investment in community engagement within their PMTCT and HIV programs.

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THE HUNGER PROJECT
EFFECTIVE FOOD SECURITY INTERVENTIONS: REDUCING HOUSEHOLD HUNGER AND INCREASING YEAR-ROUND ACCESS TO FOOD

The Hunger Project (THP) is a New York-based nonprofit organization that has operated in Africa for more than 20 years. Its mission is to end hunger and poverty by pioneering and advocating sustainable, grassroots, women-centered strategies. Using quantitative and qualitative analyses, the Capstone team explored the relationship between household hunger levels and the implementation of various food security interventions in Senegal. The team’s quantitative analysis investigated the relationship between household hunger and...
six food security techniques presumed to improve year-round access to food: animal husbandry for household consumption, child enrollment in school meal programs, availability of storage facilities, food processing equipment and training, home gardens, and household access to cash during the lean season. The team’s qualitative studies consisted of focus groups and individual interviews with local staff and community members at three Epicenters, or dynamic centers where a cluster of villages mobilize to take community-led action to meet their basic needs, in Senegal. The Capstone team synthesized the data to identify the impact of various food security interventions on household hunger, and offered guidance on how to improve program implementation and data collection within the Epicenter Strategy.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION
TOOLS FOR ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION

The International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Impact Insurance Facility works with the private sector, governments, and other partners to facilitate microinsurance market development in order to minimize the vulnerability of low-income people, promote a stronger insurance sector, and support public policies in various countries. The Facility engaged a Capstone team to develop a set of standardized tools to assess microinsurance markets and to monitor and evaluate the Facility’s efforts in targeted countries. The team conducted a literature review and an internal assessment of best practices worldwide and also interviewed diverse stakeholders in Tanzania in order to create a set of standardized indicators for the market assessment tool and the monitoring and evaluation tool. In addition, the team conducted an in-depth case study of the Tanzanian microinsurance stakeholders in order to provide the Facility with recommendations on how to approach this particular market.

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**LITWORLD**

**PARTNER TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

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**FACULTY:**
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LitWorld is a nonprofit organization that works to promote literacy and self-expression worldwide. To this end, LitWorld partners with community-based organizations in 22 countries around the world to deliver its transformational literacy programs. A Capstone team sought to identify existing gaps in current training modules and evaluate methods for delivering training to programming partners across diverse contexts. The team researched and collected data on best practices for building capacity in the areas of training, communication, and professional development found in similarly structured organizations. The team then conducted fieldwork in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, interviewing key stakeholders and observing several trainings in action. In addition, the team conducted interviews with partners in Colombia, Pakistan, Kenya, and Detroit, as well as with LitWorld staff. Based on its findings, the team provided a final report with recommendations to improve training, strengthen partners’ organizational capacity, and promote communication between and among LitWorld and its partners.

**LITWORLD**

**POST-CRISIS PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

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LitWorld is a New York-based nonprofit that utilizes literacy skills to promote social-emotional development in children and young adolescents in 27 developing countries. The organization’s flagship program, LitClub, provides in-depth, out-of-school literacy and empowerment programming through partnerships with local community-based organizations. In recent years, LitWorld has found itself operating in several regions affected by crisis. Additionally, LitWorld has received requests to create programs in communities that have been affected by natural disasters, conflict, or health epidemics. A Capstone team conducted a literature review of best practices for social-emotional learning in a post-crisis context as well as a program assessment.
NYC Global Partners, a nonprofit organization working in partnership with the New York City Mayor’s Office for International Affairs, engages with cities around the world to drive innovation around modern urban challenges. With a focus on municipal immigration policies, Global Partners engaged a Capstone team to identify and develop partnerships with other international cities as a way to advance immigrant inclusion. Drawing on best practices from New York City, Paris, and Barcelona, the Capstone team identified potential spaces and platforms for collaboration on immigrant inclusion policies. Based on its findings, the team recommended guidelines to measure and evaluate successful partnerships among international cities. Additionally, the team proposed a platform for New York City and global cities to engage in information exchanges regarding best practices on immigrant inclusion.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
LOCALIZATION OF 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the September 2015 adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is evidence of global commitment to sustainable development and provides a platform for action. As much of the attention on the SDGs remains at the policy level, there is a need to turn the focus towards implementation. The Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the UK’s leading independent think tank on international development and humanitarian
issues, seeks to elucidate how these goals can be localized for the success of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Working with ODI, a Capstone team conducted background research on the localization of international development agendas, drafted notes on selected Sustainable Development Goals, investigated potential case studies on localization, and identified key performance indicators for a localization framework to support ODI’s ongoing work.

