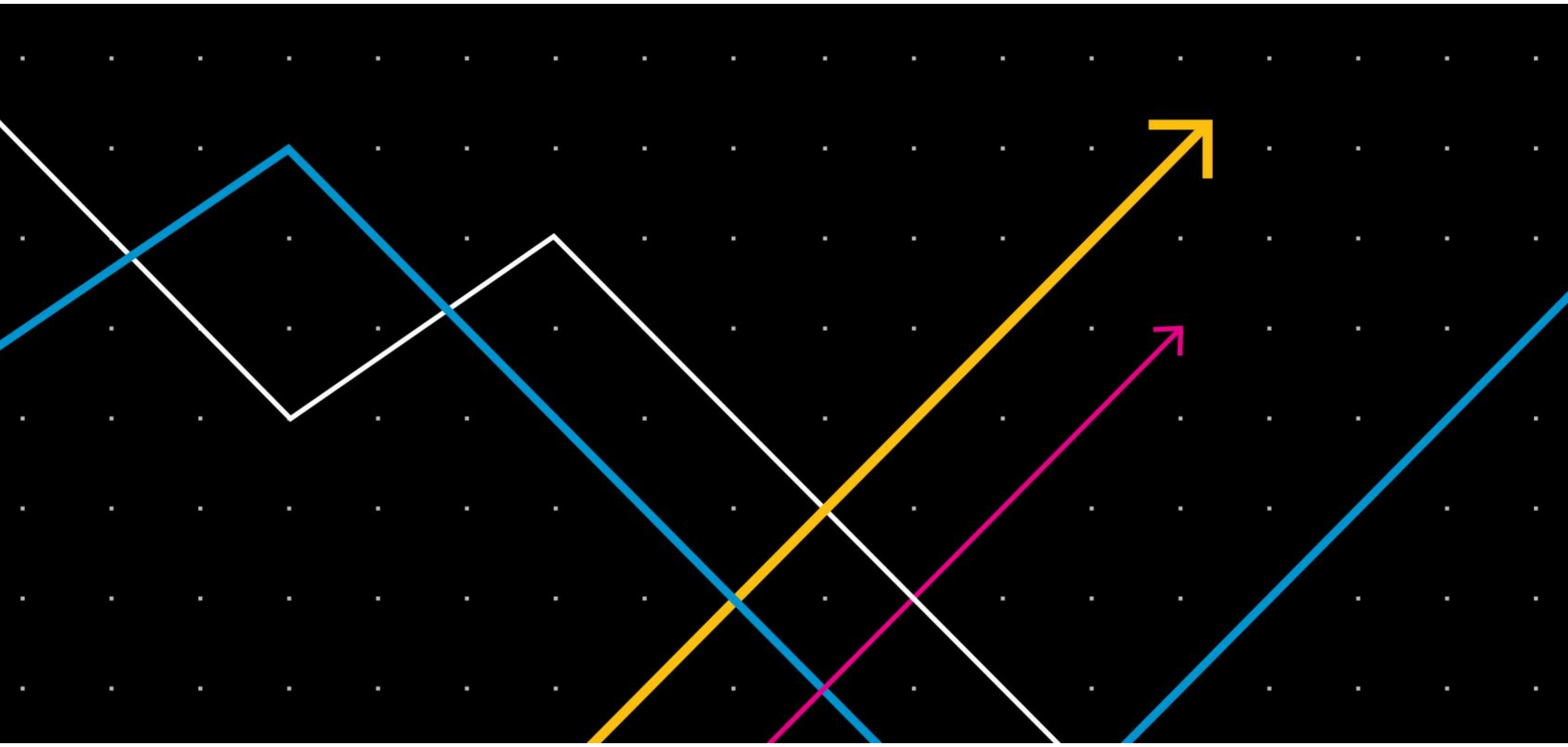
HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES



RESEARCH REPORT

Launching the WORTH Initiative to Create New Homeowners of Color

Year One Evaluation Study Implementation Report

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February 2024

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Acknowledgments

This report was funded by the Wells Fargo Foundation. We are grateful to them and to all our funders, who make it possible for Urban to advance its mission.

The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders. Funders do not determine research findings or the insights and recommendations of Urban experts. Further information on the Urban Institute's funding principles is available at urban.org/fundingprinciples.

The authors extend additional thanks to all the members of the WORTH initiative collaboratives who participated in our focus groups and who submitted their program administration data. Without the learning and progress you all shared with us, we would not have any insights into the challenges, necessary inputs, or actual successes associated with your work. We hope that our sharing this report supports cross-collaborative and even cross-initiative learning to improve the experience of those seeking to advance homeownership for communities of color across the US.

We are also grateful to Mary Cunningham and Janneke Ratcliffe for their expert, careful review of and input into this report. We also thank Caitlin Young for assistance with the first round of data reporting and technical assistance.

Executive Summary

Homeownership is the primary traditional path to intergenerational wealth building in America, and although homeownership rates across the United States have risen over the past decade, the gains have not been equal across racial and ethnic groups. Homeownership rates for communities of color (especially Black communities) have remained persistently lower than white homeownership rates, with just 47 percent of households of color owning their homes versus 72 percent of white households.[1] This gap was created and exacerbated by historical systems of racial and ethnic discrimination that excluded households of color from purchasing homes and created enormous disparities in key factors that influence and facilitate homeownership, such as incomes, educational attainment, employment, savings, and credit access and quality.

To support local efforts to shrink the homeownership gap between households of color and white households, the Wells Fargo Foundation launched the Wealth Opportunities Realized through Homeownership (WORTH) initiative, funding eight collaboratives with $7.5 million each, or $60 million total, over three and a half years to serve the following markets:

- Atlanta, Georgia
- Houston, Texas
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- New York City, New York
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Richmond, Virginia
- Rural and tribal areas
- San Diego, California

This report documents the progress these collaboratives have made in their first year of implementation toward the goal of creating 5,000 new homeowners of color in each market. As the initiative's learning and evaluation partner, the Urban Institute has collected quantitative and qualitative data on the eight collaboratives' contexts, processes, successes, challenges, and outcomes over their first year of implementation. We collected qualitative data on sites' challenges and successes through focus groups with each collaborative in April and May 2023, and we collected quantitative outcome data through two rounds of program administrative data submissions in December 2022 and June 2023.

The Why and How of WORTH

As a core part of its strategic design, the WORTH initiative's structure organizes grantees into cross-sector collaborations formed frequently of nonprofit organizations, city or state housing finance partners, and local philanthropies, along with community development intermediaries such as the Local Initiatives Support Coalition (LISC) or the Urban League. These collaboratives have begun working on strategies to advance homeownership within communities of color that include expanding access to credit, increasing homeownership counseling and education, boosting supply, advocating for systems change, and other strategies to enhance the civic infrastructure around affordable homeownership access for households of color (e.g., web platforms and tangled title policies).

Funding can be used more flexibly than funding for other homeowner-focused programs, including allowing for higher-income targets (earning up to 150 percent of the area median income) while preserving focus on lower-income households. WORTH resources can also support general operating costs to hire new staff members, launch or expand programs, build data-sharing and reporting systems, and support other infrastructure toward the goal of creating new homeowners of color.

Collaboratives are required to track and report their progress on creating new homeowners of color twice per program year using Urban Institute–created data definitions and metrics using a reporting template. The template allows for reporting participant demographic information, program inputs, outputs (e.g., the date a program was completed and total development costs), and outcomes (e.g., certificates achieved and unit sold), as well as the initiative-level outcome of new homeowners of color. The template also helps collaboratives follow and connect pathways between strategies (e.g., a home built with WORTH funds being sold to a new homeowner of color receiving WORTH-supported down payment assistance, or DPA).

Factors Influencing Implementation Progress

Within the first year of implementation, collaboratives have identified the sorts of headwinds and tailwinds that impede or support them in reaching their goals. These include market factors (e.g., rising inflation and interest rates paired with severely constricted inventories of affordable homes for purchase) and political factors (e.g., state environments that allow or encourage predatory businesses or constrain local revenues and affordable housing actions).

Collaboratives brought together seasoned staff members and well-trusted organizations into more formal and deeper relationships than past work. Those with longer histories of collaboration used their WORTH funds to build shared system-altering infrastructure, while others with newer partnerships established important foundational agreements, trust, and coordination. In some cases, the collaborative infrastructure has supported a shift, breaking down long-standing silos within the local industry and deepening connections through information sharing that also strengthened cross-organization accountability and implementation. As collaboratives deepen their integration, members focus more on strengthening their unique contributions while working on collective problem solving toward shared goals, rather than competing on shared or overlapping functions.

Collaboratives reported that the initiative's overall financial structure made it easier for them to invest in impactful, long-term, and systemic changes while reaching higher-income potential homebuyers of color (i.e., those earning more than the area median income). But the burden of reporting and meetings among collaboratives represented a significant trade-off, especially when collaborative members' data capacities were nascent or uneven.

Year One Progress

Out of this mix of challenges and supports, the eight collaboratives achieved some notable successes in their first year of implementation. In terms of individual and programmatic outcomes, the sites reported on four levels of data: (1) individual data, or information about an individual program participant and their interaction with the implementation strategy; (2) housing unit data, or information about a physical housing unit and its ownership; (3) event, training, and outreach data on key activities hosted and their participants; and (4) specific policy change campaigns and achievements. In their first year, collaboratives collectively reported

- serving **10,040 individual program participants**, regardless of race or ethnicity and
- supporting **3,132 new homebuyers of color** achieve or preserve homeownership, or roughly 31.2 percent of all individuals served and 8 percent of the 40,000 new homeowners of color the initiative aims to create (table ES.1).

TABLE ES.1

Total Homeowners of Color, Overall

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	Eight collaboratives
Total individuals (A)	10,040
New homeowners of color (B)	2,992
Preserved homeowners of color (C)	140
Total homeowners of color (B) + (C)	3,132
Share of total homeowners of color (B) + (C) / (A)	31.2%

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

The number of new homeowners of color varied by market and by program (table ES.2). These numbers are affected by market conditions and how the collaboratives used their funds. For example, some collaboratives used WORTH funds mostly for housing counseling and provided DPA using other funds, while some markets provided DPA using funding from WORTH. Collaboratives working in markets with relatively high home prices tend to show fewer new homeowners of color (Neal et al. 2023).

TABLE ES.2

Total Homeowners of Color, by Collaborative and Program

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	ATL	HOU	MIL	NYC	PHI	RIC	R/T	SD	Total
Down payment assistance	1	922		74	455	176	102	35	1,765
Homebuyer counseling		19	300	19	265		29	16	648
Alternative or extended mortgage financing						483	109		592
Mortgage credit certificate		169							169
New home construction or financing	71	31					32		134
Foreclosure prevention		29		48			2		79
Home repair, reconstruction, or rehabilitation		34					34		68
Title transfer or resolution					21				21
Closing cost assistance						8			8
Total new homeowners of color[a]	72	1,204	300	141	741	667	308	51	3,484

Source: Authors' analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

Note: The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego.

[a] The total of all participants across all programs is greater than the total number of new homeowners of color because some new homeowners participated in multiple programs.

Collaboratives had notable achievements establishing program processes and infrastructure, including creating pass-through grantmaking channels for essential homeownership support services, service coordination websites, or legal agreements. Establishing regular and standard metric tracking and reporting infrastructure also represented a major accomplishment for all. Some organizations hired new staff members, while others set up new reporting channels and activities with existing staff members and resources. Two collaboratives established cross-organizational data tracking and reporting systems, or "hubs," that they predict will ease future WORTH reporting burdens, streamline information sharing beyond the WORTH initiative, and improve client services. Indeed, we witnessed marked improvements in the amount and quality of data submitted between December 2022 and June 2023.

Key Lessons from Year One

To date, WORTH implementation has been foundational in breaking down silos across collaborative members and programs and inspiring investments in collaborative infrastructure to expand capacity and improve efficiency, such as leveraging technology for tracking services and outcomes. WORTH-supported programs are addressing some critical challenges to increasing the number of new homeowners of color, such as awareness, access, and financing. This study is also laying bare more complicated obstacles, including upstream systems adverse to change, the difficulties of building effective collaborations for implementation, and the hard work of standardizing and creating systems for tracking across multiple partners and programs.

Aligning strategies to tackle barriers and change systems. The strategies and structures collaboratives are advancing with WORTH funding balance the drive for long-term systemic change with the immediate needs of potential homebuyers in their markets and the realities of short-term funding to meet a prescribed target. To target mortgage-ready households needing a boost to cross over the homebuying threshold and try to hit their goal of creating 5,000 new homeowners of color, collaboratives are accelerating access to financial resources. Fewer collaboratives are tackling supply issues, and those that are use a wide array of approaches tailored to their markets. Although many collaboratives are strengthening their internal relationships, it is harder to build rapport with other key local actors within the housing industry. The most challenging areas of change for WORTH collaboratives remain policy and market conditions that complicate access to credit and limit the supply of affordable starter homes. Collaboratives are rarely focusing on more upstream challenges to homeownership (e.g., income-boosting policies, policies and advocacy supporting renters' ability to save, and public opinion campaigns) most likely because these are unlikely to yield new homeowners during the WORTH implementation period, and the efforts may extend beyond the mission or expertise of collaborative members.

Building collaborative trust and infrastructure. Collaboratives have invested in building trust, developing communication rhythms, hiring staff members, coordinating work based on cooperation principles, strengthening accountability, and constructing a data-sharing and reporting infrastructure. Working together has deepened partnerships and strengthened local ecosystems supporting homeownership. Some of this work has already paid off, resulting in new federal and local advocacy efforts, expanded services for potential homeowners, new programs to increase housing supply and access to credit, additional funding, and increased local political support. Growing pains included hiring challenges, meeting fatigue, inadequate communication among members, and data capacity issues. As implementation moves into year two, collaboratives will continue to find new ways of addressing these challenges together.

Achieving and documenting outcomes. WORTH funding is supporting the broader ecosystem of homeownership networks and creating new homeowners of color, all during a trying time economically for homebuying and legally for programs to address historic disparities households of color have experienced. Collaboratives are improving their data collection to tell the story of their implementation successes and challenges. But not all strategies have been implemented and reported on, and most program participants have not yet become homeowners. Weak economic and housing market conditions may be a contributing factor.

Recommendations to Accelerate Progress

It is too early in the initiative to assess progress toward the primary goal of creating 40,000 total new homeowners of color, but collaboratives suggested structural changes and supports that could help them accelerate their progress toward all WORTH-supported goals and beyond:

- **State governments** could provide or increase down payment assistance programs; increase regulations against landlord discrimination, extractive rents, and excessive investment firm purchases of affordable homes; remove barriers to local revenue generation for affordable housing; and offer more antidiscrimination oversight over business and real estate industries within the state.

- The **federal government** could create a new low-income housing tax credit for homeownership, increase community development financial institution funding, and increase Consumer Financial Protection Bureau oversight.
- **Local governments** could offer financial assistance through subsidies, tax incentives, and tax increment financing; implement zoning changes that facilitate increased development or the supply of affordable homeownership opportunities; and strategically repurpose vacant or abandoned city property to support affordable homeownership.
- **Financial institutions** could use stronger leadership from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, offer more down payment assistance programs, offer greater incentives for mortgage agents to market affordable products and programs, and provide deeper core operating support for homeownership-focused nonprofits.
- **Local employers and housing industry groups** could partner and dedicate resources to meet employees' housing needs and increase staff diversity and competency among real estate professionals through training.
- **Philanthropic entities or foundations** could offer more resources for predevelopment funding, credit repair, and gap financing; commit to longer-term funding; support nonprofit operations and not just projects; and align endowments with affordable housing priorities.

Near-term responses to year one findings include two that have already occurred: (1) expanding opportunities for peer learning around collaborative challenges and successes and (2) increasing technical assistance on data collection and reporting. Wells Fargo has already contracted with Urban for these enhanced activities through the duration of WORTH implementation. One outstanding need is to respond to changing market conditions and collaboratives' concerns about hitting their program targets and about preserving existing homeowners in today's economic climate.

Longer-term considerations that would require either significant restructuring of WORTH or implementation through the next generation of initiatives to support the creation of new homeowners of color include (1) more engagement with local housing industry professionals as gatekeepers to homeownership, (2) more supply-side support through significant capital and local zoning changes, and (3) better incentives for targeting systems change through longer-term strategies that may not create homeowners immediately but might expand future opportunities.

Launching the WORTH Initiative

Homeownership is the primary traditional path to intergenerational wealth building in America, and although homeownership rates across the United States have risen over the past decade, the gains have not been equal across racial and ethnic groups. Homeownership rates for communities of color (especially Black communities) have remained persistently lower than white homeownership rates. In 2021, 73 percent of non-Hispanic white households owned their homes compared with 63 percent of Asian households, 51 percent of Hispanic households, and 44 percent of Black households (Yun et al. 2023).[2]

This homeownership rate gap arises from myriad compounding historical systems of racial and ethnic discrimination that excluded households of color from purchasing homes and created enormous disparities in key homeownership factors, such as income, educational attainment, employment, savings, and credit access and quality. The historic and persistent effects of racially directed barriers to homeownership (e.g., centuries of slavery, Jim Crow laws, exclusion acts, redlining, racial covenants, segregation through explicit and implicit local policies, and biased mortgage lending practices) have undermined homeownership opportunities for people of color. Even when households of color do achieve homeownership, wealth-stripping practices (e.g., predatory lending and biased appraisals), toxic land uses concentrated near communities of color, and uneven levels of community and education investment reduce the potential of these families' investments to produce wealth (Neal, Choi, and Walsh 2020).

With an intent to lend weight to the efforts to close this gap and address the harms that create it, the Wells Fargo Foundation has created the $60 million Wealth Opportunities Realized through Homeownership (WORTH) initiative, which allocates $7.5 million to each of eight cross-sector collaboratives in different US housing markets. Under WORTH, these collaboratives aim to create long-term, equity-oriented change in homeownership systems and create 5,000 new homeowners of color in each market. Collaboratives in the following eight markets received WORTH investments:

- Atlanta, Georgia
- Houston, Texas
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- New York City, New York
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- Richmond, Virginia
- Rural and tribal areas[3]
- San Diego, California

Launched officially in 2022, the eight selected grantees have engaged in a full year of activities to advance homeownership among communities of color. This report presents the results of Urban's evaluation of their first year of progress in the context of the initiative's overall structure, the historical and present challenges to homeownership for communities of color, and the nature of the eight collaboratives' compositions, local political and economic environments, selected strategies, and data capacity.

