



TANF IN THE USVI: RESEARCH AS A CATALYST FOR IMPROVING PROGRAM OUTCOMES

GLORIA B. CALLWOOD, PHD, RN, FAAN, MODERATOR

PRESENTERS: E. ARACELIS FRANCIS, PHD; JANIS M. VALMOND, MS, DRPH, CHES
DEBORAH E. BROWN, PHD; NOREEN MICHAEL, PHD

2017 NAWRS WORKSHOP – MONDAY, JULY 31, 2017, PITTSBURGH, PA





INTRODUCTION TO PANEL

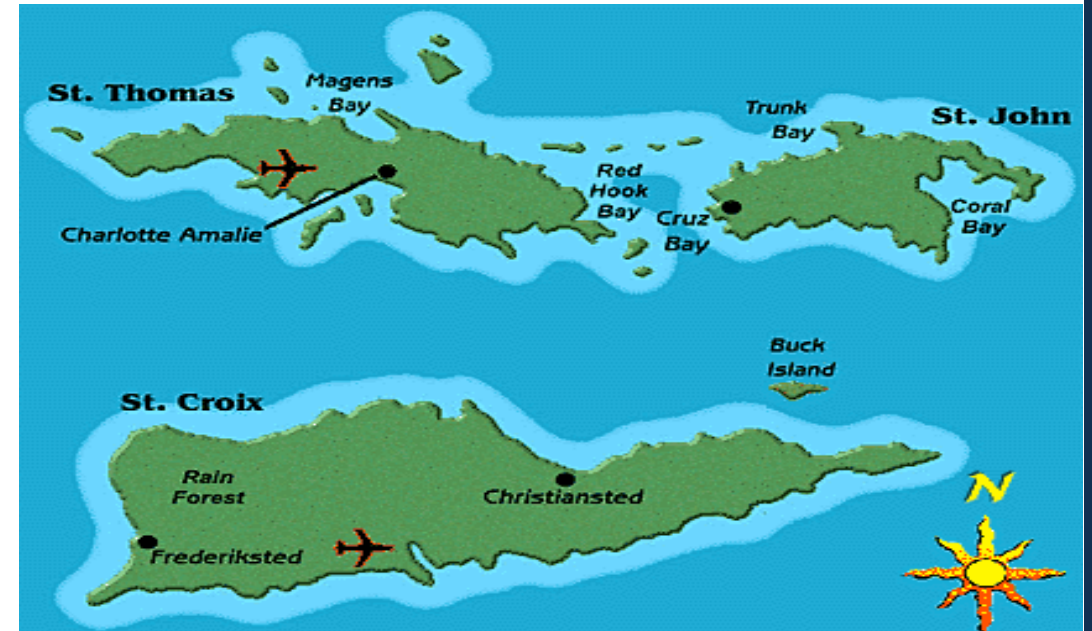
- Who and where we are
 - University of the Virgin Islands
 - Caribbean Exploratory Research Center on Health Disparities
 - Where we are located
- ACF funding
- Environmental Scan and Environmental Scan Report
- Panelists





WHO AND WHERE WE ARE

- The University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) Caribbean Exploratory Research (NIMHD) Center (CERC)
 - Only HBCU outside of the contiguous United States
 - CERC is charged with conducting health related research
- The US Virgin Islands: approximately 1,110 miles southeast of Miami





ACF FUNDING

Focused on achieving four goals:

- Build partnerships among researchers, local governments, and community-based organizations, semi-autonomous agencies, and human services clients to define and address research questions regarding the social and economic well-being of low-income children and families in the USVI.
- Strengthen research, gather relevant data and increase understanding of human services approaches to improve the quality of life in the USVI, with particular focus on topics related to the HS/EHS and TANF programs to promote family self-sufficiency and stability, and well-being.





ACF FUNDING

Focused on achieving four goals:

- Establish an accessible, comprehensive research infrastructure to support the provision of quality human services programs to clients in the HS/EHS and TANF programs in the USVI.
- Conduct at least two human services research projects.

Foundational agreement to the project:

- Memorandum of Cooperative Agreement between the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (VIDHS) and the University of the Virgin Islands. Clarified the role of the Department in the Human Services Research Partnership: Virgin Islands





TODAY'S AGENDA

- Environmental Scan of human services programs in the USVI, specifically the TANF program is the basis for today's panel presentation
- Focus on TANF in the U S Virgin Islands
- Research as a Catalyst for Improving Program Outcomes





WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

- Challenges presented by changes in Territorial and V.I. Department of Human Services leadership
- How the Community-Based Participatory Research approach facilitated the research agenda
- A snapshot of the USVI TANF program
- Priority programmatic issues that emerged from the Environmental Scan
- The process of moving from identifying priority issues to identifying and implementing research

Note: All panellists will present and then there will be a discussion period.





PANELISTS

- Dr. Aracelis Francis is Associate Professor of Social Work, University of the Virgin Islands and Research Associate on the ACF grant. She is a former Director of the Minority Fellowship Programs for social work at the Council on Social Work Education.
- Dr. Janis Valmond has worked in public health for over 25 years. In addition to her interest in health disparities research, Dr. Valmond's interests include community-based participatory research, socioecological determinants of health impacting adolescents and their families and developing culturally-relevant measures, health education and health promotion interventions for Caribbean populations.

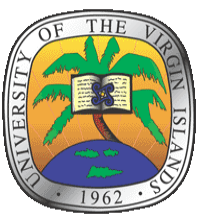




PANELISTS CONT'D

- Dr. Deborah Brown is the Post-Doctoral Research Fellow with the Human Services Research Project (HSRP- VI). She holds a terminal degree in Public Policy and her research interests include community development and the sustainability and strengthening of social safety net programs.
- Dr. Noreen Michael, Associate Professor and Research Director, UVI-CERC, has over 30 years of teaching, research, and administrative experience in education and health. Her research interests include the social determinants of health disparities; health literacy and other factors impacting health and lifestyle choices; and linkages between policy and health disparities.





THE TANF PROGRAM IN THE USVI: THE VIRGIN ISLANDS' CONTEXT

PRESENTER: E. ARACELIS FRANCIS, PHD

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

2017 NAWRS WORKSHOP

MONDAY, JULY 31, 2017, PITTSBURGH, PA





INTRODUCTION

- Challenges
- Territorial status
- Territory vs State
- Change in Administration
- Changes in Partnership Composition
- Limited Human Resources
- Project Staffing Challenges





TERRITORIAL STATUS - 1

- Colonies or colonization not mentioned in the US Constitution
- Territories in the US have different histories
- Series of US Supreme Court cases called the Insular Cases
 - Created the legal distinction on incorporated versus unincorporated territories
 - USVI one of five unincorporated territories with varying levels of autonomy





TERRITORIAL STATUS - 2

- Common Characteristics
 - Each considered within official US borders
 - US citizenship
 - US Constitution applied except those reserved explicitly for states
 - Federal programs are applied at reduced rates
 - US national integration which provides access to the US national economy and culture
- US Constitution does not provide either implicit or explicit powers so Territories subject to plenary power of Congress, which has delegated some of its powers to the Department of the Interior





THE USVI GOVERNMENT - 1

- Congress passed an Organic Act for the USVI in 1936 with subsequent amendments in 1954. Subsequent changes have led to political reforms and socio-economic reforms
- Five Constitutional Conventions have not created consensus about a U.S. Virgin Islands Constitution
- Residents elect a Governor, a Unicameral legislature and a non-voting Delegate to Congress
- In 2005, a Territorial Supreme Court was established





THE USVI GOVERNMENT - 2

- The US Virgin Islands is outside the US Customs Zone
 - The USVI has the ability to offer tax incentives that may be more generous than the US
 - The US Virgin Islands is exempt from the Jones Act





PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

- Differential Treatment – Two Examples
 - Example 1: Adult Assistance Programs and SSI
 - In 1972, SSI was not extended to the territories
 - Territories are the only jurisdictions that still implement adult assistance to the aged, blind, and disabled
 - The Federal Financial Participate (FFP) rate for the adult assistance funding is 75% as stated in Section 1118 of the Social Security Act





PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

- Differential Treatment – Two Examples
 - Example 2: TANF
 - PRWORA was extended to the US Virgin Islands and other territories in 1996
 - VIDHS implemented TANF in October 1996
 - TANF funding in the USVI – 75% federal government; 25% local government
 - Revised funding ceilings under Section 1108 became effective October 1, 1996
 - Funding for foster care and adoption is available but total funding cannot exceed the funding ceiling for the territory





FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

- 2013 ACF funding opportunity
- MOCA with VIDHS
- CERC received funding from ACF for a three-year project beginning September 30, 2014
- Project is scheduled to receive a one-year No Cost Extension





FACTORS AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION

- 2014 election of a new governor
- Uncertainty among key personnel involved in the Partnership
- Delays in establishing new Cabinet
- Turnover at Cabinet level – three Commissioners in three years
- Management and middle management turnover
- Impact on achievement of project goals





HUMAN RESOURCES

- Staffing of core HSRP-VI Team
- Staff turnover [administrative support; project management]
- Difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff
- Impact on achievement of goals
- Factors impacting recruitment
 - Limited pool
 - High cost of living
 - Social factors





GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

- Deadlines delayed or extended
- Achievement of goals despite staff shortages
- Accomplishments
 - Environmental Scan
 - Project Microsite on UVI's Website
 - Newsletter
 - TANF research project

Link to Environmental Scan report:

http://www.uvi.edu/files/documents/CERC-NCMHD/Human_Services_Programs_in_the_USVI_NVIScan_Report_December_2016.pdf





THANK YOU





THE “WHY”, “HOW”, AND SUCCESS OF UTILIZING A CBPR FRAMEWORK TO ENGAGE THE PARTNERSHIP

PRESENTER: JANIS M. VALMOND, MS, DRPH, CHES
Co-INVESTIGATOR

2017 NAWRS WORKSHOP

MONDAY, JULY 31, 2017, PITTSBURGH, PA





OBJECTIVES

- Define Community Based Participatory Research
- Examine the work of the Human Service Research Partnership-USVI within the context of the CBPR framework
- Discuss next steps





COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH (CBPR)

Definition:

- “... a **collaborative** approach to research that **equitably** involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings.” (p.2, W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Community Health Scholars Program, 2001)
- “... a partnership approach to research that **equitably** involves, for example, community members, organizational representatives and researchers in all aspects of the research process.” (p.48, Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008)





COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH (CBPR)-PRINCIPLES

1. Recognizes community as a unit of identity
2. Builds on strengths and resources within the community
3. Facilitates collaborative, equitable partnership in all research phases and involves an empowering and power-sharing process that attends to social inequalities
4. Promotes co-learning and capacity building among all partners
5. Integrates and achieves a balance between research and action for the mutual benefit of partners





COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH (CBPR)-PRINCIPLES

6. Emphasizes public health problems of local relevance and also ecological perspectives that recognize and attend to the multiple determinants of health and disease
7. Involves systems development through a cyclical and iterative process
8. Disseminates findings and knowledge gained to all partners and involves all partners in the dissemination process
9. Requires a long-term process and commitment to sustainability





CBPR AS A FRAMEWORK: THE PLAN

- Establish a research partnership comprising of community and academic leaders to frame the issue(s) and establish, support and coordinate the efforts of the project.
- Form workgroups in relevant areas;
- Integrate work group output into products created with input from all partnership members;
- Joint analyses of project data;
- Dissemination of products and findings by the partnership to local and, as appropriate, national academic, community and policy stakeholders.





CBPR AS A FRAMEWORK

Creating the partnership

- Key stakeholders and potential partnership members identified
- Letter of invitation
- Planning meetings with Co-Chairs
- Communication with partners
- Quarterly and special meetings





CONVENING THE FIRST MEETING

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 8:30 – 9:00 am | Registration and Networking |
| 9:00 – 9:35 am | Welcome and Greetings |
| 9:35 – 10:00 am | Introduction and Ice Breaker: Project Staff/Invited Partners |
| 10:00 – 10:45 am | Overview: Human Services Research Partnerships: USVI Cooperative Agreement |
| 10:45 – 11:00 am | Networking Break |
| 11:00 am – 12:30 pm | Agency Contributions: Engaging the Partners Invited Partners – small group work Support for the HSRP: VICA efforts; engagement on Data Committee |
| 12:30 – 12:45 pm | Issuance of Charge to Partners |
| 12:45 – 1:00 pm | Re-Cap, Wrap-up, Next Steps and Adjournment |





GAINING PARTNER SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT

- Share plans for quarterly meetings, commitment
- Orientation
 - Introduction to CBPR
 - Agency contributions

What 'data' do you routinely collect in your agency?

What does 'research capacity' mean to you?

What does 'data' and utilization of data mean to you?

How are data and data utilization integrated into the work of your agency with respect to policy, program development, service provision, and capacity building?

What gaps and obstacles related to data and data utilization do you regularly confront in the work of your agency?

Agency contributions





BUILDING RESEARCH CAPACITY

- Training opportunities – CBPR
 - Develop partnership identity – Alliance for Responsive Investment in Children’s Health: US Virgin Islands – A RICH VI
 - Coaching: TANF staff/Partners
- Research opportunities
 - Attend RECS 2016: TANF staff and Client partner member
 - Document review
 - Primary data collection





BUILDING RESEARCH CAPACITY

- Structure
 - Workgroups
 - Data committee
 - Capacity and Infrastructure
 - Head Start and Early Head Start
 - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
 - Policy Review
 - Communication and Engagement





ESTABLISHING WORKGROUPS

| TANF WORKGROUP CHARGE | OBJECTIVES |
|--|---|
| <p>The TANF Work Group is charged with working closely with the team conducting the Environmental Scan; using information from the Environmental Scan activities; and supporting efforts of the Partnership to implement an evidence-based intervention for current TANF recipients.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To establish a profile of TANF recipients.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. To assess what has happened to former recipients:b. Are they employed?2. Are they still receiving services, i.e. food stamps, housing, health, etc.?3. To ascertain what services are provided to TANF recipients.4. To determine if the provision of supportive services has led to financial independence.5. To determine what has worked. |





UTILIZING WORKGROUP OUTPUTS

- Integrate work group output into products created with input from all partnership members:
 - Environmental Scan Research activities
 - Catalog of Secondary sources
 - Qualitative data collection in Head Start and TANF
 - Access to parents, staff, administrators and administrative data, agency policies
- Describing the TANF Program in the USVI
 - Identify issues
 - Research Project





DISSEMINATION

- Dissemination of products and findings by the partnership to local and, as appropriate, national academic, community and policy stakeholders:
 - CERC 8th Annual Health Disparities Institute Panel Discussion-October 2015
 - Environmental Scan Report: completed December 2016
 - Newsletter





NEXT STEPS

- How can partners continue to contribute?
 - Directly as trained researchers in data collection
 - Provide feedback and input on study design and implementation
 - Participate in evaluation
 - Continue to participate in dissemination activities





REFERENCES

1. Guion, LA. (2010). A 10-step process for environmental scanning. *Journal of Extension*, 48(4); www.joe.org.
2. Viswanathan, M., Ammerman, A., Eng, E., Garlehner, G., Lohr, K. N., Griffith, D., ... & Whitener, L. (2004). Community-based participatory research: Assessing the evidence: Summary.
3. Minkler, M., & Wallerstein, N. (Eds.). (2008). Community-based participatory research for health: From process to outcomes. John Wiley & Sons.