STG INTERNATIONAL
UGANDA MARKET ENTRY STRATEGY AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

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Energy access is a keystone of development, and affordable techniques for rural electricity delivery are in high demand to serve the African continent. STG International (STG), a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing sustainable energy technologies to communities across the developing world, has pioneered a sustainable technology in Lesotho, South Africa that drives down the cost of micro-grid electrification in rural communities. STG is now planning to expand its services into Uganda. After extensive background research, a Capstone team traveled to Uganda to engage with government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and local universities to strategically position STG as a viable provider of novel, off-grid, renewable energy solutions. The team also collected data on energy consumption and willingness to pay in prospective micro-grid sites. The institutional networking and the data collected underpin STG’s strategic entry plan for Uganda and has enabled STG to submit bids for installation of energy infrastructure within the country.
An international nongovernmental organization, Transparency International fights corruption and abuses of power. In Africa, corruption is one of the largest risks to citizens’ land and property rights. Having identified these issues as a priority, Transparency International and its partner chapters in Uganda, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Madagascar, and Kenya have scaled up efforts to manage corruption. Risks related to corruption include land grabbing, sexual harassment, sexist inheritance norms, bribery, and intimidation. Mitigating such practices requires identifying and evaluating their impacts, and planning strategies to secure land and property rights using each chapter’s available resources. Transparency International engaged a Capstone team to identify each chapter’s current state of corruption risk. The team reviewed previous evaluations, interviews, surveys, and independent research. With this information, the team developed an online survey instrument and conducted follow-up phone interviews with each chapter. They synthesized the data to understand evaluation mechanisms, identify best practices, and provide strategic recommendations and solutions that each chapter can implement to mitigate the risks posed by corrupt practices.

The Public Finance and Local Governance unit at UNICEF’s New York Headquarters provides UNICEF country offices with insight into serving children in the context of decentralization. It supports governments in identifying funding sources, creating consensus around the need to invest more in children, and using public finance policies to achieve sustainable progress in the fulfillment of children’s rights. To inform technical guidance documents for UNICEF country officers, UNICEF engaged a
Capstone team to conduct research on child and adolescent participation in local governments. The team conducted an extensive literature review; developed a conceptual framework; researched and wrote three desk case studies in India, Turkey, and Costa Rica; and conducted an in-depth case study in Ethiopia. In the final deliverable, the team assessed existing cases of child and adolescent participation in local government, identified areas of weakness and opportunities for expanding participation efforts, and provided an overview of lessons learned as well as future areas for consideration.

UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
ENHANCING THE LOCAL ADAPTIVE CLIMATE LIVING FACILITY IN CAMBODIA

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The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) provides investment and technical support to the public and private sectors, operating primarily in Least Developed Countries, or countries that exhibit the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development. In 2011, UNCDF launched the Local Adaptive Climate Living Facility (LoCAL) to promote climate change-resilient communities and economies by increasing local-level financing for climate change adaptation. UNCDF engaged a Capstone team to investigate opportunities for expanding the LoCAL model in order to support revenue-generating projects and catalyze private sector investment. Integrating these aspects into LoCAL is key to ensuring long-term financial sustainability of sub-national climate adaptation efforts. The team analyzed opportunities for enhancing LoCAL through a literature review and field visit to Cambodia. There, the team interviewed government officials, community beneficiaries, and other development actors including UN agencies, NGOs, investors, and social enterprises. The team prepared recommendations to build on the UNCDF LoCAL model, with a focus on Cambodia’s Takeo province.
UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
EVALUATION OF A LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS TOOL

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The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is mandated with making strategic investments in the world’s least developed countries and emerging economies. The UNCDF office in Tanzania is working to develop strategies to improve the economic impact of successful industries. In order for programs such as the Local Finance Initiative to support productive strategic investments, UNCDF needs a reliable economic and industry analysis tool. A previous Capstone team developed the LEDbox tool, which utilizes a series of economic indicators based on available decennial census data to help assess prospects and avenues for local economic development. UNCDF engaged this year’s Capstone team to determine the viability of the tool and to further refine it. The team assessed the tool’s ability to analyze how specific industries contribute to local economies and improve the local quality of life, and made recommendations for additional analysis.