Evaluation Process

As a learning and evaluation partner, Urban's role in the WORTH initiative is to help grantees track, understand, and respond to their impact achieved through their implementation of WORTH strategies and activities. Practically, this entails Urban conducting three separate studies:

- An **outcome study** focused on tailoring reporting structures and collecting data from each grantee twice a year over the grant period. The data collected and submitted track each collaborative's overall outputs and the number of affected individuals, housing units, and policies that lead to an observed move into homeownership by a person of color. Counting the number of new homeowners of color under the WORTH program is foundational to determining its overall impact. In 2023, we collected two rounds of data from grantees—the first in December 2022 and the second in June 2023—and worked with collaboratives' data leads each round on establishing and improving reporting processes, data structures, and data quality. The standard template for data reporting that we used with each collaborative to customize to their strategies and reporting capacities can be found in appendix A. These data also illustrate the outcomes associated with specific implementation strategies or collaboratives. In addition to Urban's use of the data to drive insights about boosting homeownership for people of color, collaboratives can also use the data to shape or improve their strategies targeting this outcome. In this way, the insights from data analysis, as well as the data collection process itself, can strengthen collaboratives' capacity.
- A **process study** that gathers information on collaboratives' context and implementation experiences that affect and even determine the quantifiable outcomes they can achieve. We

collect data for this study through annual focus groups with each collaborative's member organizations. In 2023, we collected data through one round of 11 focus groups (2 for the Atlanta collaborative, 3 for the rural and tribal area collaborative, and 1 each for the remaining collaboratives) conducted in April and May. The protocol for these focus groups can be found in appendix B. Additionally, collaboratives participate annually in a peer-learning exchange convening, where our process study team collects data on shared or unique challenges and successes in strategies for advancing homeownership for communities of color.

- An **impact study** that will assess the causal influence of one strategy on homeownership rates for households of color. This part of the evaluation will be conducted at a later stage in the WORTH program implementation. The first step, launched in 2023, entails assessing grantees on their readiness for an impact evaluation, based on such factors as the suitability of their interventions for an impact analysis, the quality of their outcome data, the ability of their solutions to achieve results at sufficient scale, and their capacity to engage with the impact study team. Based on this assessment, Urban, in consultation with the Wells Fargo Foundation, will invite up to two collaboratives to be part of the impact study, which is expected to launch in 2024.

The results from the outcome and process study will feature in annual implementation reports throughout the course of the initiative, and the implementation study will have a separate report at the end of 2026. In addition to these studies, Urban will expand its scope in years two and three with the support of additional funding to host peer-learning webinars and a moderated forum in which collaborative members can pose questions and learn from each other's experiences. The end goal of this evaluation effort is to help grantees track, respond to, and accelerate their progress and to share WORTH grantees' hard-fought lessons for other practitioners on what strategies, challenges, and considerations arise during initiatives that aim to advance homeownership for people of color.

Structure of the Report

As the first of three annual implementation reports, following the initial baseline report (Neal et al. 2023), this report will begin with an overview of the WORTH initiative's motivation and the specifics of how the initiative is structured as conveyed to us by grantees in focus groups and written up in program administrative documentation. We then dive into the factors that accelerated and inhibited grantees' progress. These contextual factors offer explanations for why grantees achieved what they did during their first year and set the stage for the next section, listing the quantitative outcomes that grantees reported and the concrete process-related successes they achieved. Following these sections, we lay out the recommendations collaboratives set forth and that we observed as necessary commitments for themselves, financial institutions, policymakers, and other initiative designers to advance homeownership in communities of color.

The Why and How of WORTH

Barriers to Homeownership for Households of Color

An extensive and growing body of literature documents the numerous obstacles to homeownership confronting households of color based on their racial and ethnic identities and the neighborhoods and towns where they choose to live (McCargo 2019; Young, Neal, and Ratcliffe 2022).[4] Although the Fair Housing Act prevents and gives legal recourse for overt discrimination, current systems were built upon racist practices that continue to limit upward mobility and access to resources and perpetuate housing industry biases. We asked WORTH collaboratives to describe the key barriers at work within their markets that set the context for their strategies.

[T]here's...systemic racism that has affected…upward mobility, educational resources, access to key resources for even getting into homes or building homes…. And so the resources that are needed kind of go across the board: it's system changes, it's policy changes, it's resources that allow us to address are there contractors who are people of color? Are there [home] inspectors who are people of color? Are people of color able to access job opportunities that allow them to have a wage that supports homeownership? Are they able to get into affordable housing even as a renter so that they…have savings that contributes later to homeownership and wealth building?
—WORTH collaborative member

Wealth as Access

The ability to purchase a home has to do with having enough wealth for a down payment and having enough income to support mortgage payments. But several WORTH collaboratives have pointed to how the historical and compounding effects of enslavement and discrimination led to the lack of intergenerational wealth today among the households of color they work with. In many communities, this contributes to growing racial inequalities in both income and wealth and low rates of upward economic mobility. And although homeownership itself can be a means of producing household wealth, “the financial gap between what Black and Latine families can afford and what it costs to produce a housing unit” must be filled first to enable a home purchase, one WORTH collaborative member stated.

Housing Industry Historic Discrimination and Persistent Biases

All eight WORTH collaboratives pointed to historic and persistent biases in the housing industry as significant obstacles to increasing the number of homeowners of color in their markets and reducing existing disparities in their homeownership rates compared with white households. See Neal et al. (2023) for analyses of homeownership gaps by race and ethnicity within each WORTH market. These disparities exist across all major players in the home purchase process—from lenders to real estate agents to appraisers—because of the underrepresentation of people of color within these workforces, as well as specific practices that continue to reduce access to buyers of color.

Representation matters—having people that look like the homebuyers reflected at every step along the way, from the mortgage lenders to the home inspectors, the home appraisers, the real estate agents—so that there is that comfort level.
—WORTH collaborative member

In terms of lenders, WORTH collaboratives discussed historical redlining but also problematic practices and communications issues that keep lenders from having a more positive role. As for-profit institutions, banks lack adequate incentive to offer or accept features that could make a mortgage more affordable, even with Community Reinvestment Act credit on the line. And the absence of large banks in many rural communities means the presence of predatory financial institutions, such as payday lenders, that charge higher interest rates. WORTH collaboratives note how bank leaders are often genuine in their desire to change their lending practices and boost opportunities for new homeowners of color, but multiple collaboratives pointed to continuing problems on the ground where loan officers make daily decisions. This includes failure to discuss down payment assistance (DPA) programs for which buyers may be eligible, attributable to lack of incentive or fear of slowing down the process; preapprovals for mortgages without clarifying the down payment needed for the approved mortgage amount; and continued high rates of mortgage loan denials for households of color.

Real estate agents and appraisers can also stand in the way of home purchasing. Several collaboratives noted that real estate agents focus on closing a home sale and collecting their commission rather than connecting a potential homebuyer to DPA programs that could facilitate their home purchase. This could be because of perceived stigma around these programs as a handout, as well as concerns that this would make the process lengthier. Additionally, collaboratives noted how housing appraisers undervalue homes being sold by Black homeowners, specifically, contributing to a loss of intergenerational wealth that white homeowners do not experience.

Decentering Race in Homeownership Solutions

Several collaboratives spoke of national opinion shifting away from support of diverse communities, while others discussed how existing laws on antidiscrimination in housing transactions are at odds with the intent of programs like WORTH that focus on increasing the number of homeowners of color to correct for historical racially biased inequities. This means collaboratives must be resourceful in generating local support for their WORTH strategies and intentional in their marketing.

BOX 1

Legal Complexities to Native Homeownership

There are unique challenges to achieving homeownership on Native lands that are surmountable but add complexity to the process.

- **Native nation sovereignty.** There are more than 575 recognized sovereign tribes, all unique with their systems, laws, and housing codes.
- **Multiple gatekeepers to land access.** Land access for a single homeowner requires approvals from the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, as well as the tribal government.
- **Infrastructure needs.** Potential homeowners are often building new homes in areas without public infrastructure and need to cover the costs of adding well water access, septic systems, and more.

Strategies to Increase the Number of Homeowners of Color

Over the first year of the WORTH initiative funding program, each collaborative has taken steps to finalize planning and start implementation of their unique strategies targeted at boosting homeownership for households of color. The most prevalent strategies fit under a few broad categories: expanding access to credit, increasing homeownership counseling and education, streamlining affordable housing production, and coordinating policy advocacy. Although implementation varies across markets, each is an important fixture of the WORTH initiative at a program-wide level. In addition to these shared approaches, collaboratives are pursuing unique and long-term strategies responsive to their local contexts and specific goals.

Expanding Access to Credit

Income, credit, and wealth gaps between white households and households of color are persistent barriers to prospective homebuyers across sites. Collaboratives across all markets noted historical financial inequities that emerge when people of color enter the homebuying market. All eight collaboratives' WORTH implementation proposals included building and enhancing programs that expand access to credit and combat these trends, with DPA programs being the most prevalent.

Each collaborative has a unique DPA program, funding its work through a combination of different sources, including the WORTH grant, state programs, and other private-sector grants and bank programs. In many cases, interviewees noted the challenges of securing enough funding for individual buyers to close, particularly when low housing supply requires quick decisionmaking and households' finances fluctuate. Practitioners report that drawing on DPA funds from multiple sources necessitates a patchwork approach to closing, demonstrating the resourcefulness of collaborative members. As one person put it, "It takes some real savvy maneuvering to be able to, you know, put together a package of resources to be able to purchase." Notably, WORTH allows some organizations to provide DPA support to households that might otherwise be ineligible for other products. For example, although some products have income limits restricting participation to households earning no more than 80 percent of the area median income, WORTH funding has allowed some markets' collaborative partners to support moderate-income households making up to 120 percent of the area median income.

Noting that credit challenges are more prevalent among potential homebuyers of color, leading to higher mortgage rate denials, some collaboratives took different approaches to address the lack of credit options. Collaborative members in Houston developed a credit repair program for secure credit cards, allowing homebuyers the opportunity to rebuild their credit and maintain a credit line in the future. In 2023, Milwaukee collaborative organizations expanded access to mortgage credit based on rental payment history rather than credit score by creating a new lending pool. Collaboratives with special purpose credit programs crafted them to broadly serve communities of color while meeting nondiscrimination standards.[5]

Increasing Homeownership Education and Counseling

Across markets, homeownership education and counseling services are key strategies for increasing the number of homebuyers of color by supporting homeownership readiness and spreading information. All collaboratives included counseling as a crucial strategy for engaging with the community and ensuring that community members of color have the requisite resources and supports to engage with the housing market. These services counter decades of discriminatory homeownership lending practices that have led to—what grantees reported were widespread—beliefs that homeownership is for only white households and have led to a lack of shared knowledge about how to navigate the process and access supports within communities of color.

They just think, "Oh, that's for low-income households, I'm not a low-income household." … They don't understand that they may fall within that guideline and still be able to receive the assistance—so it's overcoming that as well.
—WORTH collaborative member

To counter misconceptions and the general lack of support, most collaboratives held workshops or homeownership education and counseling courses. Some collaboratives' homeownership education and counseling focus on mortgage and credit, supporting clients both in meeting eligibility requirements for loans and other products and in achieving homebuyer readiness. Other education and outreach programs—such as Houston's campaign to provide information on home care, long-term maintenance, and rehabilitation—focus on homeownership preservation. As a tool for public education, homeownership education and counseling can combat stigma around resources such as DPA and can promote narratives around feasible pathways to homeownership in communities of color.

Boosting Supply

Staff members across collaboratives mentioned the limited supply of affordable homes as one of their primary challenges. WORTH is allowing collaboratives to invest in the infrastructure, processes, and relationships that will support increasing the affordable housing supply in their markets.

Discussions with collaborative members unearthed the complexity of challenges associated with housing production, including the role the Great Recession played in eliminating small home builders. These suppliers were crucial components of the housing ecosystem. To rebuild what was lost, collaboratives are using WORTH funding to support unit production, with some geographies focusing on supporting builders of color. Producing a single unit is costly and, therefore, production itself is a limited yield strategy, but addressing the supply shortage is crucial. Many collaboratives, therefore, seem to be addressing upstream factors to supply.

To pilot and expand lower-cost models for developers, two collaboratives are developing new production systems. Building on one collaborative member's existing MiCasita model,[6] the rural and tribal area collaborative has created a modular home production facility. The MiCasita program also centers environmental justice, as each home meets green building practices. Staff members from other collaboratives expressed interest in learning more about the rural and tribal area collaborative's methods and processes. The Milwaukee collaborative has focused on reuse of vacant land and producing multiunit properties for sale. The creation of Milwaukee's acquisition fund aims to "combat predatory acquisition and turn vacant lots into first-generation homes" and reverse the city's trend of homes being transferred from homeowners to investors. This fund will work in tandem with the counseling programs described above to identify homeowners who are interested in purchasing homes. Both approaches cut down development costs, and collaboratives hope these methods enable them to offer more affordable homeownership opportunities for households of color.

Collaboratives are trying other approaches to support supply, many of which especially focus on entry-level homes. Working on an upstream supply issue, the Atlanta collaborative focused on partnering with builders of color to increase supply. The San Diego collaborative is piloting incentives for affordable homeownership development—including infill construction, accessory dwelling units, modular housing, co-op and condo conversion, land subdivision, and small multifamily development—to see what yields the greatest supply increase within their market. Houston proposed building more multigenerational housing to meet the demands of households of color in their communities because the city's current housing stock "does not reflect the diversity of the households and incomes that are in our community," which drives up prices. By building more of these homes, the Houston collaborative hopes to make this style of living more attainable for would-be homeowners of color.

Advocating for Systems Change

Many of the challenges homebuyers of color face are systemic, so policy advocacy is particularly important. But most homeownership-focused funding is for delivering specific programs, projects, or credit vehicles rather than flexible funding to support advocacy to remove explicit barriers to homeownership, such as harmful policies, ineffective programs, or inequitable resources. With the branding of the Wells Fargo Foundation's cross-site initiative and through the diverse nature of their members, collaboratives have greater credibility and leverage to push policymakers on the changes they see as necessary for disrupting the barriers to homeownership for people of color and advancing systemic change in their markets.

Though these efforts focus more on long-term change and are less likely to have immediate impacts, the collaboratives, as long as they have a plan to meet WORTH funding requirements, can use additional resources on important upstream factors. As a result, many collaboratives set aside funding to advocate for steps to boost homeownership for households of color, though the specific efforts vary by market. Goals of their advocacy include the following:

- **Reforming access to capital**. The rural and tribal area collaborative discussed working with government-sponsored enterprises, such as Fannie Mae, to improve access to affordable mortgage programs for Native homeowners building on trust land.
- **Increasing (affordable) housing supply.** Most of the collaboratives—including Richmond, Milwaukee, and San Diego—focus their advocacy work on issues surrounding housing supply, as the collaboratives push for zoning changes and for more funding for new construction. Zoning and other land-use reforms allow for increased density and the streamlined production of more affordable housing units. In a unique example, the New York City collaborative aims to work with the city government to create a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act pipeline to increase the supply of affordable homeownership units within local community land trusts. Other efforts to increase or preserve the supply of affordable homes for ownership include rehabilitation, reconstruction, and replacement of dilapidated units.
- **Fair housing enforcement.** The Houston collaborative plans to support its county in advancing fair housing enforcement among housing appraisers to tackle appraisal bias.

- **Boosting incomes.** Two collaboratives discussed advocacy efforts aimed at increasing minimum wages and seeking forgiveness for student loan debt.
- **Preserving homeownership.** Some collaboratives are advocating for legislative changes that would address historical barriers to homeownership, such as financial hardships, specifically tax burdens and credit measures. Expanding tax abatement programs and homestead exemptions and increasing opportunities for homeowner rehabilitation support are just some of the measures collaboratives in Atlanta and Philadelphia are working toward to enact structural change and preserve the wealth of communities of color.

Unique Strategies

While collaboratives enact strategies that work toward their short-term goal of creating 5,000 new homeowners of color, grantees also have an acute awareness that more unique and long-term measures are necessary to ensure the number of homeowners of color can increase sustainably in years to come. Because of the flexibility of WORTH funding dollars, collaboratives are allowed to develop strategies that facilitate this work outside the program's time frame. Although these strategies focus on long-term systemic change, they account for nuances in ecosystem, cultural, and legal challenges to affordable homeownership across different geographies. The real estate landscape and its various players vary across the markets, and local efforts are fine-tuned to ensure that community needs are being met through these longer-term initiatives.

Some collaboratives have built web platforms for centralized information and program coordination across homeownership-supporting organizations and agencies in their markets. In New York City, the platform is used to align data collection for the citywide housing ecosystem and coordinate and align around target goals; it is a platform for suppliers and service providers. On the other hand, Atlanta, Houston, Philadelphia, and San Diego have plans for centralizing resource access for both service and affordable housing suppliers and potential homebuyers. These hubs aim to assemble and streamline information related to the homebuying process (e.g., centralizing application portals or contacts of counseling options) from multiple services and to present this information in an accessible way to clients.

The rural and tribal area collaborative and the Houston, New York City, and Philadelphia collaboratives are aiming to resolve tangled title issues where a property deed does not bear the property owner's name. Without an accurate title, it is challenging for homeowners to receive assistance, and an issue like this makes it challenging for wealth to transfer across generations.

Separately, the Richmond collaborative is creating an employer-assisted housing program to connect employers' interest in maintaining a stable, well-housed workforce near their offices with the potential need for homeownership assistance among households of color.

How Collaboratives Are Structured

The WORTH initiative's grant structure requires grantees to form cross-sector collaborations, which can take many forms. Generally, the collaboratives are formed of partner organizations and agencies that can be either a part of a core executive steering team or simply implementation partners. According to the Collective Impact Forum (an organization specializing in studying and supporting collaboratives across the US), collaboratives generally have similar members (e.g., a backbone or lead organization, a steering committee, working groups, partners, and community members) and similar structures (e.g., shared vision or goals, mutually reinforcing activities, data and metric coordination, regular communication, and a shared backbone organizer).[7]

WORTH collaboratives' partners and leads shared similarities insofar as they consistently incorporated community development support organizations called intermediaries, housing counseling agencies, affordable housing developers, city representatives, and real estate partners. In terms of national community development and affordable housing development nonprofits, every site (except the rural and tribal area collaborative) had the Local Initiatives Support Coalition (LISC) as one of their members (with two sites including support from the national office). Local LISC chapters served as lead for three of the eight sites (table 1). Half the sites have the Urban League as a partner, and six sites had a local branch of Habitat for Humanity as a partner. These local chapters of national community development organizations can help collaborative members tap into national networks for capacity building, funding, and peer learning resources, among other benefits that would not otherwise be available locally. In terms of government representation, every site had representation from their local city government (except the rural and tribal area collaborative). Three had connections with state housing departments and finance agencies.