THANK YOU





THE TANF PROGRAM IN THE USVI: KEY FINDINGS OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

PRESENTER: DEBORAH E. BROWN, PHD

POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW

2017 NAWRS WORKSHOP

MONDAY, JULY 31, 2017, PITTSBURGH, PA





PRESENTATION OUTLINE

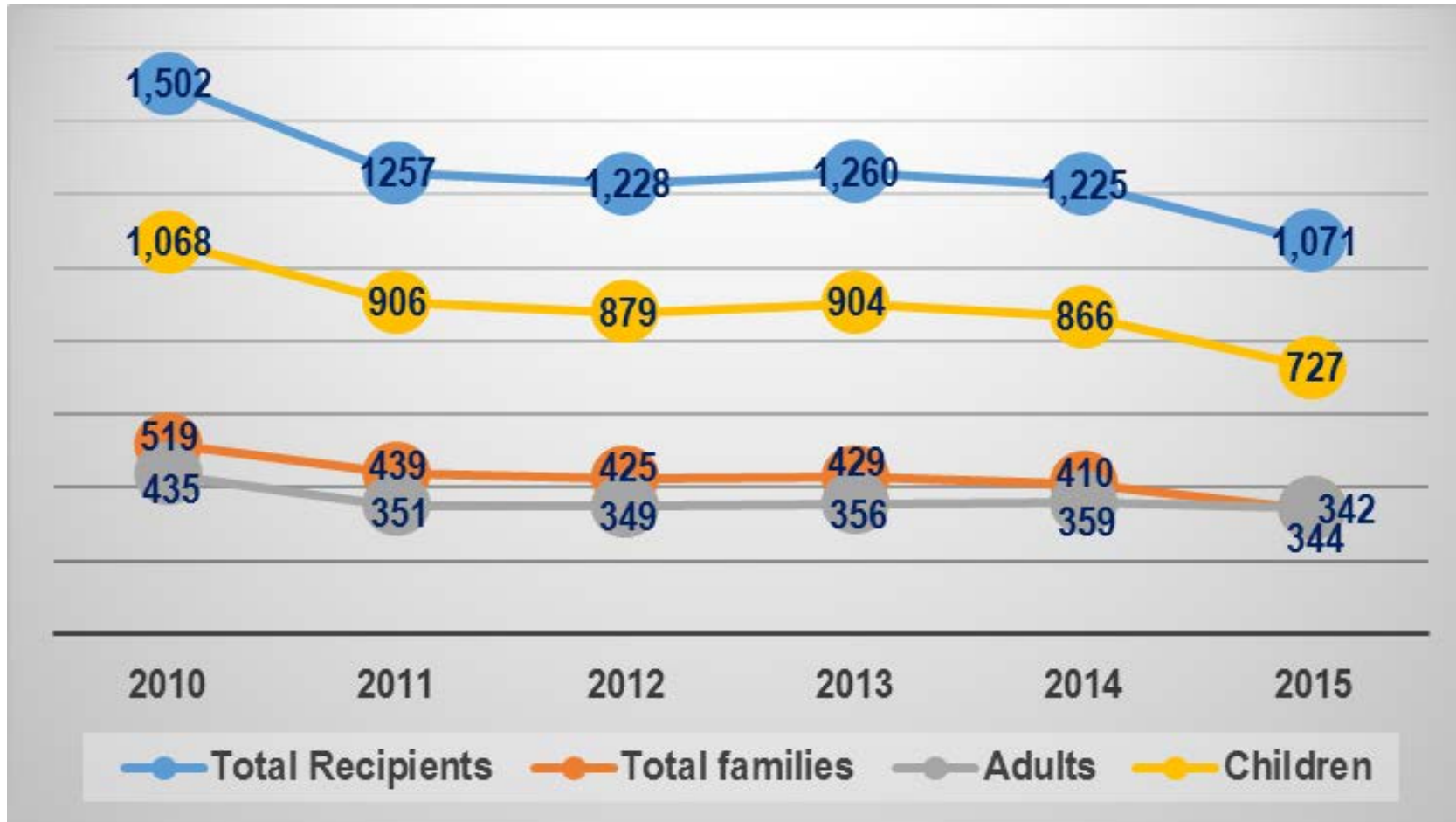
- Profile of TANF clients in the USVI (2009-2015)
 - Enrollment
 - Demographic characteristics
- Programs and services
- Program staff and qualifications
- Funding
- Data processes of the TANF program
- Data utilization and data utilization issues in the TANF program
- Summary





ENROLLMENT: USVI TANF POPULATION

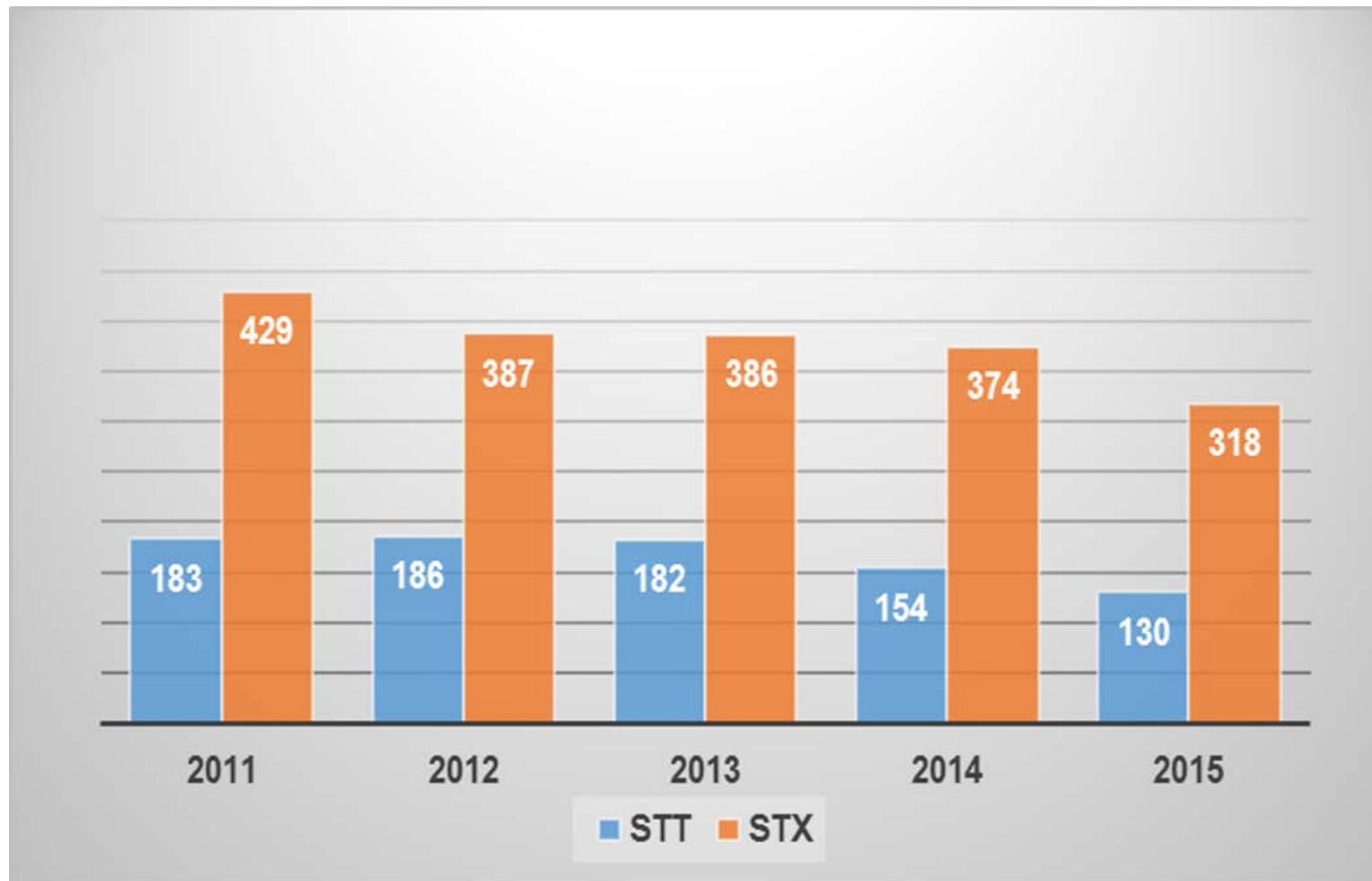
Average monthly TANF recipients by category: CY 2010-2015