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND
CREATING A CLIMATE-NEUTRAL ORGANIZATION

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Under the leadership of United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UN agencies and governments have advanced global efforts to combat climate change. The operations of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) achieved climate neutrality in 2015, five years earlier than the 2020 deadline for UN agencies. To maintain and foster its outstanding progress, UNFPA enlisted a Capstone team to generate a Referenced Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) report that presents a comprehensive look at the organization’s economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The completion of the GRI report involved a stakeholder analysis survey, one-on-one interviews, and an analysis of the organization’s carbon emissions data that was collected from over 140 UNFPA country offices. The GRI report will allow decision-makers within UNFPA to better understand
and communicate their accomplishments, both internally and externally, and to identify opportunities to achieve its sustainability goal. Additionally, the report serves as an international, standardized record that further strengthens UNFPA’s commitment to remaining a climate-neutral organization.

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND
FAMILY PLANNING 2020

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The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) aims to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted and every childbirth is safe in order to expand the possibilities for women and girls to lead healthy and productive lives. The UNFPA launched Family Planning 2020 (FP2020) as a global initiative to increase access to family planning services for an additional 120 million women and girls in 69 countries by 2020. UNFPA engaged a Capstone team to assist in setting FP2020 indicator targets for 23 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. The team completed a literature review and consulted with stakeholders with trips to Uganda and South Africa. Referencing Uganda as a case study, the team constructed a model, centered on a rights-based approach, which focused on increased quality of care within family planning services. The team recommended strategies to increase identified countries’ abilities to successfully implement family planning initiatives while ensuring valid evaluation methods.
UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM
GENDER CENTRE
IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING INITIATIVES AT UDSM

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The mandate of the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) Gender Centre and its affiliated student organization, the Gender Club, is to mainstream gender policies and programs across the University. The Centre’s work includes student and faculty engagement and research. The Gender Centre requested a Capstone team for a second year to improve external communications and identify University-wide engagement opportunities. The team interviewed staff and students in Tanzania to understand the current barriers to successful Gender Centre and Gender Club programming. Using information from interviews and observations, the team made updates to the Gender Centre’s website and developed actionable tools to improve the Centre’s communications techniques, including a user guide for the long-term maintenance of the site. The team also developed a strategic planning resource for the Gender Club to help students communicate its vision and goals, and the actions needed to achieve them.

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In April 2013, the World Bank and the Regional Plan Association (RPA) of New York launched the Global Lab on Metropolitan Strategic Planning (MetroLab) in New York City. The MetroLab community of practice is part of a program of activities and services involving peer learning, virtual knowledge exchange, and high-level face-to-face workshops and consultations. MetroLab’s objective is to enable participants from different cities around the world to jointly explore solutions for shared concerns and challenges on a regular basis. The Capstone team was engaged to produce a set of materials that aid the
MetroLab in facilitating a meaningful dialogue between stakeholders. Through background research, consultations with a range of stakeholders, and involvement in various events, the team targeted and produced specific learning materials for MetroLab participants on three key Metropolitan topics: public private partnerships, resiliency through infrastructure investments, and information system centers.