Notably, the collaboratives all had different approaches to structuring their teams—some with large partner rosters and small steering committees and others with small partner lists and expansive steering committee inclusion. Decisions about who qualified to be a core member on the executive steering committee also varied across collaboratives, with some reserving core membership for funding partners while others composed their core member team using key strategy implementation lead organizations.

TABLE 1

Market Collaboratives' Lead Organizations and Partners

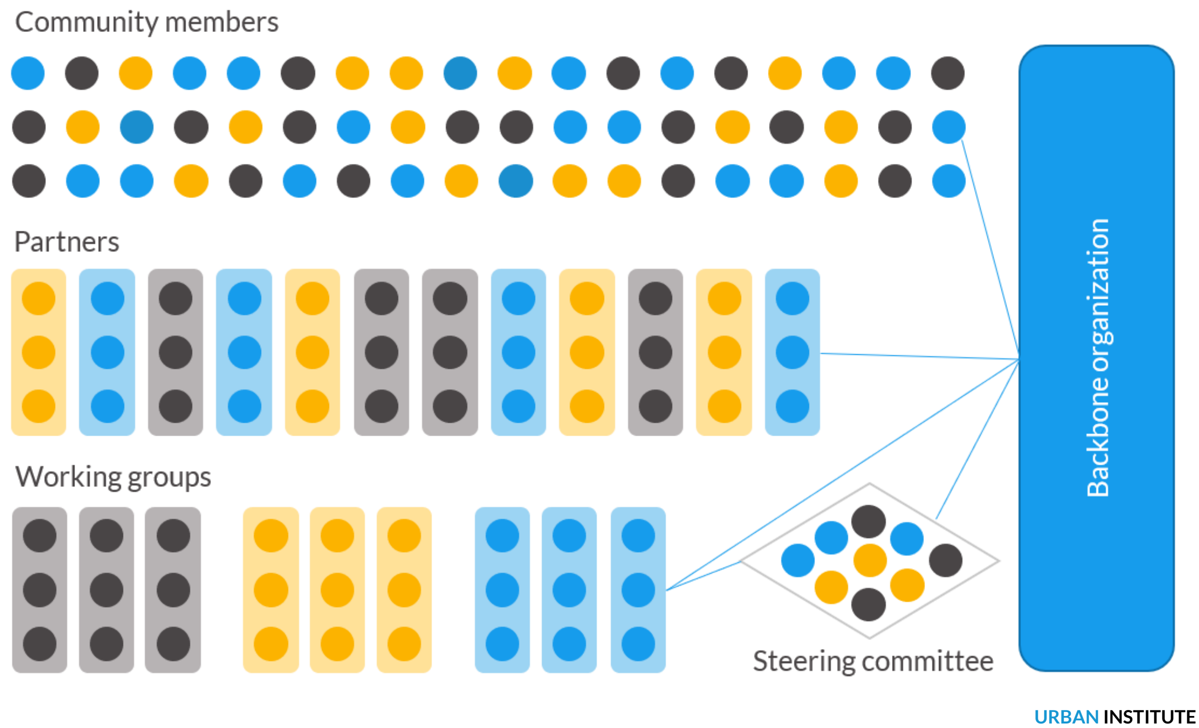
MC	Collaborative lead organization	Partners	Number of core members	Share of core members versus other partners
ATL	Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta	22	6	27%
HOU	LISC Houston	15	7	47%
MIL	Acts Housing and the Community Development Alliance	20	14	70%
NYC	LISC New York	30	3	10%
PHI	Urban League of Philadelphia	13	7	54%
RIC	LISC Virginia	33	9	27%
R/T	come dream, come build	29	7	24%
SD	San Diego Housing Corporation	25	19	76%

Source: Authors' analysis of WORTH initiative grantee implementation proposal partnership tables.
Notes: MC = market collaborative. The abbreviated row headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego.

All these actors come together under various structures. Figure 1 offers a visual of one potential structure (most similar to the Milwaukee grantee collaborative). The backbone organization coordinates meetings among cross-sector steering committee members, connects with residents and community members to understand needs and desires, and establishes and finds leaders for working groups to implement the ideas generated. These working groups, which plan and figure out implementation logistics, either find or are connected with partners to execute that implementation plan. Community members who are connected with those partners or who are influenced by the plan provide ideas and feedback up through partners to the working groups and eventually back up to the steering committee. The backbone or lead organizations, along with working group members' partnerships and consultation with community residents, ensures their needs and priorities inform and guide resource allocation and strategy and program design. Communication flows between community members and partners, and partners bring that information into working groups. The steering committee—which includes community, partner, and working group members—communicates with all levels but is responsible for identifying and aligning partners around common goals within working groups and guiding and supporting working groups in their implementation of key strategies.

FIGURE 1

Example Collaborative Structure



Source: Authors' adaptation of the structure from John Kania and Mark Kramer, "Embracing Emergence: How Collective Impact Addresses Complexity," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, January 21, 2013, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/social_progress_through_collective_impact.

In the best-case scenarios, collaboratives' meeting and communication infrastructure supports knowledge sharing and mutual support. Practically speaking, collaboration happens through regular communication via meetings, emails, and phone calls across committees and partners. WORTH grantee members report differing rhythms for their communications, with some citing weekly or continuous communication (mostly by email). All collaboratives reported scheduling at least bimonthly central steering committee meetings to discuss WORTH strategy implementation, coordination, progress, and reporting. Three collaboratives discussed working groups made of different collaborative members focused on implementing specific strategies, while other collaboratives simply appointed single member organizations to lead strategies and build their own partnerships as needed.

Initiative Funding Requirements

The WORTH initiative supports increasing homeownership for people of color by creating 5,000 new homeowners of color in each of eight markets through work grounded in collaboration. Grantees say engagement in the program increased intentionality and fostered connectivity in the affordable housing ecosystem. WORTH grants were given in two phases: planning grants (phase one) and implementation grants (phase two). After developing a plan to create 5,000 new homeowners of color in their geography, 15 markets were given $150,000 in planning grants over six months. These 15 collaboratives were asked to complete the planning process and submit a revised plan to apply to be one of eight collaboratives to receive implementation grants. Winners of this grant were awarded about $1.9 million per year over four years, totaling $7.5 million. Award dollars can be used flexibly to create new homeowners, with two main caveats: the plans had to meet household income targets on who is assisted through WORTH to become a homeowner, and evaluation data and reporting requirements had to be covered with grant resources.

Income Targets

There are no material restrictions on how WORTH dollars can be spent—grantees can use the provided resources at their discretion and can dedicate funds to overhead and organizational investments—but the program goal is clear: "to have at least 25% of the net new BIPOC[8] homeowners created at 80 percent of average median income (AMI) and the majority of net new BIPOC homeowners at up to 150 percent of median income" (Wells Fargo Foundation 2021). The median income stipulation "allows for [a maximum of] 50% of the 5,000 targeted [to] be above 150% AMI (i.e., any income level)." Importantly, a homeowner earning no more than 80 percent of the area median income also counts as a homeowner earning no more than 150 percent of the area median income. This allows for up to 50 percent of targeted homeowners to be at any income level and allows for collaboratives to consider the use of innovative strategies that go beyond the traditional approaches used to address homeownership challenges primarily for low-income people of color. The broad income limits from WORTH funding enable collaboratives to engage with a broader range of households traditionally not eligible for support, thus increasing the number of higher-income households they serve through smaller DPA grants.

Tracking and Reporting Requirements

Initiative participants must also participate in a program evaluation conducted by the Urban Institute, which requires ongoing data collection and reporting. These data collection and reporting guidelines are the most significant requirements collaboratives must meet to receive continued funding. Submitted implementation plans had to include an outline of the general approach to data collection each collaborative would take, including the proposed tracking system used to collect data on nonduplicative program participants. As an ongoing measure of performance, grantees must provide Wells Fargo and Urban regular counts of new and preserved homeowners served through the collaborative's strategies. Plans were also required to detail allocated staff time during the planning and implantation process for data collection and to propose additional key metrics that are meaningful to their work. Strong implementation plans had a thorough understanding of issues that prevent establishing and preserving BIPOC homeownership across different geographies.

Data Collection and Reporting Requirements

As indicated above, grantees are required to collect and report data to track progress toward creating 5,000 new homeowners of color and participate in the initiative-level evaluation. To support grantees, Urban provided training, a data reporting template with metric definitions, guidance on frequently asked questions, and technical assistance to collaborative data leads and other collaborative members responsible for tracking and reporting on their strategy implementation progress.

Defining Metrics

To help standardize reporting within and across collaboratives, Urban developed a definition of new homeowners of color (box 2), while acknowledging challenges associated with pursuing and measuring this target (box 3). The evaluation team also created a metrics template and data dictionary and provided training and answered commonly asked questions through a frequently asked questions document and more unique questions through one-on-one meetings with each collaborative. Metrics were developed to capture the WORTH initiative's outcomes at the level of each collaborative market, to track outcomes by strategy, and to allow collaboratives to follow and connect pathways between strategies (e.g., a home built with WORTH funds being sold to a homeowner receiving WORTH-supported DPA).

BOX 2

Defining "New Homeowner of Color"

Who is a new homeowner of color? Any individual named on a mortgage or title as owner of a home, serving as their primary residence and only home, who is a person of color and meets at least one definition of new homeowner.

Who counts as a person of color? Anyone who identifies as other than non-Hispanic white, including Black or African American, Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Asian, and nonwhite Hispanic or someone of two or more races.

Who counts as a homeowner? Any individual listed on the mortgage or title as owner of a home serving as their primary residence and only home.

Who counts as a new homeowner? Anyone who, with the assistance of WORTH funding, transitions from the following:

- Renter to homeowner (e.g., renter closing on a home mortgage)
- Unclear title on a home to clear title as owner (e.g., via inheritance or other legal processes clearing the title)
- Household saved from losing their home through foreclosure prevention
- Owner of an uninhabitable home to owner of a habitable home (e.g., via wholesale reconstruction of property or replacement of home such as a mobile home unit)
  - Reconstruction means the home previously lacked basic services (e.g., water or electricity, as in colonias or some Native communities) or its structure was unsound, therefore denying the current owner the benefits of ownership as a financial asset or safe place to live.
  - Rehabilitation to replace systems and maintain existing habitability is a preservation activity and does not count as a new homeowner. Other preservation activities (e.g., weatherization, utility assistance, and tax relief) also do not count as creating a new homeowner.

A new homeowner does not have to be a first-time homebuyer but should not be a homeowner when they receive assistance through WORTH funding unless the assistance is for reconstruction or replacement.

A new homeowner counts only once, even if they meet multiple definitions above and received multiple types of assistance from WORTH-funded strategies.

A couple who are both people of color on the same mortgage or title and meet all the other criteria would count as two new homeowners of color.

Urban asked for data at multiple levels: individual data include information about an individual program participant and their interaction with the implementation strategy; housing unit data include information about a physical housing unit and its ownership; event, training, and outreach data describe key activities hosted and their participants; and policy change data capture specific policy change campaigns and achievements (table 2). Different strategies fall within each unit of analysis:

- **Demand-side strategies** address the challenges individual homebuyers of color often face through interventions that improve their ability to purchase a home, including DPA, homebuyer counseling, and innovative financial products, such as special purpose credit programs.
- **Supply-side strategies** build, divert, preserve, or create more homes for sale, addressing the lack of inventory by directly expanding the number of housing units, including the construction of new modular homes.
- **Event, training, and outreach strategies** focus on building awareness of homebuying opportunities or capture the training required for solutions, such as housing counseling or certification for a new minority-owned developer. These can be intermediate steps on the pathway to advancing homeownership by building capacity and making connections.
- **Systems change strategies** that make the homebuying system more efficient or that fundamentally change it include expanding diversity of workers in the homebuying ecosystem (e.g., minority-owned developers), policy efforts related to zoning or antidisplacement, and interagency efforts to generate efficiencies in the homebuying process. Although least likely to produce new homeowners of color during WORTH implementation, these efforts are still valuable to track.

TABLE 2

Overview of Unit of Analysis, Inputs, Outputs, and Outcomes Tracked by WORTH Metrics

Reporting level	Key units of analysis	Input	Output	Outcome
Individual	Individuals are those who participate in trainings and build housing units supported by WORTH-funded strategies designed to boost or preserve homeownership among people of color over the 2022–25 grant period.	Characteristics about the person, such as race, gender identity, or current homeownership status	Metrics of the service provided, such as program completion date, loan approval, or amount to closing costs issued	Information on outcomes, such as new credit score, purchase price, or whether foreclosure was prevented
Housing unit	Housing units are those constructed, rehabilitated, reconstructed, or replaced as part of WORTH-supported strategies designed to boost or preserve homeownership for people of color over the grant period.	Characteristics of the housing unit, such as unit type, construction type, or date the permit was issued	Total development cost for the construction, reconstruction, or replacement of the unit	Outcomes related to the unit status and ownership, such as homeowner's race, current homeownership status, or household income
Event, training, or outreach	Periodic events that solicit potential participants. Trainings could include support for potential homeowners (e.g., housing counseling or foreclosure prevention) or certification courses (e.g., realtor licenses and appraisal certifications). Outreach activities could include information tables, social media campaigns, or other dissemination activities. Any of these must be sponsored or implemented by a collaborative member using WORTH funding and must be designed to boost or preserve homeownership for people of color over the grant period.	Information about the event, training, or outreach, such as the event date, number of classes in the training, or the type of outreach	Measure of interaction, such as how many people were referred to services, how many attended the first and last classes, or number of responses received	Measure of steps in the process achieved, such as how many people reached certification or entered a program because of outreach
Policy	Advocacy and other policy change strategies funded under WORTH that are designed to boost or preserve homeownership for people of color over the grant period.	Information about the policy activity, such as information on any materials created, number of meetings with policymakers, or type of media coverage	Measures of policy change, such as an increase in support or whether a policy was changed or enacted	

Source: Urban Institute evaluation materials.

Data collected for each strategy, captured in one of the four broad buckets, spans inputs, outputs, and outcomes. Using DPA as an example, one input data point is when an individual began the housing counseling required to receive the financial support. An output would be whether the individual received the assistance. The outcome is whether the individual purchased a home.

Some metrics were required to be filled in (e.g., race, ethnicity, income, and new homeowner) to align with WORTH initiative goals, while others were optional based on their applicability to the strategy or the collaborative members' capacity to collect and report (e.g., credit scores at baseline and after counseling services) (appendix A). Collaboratives customized their template before the first reporting cycle to identify which metrics they expected to be able to report to Urban.

BOX 3

Challenges with Collecting and Reporting on Race and Ethnicity

The key metric stated as the WORTH initiative's goal is increasing the number of homeowners of color. Collecting racial demographics can be complicated, as people may be wary of sharing their information or because people define their racial identities differently. Urban requested that programs collect information on clients' race and whether they identify as Hispanic. Though we recognize the complexity of racial and ethnic identity, we used the Census Bureau definitions and categories. For race, the options are "White," "Black or African American," "American Indian or Alaska Native," "Asian," "Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander," or "Other (including two or more races)." Hispanic is defined as whether someone is Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin. In some cases, collaboratives returned templates with altered or additional racial or demographic variables, such as collecting "Latino" instead of or in addition to "Hispanic." WORTH clients were not required to report their race, and collaboratives were instructed to explicitly clarify that the racial or ethnic identities that any client selected would not affect their eligibility, treatment, or enrollment in any services.

Each collaborative is tasked with creating and maintaining a consistent unique identifier system that works and that will be internally consistent across years and partners. This way, no personally identifiable information is shared beyond the collaborative, any duplicates across collaborative members can be aggregated to avoid double counting, and activities can be updated. Still, data are submitted to Urban through a secure data transfer system.

Reporting Process

Each collaborative submits data to Urban twice a year, once by January 31, covering the six months ending November 30 the previous year, and once by June 30, covering the six months ending May 31. Additionally, each market must submit an impact report to the Wells Fargo Foundation annually. The official WORTH data are those submitted to Urban.

Each collaborative is responsible for reporting data from all partner organizations' WORTH activities. These data are ideally standardized across all partners, with all partners counting metrics consistently and with the same unique identifier for a given person across services. This provides both challenges and opportunities for innovation. Some collaboratives have hired a new staff member or consultant (individual or organization) to collect and compile data from all the partner organizations, while others use their existing staff members and resources.

Some collaboratives have established a data-sharing infrastructure through effective use of technology, an investment with potential long-term benefits. New York City and Atlanta have each established a cross-organizational tracking and reporting system, or a "hub." Though the specifics and functionalities of these two hubs differ, they are meant to standardize and centralize client information. The collaboratives predict their hubs will ease future WORTH reporting burdens, streamline information sharing beyond the WORTH initiative, and improve client services. Future reporting cycles and qualitative data collection may provide more nuance to our understanding of the use of technology (e.g., hubs or other tools) in data collection and reporting.

The Urban outcome study team supports each collaborative's tracking and reporting through providing definitions, clarification, and individualized data support. In the past year, this has entailed providing data reminders, circulating updates to frequently asked questions, answering individual questions, following up with each collaborative about their specific data after submission, and meeting with data leads or other collaborative members as needed or as requested. Urban's outcome study team works closely with the process study and impact study teams to inform analysis and ongoing work with collaboratives. Data are the result of a collaborative implementation, and the qualitative data Urban collects inform both Urban's strategy for data tracking and our interpretation. Likewise, the data are critical to measuring the impact of the WORTH initiative, of particular strategies, and of individual collaboratives' implementation.

Factors Affecting Implementation Progress

To provide context for WORTH initiative grantees' progress during their first year of implementation, the following sections lay out factors affecting implementation success outside of WORTH, as well as within the structure of WORTH and its evaluation. Dimensions we explore below include the external policy and market influences outside grantees' control on national, state, and local levels; the relational and logistical dynamics associated with establishing and working within a collaborative; the benefits and responsibilities associated with WORTH's funding standards; and the challenges and advantages of collecting data across collaborative members around the shared goal of creating 5,000 homeowners of color in each market.