DISTRIBUTION BY DISTRICT

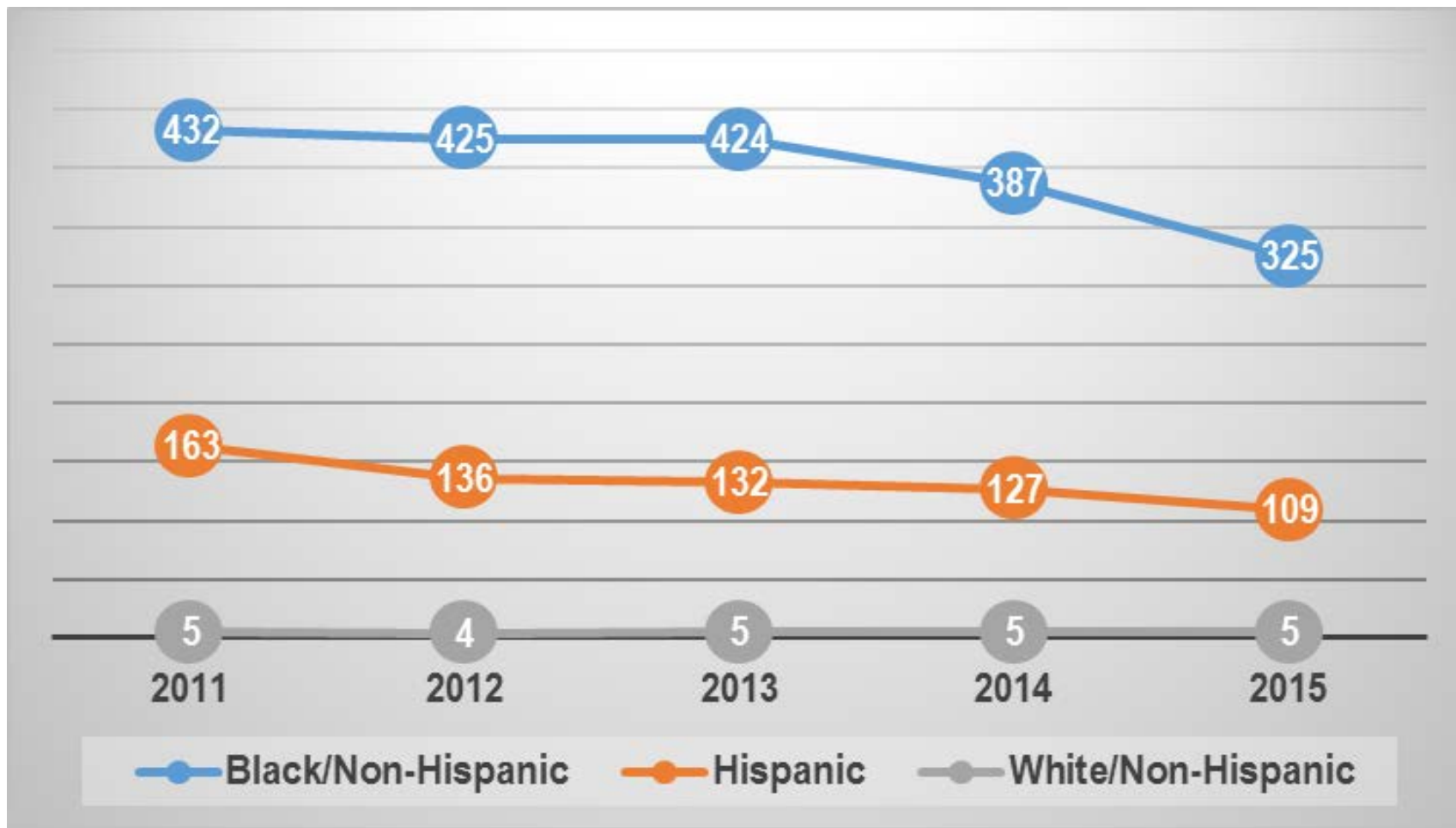
TANF Adult Recipients by District: FY 2011-2015





DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS: RACE/ETHNICITY

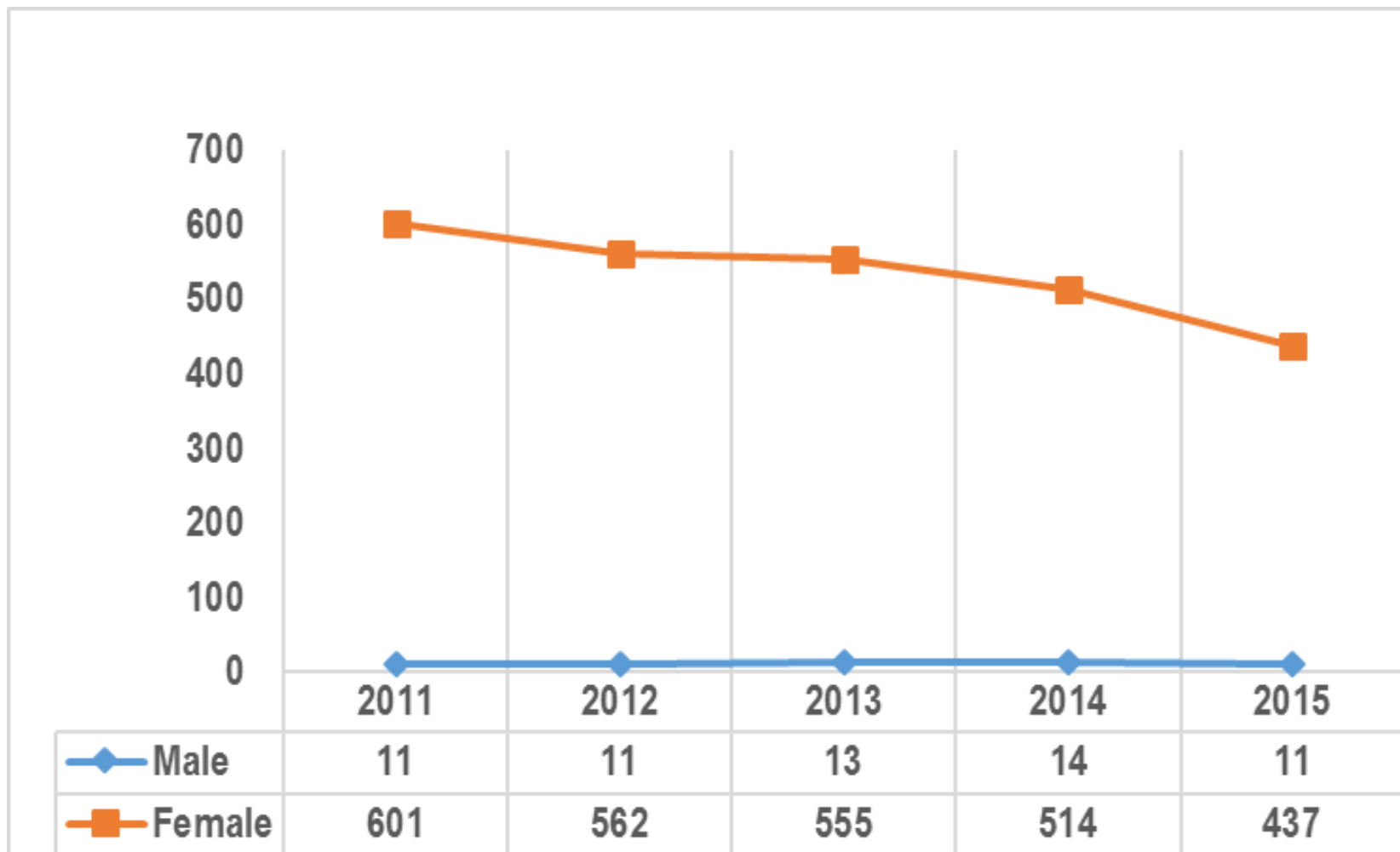
TANF Adult Recipients by Race/Ethnicity: FY 2011 - 2015





DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS: GENDER

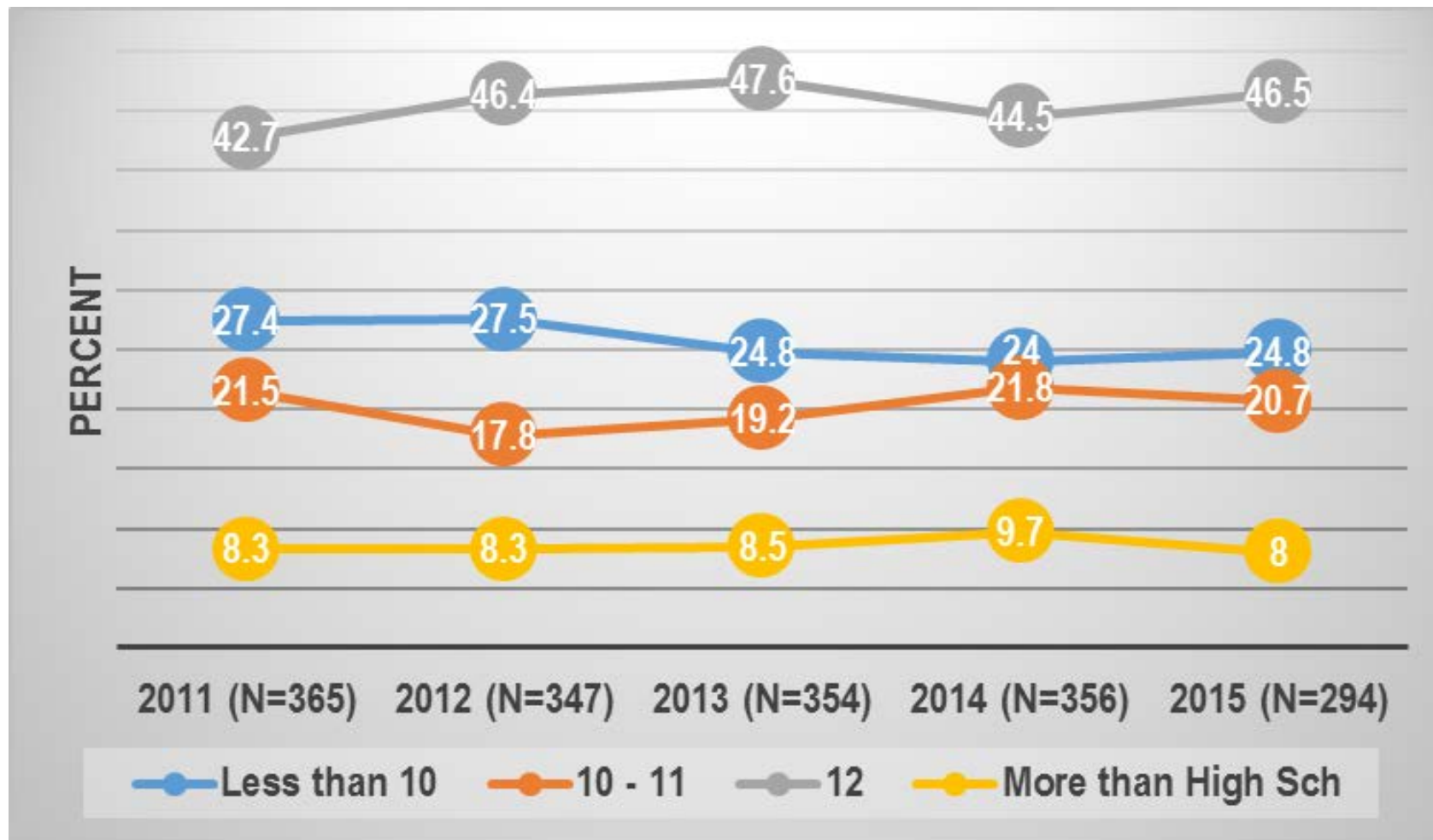
TANF Adult Recipients by Gender: FY 2011-2015





DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS: EDUCATION

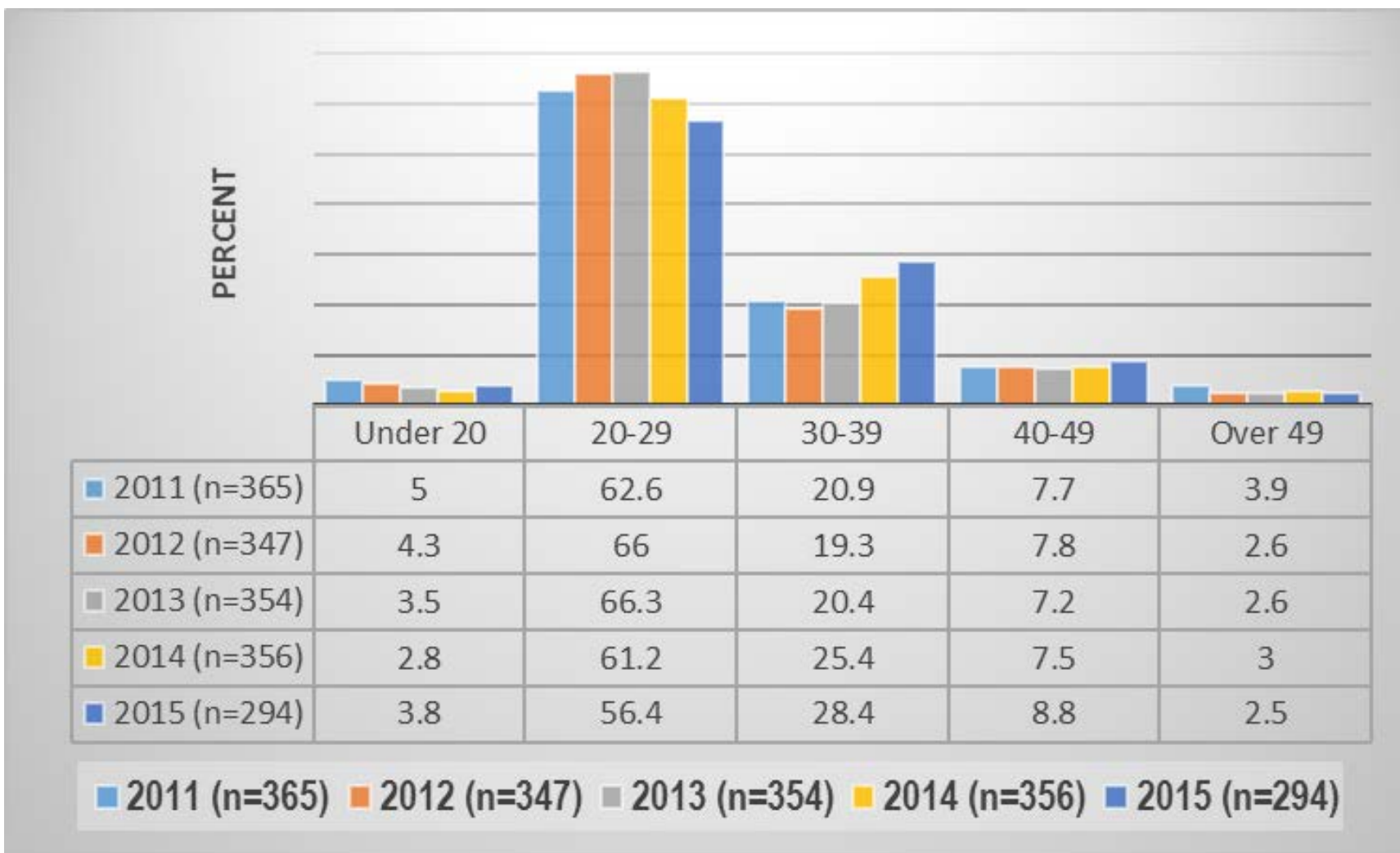
TANF Adult Recipients by Educational Level: FY 2011-2015





DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS: AGE

TANF Adult and Teen Recipients by Age: FY 2011-2015





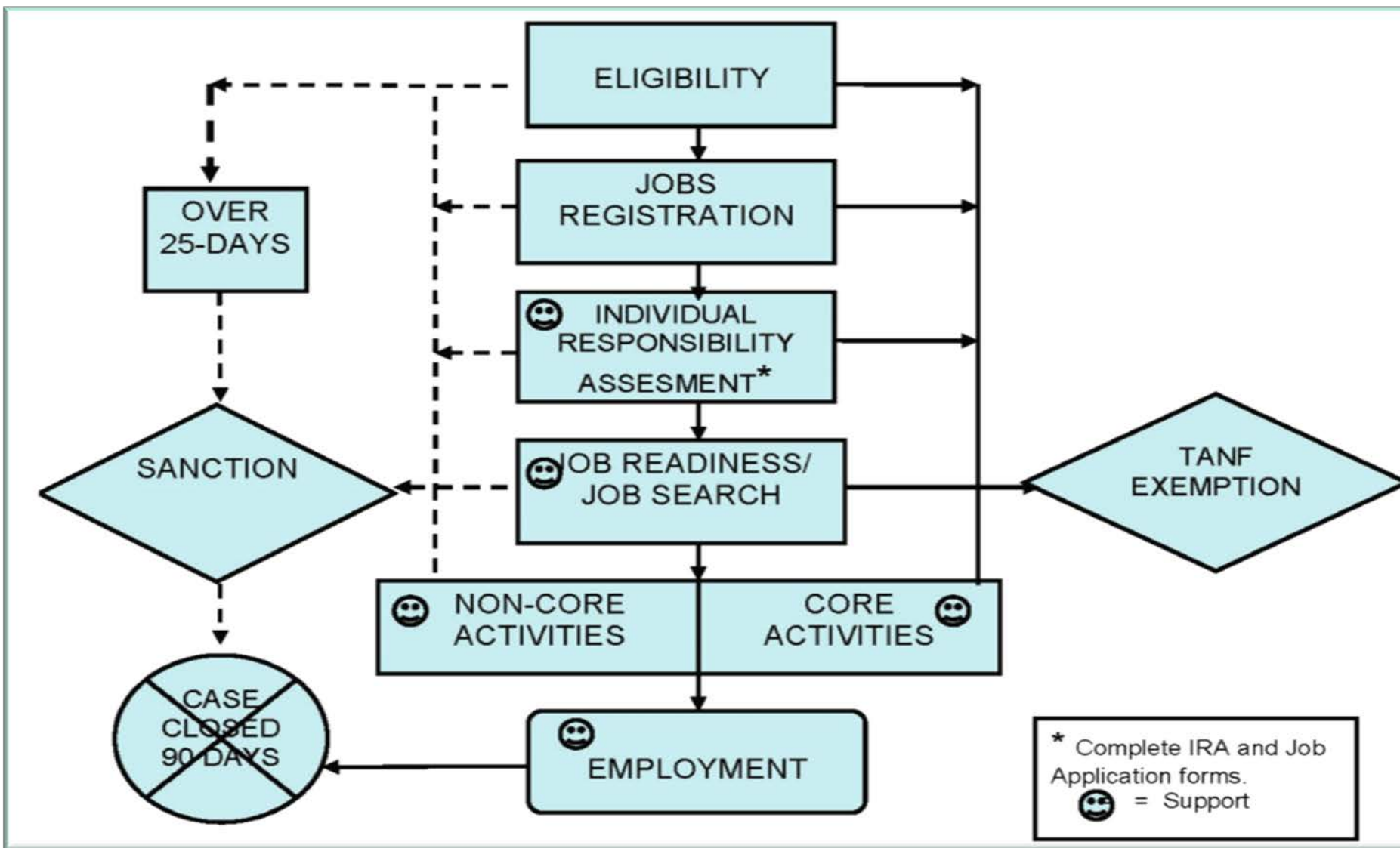
TANF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- The TANF recipient has 25 days to begin the work experience process.
- USVI TANF Work Flow references job readiness/job search and core and non-core activities.
- Based on the VIWVP, core activities include:
 - Subsidized and unsubsidized employment
 - Self-employment
 - Work experience
 - Vocational education training as well as on-the-job training (OJT)
 - Job search and job readiness assistance
 - Community service
- Non-core activities (job skills training directly related to employment, education directly related to employment, and satisfactory attendance at secondary school).