**WORLD BANK – URBAN DIVISION – BANGLADESH**

**CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT IN FOUR BANGLADESHI CITIES**

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An international financing institution, the World Bank provides loans to developing countries for capital programs. In Bangladesh, the World Bank is in the beginning stages of developing Capital Investment Plan (CIP) templates for all participating cities. Based on principles of good public management, the CIP is intended to provide local governments with a method for establishing and maintaining a regular process of planning and funding capital investments. This would ensure that financial resources are used efficiently while also serving as a capacity building tool. Building on visioning workshops which identified priority infrastructure projects, the Capstone team further developed formal CIPs for four Bangladeshi municipalities: Comilla, Feni, Khulna, and Narayanganj. The collaborative development of the CIPs enabled the cities to agree upon economic development and public service delivery through a consensus building process; establish investment priorities, project costs, and timelines over the next five years; and identify and assess financing and investment strategies.
The Institute of Medicine (IOM), a division of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine that aims to help the government and private sector make informed health decisions, recommends interdisciplinary redesign and integrated infrastructures to support collaborative practice. Additionally, the IOM suggests evidence-based processes supported by clinical information systems to improve outcomes. Although the best methods for implementing interdisciplinary practice (IP) are unclear, leaders at the Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS), the oldest orthopedic hospital in the United States, recognized that it is essential for providing excellent care. HSS sought to evaluate the extent to which current organizational structures are effective in operationalizing IP and how these structures can be improved. HSS engaged a Capstone team to analyze the current state of its IP, assess the functionality of current organizational structures, identify strategies for the operationalization of IP, and suggest an action plan to advance IP at HSS.

Affiliated with two Ivy League medical schools, New York-Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) is one of the largest hospitals in New York City. Of NYP’s 44,764 patients discharged from January - May 2015, 3,509 (7.8%) were readmitted within 30 days. Among the 1,024 Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) patients, however, 161 (15.7%) were readmitted within 30 days. Many CHF readmissions can be prevented through improved follow-up care and collaboration among healthcare providers. A strong indicator of whether NYP is doing its best to manage high-risk patients and improve transitional care is the correlation between preventable 30-day readmissions.
readmissions, follow-up care, and collaboration. Social determinants of health play a crucial role in hospital readmissions. Current stratification tools, utilized to assess the level of risk for readmission, do not integrate these social determinants. The Capstone team designed a CHF Readmission Risk Assessment Tool for NYP with an emphasis on social determinants.

NEW YORK-PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL

MEDICATION DISPENSING SYSTEM

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New York-Presbyterian (NYP) Hospital is a university hospital in New York City. NYP’s nursing leadership and key stakeholders recognize the importance of providing efficient, safe, and cost-effective methods of delivering medications from the point of pharmacy dispensing to the point of administering them to patients at their bedside. Desiring further improvements in its medication dispensing process, NYP sought to identify best practices and models that could facilitate improvement. NYP engaged a Capstone team to determine best practices of medication dispensing. The team described the necessary steps of a medication dispensing system that can assist in delivering medication at bedside, and defined measurement processes to evaluate the impact of these recommended improvement strategies. The team examined the strengths and weaknesses of the current system, defined potential improvements that could be implemented to justify moving forward with the current system, and assessed the cost/benefit of full replacement of the existing medication distribution system.

NEW YORK-PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL

NURSING RISK ASSESSMENT

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A leader in medical education, research, and patient-centered care, New York Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) consists of six core campus sites plus several regional affiliated hospitals. Recently, NYP and five select regional hospitals agreed to change their legal status to “active parent affiliates.” With this change, NYP has greater responsibility for, and control over, the management of the regional
hospital and the quality of nursing care provided. NYP engaged a Capstone team to conduct a risk assessment of each regional hospital’s processes for creating, reviewing, and implementing nursing policies and procedures. The team interviewed each regional hospital’s Chief Nursing Officer and Nursing Management team and surveyed clinical nursing staff using an electronic survey. After reviewing each regional hospital’s table of organization and policies, the team created a risk assessment grid. The team produced a final report which included examples of best practices for policy creation and review, and explored areas for integration between the core campuses and the regional hospitals.