Market and Policy Environment

To understand the context of the first year of WORTH implementation, we asked collaboratives about factors outside their control at the national, state, and local levels that have stalled progress or provided unexpected opportunities. Themes fell into three categories: national economic trends, housing supply and financing, and unique state and local factors advancing or limiting success.

One key barrier collaboratives discussed was how inflation and rising mortgage interest rates affected home purchases. Inflation increased the costs of producing units for sale and increased home sales prices. This left many prospective homeowners waiting; some backed out because they feared unstable markets, even when they could still afford to go through with the purchase.

Many homebuyers are standing on the sidelines wanting to buy homes.
—WORTH collaborative member

In addition to historically low housing production numbers across the US (Weinstock 2023), collaboratives discussed several market factors contributing to the low inventory of affordable homes for purchase:

- **Lack of small "starter homes."** Local zoning can prohibit construction of modestly sized homes by requiring large lots and home sizes and prohibiting smaller housing types, manufactured or modular housing, or attached homes (e.g., condominiums or townhomes). Facing high construction and permitting costs, developers also often lack any incentive to build affordable starter homes and choose luxury development instead.[9]
- **Presence of investors and cash buyers.** These groups buy up properties before potential WORTH homeowners get a chance to, and they often convert these homes to rental units or tear down and build large, high-cost homes instead. One collaborative member called this a "new form of redlining."
- **Fewer existing homes for sale.** The number of units available for purchase were unseasonably low, as existing homeowners decided not to risk losing their current lower-cost mortgage.

For mission-based nonprofit housing organizations, funding remains inadequate to get the work done. Collaboratives note how general operating support not tied to specific project outcomes is hard to come by and that fees generated by project work are not always enough to cover the costs of the services provided to a potential homebuyer. What is available is often fragmented, requiring multiple sources and partners to complete a single sale. Capital can be costly and competitive, and available resources and programs change constantly as available funds are depleted and programs get shut down.

For potential homebuyers of color, available financing falls short of what is often needed and can be difficult to access. Collaboratives discussed unmet needs for DPA attributable to low local incomes and exceedingly high home purchase prices. Some pointed to the lack of good loan products with low interest rates, including the slow adoption of special purpose credit vehicles by federal agencies and private lenders. Others mentioned the lack of mortgage products for noncitizens and migrant workers. Rural and tribal area collaborative members noted additional issues, including a lack of private lenders and investors that do business on trust lands,[10] a reliance on undercapitalized Native community development financial institutions for lending, and weak relationships between some federal agencies and sovereign tribes.

Despite financing and inventory challenges, several collaboratives reported an increase in state and local government engagement in affordable homeownership issues. Collaboratives formally engaged with local elected leaders to secure individual commitments and new funding to acquire properties and increase the number of homeowners of color. One collaborative won official support for smaller starter home construction on vacant city-owned lots. Another successfully advocated for expanding an existing community land trust that has historically provided affordable homeownership opportunities for households of color.

Most collaboratives continued to face local barriers, however. Several discussed issues with local politics, including prioritizing outside investors over existing residents and local businesses, and a lack of political will around promoting affordable homeownership opportunities, particularly for households of color. But most collaboratives discussed multiple local obstacles to increasing the construction of affordable homes, with more than half describing zoning and land-use and development capacity challenges. They pointed to existing zoning and land-use patterns that maintain residential segregation by preventing construction of smaller homes and at higher densities in specific neighborhoods. Collaboratives also shared how their markets lacked the development savvy needed to increase supply because of a lack of developers with the mission and capacity to do complex deals while capping profits to keep costs affordable. Construction labor force shortages and a lack of innovation in construction methods also slowed development. Fewer collaboratives noted more specific local issues, such as land acquisition challenges, lengthy permitting and inspection timelines, high property tax assessments, and barriers to transferring titles to property heirs. Rural and tribal area WORTH strategies faced additional local barriers, including the physical distance and isolation of rural communities of color, the lack of basic infrastructure (e.g., water and electricity) to support new housing units, and the small number of staff members traveling long distances and filling multiple service roles—from financial literacy and credit reporting or standards to mortgage financing—to support homeownership.

We're going into communities that…may have aging housing stock [and] lack of contractors [and] subcontractors that are needed for building new homes or rehabbing existing housing stock [and that] lack lending institutions [and] real estate agents…. We're starting at a deficit and trying to fill that hole and then get individuals into homes.
—WORTH rural and tribal area collaborative member

Some state environments have also proved challenging for WORTH implementation. Collaboratives discussed their efforts to prevent harmful policies and advance positive policy change. Some states in which collaboratives work have histories of state preemption of local action and have constraints on local revenues (e.g., real estate transfer tax caps or prohibitions on local sales taxes) that could be used to fund affordable homeownership opportunities. One collaborative saw an important state policy change stall: a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act that could propel more renters of color into homeownership. Other states created hostile climates for WORTH implementation, from removing required trainings on how to meet the needs of diverse populations to considering deregulation of exploitative industries, such as payday loans, that strip wealth from households earning low incomes.

Collaboratives

WORTH's structure of having all grantees as collaboratives created identifiable challenges and benefits for accomplishing more extensive outcomes than if the initiative simply granted funds to eight single organizations and potentially more extensive systemic impacts. We observed the benefits and challenges associated with the collaborative structure in the context of the degree of collaboratives' integration and trust and the structure's advantages for promoting peer learning, specialization, agile adaptation, and work distribution.

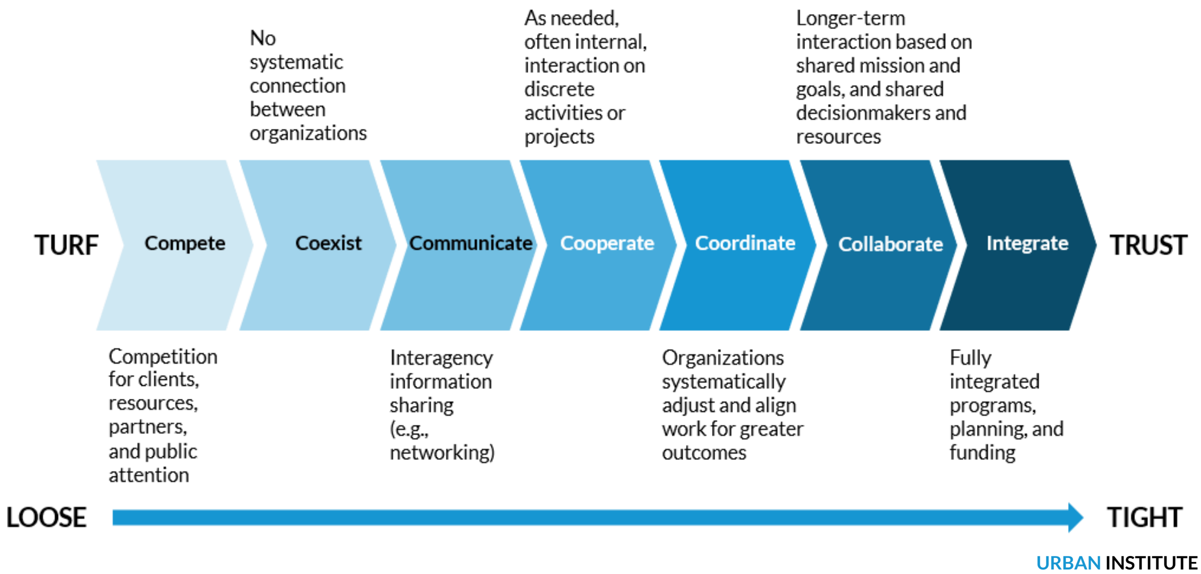
Trust and Integration

WORTH collaborative relationships are strengthened by individual staff member relationships and experiences, formal organizational connections across collaborative members, and organizations with strong community connections. People's individual histories and interpersonal relationships are key to building cohesion, partnerships, and effective strategies. Many collaboratives discussed how building trust was eased by well-seasoned individuals who have been working in the market's housing sector for a while and have preestablished relationships with other individuals.

Most collaborative members have long histories in the field working to support homeownership from various angles for low-income communities or communities of color, but fewer members had deep experience working formally with each other. Some (e.g., San Diego, Philadelphia, and Richmond) had worked mostly in parallel within their markets, while others (e.g., Atlanta, Houston, rural and tribal areas, and New York City) noted having long histories of coordinating together on shared goals or programs, though not always specifically on creating new homeowners of color. For example, the Houston collaborative noted that having a history of collaborating through emergency response initiatives (e.g., the 2008 financial crisis, natural disasters, and the COVID-19 pandemic) had forced them to develop systematic, long-term interaction channels and shared goals. The length of time and intentionality of collaboration may have moved some grantees further along in the collaboration spectrum (figure 2).

FIGURE 2

The Collaboration Spectrum



Source: Adapted from Liz Weaver and Mike Des Jardins, "A Guide for Building a Sustainable and Resilient Collaboration" (Toronto, Canada: Tamarack Institute, 2023).

Collaboratives' level of prior integration, to some extent, may have influenced what they dedicated their funding toward and the kinds of benefits and challenges they saw associated with the WORTH structure. Some earlier-stage collaboratives dedicated funding toward building trust among members with retreats and hiring initial coordination staff members to support new intranetwork information sharing. Some of these collaboratives reported challenges in cohesion, clear lines of communication, priority setting, and decisionmaking, along with the fatigue of the additional work. Meanwhile, later-stage collaboratives dedicated their resources toward building on or expanding existing shared reporting and information-sharing infrastructure. For example, New York City's collaborative hired a Salesforce consultant to formalize and implement the unified monitoring and reporting system to share individuals' homeownership progress data across all collaborative partners—an indication of trust and prior deep work aligning reporting structures, sharing data on beneficiaries, and tracking collective goals. No matter their stage of integration, collaboratives all emphasized WORTH's importance as an opportunity to invest in their integrative infrastructure and build trust.

Beyond trust within members of the collaborative, staff members across most markets noted how individual organizations play important roles in establishing community trust and connections. Lead organizations within the collaboratives play a crucial role in guiding all members through these stages of integration and working out breakdowns in communication or efficacy and in acting as the initiative's key promoter, fiscal agent, and interlocutor between members and community residents. Specific organizations, rather than the collaborative as a whole, have relationships with local residents and potential clients. An organization's local reputation and an organization's function seem to affect how much residents trust them. Organizations providing housing counseling—the success of which relies on face time with clients—may be more likely to build those relationships and community trust.

Collaborative Information Sharing for Peer Learning and Agility

Across most markets, staff members noted how the WORTH initiative's collaborative structure—whether built on existing relationships or with new stakeholders—facilitated information sharing. Specifically, collaborative infrastructure broke down silos in the local industry, created a forum for and practice of peer learning, and fostered agility and diversification through burden sharing and individual organizations' specialization.

In some cases, the collaborative infrastructure has supported a shift, breaking down long-standing silos within local industries and deepening connections. Focus group participants from some collaboratives reflected how internal meetings bring together people and organizations who would not necessarily come together otherwise (e.g., bringing together developers and housing counseling providers) and provide members the opportunity to share updates and learn about relevant upcoming events. In these ways, the collaborative environment provides exposure to different organizations and serves as a space for peer learning. Collaborative meetings are an opportunity to share knowledge, skills, and resources and a platform for collective strategizing and problem solving. Some noted that they have used the forum to discuss common challenges and share successes. Members of the rural and tribal market collaborative noted that rural communities across the country face similar structural barriers and that they support each other by sharing specific information, such as walking each other through the details of accessing federal grant programs.

The opportunity for candid cross-organizational conversation and reflection can also be a generative process, improving strategies and responses to challenges. New York City staff members noted that as they have faced and discussed challenges, the group has been able to reassess their strategies and pivot. They emphasized the importance of regularly reassessing priorities and maintaining agility to shift strategies. Another collaborative member noted that the feedback they receive from partner organizations promotes accountability and strengthens strategy implementation.

Collaboratives with deep histories of working together note how they prioritize an iterative process that is responsive to the experiences and needs of individual partners and the group as a whole.

The collaborative structure strengthens the capacity of individual organizations through crowd-sourced problem solving and peer learning and creates a framework in which the burden is lightened for each individual organization as they rely on each other's knowledge and skills. In some cases, it enables organizations to specialize, devoting themselves to specific programs and building expertise in niche areas while relying on each other to take on other functions. As collaboratives deepen their integration, they focus more on collaborating—each identifying a unique lane that helps and benefits other members of the housing ecosystem—and working on collective problem solving toward their shared goals, rather than competing on shared or overlapping functions. Some staff members noted that the WORTH collaboration has centered or grounded their work together and conversations around the work, clarifying their shared goal and roles.

[WORTH has created] a sense of intentionality within the ecosystem, to work in a way that feels more collaborative and interconnected. Because we all, you know, get very focused on our lane in the bigger picture, and to be in a room on a regular basis, all together, talking about the work that we're doing, and then finding ways to better intersect that work, and maybe even look at the system of the work, and are there ways to not replicate.
—WORTH collaborative member

Funding Structure

Compared with similar grants, the WORTH initiative has a uniquely flexible funding structure. Collaboratives cite the flexibility of the funding and the connection to the Wells Fargo name as critical positives to receiving WORTH dollars. But they also note challenges, namely the inability to adequately address housing supply issues because of the initiative's funding limits and time constraints.

Collaboratives generally found the freedom associated with the Wells Fargo Foundation's grant funding to be helpful. Aside from data reporting requirements and the creation of 5,000 new homeowners of color in their respective markets and the loose guidelines around homeowners of certain area median income categories, there are no mandates attached to WORTH funding.

Collaboratives mentioned that partnering with Wells Fargo helped them prioritize their own goals, and they lauded the funding flexibility. This is especially notable given that other types of funding are often rooted in existing programs or lending opportunities, restricting organizations from innovating and creating new programs. Furthermore, the relaxed area median income guidelines and the ability to dedicate funds to overhead and organizational investments allow collaboratives to target more potential homeowners. By having loosened funding mandates, the WORTH initiative allows collaboratives the freedom to develop new programs and expand their existing work, increasing and diversifying their impact.

Participation in the WORTH initiative—with its flexible funding structure—allows organizations to invest in long-term capacity and system changes, and a partnership with Wells Fargo furthered the collaboratives' mission because of the bank's reputation. Four collaboratives mentioned that Wells Fargo's name recognition increases momentum and buy-in from other sponsors and key stakeholders. One specifically referred to a snowballing effect of receiving this funding, describing the powerful impact Wells Fargo backing has on the ease with which other funds can be accessed.

Despite these positive characteristics, some members noted that WORTH's funding structure did impose limits on the work simply by the amount of funding. In the focus groups, every collaborative mentioned the historical barriers that prevent people of color from owning homes. These barriers are so entrenched in our financial, social, and political systems that the amount of funding (technically just $1,500 per household), while substantial in many regards, is inadequate to address the barriers. Specifically, member organizations pointed to the limited supply of affordable housing as a critical structural challenge that WORTH dollars cannot address; there are insufficient funds for new home development. Collaboratives discussed how their strategies were well positioned to help prepare potential homeowners of color to be "mortgage ready," but available housing stock is scarce, and the allocated funding amount is not enough to build enough housing at the scale necessary. An additional restriction was that every collaborative—regardless of the number of member organizations or the scope of the activities proposed—received the same allocation of funding, which meant that some collaboratives' members were expected to increase their activity and reporting burden without as much of an increase in additional funding as other collaboratives' members.

Evaluation Data Collection

Data collection and standardization is an enormous task for collaboratives, especially ones that are regularly underfunded for their work and do not have research and evaluation staff members.

Collaboratives tackled these challenges and recognized and capitalized on the long-term benefits of data collection by implementing strategies that streamline data collection and storage.

Accepting WORTH funding increases collaboratives' data collection efforts and standardization demand. Each collaborative has a unique process for internal tracking, reporting, and cleaning data across their many partner organizations. Although data collection can be made easier if processes are centralized and streamlined, organizations within collaboratives are understaffed and often do not have enough capacity to meet data requirements. To address this, some collaboratives, such as the one in New York City, hired consultants or staff members whose sole responsibility was to collect and compile data. Other collaboratives struggled under reporting requirements, especially those with less cross-organizational integration and lower per organization resource shares because they were either unprepared or could not afford to share consultants or data experts.

Data collection challenges are strategy dependent. Quantifying the effects of an outreach campaign or policy advocacy is complicated. Counting the number of homeowners helped through a DPA program is more straightforward. Collaborative reporting was also constrained in the first year because some strategies had not yet been implemented or may take time to produce results. Collaboratives that relied on data and information hubs as a strategy needed additional time to build the infrastructure that could produce consistent and complete data on their activities. As a result, data that collaboratives submitted in the second half of the year were more robust than in the first half. And absent a structural change, such as turnover among data leads, we expect data quality to continue to improve.

On top of collaboratives' internal data preparation considerations and efforts, complications arise, given the personal nature of the work. Residents and community members are often reticent to share information, and collaboratives toe a line of collecting information without being extractive. Communities, particularly low-income communities of color, have been subject to research without necessarily receiving any benefits. This leads to data fatigue and can account for skepticism when sharing information. Organizations in Richmond and Milwaukee emphasized how critical it is to build trust with communities, especially when collecting data. Community hesitation must be addressed, and deidentification processes need to be explained to constituents in a way that fosters safety and care. Doing this community outreach requires additional work, which raised another challenge associated with the data collection.

Across the board, collaboratives mentioned a trade-off between data collection and resource provision. Some collaboratives noted that participation in WORTH demands extra data work and that with limited time and resources, on-the-ground tasks get prioritized over data reporting, forcing team members to recalibrate and refocus on accurate data and collection. Others mentioned these rigorous demands compete with their ongoing work differently, with building a robust data infrastructure taking precedence over assisting new homeowners of color and households of color more generally. Involvement in the initiative forces collaboratives to make trade-offs where staff members' time and energy are spent. Technology is increasingly being seen as a solution to this tension.

Benefits of Tracking and Reporting

Despite these reporting challenges, collaboratives did acknowledge several benefits of data tracking, including allowing for long-term monitoring, enabling systems focus, building foundational infrastructure, and fostering a culture of data-centered collaboration. Collaboratives across geographies spoke about the importance of data collection work and recognized its importance in long-term change; New York City, Philadelphia, and San Diego collaboratives are building resource hubs to centralize and store relevant materials for new potential homeowners as one of their strategies to increase homeownership among households of color. These program-level shared measurement systems allow homebuyer coaching agencies and housing producers to submit and store information in a centralized system, increasing transparency and connecting players in the homeownership pipeline. Collaboratives also implemented their solutions in data collection by creating working groups—data leads connected to other key data collection staff members within other organizations—to make decisions and optimize data sharing across organizations within the collaborative. These connections signify an eagerness to engage with and leverage data collection and a deep understanding of its importance moving forward.