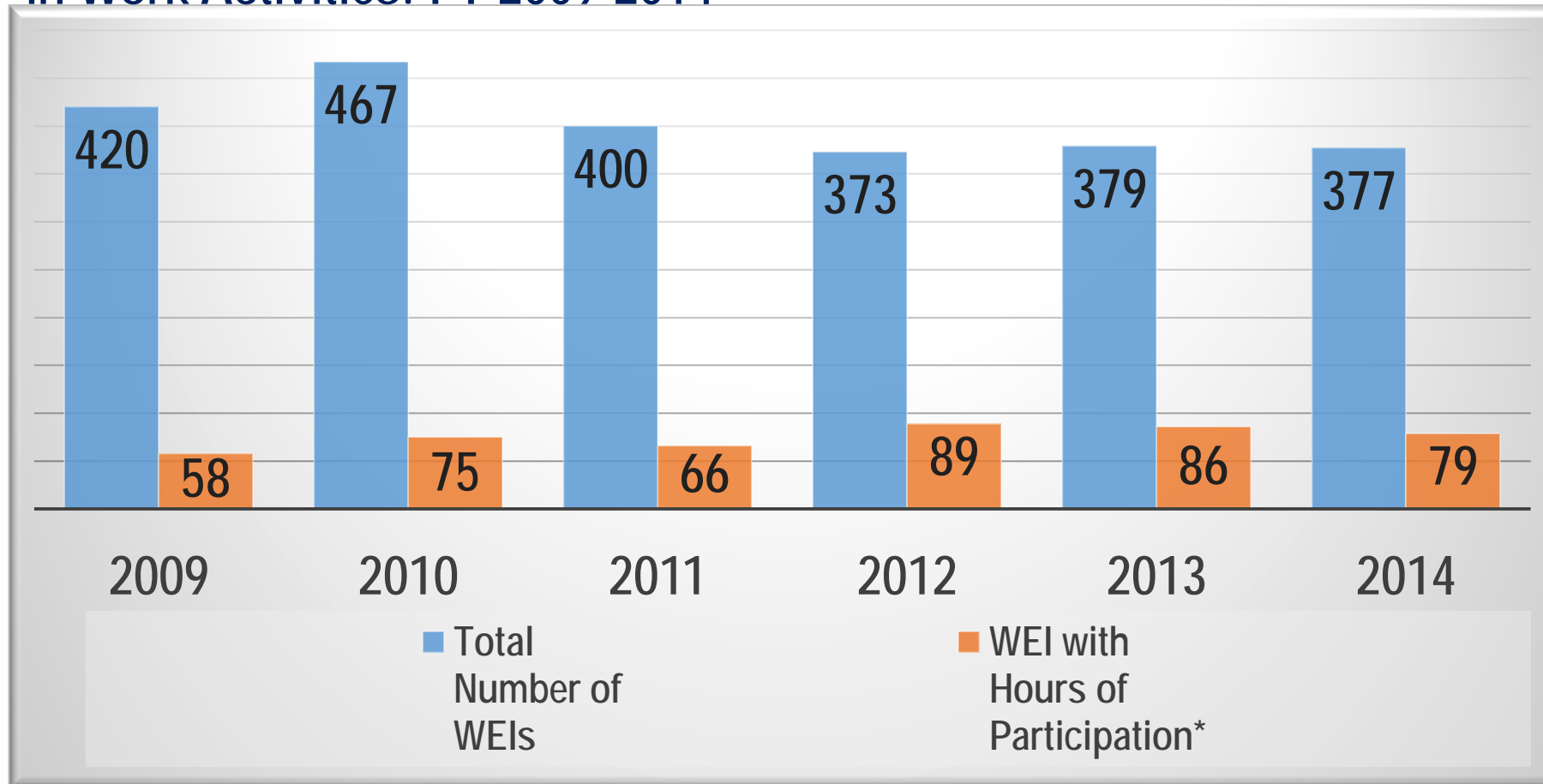
USVI TANF WORKFLOW





PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

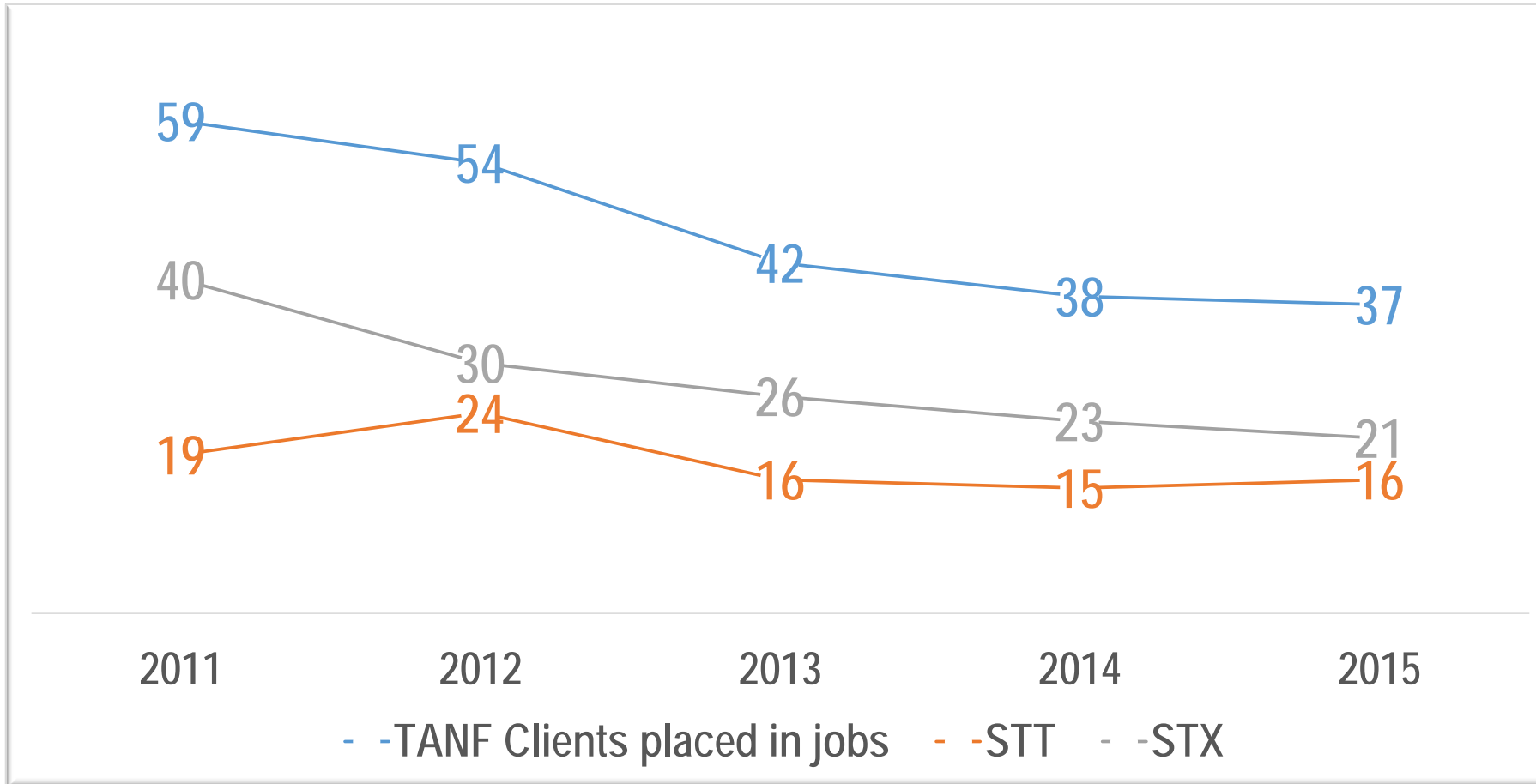
Number of Work-Eligible Individuals (WEIs) with Hours of Participation in Work Activities: FY 2009-2014





TANF RECIPIENTS PLACED IN JOBS

TANF Recipients Placed in Jobs – Territory and Each District: FY 2011-2015





TANF STAFF & QUALIFICATIONS

- The TANF program had an Acting Administrator, a Director of the JOBS program and two district managers.
- Each district manager supervises the ETOs in the respective district. VI-TANF program has 10 professional staff members.
- The staff have an average of 11.33 years (median 10 years), and all staff have at least a Bachelor's degree; additionally, four of nine have earned a Master's degree.
- Employment and training officers (ETOs) caseloads range from 60 to 80 clients





FUNDING FOR TANF PROGRAMS

- Funding for the USVI TANF program comes from two sources

Table 12. Estimated funding levels for the USVI TANF Program: FY 2011 – FY 2015

| Fiscal Year | Federal Award | Local Match |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| 2011 | \$ 919,872 | \$ 80,000 |
| 2012 | \$ 916,152 | \$ 80,000 |
| 2013 | \$3,554,000 | \$1,420,000 |
| 2014 | \$3,554,000 | \$1,420,000 |
| 2015 | \$3,672,681 | \$1,224,227 |

Source: Government of the Virgin Islands Executive Budgets: FY 2011 – FY 2016





DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES

- The environmental scan assessed the data processes ongoing within the TANF service sites.
- It was a priority for the research team to examine TANF data processes that will inform the development and implementation of research projects within the human services system in the USVI.
- Data on TANF recipients are captured in the Client Application Recertification Issuance Benefit System (CARIBS).
- On site, much of the data collection is manual, and data entry is limited.





TYPES OF DATA COLLECTED

- Data for eligibility considerations:
 - Demographics
 - Family composition
 - Information on savings accounts
 - Child support being received
- Information is shared with the Division of Paternity and Child Support (DPCS)
- The Employment Training Officers (ETOs) collect data for the development of an Individualized Responsibility Plan or IRP for each assigned client.
- Data based on participation in the activities associated with the Job, Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) programs.





DATA UTILIZATION

- To determine applicants' eligibility for TANF benefits.
- To assess compliance with program requirements.
- To address areas of non-compliance.
- To determine appropriate educational and/or training opportunities for TANF clients.