NEW YORK-PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL
REDUCING LENGTH OF STAY ON GENERAL MEDICINE UNITS

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The effective management of Length of Stay (LOS), or the duration of a single episode of hospitalization, is critical to ensuring positive patient outcomes as well as managing hospital resources effectively. In order to reduce LOS, it is imperative to understand the root causes of increased LOS. NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, a leading medical center in New York City, engaged a Capstone team to examine delays and develop action plans to reduce and/or eliminate delays to decrease LOS. Focusing on inpatient medical units, the team surveyed members of the interdisciplinary teams, collected data during observation of interdisciplinary rounds, and conducted focus groups. From this research, the team identified common communication and process barriers to an effective and timely patient discharge. In addition, the Capstone team performed a comprehensive literature review to identify best practices for LOS reduction. The team analyzed staff perceptions of barriers to timely discharges and recommended strategies for improving communication between all stakeholders to reduce delays related to the discharge process.
Over the past 30 years, an interesting phenomenon has taken shape in education systems in the United States: despite rising levels of national diversity, public schools have become increasingly racially segregated. While previous studies link greater diversity to better student performance, the focus remains largely on classroom diversity. Yet a large educational and psychological body of literature suggests that relational diversity—the discrepancy of diversity experienced in one’s surroundings versus the classroom—is an important factor in educational performance. A Capstone team provided the first empirical test of this hypothesis in the context of New York State, where blacks and Hispanics face the highest rates of educational segregation in the country. Using geocoded data on public schools merged with Census data on diversity in the surrounding area, the team found that a one-unit increase in a school’s relational diversity is associated with a 7 percentage point increase in the proportion of students who pass the State English Language Arts exam. The findings have important implications for how policies on school redistricting, zoning, and integration relate to academic performance.
FINANCIAL INCLUSION
CAN CONSUMER PROTECTION PRACTICES HELP MICROFINANCE CLIENTS AVOID THE PERILS OF DEBT?

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A means to help low-income individuals gain access to credit, microfinance has been met with mixed results, sometimes increasing clients’ over-indebtedness and threatening their financial welfare. A growing industry solution is the implementation of a set of “consumer protection policies,” one of which is a simple fact sheet that fully discloses a loan’s interest rates and terms. This study provides one of the few systematic tests of the effectiveness of such policies. The Capstone team used detailed data from the microfinance database MIX Market, which tracks the write-off ratios for loans, a useful proxy for over-indebtedness. Using various statistical methods to address selection bias and delayed effects, the team found that on average, full disclosure policy is robustly associated with lower write-off ratios. The fact that the team detected policy effects with write-off ratios, a distant and conservative estimate of actual over-indebtedness, suggests a clear policy recommendation: the provision of fact sheets and general consumer protection policies prior to engaging in microfinance can significantly mitigate its negative effects.

HEALTHCARE IN ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATIONS
SEARCHING FOR STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE VALUE OF HEALTHCARE IN ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATIONS

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Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) were established by the Affordable Care Act as a way to improve the value of healthcare—defined as the ratio of healthcare quality to cost—in the Medicare population. ACOs are incentivized to achieve high-value care by keeping a portion of their cost savings below a set benchmark. This model has created an environment of experimentation in which organizations are choosing different inputs to achieve the same goal of high-value care. While the number of healthcare providers opting into ACOs is rapidly
increasing, the novelty of this policy has resulted in a paucity of systematic studies examining what factors contribute to high-performance ACOs. To address this gap, the Capstone team analyzed the most up-to-date, partial panel data on ACO characteristics from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services public use files. The team identified the specific strategies associated with holistic measures of high-value care that include lower costs as well as better health outcomes.

U.S. NONPROFIT INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT INDUSTRY RESPONSE TO UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL ADOPTION

INPUTS TO DEVELOPMENT: HOW THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AFFECT NONPROFIT RESOURCES

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A set of eight global priorities to eradicate extreme poverty, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were met with great optimism in 2000. While many studies have examined developmental progress in the intervening 15 years, how much of these outputs are directly attributable to the MDGs remains unclear. The Capstone team’s novel study focused on a different part of the causal chain: inputs. What effect, if any, did the MDGs have on the funding and spending activities of international development nonprofit organizations? Nonprofit organizations are key players in the international development sector. Using a rare IRS dataset that includes over one million firm-level records on funding and spending areas from 1987-2015, the Capstone team analyzed changes in the total funding and spending of U.S.-based MDG-aligned nonprofits before and after the adoption of the MDGs in 2000. The team’s findings have significant implications for the role of nonprofits in the development sector and provide a creative impact evaluation model for the recently-adopted Sustainable Development Goals.
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The paper used contains 100% post-consumer content, is made using 100% renewable energy, and is processed chlorine-free.