Specifically, tracking participants from when they enter a strategy to homeownership can help the Urban evaluation team and the collaborative understand key bottlenecks in strategy implementation and outcomes. For example, an individual may have started housing counseling but never completed the program, and this may explain why they did not become a homeowner. Or a builder may have started construction but never completed it, limiting the number of units for sale. These could point to individual-level interventions or even strategy-wide improvements that collaboratives can make to enhance their success.

A second benefit is the ability to track one or multiple strategies across several of the four broad buckets. This largely results from the fact that the final desired outcome for all strategies is more homeowners of color. For example, a builder may build a home that is tracked as a housing unit strategy, but ultimately, a person of color purchases that home. Or, for more complexity, a builder builds a home that is purchased by an individual using DPA.

Finally, the data template provides the use of unique identifiers to connect multiple WORTH-supported activities. An individual has a unique associated identifier. A housing unit created or acquired has a separate and unique identifier. Using the example in the previous paragraph, by collecting and connecting data using the unique individual and housing unit identifiers, one can see where the WORTH-supported individual purchased a unit built with WORTH funds.

Overall, the requirement to collect and report data encourages collaborative members to pay attention to key metrics intended to help them advance homeownership specifically for communities of color, to integrate their work more closely with one another, and to understand their connections with other members of the homeownership support ecosystem. The data reporting template and supports enable grantees the flexibility to follow the effects of their efforts from information down to closing.

Year One Progress

Data collection is critical to measuring WORTH-supported activities, ultimately aiming toward the goal of 5,000 new homeowners of color created by each collaborative. The burden of data collection falls onto each collaborative for their market before sending the data to the Urban Institute. In turn, Urban cleans and develops systematic datasets for the analysis of WORTH-supported activities. Urban also provides technical assistance in support of collaboratives' data collection efforts.

The sections below quantify the activities achieved under WORTH during year one of implementation. First, the data are used to provide overall results and by race or ethnicity and by program. Second, the data show how these trends vary by each collaborative, highlighting some of the challenges noted earlier in this report. These trends are contextualized with process-level qualitative achievements, followed by a description of how to understand the significance of these findings.

Data Reporting Improvements

Collaboratives demonstrated significant progress in the first year in improving their data collection and reporting. For the second half of the first year (data due June 30, 2023), all eight markets were able to submit their data (table 3). This marked an improvement from the first half of the first year (data due January 31, 2023), when San Diego could not submit data because it was still building capacity. Additionally, several rural and tribal area collaborative members were not yet set up for reporting.

TABLE 3

Number of Collaboratives Reporting

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	ATL	HOU	MIL	NYC	PHI	RIC	R/T	SD	Total
H1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		7
H2	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	8

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee year one reporting data.
Notes: H1 represents the first half of the year, and H2 represents the second half. Four of the six rural and tribal area organizations reported data due January 31, 2023, and all six organizations reported data in the cycle due June 30, 2023. The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego.

Although collaboratives differed in the types of strategies they reported on, they were fairly consistent in reporting on the same strategies over time (table 4). Two exceptions were Atlanta (which reported only on housing unit file in the second round of data because of data capacity challenges in early 2023) and Philadelphia (which added reporting on policy with round two reporting after successfully advocating for citywide program funding in early 2023).

TABLE 4

Number of Collaboratives Reporting, by Strategy

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	ATL	HOU	MIL	NYC	PHI	RIC	R/T[a]	SD	Total
H1 (data due January 31, 2023)									
Individual	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		7
Housing unit	√	√	√				√		4
Events, trainings, outreach		√		√	√		√		4
Policy				√			√		2
H2 (data due June 30, 2023)									
Individual		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	7
Housing unit	√	√	√				√		4
Events, trainings, outreach		√		√	√		√	√	5
Policy				√	√		√		3

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee year one reporting data.

Notes: H1 represents the first half of the year, and H2 represents the second half. The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego.

[a] One of the six rural and tribal organizations reported housing and event training outreach data in H1 and H2, and two organizations reported policy data in H1 and H2.

The number of observations each collaborative collected increased over time (table 5). For example, for individual data, which all collaboratives reported at least once, the number of observations increased from 3,492 in round one data reporting to 9,640 in round two. The number of observations increased for all collaboratives that reported twice, as data collection systems and processes advanced. New York City showed the most growth in the number of observations from only 3 just six months into implementation to 2,473 after one year. This growth most likely reflects the successful development of its shared database to collect and report collaborative data at the end of the initiative's first year. For the markets that also more than doubled their applicants, these trends also suggest that momentum can build.

TABLE 5

Number of Observations in Individual Data

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	ATL	HOU	MIL	NYC	PHI	RIC	R/T	SD	Total
H1	560	583	962	3	229	37	1,118		3,492
H2		758	2,477	2,473	764	604	2,510	51	9,640

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

Notes: H1 represents the first half of the year, and H2 represents the second half. The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego.

Generating New Homeowners of Color

In their pursuit of creating 40,000 new homeowners of color across eight markets, WORTH collaboratives collectively had a slow start in the first year of implementation, creating 2,256 total homeowners of color (table 6). But organizations within these markets have leveraged the WORTH initiative's funding to serve high volumes of low-income borrowers, culminating in 11,546 individuals served and tracked in the data. Although collaboratives are working to expand their data and program capacities, they reported in this first year that 31 percent of the people they served were individuals of color who achieved homeownership.

TABLE 6

Total Homeowners of Color, Overall

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	Eight collaboratives
Total individuals (A)	10,040
New homeowners of color (B)	2,992
Preserved homeowners of color (C)	140
Total homeowners of color (B) + (C)	3,132
Share of total homeowners of color (B) + (C) / (A)	31.2%

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

The number of new, preserved, and total homeowners of color varied by market (table 7). These numbers are affected by market conditions, by how the funds were used, and on successful setup of a collaborative's data reporting infrastructure. Some collaboratives used WORTH funds mostly for housing counseling and provided DPA using other funds, while some collaboratives provided DPA using WORTH funding. Further, some collaboratives reporting lower numbers had only recently established or were still building out their data tracking and reporting capacities, so what they recorded in their first year may undercount the actual number of households of color served.

Adhering to fair housing laws and maintaining existing programming meant that collaboratives' WORTH activities did not solely serve households of color, and the share of new homeowners of color versus total individuals served varied by market (table 7). For example, New York City's collaborative reported higher numbers of individuals served through its WORTH programming, but total homeowners of color made up only 5.5 percent of the large applicant pool. On the other hand, San Diego reported the fewest individuals served and a 94.4 percent share of new homeowners of color because it reported only on program participants who had obtained homeownership by the reporting deadline. How collaboratives chose to report their data affected the initiative-wide shares of new homeowners of color.

TABLE 7

New Homeowners of Color as a Share of Total Individuals Served, by Collaborative

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	ATL	HOU	MIL	NYC	PHI	RIC	R/T	SD
Total individuals (A)	652	1,258	3,157	2,547	764	604	2,510	54
New homeowners of color (B)	71	1,026	300	93	741	483	227	51
Preserved homeowners of color (C)	0	68	0	48	0	0	29	0
Total homeowners of color (B) + (C)	71	1,094	300	141	741	483	256	51
Share total homeowners of color (B) + (C) / (A)	10.9%	86.6%	12.9%	5.5%	97.0%	80.0%	13.9%	94.4%

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

Notes: Only a handful of collaboratives included non-Hispanic white applicants in their data, so that information is excluded here. The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego.

The most frequently proposed and thus most common program grantees used to increase homeownership for people of color was DPA (table 8). About 50 percent of the new homeowners of color created through WORTH received DPA. The other two most commonly mentioned programs were alternative or extending mortgage financing (producing 592 homeowners) and homebuyer counseling (648 homebuyers). Some collaboratives provided information on new homeowners of color in the reports on housing units built, where homeowners of color purchased or preserved homes through new home construction or financing (213 households served) or home repair, reconstruction, or rehabilitation programs (68 households served).

TABLE 8

Total Homeowners of Color, by Program

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

Program	Homeowners of color
Down payment assistance	1,765
Homebuyer counseling	648
Alternative or extended mortgage financing	592
Mortgage credit certificate	169
New home construction or financing	134
Foreclosure prevention	79
Home repair, reconstruction, or rehabilitation	68
Title transfer or resolution	21
Closing cost assistance	8
Total	3,484

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

Note: The total of all participants across all programs is greater than the total number of new homeowners of color because some new homeowners participated in multiple programs.

We found that 90 percent of new homeowners of color were in only one WORTH-funded program, but 10 percent were in two or more programs (table 9). This discovery speaks to the value of organizations sharing tracking methods to understand interplays between their programs and the pathways households of color take to achieve homeownership. These pathways may shift and grow in future implementation years and data reporting.

TABLE 9

Total Homeowners of Color, by Number of Programs

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

Number of programs a homeowner participated in	Number of homeowners	Share of homeowners
1	2,821	90.0%
2	289	9.2%
3	12	0.5%
4	10	0.3%
Total	3,132	100.0%

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

The racial and ethnic composition of new homeowners differed dramatically across markets; the majority of new homeowners of color across the eight collaboratives were Black (1,484) or Latine (1,135) (table 10). Philadelphia (474), Richmond (323), and Houston (313) reported the highest numbers of new Black homebuyers. Houston also reported the highest number of Latine homebuyers and the largest contribution to initiative-level Latine homebuyers (57 percent). The rural and tribal market collaborative reported 88 percent of new American Indian and Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander homeowners, and Native homebuyers composed 22 percent of the rural and tribal area collaborative's homeowners of color.

TABLE 10

New Homeowners of Color, by Collaborative and Race or Ethnicity

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	ATL	HOU	MIL	NYC	PHI	RIC	R/T	SD	Total
Asian	4	30	46	37	23	11			151
Black	60	313	151	29	474	323	102	32	1,484
Latine	7	648	102	25	235	30	72	16	1,135
AIAN/NHPI		2		1	3	1	50		57
Other		8	1	1	6	118	3	3	139
N/A		26							26

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

Notes: AIAN = American Indian or Alaska Native; N/A = not available; NHPI = Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego. For a comparison of each market's homeownership rates with collaboratives' service shares by race and ethnicity, see Michael Neal, Corianne Payton Scally, Jung Hyun Choi, Sonia Torres Rodriguez, Caitlin Young, Lydia Lo, and Peter Tatian, *Wealth Opportunities Realized through Homeownership: Baseline Report* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2023). Caution should be used when drawing conclusions from this comparison, as data collection efforts are still nascent and evolving across markets.

Financial support through the WORTH program can also support strategies targeting homeownership preservation. Several collaboratives are executing strategies such as foreclosure prevention and homeownership maintenance aimed at keeping families in their homes as opposed to boosting new homeowners (table 11). Nevertheless, most WORTH funding has supported the creation of new homeowners of color (table 12). But if housing market conditions remain challenging, home preservation strategies may expand.

TABLE 11

Preserved Homeowners of Color, by Collaborative and Race or Ethnicity

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	HOU	NYC	R/T	Total
Asian	1	3	1	5
Black	40	26	12	78
Latine	21	9		30
AIAN/NHPI			15	15
Other	1	2	1	4
N/A		8		8

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

Notes: AIAN = American Indian or Alaska Native; N/A = not available; NHPI = Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Houston, New York City, and rural and tribal areas. For a comparison of each market's homeownership rates with collaboratives' service shares by race and ethnicity, see Michael Neal, Corianne Payton Scally, Jung Hyun Choi, Sonia Torres Rodriguez, Caitlin Young, Lydia Lo, and Peter Tatian, *Wealth Opportunities Realized through Homeownership: Baseline Report* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2023). Caution should be used when drawing conclusions from this comparison, as data collection efforts are still nascent and evolving across markets.

TABLE 12

Total Homeowners of Color, by Collaborative and Race or Ethnicity

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	ATL	HOU	MIL	NYC	PHI	RIC	R/T	SD	Total
Asian	4	31	46	40	23	11	1		156
Black	60	353	151	55	474	323	114	32	1,562
Latine	7	669	102	34	235	30	72	16	1,165
AIAN/NHPI		2		1	3	1	65		72
Other		8	1	3	6	118	4	3	143
N/A		26		8					34

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

Notes: AIAN = American Indian or Alaska Native; N/A = not available; NHPI = Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego. For a comparison of each market's homeownership rates with collaboratives' service shares by race and ethnicity, see Michael Neal, Corianne Payton Scally, Jung Hyun Choi, Sonia Torres Rodriguez, Caitlin Young, Lydia Lo, and Peter Tatian, *Wealth Opportunities Realized through Homeownership: Baseline Report* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2023). Caution should be used when drawing conclusions from this comparison, as data collection efforts are still nascent and evolving across markets.

Each collaborative incorporated different combinations of strategies to boost homeownership among people of color, broadly incorporating a combination of DPA, alternative or extended mortgage financing, and homebuyer counseling (table 13). Houston most often incorporated DPA (922 of 1,204 observations), while Richmond incorporated more alternative or extended mortgage financing into its programs (483 of 667 observations). Most collaboratives used housing counseling, with 100 percent of Milwaukee's new homebuyers of color and 36 percent of Philadelphia's receiving counseling. The results for Milwaukee may be an understatement because data reported as missing by this collaborative may have occurred under the housing counseling strategy.

In targeting 5,000 new homeowners of color per collaborative, or 40,000 overall homeowners of color, WORTH allows collaboratives to also support homeownership preservation. Programs aimed at preserving homeownership may have been used less frequently than programs focused on helping households achieve homeownership. For example, only the Houston and the rural and tribal market collaboratives collected data on home repair, reconstruction, and rehabilitation, and only the Houston, New York City, and rural and tribal market collaboratives reported activity on foreclosure prevention. Our initial baseline report illustrated that six of the eight collaboratives, including Houston and the rural and tribal markets, had home preservation strategies (Neal et al. 2023). Among the 1,204 total homeowners of color served by the Houston collaborative, 63 (5.7 percent) were in either of these two categories. As market conditions remain challenging, particularly for households of color, and as recession risks remain, some collaboratives may pivot toward strategies focused on homeownership preservation.

TABLE 13

Total Homeowners of Color, by Collaborative and Programs

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

	ATL	HOU	MIL	NYC	PHI	RIC	R/T	SD	Total
Down payment assistance	1	922		74	455	176	102	35	1,765
Homebuyer counseling		19	300	19	265		29	16	648
Alternative or extended mortgage financing						483	109		592
Mortgage credit certificate		169							169
New home construction or financing	71	31					32		134
Foreclosure prevention		29		48			2		79
Home repair, reconstruction, or rehabilitation		34					34		68
Title transfer or resolution					21				21
Closing cost assistance						8			8
Total new homeowners of color[a]	72	1,204	300	141	741	667	308	51	3,484

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

Notes: The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego.

[a] The total of all participants across all programs is greater than the total number of new homeowners of color because some new homeowners participated in multiple programs.

The Atlanta, Houston, Richmond, and rural and tribal area collaboratives reported new homeowners of color who accessed multiple programs (table 14). Twenty-two recipients in the rural and tribal area collaborative used three or more programs to achieve homeownership.

TABLE 14

Total Homeowners of Color, by Collaborative and Number of Programs

WORTH implementation year one, July 2022–June 2023

Number of programs	ATL	HOU	MIL	NYC	PHI	RIC	R/T	SD
1	70	992	300	141	741	299	227	51
2	1	97				184	7	
3							12	
4							10	

Source: Urban Institute analysis of 2022–23 WORTH grantee reporting data.

Note: The abbreviated column headers are as follows: Atlanta, Houston, Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, Richmond, rural and tribal areas, and San Diego.

How Urban Interpreted the Data

Because each collaborative reported their data with different combinations of variables, we addressed the following assumptions when interpreting their data. These practices standardized data reporting across the initiative's eight collaboratives and provided additional context for how we calculated new homeownership among people of color.

First, we counted all new and preserved homeowners of color just once and did not count any preexisting homeowners in our totals. Some collaboratives (e.g., Philadelphia) submitted cumulative first and second rounds of data together in the June 2023 reporting cycle, while others (particularly, the Houston and the rural and tribal market collaboratives) reported only distinct sets of individuals served in each six-month reporting period. We combined the submittals from the December 2022 and June 2023 reporting cycles and removed any duplicates in our combined dataset. After removing duplicate individuals, we filtered out any non-Hispanic white individuals from the combined datasets.

Second, we filtered out observations for preexisting homeowners or those where the participant was marked as both an existing and new homeowner if the strategy employed was not rehabilitation, reconstruction, or a renovation. Although the WORTH initiative also focuses on preserving homeownership, future years' implementation reports will assess each collaborative's longer-term outcomes that preserve homeownership.

Third, a few collaboratives reported clients with intake dates well before the start of the initiative, beginning in 2021. We removed observations with intake dates before the start of the WORTH initiative (April 1, 2022). This helped us count the number of people who became homeowners through the WORTH initiative's support.

Fourth, partners within some collaboratives did not directly flag that an individual of color was a new homeowner in their datasets, making it difficult to interpret who achieved homeownership from these collaboratives. For example, one organization in the rural and tribal market collaborative did not submit data indicating whether the individual of color became a new homeowner. In these cases, we used the geographic and home value information within the homebuyer record to infer who became a new homeowner. Using this method, we calculated that these organizations added approximately 70 new homeowners of color. The cases for which we imputed the homebuyer's race or ethnicity in this way accounted for less than 3 percent of total records.

Fifth, the collaboratives chose different ways to report clients who participated in multiple programs. For example, the Milwaukee collaborative funded housing counseling for clients who received external support, while the rural and tribal market collaborative mentioned all the programs that individuals received in one line. To standardize program reporting across the eight collaboratives, we separated the individuals by the number of programs received in part of our analysis.

We made these assumptions to standardize different reporting decisions across eight collaboratives. More importantly, however, these assumptions ensured that all new homeowners of color were properly counted in our analysis.