DATA UTILIZATION

- To determine the need for services such as child care and transportation
- To inform the development of budgets for prioritization of how funds would be utilized.
- To determine when the service should end for TANF recipients.





DATA UTILIZATION: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

- There were inconsistencies in the counts of TANF recipients in data extracted from the federal database and data provided by TANF personnel, for the same years.
- There are gaps in the data being collected.
- Limited use of data for program improvement





SUMMARY: TANF IN THE USVI

- ***Program participants*** - The typical TANF client in the USVI is a female between the ages of 20-29 with less than a high school diploma.
- ***Program enrollment*** - The number of families served by the TANF program has seen a decline from 2010-2015
- ***Data processes*** – Data collection is primarily manual. However, there is a database into which client and program data are batch entered.
- ***Data utilization*** – TANF staff use data primarily for compliance reporting requirements and less so for improving service delivery.



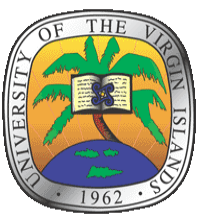


SUMMARY: TANF IN THE USVI

- **TANF program staff** - There is a small group of experienced and dedicated staff who support the basic infrastructure of the program from service sites located on the two island districts.
- **Program participation activities** – Fewer than 25% of work-eligible TANF recipients participate in work activities.
- **Program success** – From 2011 to 2015, annually, fewer than 10% of TANF clients were placed in jobs.







IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION, POLICY REVISION/DEVELOPMENT, AND ONGOING RESEARCH

**PRESENTER: NOREEN MICHAEL, PHD
LEAD PI**

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PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

By the end of the presentation participants will understand:

- The basis for and sources and foci of TANF priority programmatic issues
- The process used for arriving at the top three TANF priority programmatic issues
- The process of translating the top three priority programmatic issues to a TANF intervention pilot study





PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

By the end of the presentation participants will understand the implications of the priority programmatic issues identified for:

- Program implementation and policy revision
- Ongoing research
 - Expansion of CBPR in human services research in the USVI
 - Expansion of research capacity in the USVI
 - To inform ongoing improvement of program/service delivery
 - Current research project





IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- **Basis** for priority programmatic issues (PPIs) → overall findings of environmental scan of TANF Program
 - Program – Participants, Program/Services, Funding
 - Data Processes
 - Data Utilization
- **Sources** of PPIs
 - HSRP-VI Core Team – based primarily on qualitative data
 - A RICH VI Partnership
 - Based on presentation of findings at Partnership meetings
 - Small group work to identify priority programmatic issues
- **Foci** of PPIs





IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- Identified by HSRP-VI Core Team:
 - Policy regarding suspension of TANF benefits
 - Paternity and Child Support requirements regarding fathers' personally identifiable information (PII)
 - Lack of systematic approach for communicating with TANF employers
 - Perception of attitude of TANF employers toward TANF clients
 - Data availability, quality, and reliability





IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- Identified by A RICH VI
 - Assess reasons (USVI) TANF program does not work – complete revamping – clients’ readiness for program
 - Identifying client skills to be improved upon
 - Communicating TANF program’s mission and vision to clients
 - Determining how to offer wide range of courses to clients
 - Determining how to measure outcomes to ensure clients move from dependency to self-sufficiency – through the use of the individual responsibility plan (IRP)





IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- Identified by the A RICH VI
 - Knowledge of intake and follow-up of self-sufficiency goals
 - Understand what self-sufficiency means to clients
 - Identify the factors that adversely affect progress and success in self-sufficiency
 - Staff training to help clients understand and reach goals of self-sufficiency
 - What are the holistic needs of clients that can be better tailored for self-sufficiency?





IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- Identified by A RICH VI
 - Assessment of success rate of clients: Are they being offered jobs at public or private agencies?
 - Reaching out to potential employers – public and private sectors – to have them provide work opportunities to TANF clients
 - Expectations public/private agencies have of TANF clients
 - Determining “after care” available to TANF clients at end of 63 months
 - Repurpose JOBS and provide support/stipend for GED
 - Determine why service providers do not hire TANF clients (at end of program)





IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- Foci of identified priority issues
 - From the Core Research Team
 - Program processes & infrastructure
 - Policy
 - Other
 - From A RICH VI
 - Recipients – getting to self-sufficiency; education and skillset challenges; clients level/readiness; placements in gainful employment opportunities
 - Program – program success; outcomes; relevance
 - Other





TOP THREE PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- Process for arriving at top three PPIs
 - Occurred during quarterly Partnership meeting
 - Presentation made of findings for TANF program based on completion of the environmental scan report
 - Partners worked in small groups to identify key programmatic issues that could be pursued through a research project/study [step 1]
 - Identified issues were captured on flip chart paper
 - Partners were then asked to go around the room to identify their top three issues, based on a review of all issues captured. [step 2]





TOP THREE PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- Process for arriving at top three PPIs
 - Votes for the initial PPIs generated were tallied and the top three identified [step 3]
 - The results were shared with the Partners and a brief discussion of the top three PPIs occurred
 - There was general consensus among Partners that the top three PPIs were reflective of areas that needed closer attention in an effort to improve outcomes for TANF clients, particularly as it relates to securing employment and achieving self-sufficiency.





TOP THREE PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

FINAL THREE PPIs

- Assess reasons (USVI) TANF program does not work – complete revamping – clients’ readiness for program
- Determining how to measure outcomes to ensure clients move from dependency to self-sufficiency – through the use of the individual responsibility plan (IRP)
- Assessment of success rate of clients: Are they being offered jobs at public or private agencies?





TRANSLATING PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES - 1

- Revisiting funding requirement – TANF research project
- Distilling priority programmatic issues
 - Clarifying session held with TANF consultants (Mathematica) during a Partnership meeting
 - Session focused on TANF Scan results and translation of priority issues to workable intervention project
 - Consultants took Partners through the LI2 Process – Learn, Innovate, Improve
 - At the end of the clarifying session, there was not consensus on the way forward.





TRANSLATING PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES- 2

- A second clarifying session held at a special Partnership meeting convened specifically to arrive at consensus as to the TANF research project to be pursued
- A more expansive presentation was made by the research team sharing highlights of findings from the environmental scan study.
- Consultants engaged the Partnership after that presentation and shared a case study of Ramsey County.
- After extensive and robust discussion, Partners arrived at general consensus as to the focus of the TANF pilot study, based on similarity of issues and challenges across the two locations.





TRANSLATING PRIORITY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES- 3

- Subsequently, TANF personnel met with TANF consultants and the core research team to discuss the fine-tuning of the focus area and a pilot study was agreed upon: *An enhanced approach to goal planning for USVI TANF clients – Impact on client and family outcomes: A Pilot Study*
- There was agreement that the proposed pilot study reflected scope of top three priority programmatic issues
- Once this agreement was reached, work began in earnest to prepare an IRB application to gain approval for the proposed human subjects research.





IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TANF PROGRAM

- Program implementation and improvement
 - Program focused
 - Client focused
 - Outcome focused
- Policy Revision/Development
 - Program focused
 - Client focused
 - Outcome focused





IMPLICATIONS FOR ONGOING RESEARCH

- Expansion of CBPR in human services research in the USVI
- Expansion of research capacity in the USVI
- To inform ongoing improvement of program/service delivery
- Current research project
 - Preparation – tailoring materials
 - IRB approval
 - Training on the use of coaching by ETOs
 - Commencement of Road Test
 - Status of Pilot Study





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THANK YOU!





WRAP UP

- Instability in government leadership was challenging, however dedicated members of the partnership assured continuing progress
- Partners shared equal decision making with the CBPR approach
- Conducting the Environmental Scan provided a basis for determining priority issues
- The collaboratively identified TANF research project is being implemented





DISCUSSION