Leveraging WORTH to Build Capacity and Momentum

Supporting the creation of new homeowners of color requires significant infrastructure and setup work. Although grantees' efforts may not translate yet into high numbers in the reported outcome data, grantees reported these steps in this first year as some of their most important accomplishments. Their infrastructure and input-level successes included leveraging the WORTH structure for visibility and resources, strengthening and integrating the homeownership network, and setting up program processes and agreements.

Building a collaborative and implementation plan required and helped WORTH grantees develop broader awareness and support for homeownership among communities of color. Grantees reported generating excitement and backing for their cause among city leadership, employers, the real estate industry, developers, and residents. The promise of a multiyear grant gave some collaborative members the legitimacy to have their case for homeownership in communities of color heard, with powerful banks and community development groups saying, "Let's have some conversations about...how we can be working together on homeownership." Meanwhile, the WORTH initiative funds enabled collaboratives to leverage significant resources from other funders. In their implementation proposals, collaboratives reported leveraging their WORTH grant for between $5 million and $187 million in new funds to put toward their strategy implementation. These funds came from state, city, and county grants (many from American Rescue Plan Act funds); large philanthropies and community foundations and community development intermediaries; state housing finance agency commitments; and private investment and in-kind donations. As one grantee noted, "The amount of money that the [funding partners] raised and the amount of money the city...is committing to this is really a game changer."

Beyond funding, collaboratives celebrated their progress and achievements in strengthening and integrating the homeownership network in their markets. Some collaboratives described how WORTH's collaborative structure pushed them to formalize their work together, and others heralded the agreements they reached with members and stakeholders around shared measurement systems and metrics to track their goals. As one member put it, "A lot of this work was being done in the market for a number of years, but what the WORTH initiative has in my mind has done is it's created sort of a sense of intentionality within the ecosystem, to work in a way that feels more collaborative, and interconnected." Part of this formalization has helped collaboratives learn about each other and build trust among members, which in turn has helped members find ways to streamline and coordinate as a system with centralized platforms where everyone can access the same information.

We did not know who was doing what; there were plenty of organizations working on their own on their silos. They were helping the communities, but very few people knew each other or what they were doing.... But as we moved along with this collaborative, I think the biggest achievement is that now there is a network of information sharing; there is free flow of information about what all the agencies are doing. And I take that as a win for the region, because I think this is the first time we have come out of our shells and started to show our information that we kept really dearly and siloed in boxes.
—WORTH collaborative member

With fuller information and representation from all influencing and influenced partners, collaboratives reported effective working sessions getting to the root of problems to design effective advocacy and programs or systems to tackle them. This progress and the processes of aligning forces and identifying problems and responses has also, in various collaboratives, required input from and strengthened connections with key residents and community leaders.

Practically speaking, the collaboratives had several achievements establishing program processes and infrastructure. Grantees reported setting up funding streams—pass-through grantmaking for essential homeownership support services—and creating new products, such as one-stop homeownership information and service coordination websites, credit products, and home acquisition and development programs. Grantees also set up infrastructure to solve data reporting challenges and achieve policy and legal wins. An essential element each collaborative mentioned was coordinating marketing and messaging to publicize both the initiative and the programs that compose it for each collaborative. To carry out all this work, collaboratives had to hire staff members, which is another significant achievement for their first year of work. New staff members across the collaboratives brought community relations, intercollaborative communication, data reporting coordination, project management, legal and financial assistance, and development expertise to the collaboratives.

In terms of solutions addressing data collection and reporting infrastructure challenges, collaboratives implemented several of their own solutions, and Urban developed others. For example, collaboratives began discussing challenges among each other in search of answers to help practice and building technological hubs to facilitate data sharing across partners. They also began to include requirements for necessary data on fields, such as race and ethnicity, in contracts with partners, which ensured that all partners collect important data for important fields.

To help with problem solving, Urban provided and updated a frequently asked questions document for collaboratives to consult as they collected their data (appendix C). The document provided answers to foundational questions, such as how to identify a new homeowner of color. It also included questions posed by specific collaboratives and answers to those questions. Urban also provided technical assistance to collaboratives, meeting with each of them twice over the year to tailor a data template that met their capacity and Urban’s needs. Urban also reviewed data submissions from activity over the first half of the first year, offering feedback on the data collection. And Urban plans to continue providing technical assistance over the duration of the project. Taken together, these advances promise a smoother experience and hopefully reduced burden for collaboratives collecting data and tracking outcomes going forward.

In terms of legal wins, the collaboratives figured out how to structure their partnerships and their programs such that they fit within fair housing standards, and they changed essential policies that enabled grantees to access more funding and improve their ability to help people of color achieve homeownership. For example, the rural and tribal market collaborative leveraged discrepancies between members' access to federal funds to advocate for and achieve changes in US Department of Agriculture and Federal Housing Finance Agency policies.

Key Lessons from Year One

The challenges to homeownership for communities of color, strategies that grantees have adopted, the structure of the different collaboratives, funding targets and structure, and outcome reporting requirements provide a motivating and supportive but absorbing and difficult pathway for grantees to navigate over the course of their implementation. To date, WORTH implementation has been foundational in breaking down silos across collaborative members and programs and has inspired investments in collaborative infrastructure to expand capacity and improve efficiency, including leveraging technology for tracking services and outcomes. WORTH-supported programs are addressing critical challenges to increasing the number of new homeowners of color, such as awareness, access, and financing. This study is also laying bare more complicated obstacles, including upstream systems adverse to change, the difficulties of building effective collaborations for implementation, and the hard work of standardizing and systematizing tracking across multiple partners and programs. Taken together, the background achievements collaboratives noted laid the foundation for their programs to document and increase the number of homes and homeowners of color they will help create in the coming years.

Aligning Strategies to Tackle Barriers and Change Systems

Tackling historic barriers to help households of color achieve homeownership requires changing the systems that perpetuate them, including the people, policies, processes, programs, and political environments that shape access to homeownership (Scally et al. 2020). Dismantling these barriers requires concerted efforts to target policies, practices, resource flows, power dynamics, relationships, and mindsets that stand in the way of equitable opportunities for these families (Kania, Kramer and Senge 2018). The strategies and structures collaboratives are advancing with WORTH funding seek to balance the drive for long-term systemic change with potential homebuyers' immediate needs in their markets and the realities of short-term funding to meet a prescribed target.

To target mortgage-ready households needing a discrete boost to cross over the homebuying threshold, collaboratives are increasing access to financial resources. This includes making home purchases more affordable through special purpose credit vehicles and expanded DPA dollar amounts and eligibility thresholds. Collaboratives are also expanding the pool of mortgage-ready households through homeownership counseling and education. These strategies are most likely to move households of color into homeownership in the WORTH initiatives where resources are the key obstacle.

Fewer collaboratives are tackling supply issues, and those that are use a wide array of approaches tailored to their markets. These often include creating new processes and programs where little to no capacity existed before WORTH, ranging from acquisition and rehabilitation of existing single-family homes, to creating new modular housing construction facilities, to training up new developers of color. These are longer-term strategies that often require advocacy to change policies and processes for accessing vacant land, securing tenants the right to purchase existing buildings, or modifying zoning and land-use regulations. Supply-side strategies may also call for developing new skills around how to beat out real estate investors on existing home purchases or how to provide training and capacity building around development and construction. Although critical to homeownership for households of color and households with modest financial means, these strategies take time to produce new affordable units for purchase, which may not materialize until after the WORTH initiative has ended.[11]

Although many collaboratives are strengthening their internal relationships, it is harder to build rapport with other local actors within the housing industry. Internally, many collaboratives are exploring new ways to work together; some are coordinating for the first time. They are creating a durable infrastructure for collaboration in the future around advancing homeownership for households of color. But the financial disincentives to work with homeowners who may need more assistance to get to the closing table and the underrepresentation of people of color in the housing industry can lead to weak working relationships with local loan officers, appraisers, and realtors (Neal and Walsh 2023). Although WORTH collaboratives acknowledge these barriers, most of them do not yet have strong strategies in place to strengthen connections and communication with these key gatekeepers to homeownership.

The most challenging areas of change for WORTH collaboratives remain policy and market conditions. Policies driving access to mortgages have historically created a two-tier system of access that persists today (Immergluck 2009).[12] Collaboratives discussed the continued difficulties of connecting potential homebuyers to affordable mortgages and their dismay at needing new credit products to meet borrowers' needs. Locally, collaboratives shared several policy obstacles to increasing the supply of affordable starter homes, with few experiencing success in winning needed changes. And market conditions—with high inflation and interest rates nationally, as well as various unique local challenges, such as investor acquisitions—are challenging to influence with local action. Amid market challenges, some collaboratives may consider shifting their focus to homeownership preservation or may settle with homeownership readiness, even if that does not end with a home purchase.

Collaboratives rarely focus on more upstream challenges to homeownership, most likely because these are unlikely to yield new homeowners during the WORTH implementation period, and they may extend beyond the mission or expertise of collaborative members. A key component of housing affordability is income. Only a couple collaboratives discussed work to boost incomes through policy advocacy, business and workforce development, or other means as a part of their WORTH funding. Creating homeowners also requires mortgage-ready renters, which may extend beyond providing homeownership education and counseling to reforming local rental systems and engaging with landlords, so they are not extracting wealth from renters of color but giving households a chance to build savings toward homeownership. Finally, changing systems holding back potential homeowners of color means shifting public opinion around the value of and need to explicitly invest in equitable homeownership. Although collaboratives pointed to this problem and see themselves as part of the solution, most are not engaging in the types of public education campaigns to combat myths and generate support around local changes in policies, practices, or resources to support homeowners of color.

Amid challenging market conditions, the possibility for misalignment between strategies and household need is heightened. Individual financial strategies such as DPA, special purpose credit vehicles, or housing counseling can help lower housing costs but are primarily tailored to addressing the lack of financial resources or the inability to qualify for a mortgage, critical structural challenges. But today's high interest rates raise the need for considering strategies such as permanent interest rate buydowns that can further reduce costs and boost affordability.[13] This example illustrates how strategies to stem low homeownership rates for people of color must be robust to sudden shocks.

Building Collaborative Trust and Infrastructure

Collaboratives have invested time and energy in building trust, developing rhythms of communication, hiring staff members, coordinating work based on cooperation principles, strengthening accountability, and constructing a data-sharing and reporting infrastructure. Working toward a shared goal with systematic knowledge sharing across members and collective innovation has deepened partnerships and strengthened local ecosystems supporting homeownership. In some cases, individual core collaborative members have significantly changed or strengthened their homeownership-focused programs and advocacy efforts because of collective learning and implementation with their partners.

As trust and relationships between staff members and organizations deepen within the homeownership ecosystem and broaden to address other local needs, these advances in collaboration are likely to persist beyond WORTH implementation.

Some of this work has already paid off, as collaborative members shared collective achievements in support of creating new homeowners of color, including new federal and local advocacy efforts, expanded services for potential homeowners, and new programs to increase housing supply and access to credit. Much of this work was facilitated by flexible WORTH funding that created space for peer learning and innovation. Many also noted how their collective effort has already leveraged additional resources to support homeowners of color and garnered growing local political support.

These wins have not come without growing pains. Many collaboratives faced challenges in this first year hiring staff members for specific program areas or to lead data collection and reporting. Some also mentioned difficulties in integrating their WORTH programming and evaluation activities into their other many daily activities. In some cases, this resulted in too many meetings, while in others, collaborative members said they experienced less communication and coordination than they would like. Similarly, some collaboratives saw the data tracking and reporting infrastructure needed for WORTH evaluation as detracting from their ability to provide direct supports for potential homeowners, while others embraced it as an opportunity to share data more systematically and sustainably between partners for WORTH and beyond. As implementation moves into year two, collaboratives will continue to find new ways of addressing these challenges together.

Achieving and Documenting Outcomes

WORTH funding is supporting the broader ecosystem. With WORTH support, households of color are becoming homeowners. And this has been achieved during a trying time economically for homebuying and legally for implementing programs meant to address historic disparities households of color experience. In addition, grantees are improving their data collection, developing unique data to narrate the challenges and successes of boosting homeownership among households of color. As a result, data collection has also sparked innovations, including the creation of technology databases by several grantees.

But the data provided have not completely covered all the strategies each collaborative has articulated. And most program participants have not yet become homeowners. Weak economic and housing market conditions have hampered home sales and may be preventing some participants from buying homes.

Over the course of the project, Urban will continue to collect and report on data describing overarching outcomes and outcomes for specific markets or strategies. And where needed, Urban will provide technical assistance to support continued data collection. Along with annual implementation reports that continue to monitor and update findings related to progress and contributing factors, Urban's activity will culminate with a summative outcome report that will quantify the relationship between WORTH outcomes and market outcomes around homeownership for people of color. Additionally, Urban will publish a report on the impact of one type of program supported by WORTH—such as DPA, new home construction, or title transfer and resolution—on the change in the number of homeowners of color.

Recommendations to Accelerate Progress

Though collaboratives have put forth immense effort and achieved significant progress in creating greater homeownership access for people of color, our evaluation uncovered numerous areas where existing systems (i.e., policies, practices, resource flows, network relationships, power dynamics, and expectations) are inhibiting them from making deeper, larger, and longer-lasting change. Below, we describe the commitments grantees said they needed from other stakeholders—often with substantial power and influence—to achieve more. We end with observations about additional positive supports that could boost outcomes of the WORTH initiative and beyond.

Additional Commitments Collaboratives Say Would Help

During focus groups with collaborative members, we asked what additional commitments or supports from other key stakeholders would help them boost homeownership in communities of color. Their responses ranged widely, with grantees noting they lacked crucial commitments from numerous types of actors, including government officials (state, local, and federal), financial institutions, local employers and housing industry professionals, philanthropists, and the Wells Fargo Foundation specifically.

Government

Collaboratives generally desired more even, widespread, integrated, and real (i.e., funded) commitments to advancing homeownership in communities of color from government officials at all levels. At the state level, grantees reported wanting policymakers to pass bills that

- support homeownership through statewide DPA programs for members of communities who have particularly low homeownership rates,
- regulate landlord discrimination and extractive rents,
- allow local municipality revenue generation to support local housing affordability, and
- rein in excessive real estate investment firms' buy-up of affordable homes.

The federal government, collaboratives noted, also could support homeownership for communities of color by creating low-income housing tax credits for homeownership opportunities and increasing funding support for community development financial institutions. Some also suggested the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau pay more attention to consumer protections for predatory lending and other wealth-stripping practices that disproportionately affect communities of color.

Collaboratives had multiple requests for local government policymakers, though most centered on increasing the supply of affordable housing. Desired actions included

- subsidizing affordable home construction,
- offering zoning or tax incentives for developers to build affordable housing,
- using tax increments from inflation and property appreciation to finance more affordable homeownership creation and preservation subsidies for new or existing homeowners of color,
- loosening zoning to allow for a wider range of housing types, and
- repurposing vacant or abandoned city property as set-asides for affordable homeownership development.

We can have all of the money, but if there's nowhere for [potential homeowners] to go with their money, it's null and void, and there isn't any inventory for them to buy.
—WORTH collaborative member

These recommendations also came with a desire for shifts in local government culture to change opinions about affordable housing as rental housing only and where suburban city leaders would take responsibility for creating affordable homeownership opportunities at an equal rate with their central cities. One grantee's said, "Having more government leaders treating affordable housing as a priority, because [our core city] is doing it, but we need everyone in the region to kind of be on the same page and walk together and coordinate together."

Financial Institutions

When it came to financial institutions, collaboratives' needs covered the full array of activities related to mortgages, including secondary mortgage purchasing practices, bank investment practices, DPA coordination and incentives, and reducing the homeownership gap. A couple collaboratives raised a desire for legislators to ask more of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae to encourage homeownership for communities of color, such as creating special purpose credit programs targeting communities with low homeownership rates, originating or purchasing mortgages from tribal-serving institutions, and creating culturally conscious agreements with community development financial institutions. But one collaborative noted that "even though Fannie and Freddie have made products available to help first-time homebuyers, the big banks do not touch them." This comment aligns with data and with other collaboratives' observations that large banks do not align their institutional investment practices with their Community Reinvestment Act philanthropic priorities (Goodman et al. 2023). They noted that large banks do not often offer any of their own DPA products or nonpredatory, low-harm credit products, and their mortgage agents rarely have incentives to accept or recommend subsidized mortgage products or DPA products. Two collaboratives noted that most of the funding for their work comes from banks, but they also noted that "the amount that banks contribute to nonprofits like ours has significantly decreased over time." Overall, collaboratives indicated that banks' current funding allocations seem to prop up the existing homeownership gap and that they need to shift their day-to-day investment patterns to change homeownership rates in communities of color.

Local Employers and Housing Industry Groups

Collaboratives raised innovative recommendations of commitments from traditionally excluded but key players in the homeownership pipeline, namely large local employers (e.g., anchor institutions) and members of the real estate and development industry. From employers, collaboratives raised the need for more employers to become aware of their local homeownership gaps and to engage with collaboratives in identifying or creating programs to support homeownership for their employees of color. Such programs might include partnerships with local governments to create workforce housing and homeownership programs. For real estate professionals, collaboratives expressed a desire for them to increase the diversity in their staffing as well as competency and bias awareness training and for local governments to create oversight over real estate agent and appraisal transactions.

Philanthropy

Collaboratives called out the unique role that foundations and other philanthropic ventures can fill in improving the homeownership gap. Given the lack of investors willing to forgo maximum profit, philanthropies have an advantage in investing in and subsidizing key homeownership-focused services that the market will not approach, such as predevelopment investment, credit repair, and affordable housing gap financing. These types of investments also require philanthropies to plan longer engagements (e.g., five years or more) and to plan for and support organizations' funding transitions to other philanthropic or market-based support at the end of initiatives. Additionally, many collaboratives pointed to the worsening investment climate and encouraged philanthropies to invest in general operating funds for organizations already doing good work, not just production. And, similar to financial institutions, collaboratives noted the enormous potential of philanthropies aligning their philanthropic and endowment investment patterns with collaboratives' housing priorities.

For the Wells Fargo Foundation in particular, collaboratives generally requested additional support for peer learning and for their activities in managing data collection on top of expensive services, which the foundation has already implemented beginning in the second year of the initiative. As collaboratives spoke about WORTH in the context of broader national economic trends, local policy constraints, and the widespread lack of affordable homeownership opportunities, they noted that $7.5 million, though a significant investment, would not close the ever-widening gap between prices and incomes or address the increasing supply shortages. For these reasons, grantees' central hope was that their outcomes would be appreciated in context.

Boosting Initiative Progress

Near-term responses to findings that could be executed during the WORTH initiative include the following:

- **Expand opportunities for peer learning around collaborative challenges and successes so far.** In response to early findings on collaborative members' desire to connect more and exchange ideas and questions, Urban has been awarded additional funding from the Wells Fargo Foundation to facilitate quarterly peer learning opportunities and a listserv to promote ongoing learning and sharing across collaboratives.
- **Increase technical assistance on data collection and reporting.** Collaboratives asked for more assistance, and the Wells Fargo Foundation has already responded by expanding the scope of support offered by Urban for the remaining implementation period. This includes implementing an information-sharing listserv across collaboratives facilitated by the Urban team, hosting quarterly peer learning calls, and providing more extensive feedback and technical assistance to each collaborative on their data reporting challenges.

- **Respond to changing market conditions**. With mortgages and affordable homes more difficult to access than when WORTH launched, collaboratives are concerned about their ability to create 5,000 new homeowners. Some collaboratives are also more concerned about preserving existing homeowners than they were when they applied for the WORTH initiative.

Reaching More Homeowners beyond WORTH

Longer-term considerations that would require either significant restructuring of WORTH or implementation through the next generation of initiatives to support the creation of new homeowners of color include the following:

- **More engagement with local housing industry professionals**. Collaborative members, structures, and strategies were not dictated, and extensive partnerships were encouraged, but most collaboratives did not prioritize working with their local mortgage lending, appraisal, and real estate professionals. But these professionals are almost as important to accessing affordable homeownership as boosting a household's financial resources through DPA.
- **More supply-side support.** Collaboratives discussed the high costs of building new homes to sell at affordable prices and the trade-offs within their WORTH budgets of investing in home construction versus buyer preparation through counseling, DPA, and affordable home purchase mortgages. To increase affordable supply to the levels needed in all markets requires significant capital and local zoning and land-use changes.
- **Better incentives for targeting systems change.** Flexible funding is useful, but the goal of creating a fixed number of homeowners—regardless of market size, the number of mortgage-ready households of color, or the current supply of affordable homes for purchase—has focused efforts on using the money to put people into homes now rather than invest in longer-term strategies to change systems that could yield even more homeowners over time.

What WORTH is doing is great, but it alone does not address the larger picture that then feeds into homeownership among BIPOC communities…. It is a system-wide need that homeownership is just a small part of, and so we have to look at how can we tie all those resources together and not just work in silos.
—WORTH collaborative member

Appendix A. Data Dictionary for Reporting Templates

Color Key - shown in the indicator templates		
	Required indicator for strategy tracking - needed to measure core program and WORTH initiative outcomes	
	Optional indicator for strategy tracking - grantees expressed interest in tracking these metrics to give a more comprehensive view of progress, but they are not required to measure core program and WORTH initiative outcomes	
	Indicator not applicable to strategy - the indicator (column) is not applicable to this strategy (row) but is applicable to other rows/strategies	
Key Terms		
Individual	Individuals that participate in trainings and build housing units supported by WORTH-funded strategies designed to boost or preserve BIPOC homeownership over the 2022-2025 grant period.	
Development Organizations	Organizations that participate in trainings and build housing units supported by WORTH-funded strategies designed to boost or preserve BIPOC homeownership over the 2022-2025 grant period.	
Housing units	Housing units constructed, rehabilitated, reconstructed or replaced as part of WORTH-supported strategies designed to boost or preserve BIPOC homeownership over the 2022-2025 grant period.	
Events	Periodic events that solicit potential participants, are supported by a Collaboratives using WORTH funding and are designed to boost or preserve BIPOC homeownership over the 2022-2025 grant period.	

Trainings	Trainings (e.g. housing counseling, foreclosure prevention, etc.) or certification courses (e.g. realtor licenses, appraisal certifications, etc.) sponsored by Collaboratives and supported by the WORTH initiative that are designed to boost or preserve BIPOC homeownership over the 2022-2025 grant period.	
Outreach	Outreach activities (information tables, social media campaigns and other dissemination activities) by a Collaboratives using WORTH funding and are designed to boost or preserve BIPOC homeownership over the 2022-2025 grant period.	
Policy and Systems Change	Various advocacy and other policy-change strategies funded under WORTH that are designed to boost or preserve BIPOC homeownership over the 2022-2025 grant period.	

SHEET: INDIVIDUAL

Field Section	**Field name**	**Description**
Program	Down payment assistance	Any program connecting or providing potential homebuyers with funds to cover down payments or closing costs
	Homebuyer counseling	Any educational or interpersonal program that provides individuals with counseling on seeking, financing, maintaining, renting, or owning a home.
	Education/outreach campaign	Any program that produces and disseminates materials to advance individuals' understanding of the following: preparing for homeownership, budgeting and credit management, financing a home, the loan process and timing, selecting a home, maintaining a home and finances, and avoiding delinquency and foreclosure.
	Alternative/extended mortgage financing	Any program that augments or alters credit ratings or financing supports to enable families to qualify for a mortgage
	Community land trust/land bank	Any program that establishes or supports community land trusts/land banks in acquiring and leasing/selling permanently affordable housing units
	Expand investment to BIPOC builders/developers	Programs that channel funding, TA, or policy support to housing construction/development businesses with at least a 50% BIPOC ownership stake.
	New unit construction/financing	Programs that leverage funds, build connections, or change policies in order to increase construction/rehabilitation of housing units
	Title transfer/resolution	Programs that resolve home title/ownership disagreements or formalize home ownership

	Foreclosure prevention	Programs that provide funding and/or credit/housing counseling that enables homeowners to avoid foreclosure
	Home replacement or reconstruction	Programs that rehabilitate or rebuild homes that were [in danger of becoming] uninhabitable.
	New real estate agents	Programs that educate and train BIPOC individuals to become real estate agents
	New appraisers	Programs that educate and train BIPOC individuals to become real estate appraisers
Identifiers	Unique individual identifier	A number that uniquely identifies an individual WORTH program participant. This should not include any personally identifiable information such as Social Security Number.
	Unique development organization identifier	A number that uniquely identifies a development organization that received training and technical assistance to increase housing production through WORTH funding or programming
Characteristics of individual served	Race	Race as defined by the Census: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, or Other (including two or more races)
	Hispanic?	[Yes/No/Unknown] Yes if the individual is of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
	Gender identity	Enter Male, Female, Non-binary, or Other
	Current zip code	Zipcode for the address where the individual CURRENTLY lives (not the zipcode of the future home they are purchasing/moving to)
	Current FIPS code	FIPS code for state, county and census tract where the individual is CURRENTLY living
	Year of birth	Individual's year of birth
	Existing homeowner?	[Yes/No] Yes if the individual being served is currently a homeowner (only complete for reconstruction/replacement strategies)
	First-generation buyer or owner?	[Yes/No/Unknown] Yes if the individual is someone whose parents or guardian never owned a home during the individual's lifetime or lost the home to a foreclosure or short sale and does not own a home now. Anyone who lived in foster care also qualifies as a first-generation home buyer.
	Primary language spoken at home	Primary language spoken at home.
	Household Income	Household income for the most recent calendar year. Reported for individuals living in the household that are 15 years of age or older and includes income from the following sources: wages, salaries, commissions, bonuses or tips from all jobs, self employment income, interest, dividends, net rental income, royalty income, income from estates, social security, railroad retirement, supplemental security income, public assistance or welfare payments from the state or local welfare office, retirement income, pensions or survivor or disability income, or any other income

		(e.g. veterans payments or unemployment compensation). This reflects the Census definition of annual income.
	Baseline debt-to income percentage	The individual's total annual debt payments as a percentage of annual income when they enter the program
	Baseline credit score	The individual's credit score when they enter the program [Externally-measured number from 300 to 850 that depicts a consumer's creditworthiness.]
	Co-borrower unique individual identifier	A number that uniquely identifies an individual co-borrower with another WORTH program participant. Please input "N/A", not applicable, if there is no co-borrower. The co-borrower should be assigned their own confidential individual identifier and tracked separately across all relevant metrics.
	Intake application received	Date the individual applied to enter WORTH programming
	Program start date	Date the program begins for the individual
	Unique Event Identifier	If the individual or organization entered due to an event under Events, Training, Outreach it can be put here. This helps the Collaborative connect the WORTH-support assistance with the outreach that led to the individual or organization requesting, attending or completing that training
	Unique Outreach Identifier	If the individual or organization entered due to an outreach under Events, Training, Outreach it can be put here. This helps the Collaborative connect the WORTH-support assistance with the outreach that led to the individual or organization requesting, attending or completing that training
	Unique Training Identifier	If the training was captured under Events, Training, Outreach it can be put here. This helps the Collaborative connect the WORTH-support assistance with the training to the number of people or organizations that request, attended and completed that training
Outputs	Program Completion Date	Enter date of program completion for individual
	Loan approval?	[Yes/No/Not Applicable] Yes if a loan application by the individual was approved
	Amount of down payment or closing costs issued	How many dollars the individual (and co-borrower) received from any program to put toward down-payments or closing costs
Outcomes	New credit score	Individual's credit score after participating in WORTH programming
	New debt-to-income percentage	Individuals debt-to-income percentage after participating in WORTH programming. See "Baseline debt-to-income percentage" for a methodology to calculate it.
	New mortgage pre-approval?	[Yes/No/Not Applicable] Yes if the individual becomes pre-qualified for a mortgage
	Zip code of home purchased	Zipcode for the address of the individual's purchased home, or Not Applicable if no home purchased

	FIPS code of home purchased	FIPS code for state, county and census tract where the individual is currently living, or Not Applicable if no home purchased
	Purchase price	The amount of money that a seller received in exchange for the home the individual (and co-borrower) purchased
	Foreclosure prevented?	[Yes/No/Not Applicable] Yes if the individual who received foreclosure prevention support avoided foreclosure [within the WORTH program timeline]
	Title transferred?	[Yes/No/Not Applicable] Yes if the individual who previously held unclear title over their home of residence now owns the deed to the property
	Zip code of home preserved	Zipcode for the address of the home the WORTH program rehabilitated or replaced, or Not Applicable if no home preserved
	FIPS code of home preserved	FIPS code for state, county and census tract where the individual is currently living, or Not Applicable if no home preserved
WORTH initiative Outcomes	New BIPOC homeowner	See BIPOC homeowner definition sheet
	WORTH Housing Unit ID purchased	[If the unit purchased was constructed, rehabilitated, reconstructed or replaced due to WORTH funding]: The unique identifying number of the unit

SHEET: HOUSING UNITS

Field Section	Field name	Description
Identifiers	Unique housing unit identifier	A number that uniquely identifies a housing unit that was constructed, rehabilitated, reconstructed or replaced due to WORTH funding or WORTH intervention
	Unique building identifier	A number that uniquely identifies a housing unit that was constructed, rehabilitated, reconstructed or replaced due to WORTH funding or WORTH intervention. This is used to tie units in multifamily buildings together. Each unit in a multifamily building may have a different unique housing unit identifier but the same building identifier
	Unique development organization identifier	A number that uniquely identifies a development organization that received training and technical assistance to increase housing production through WORTH funding or programming
Program	Expand investment to BIPOC builders/developers	Programs that channel funding, TA, or policy support to BIPOC-owned housing construction/development businesses
	New unit construction/financing	Programs that leverage funds, build connections, or change policies in order to increase construction/rehabilitation of housing units
	CDC capacity building	Any program that channels funding, TA, or policy support to community development corporations with the end goal of constructing/rehabilitating affordable housing units

	Home replacement or reconstruction	Programs that leverage funds, build connections, or change policies in order to increase replacement & reconstruction of uninhabitable housing units
Inputs	Obtain the site or property?	[Yes/No/Not Applicable] Yes indicates that site ownership has been obtained, including land purchase or building acquisition , with assistance of the WORTH initiative
	Construction type	Enter one choice: new construction, reconstruction or replacement
	Construction financing secured?	[Yes/No/Not Applicable] Yes indicates that financing for unit construction was secured with assistance of the WORTH initiative
	Date permit issued	Date building permit issued approving unit construction, reconstruction or replacement
	Date of construction start	Date construction, rehabilitation or replacement began
	Unit* type	Enter one choice: single family, duplex, Garden Multifamily (3-4 units), Small Multifamily (5-50 units), Large Multifamily (51+ units), ADU or Modular. *Unit refers to any unit, whether a single family home or a condo in a large multifamily building.
	Home built by BIPOC builder or developer?	[Yes/No/Don't Know] Yes indicates that the unit was constructed by a BIPOC-owned construction and/or development business
	Zip code of unit location	Zip code in which the new, reconstructed, or replaced unit is located
	FIPS code of unit location	FIPS code for state, county and census tract in which the new, reconstructed, or replaced unit is located
Outputs	Total development cost ($)	Total development cost for the construction, reconstruction or replacement of the unit
Outcomes	Date certificate of occupancy obtained	Date certificate of occupancy issued by local government
	Date replacement or rehabilitation completed	Date on which unit replacement or rehabilitation is completed
	Date of sale to homebuyer	Date ownership begins as verified by deed or title to the property
	Unique individual identifier	[If individual or organization is being tracked through WORTH]: The unique individual identifier of the person served by WORTH programming who has purchased the home, or Not Applicable is the borrower is not receiving other WORTH services
	Co-borrower unique individual identifier	A number that uniquely identifies an individual co-borrower with another WORTH program participant. Please input Not Applicable if there is no co-borrower or the co-borrower is not receiving other WORTH services
	Race	[If the individual did not receive WORTH services]: Race as defined by the Census: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, or Other (including two or more races)
	Hispanic identity?	[If the individual did not receive WORTH services]: [Yes/No] A binary for whether a person is of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

	Existing homeowner?	[If the individual did not receive WORTH services]: [Yes/No] A binary variable indicating whether the individual being served is currently a homeowner
	Co-borrower race	[If the co-borrower did not receive WORTH services]: Race as defined by the Census: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, or Other (including two or more races)
	Co-borrower Hispanic identity?	[If the co-borrower did not receive WORTH services]: [Yes/No] A binary for whether a person is of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
	Co-borrower existing homeowner?	[If the individual did not receive WORTH services]: [Yes/No] A binary variable indicating whether the co-borrower being served is currently a homeowner
	Household Income	[If the individual did not receive WORTH services]: Household income for the most recent calendar year. Reported for individuals living in the household that are 15 years of age or older and includes income from the following sources: wages, salaries, commissions, bonuses or tips from all jobs, self employment income, interest, dividends, net rental income, royalty income, income from estates, social security, railroad retirement, supplemental security income, public assistance or welfare payments from the state or local welfare office, retirement income, pensions or survivor or disability income, or any other income (e.g. veterans payments or unemployment compensation). This reflects the Census definition of annual income.
WORTH initiative Outcomes	New BIPOC homeowner	[If the individual(s) did not receive WORTH services]: See BIPOC homeowner definition sheet
	Purchase price	[If the individual(s) did not receive WORTH services]: The amount of money that a seller received in exchange for the home the individual (and co-borrower) purchased

SHEET: EVENTS, TRAINING, AND OUTREACH

Field Section	Field name	Description
Program	Homebuyer counseling for down payment assistance	Any program using housing counseling services to connect potential homebuyers with funds to cover down payments or closing costs
	Homebuyer counseling for other reasons (eg credit repair)	Any educational or interpersonal program that provides individuals with counseling on seeking, financing, maintaining, renting, or owning a home.
	Education/outreach campaign	Any program that produces and disseminates materials to advance individuals' understanding of the following: preparing for homeownership, budgeting and credit management, financing a home, the loan process and timing, selecting a home, maintaining a home and finances, and avoiding delinquency and foreclosure.

	CDC capacity building	Any program that channels funding, TA, or policy support to community development corporations with the end goal of constructing/rehabilitating affordable housing units
	Expand investment to BIPOC builders/developers	Programs that channel funding, TA, or policy support to BIPOC-owned housing construction/development businesses
	New Realtors	Any program dedicated to the training and certification of new BIPOC realtors
	New Appraisers	Any program dedicated to the training and certification of new BIPOC appraisers
	Foreclosure prevention	Programs that provide funding and/or credit/housing counseling that enables homeowners to avoid foreclosure
Identifier - Event	Unique Event Identifier	[event] A number that uniquely identifies a training that was held due to WORTH programming
Input - Event	Date event held	[event] Date the event was held
	Number of participants	[event] Number of participants who attended the event
Output - Event	Number of referrals	[event] Number of event attendees who were referred to/connect with other homeownership services
Identifier - Training	Unique Training Identifier	[training] A number that uniquely identifies a training that was held due to WORTH programming
Input - Training	Any curriculum developed (Y/N)?	[training]: Whether or not new curricula were developed, and, if they were, their contents
	Number of classes in the training	[training]: Total number of courses held over the course of the training. Completion of the training typically results in a certification.
	Date first training is held?	[training]: Cite this as Month and Year that the policy was enacted
	Date last training is held?	[training]: Cite this as Month and Year that the policy was enacted
Output - Training	Number of participants attending first training	[training]: Total number of attendees
	Number of participants attending last training	[training]: Total number of attendees
Outcome - Training	Number that reached approval	[training]: Total number of individual attendees seeking homeownership that were approved or otherwise successfully completed the entire training
	Number passed Certification	[training]: Total number of attendees seeking the credentials to conduct housing-related business that were approved or otherwise successfully completed the entire training
Identifier - Outreach	Unique Outreach Identifier	[outreach]: A number that uniquely identifies an outreach that was held due to WORTH programming
Input - Outreach	Type of Outreach (Traditional or Social media, etc.)	[outreach]: This includes traditional outlets such as television or radio commercials or non-traditional channels including social media.

	Number of attendees	[outreach]: If the outreach was in-person then input the total number of attendees at the outreach
	Estimated Number of Viewers Reached	[outreach]: If the outreach was virtual, then input the total number of viewers reached
Output - Outreach	Number of Responses due to the outreach	[outreach]: Total number of responses due to outreach
Outcome - Outreach	Number that enter a given program	[outreach]: Total number of that enter a WORTH-supported program
SHEET: POLICY		
Field Section	**Field name**	**Description**
Inputs	Unique Policy Identifier	A number that uniquely identifies a specific policy being targeted or advocated for by the Collaborative.
	Number of advocacy meeting held?	Total number of meetings held with community members, housing stakeholders, local businesses, etc. centered around barriers to and/or strategies to advance BIPOC homeownership
	Were any materials created for distribution at advocacy meeting?	Any materials created including, reports, briefs, short documents (e.g. “one-pagers”), etc. for these meetings
	Description of materials created for advocacy meeting	Please describe the materials created for these meetings.
	Constituent meeting held?	Total number of meetings held with BIPOC households and individuals who could potentially benefit from policies addressingbarriers to and/or strategies to advance BIPOC homeownership
	Were any materials created for distribution at constituent meeting?	Any materials created including, reports, briefs, short documents (e.g. “one-pagers”), etc. for these meetings
	Description of materials created for constituent meeting	Please describe the materials created for these meetings.
	Policymaker meeting held?	Total number of meetings held with policymakers and/or their staff at any level of government to discuss barriers to and/or strategies to advance BIPOC homeownership
	Were any materials created for distribution at policy meeting?	Any materials created including, reports, briefs, short documents (e.g. “one-pagers”), etc. for these meetings
	Description of materials created for policy meeting	Please describe the materials created for these meetings.
	Was the policy position communicated through the media?	This includes policy distribution methods not covered by advocacy, constituent or policy meetings and could include traditional outlets such as television or radio commercials or non-traditional channels including social media.
	Type of media used	Please describe the media outlet. This could include traditional outlets such as television commercials or the use of social media.
Outputs	Number of policy papers produced	Number of white papers, reports, briefs, and/or blog posts produced with the goal of analyzing, exploring, and/or advocating for a particular policy

Did advocacy support increase?	[Y\N] In response to these meetings, was support for the policy by constituents, as described in row 127, increased?
How is advocacy support measured?	Please describe how the change in support is measured
Did constituent support increase?	[Y\N] In response to these meetings, was support for the policy by constituents, as described in row 124, increased?
How is constituent support measured?	Please describe how the change in support is measured
Did political support increase?	[Y\N] In response to these meetings, was support for the policy by constituents, as described in row 130, increased?
How is political support measured?	Please describe how the change in support is measured
Policy proposed in response to advocacy or policy meetings	New policies enacted or existing policies updated that emerged from WORTH-funded advocacy efforts to advance BIPOC homeownership, aperincluding detailed descriptions of the contents of the policies
Primary description of policy proposal	Please describe what this policy ist intended to do
Secondary description of policy	If there is more than one intended action, describe any other steps that policy is intended to take.
Policy enacted?	[Y/N] This refers to policies that go through the legislative and executive process before being implemented
Date Policy Enacted	Cite this as Month and Year that the policy was enacted
Policy Changed?	[Y/N] This refers to policies that go through any other route (e.g. new rules written by the housing development agency) and is considered implemented
Date Policy Changed	Cite this as Month and Year that the policy was enacted
Public funds allocated to support BIPOC homeownership ($)	[In Dollars], how much public funding has been allocated to housing as a result of the WORTH-supported policy strategy
Private funds allocated to support BIPOC homeownership ($)	[In Dollars], how much funding from companies and organizations not connected to the government and allocated to housing as a result of the WORTH-supported policy strategy

Appendix B. Focus Group Protocol

Focus Group Protocol

CONSENT

Thank you for making time to speak with us today. My name is [name], and this my colleague [name]. As you know, we are from the Urban Institute, a DC-based non-profit, non-partisan social and economic policy research organization. We're working on an evaluation for the Wells Fargo Wealth Opportunities Realized through Homeownership (WORTH) BIPOC initiative, which supports increasing BIPOC homeownership by creating at least 5,000 net positive BIPOC homeowners in each of eight markets.

As part of our evaluation, we want to make sure that we have a holistic understanding of what it takes to manage and implement such a complex initiative. To do this, we are holding discussions, like this one, to hear your thoughts on the process in developing and implementing these programs. We're particularly interested in hearing about the successes and challenges your collaborative has had throughout the life of the grant. We want to learn more about your processes and evolving strategies to increase BIPOC homeownership, including your approaches to providing services and promoting systems change, and to collecting and reporting data. Additionally, we are curious to hear how participating in the grant program has helped, impeded, or otherwise affected your efforts to expand BIPOC homeownership.

We expect the discussion to last a maximum of 2 hours, with a 10-minute break halfway through.

The discussion we have today will be treated as confidential. What this means is that any information you choose to provide will only be shared with members of the Urban research team, and we ask that you and other participants not share information you learn in this discussion outside this call. Although we will be careful to keep what is said in this discussion confidential, we cannot control what other participants may say about what they heard -- or thought they heard someone say. We ask that you participate in a private setting away from earshot and viewing by people who are not participating in the focus group. Again, we want you to understand that, given the technical limitations of Microsoft Teams and similar internet platforms (along with multiple parties participating in this discussion), we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of what might be said.

Our findings from this discussion will be summarized and aggregated according to key themes within and across WORTH collaboratives. No one who participates in this focus group will be identified by name, employer, or job title in any of our public evaluation products.

Your participation in this discussion is entirely voluntary – you do not have to participate if you do not want to. Choosing to participate, or not, will not impact your employment or work with your organization or the WORTH grant. If you agree to participate, you will not be required to answer any questions you do not want to answer, and you can stop participating in the discussion at any time.

If all participants consent, we would like to record this discussion today so that we can have an accurate account of your feedback and thoughts on each question we discuss. The recordings will only be used for notes and only accessed by the Urban Institute research team, who have all signed confidentiality agreements. During the discussion, we can stop the recording at any time. If you prefer not to have this discussion recorded at all, we will simply take typed notes. The recording and notes from this discussion will be destroyed at the end of the project or June 2027, whichever comes sooner. The learning from these interviews will benefit other grantees, funders, program administrators, and policymakers in developing and supporting better strategies for increasing BIPOC homeownership.

Do you consent to participate in the focus group? You can either let us know out loud or send a private message in the chat directly to Olivia with your response.

Do we have your permission to record? We must receive a verbal or electronic response from all who have consented to participate.

Does anyone have any questions before we begin?

If, for any reason, you would like to withdraw your consent, or if you have any questions about the study, please contact the project leader, Corianne Scally.

We will begin recording now. (Notetaker presses record).

FOCUS GROUP INSTRUMENT

ICEBREAKER (10 min)

1. To start us off, could we go around the Teams room, introduce ourselves (name and organization), and describe your Collaborative's WORTH initiative program in one adjective or short phrase? Why did you choose that word/phrase?

Successes and Challenges (30 min): Next we would like to hear about your successes and any challenges you've encountered during this past year of WORTH implementation.

2. What successes would you say your collaborative or organization has achieved within the past year?

3. What factors contributed the most to those successful program outputs and outcomes?

   Probes:

a. Is there anything particularly **within your Collaborative members** (policies, staff, resources, network relationships) that helped you achieve those successes?
b. What **factors or conditions in the local market** (either local, state, national policies or demand and supply dynamics) had to be aligned for you to achieve that success?

4. What challenges has your collaborative or organization encountered in implementing this/these strategies?

   Probes:

   a. **Within your Market collaborative**? Within the WORTH initiative? Within the local market conditions? Within the local, state or national policy environments?
   b. What effects have these challenges had on implementation?
   c. How have these challenges **altered your collaborative's implementation approaches** or the strategies selected?
   d. If challenges remain, **what will it take to overcome them** in the future?

Collaborative & Partners (20 min): Now we would like to hear more about inner workings and evolution of the partners and partnerships within your Collaborative.

5. Where or how do the collaborative members interface or directly collaborate with each other?
   a. What responsibilities or resources are shared?
   b. What belongs uniquely to the different members?

6. In what ways have collaborative members been affected by WORTH implementation grant goals and strategies?
   a. Target population (BIPOC)?
   b. Service area changes/expansion?
   c. Program and/or service changes/expansion?
   d. Staffing and capacities, including DEI competencies or training?

7. How has your partnership evolved internally over the course of the implementation grant? What has prompted this evolution?
   a. Change in partners/members?
   b. Change in responsibilities?
   c. Change in communication?

[BREAK: 10 MIN]

Systems Change [15 MIN]:

8. What do you see as the largest systemic barriers to BIPOC homeownership in your market?** [ASK ONLY IF NOT ADDRESSED UNDER Q4, CHALLENGES]

9. *Our working definition of systems change is creating permanent changes in policies, practices, resource flows, relationships, or attitudes.*

   How do these goals, if any, feature in your collaborative's strategy to increase BIPOC homeownership, and what have been the associated results so far?

10. In what ways (if any) has the desire to make durable changes in policy and practice affected how your collaborative is structured and what work you engage in together as part of WORTH and beyond?
    a. How does this build on or add to work you were doing prior to receiving WORTH funding?

Data collection (skip if time is short) [10 MIN]:

11. What challenges has your collaborative experienced in collecting and reporting programmatic data?
    a. Tracking across partners
    b. Standardizing measures
    c. Standardizing reporting periods

12. How do you think your new data collection and reporting tools will factor into your work beyond the scope of this grant?

Lessons learned and future improvements (15 MIN):

13. Does your collaborative have a system or rhythm for collecting learning or reflecting on improvements and delivering feedback amongst members?

14. What has your collaborative learned together so far?

    Possible prompts:

    a. implementation strategies,
    b. collaboration,
    c. systemic barriers to BIPOC homeownership
    d. opportunities affecting BIPOC homeownership
    e. data collection

15. What other commitments are needed across system actors to increase BIPOC homeownership (including outside of your collaborative or from WFF)?
    Probes: Network connections, reputational backing, skills or knowledge resources, publicity, etc.

Conclusion

16. Finally, could we go around the Teams room, and could you all share a short phrase or word that describes your hopes and/or aspiration for the future of your Collaborative's WORTH initiative program?

Appendix C. WORTH Evaluation Data Collection and Reporting Frequently Asked Questions

Version 2: May 2023

New BIPOC Homeowners

Who counts as BIPOC?

Anyone who identifies as other than non-Hispanic white, including Black or African American, Native American, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Asian, nonwhite Hispanic, or someone of two or more races.

Who counts as a homeowner?

Any individual listed on mortgage or title as owner of home serving as their primary residence and only home.

Who counts as a new homeowner?

Anyone who, with the assistance of WORTH funding (see below), transitions from...

- Renter to homeowner, e.g., renter closing on a home mortgage.
- Unclear title on a home to clear title as owner, e.g., via inheritance or other legal processes clearing title.
- Owner of an uninhabitable home to a habitable home, e.g., via wholesale reconstruction of property or replacement of home such as a mobile home unit.
    - » Reconstruction means the home previously lacked basic services (e.g., water, electricity as in Colonias or some Native communities) and/or its structure was unsound, therefore denying the current owner the benefits of ownership as a financial asset or safe place to live.

   - Rehabilitation to replace systems and maintain existing habitability is a preservation activity and does not count as a new homeowner. Other preservation activities—such as weatherization, utility assistance, and tax relief—also do not count as creating a new homeowner.
- A new homeowner does not have to be a first-time homebuyer but should not currently be a homeowner when they receive assistance through WORTH funding unless the assistance received is for reconstruction or replacement.
- A new homeowner counts only once even if they meet multiple definitions above and received multiple types of assistance from WORTH-funded strategies.

Who counts as a new BIPOC homeowner?

Any individual named on a mortgage or title as owner of home, serving as their primary residence and only home, who is BIPOC and meets at least one definition of new homeowner.

Would a BIPOC couple who are both on the same mortgage and/or title count as two new homeowners?

Yes, as long as they meet all the other criteria they would count as two new BIPOC homeowners.

An increasing share of homebuyers choose not to report their race and/or ethnicity, and lenders cannot require that they do. Do you have examples of strategies that can be employed to get high rates of participant willingness to share race/ethnicity information?

Collaboratives are likely to engage a potential BIPOC homebuyer at points in the homebuying process outside the mortgage application and loan. The metric template provided by the Urban Institute seeks to ensure that the consistent use of unique identifiers will strengthen the ability of Collaboratives to capture the race and/or ethnicity of the new homeowner as they engage with the Collaborative's strategies.

Currently, for Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data the CFPB form does state that the data will be used for fair lending purposes to promote reporting. When asking for this information, it could be helpful to let participants know the importance of data collections. In addition, if mortgage lending itself is supported by WORTH, then the Collaborative may, as a condition of receiving funds, consider requiring the beneficiary of the WORTH assistance (borrower or the lender) to record the race and ethnicity of the individual(s) as part of receiving the WORTH investment.

Other strategies to collect this information could include surveying clients (during or after participation) about their experience with the service provider and including a question about race/ethnicity or additional reporting incentives.

WORTH-Assisted New BIPOC Homeowners

Who counts as a WORTH-assisted new BIPOC homeowner?

BIPOC individuals that become new homeowners as a result of a Collaborative's WORTH-funded strategies. The metric template provided by the Urban Institute can help a Collaborative connect a new BIPOC homeowner with one or more of their specific strategies.

Does "with the assistance of WORTH funding" include both direct and indirect WORTH support? That is, does it include participants who may have benefitted from a specific WORTH program but maybe did not receive direct financial assistance?

Yes. Worth assistance refers to any strategy used the Collaboratives and funded through the WORTH program. The metric template provided by the Urban Institute can help a Collaborative connect a new BIPOC homeowner with one or more of their strategies, whether that strategy provided "direct" or "indirect" support. The template does not require Collaboratives to demonstrate the contribution of WORTH investment in each strategy.

Can participants receiving any other non-WORTH support while they receive WORTH support be counted as WORTH assisted?

Yes.

Does Wells Fargo have to be the primary lender for a homeowner to be considered to have benefitted from the WORTH program?

No.

If we raise money from a number of sources for a program, say for down payment assistance, and a home buyer receives that down payment assistance from a funding source other than Wells Fargo money, can they be counted?

The program recognizes that leveraging WORTH investment can help maximize impact and strengthening Collaborative's longer-term homeownership equity strategies. The assumption of the program is that the WORTH dollars directly from Wells Fargo would need to leverage additional funds to reach 5,000 BIPOC homeowners. And the impact of the combined funds counts towards the effort.

For example, the WORTH investment may be combined with separate financial resources to solely fund the dollars given for down payment assistance. The metric template provides a Collaborative with a method of identifying and tracking an individual that that went through this WORTH-funded program.

The WORTH investment may also eliminate a high barrier that is related to a Collaborative's strategy. For example, WORTH funding may transform how the Collaborative prepared and recruited people to receive and be ready for an existing DPA program. But separate money funded the down payment assistance program itself. The metric template provides a Collaborative with a method of identifying and tracking an individual that went through a WORTH-supported program.

A Collaborative may leverage other funding used for one stage of the homebuying process by using WORTH investment to fund another and related stage of the process. For example, WORTH dollars may fund a down payment assistance program that leverages separate funding used to implement a homebuyer counseling program. Even if WORTH funds one stage of the homebuying process, the metric template provides the Collaborative with a method of tracking a person through each step toward a home purchase. However, in this example, Urban would expect the Collaborative to only track the individual based on the WORTH-funded strategy (in this case down payment assistance).

These examples may not cover all the instances in which a Collaborative may leverage the WORTH investment. Each Collaborative has broad discretion in determining WORTH assistance. Feel free to reach out to us if there is a question about whether a particular strategy is considered to be supported by WORTH. In each example, the metric template will allow for the counting of those served by a strategy that you believe was supported by WORTH funding.

Does a program participant have to both live and buy in the Collaborative's jurisdiction to be counted toward the Collaborative's new homeownership metrics?

The following are WORTH program participants who can be counted as new BIPOC homeowners:

- If a BIPOC individual **residing in** your market's jurisdiction receives services from a WORTH Initiative Collaborative or network partner supporting the WORTH-funded initiative and **purchases a home in the jurisdiction** they count as a new BIPOC homeowner.

- If a BIPOC individual **residing outside** your market's jurisdiction receives services from a WORTH Initiative collaborative/network partner and **purchases a home within the jurisdiction** they also count as a new BIPOC homeowner.
- If a BIPOC individual **residing within your market's jurisdiction** receives services from a WORTH Initiative collaborative/network partner and **purchases a home outside the jurisdiction** they too count as a new BIPOC homeowner.

The following cannot be counted as new BIPOC homeowners for WORTH initiative purposes:

- A BIPOC individual **residing outside** your market's jurisdiction who receives services from a WORTH Initiative collaborative/network partner and **purchases a home outside the jurisdiction does not count as a new BIPOC homeowner** for WORTH initiative purposes.

Is there an income threshold to qualify for the program, or can BIPOC individuals of any income level can be included?

Anyone can be served with the funds but the implementation plan guidance from Wells Fargo asks for "at least 25 percent of the targeted new homeowners created at 80 percent of area median income (AMI) and the majority at up to 150 percent AMI." To document this, Urban Institute has provided columns in metric template to identify household income and a geographic identifier. This will enable Urban to calculate percent of area median for each new BIPOC homeowner created.

Data Collection and Reporting

In the *Program Doors, Pathways, and Intersections for an Individual* scenario, the stages do not always occur in a linear fashion. Frequently, the initial contact is with a lender who then directs the applicant to housing counseling if they have credit deficiencies or counseling is required for a particular loan product or down payment assistance.

The order of contact isn't as important as establishing there is a logical connection between the assistance provided and the eventual outcome. Where dates are important for understanding sequence or length of time between steps, we tried to ask for them.

How should we count people in different stages or elements of the homeownership assistance programs? How should we count those in the pipeline to homeownership who have not officially completed the stage of new homeownership (i.e. have not yet closed or

gotten a title to their home, have not yet finished rehab or reconstruction to make their house habitable, etc)?

We are not looking for projections of where you anticipate them being. An individual cannot be counted as a new homeowner until they have officially achieved homeownership status, as defined above. However, we still want to see where people are at in their journey toward homeownership and track that and how they are still involved in the efforts.

Any individual receiving WORTH-funded services would ideally be entered into the tracker as soon as possible under the appropriate strategy and stage of the process. For example, an individual working with a WORTH collaborative member on title transfer can initially be entered in a row with any known values for measures of “Characteristics of Individual Served” and “Inputs” which includes intake date or program start date. “Outputs” and “Outcomes” can be filled in for a later reporting cycle once they are achieved.

How do we deal with program leakage where a BIPOC individual or household participates in a program service and ultimately becomes a homeowner but doesn’t report that outcome to the collaborative?

While we don’t necessarily expect you to be able to track outcomes for all program participants, we won’t be able to include a person toward the final new BIPOC homeowner goal without some specific information about whether they became a homeowner and met other criteria described above.

Do you have any suggestions or guidance for creating the WORTH unique identifier?

Urban Institute has no specific guidance or requirements for the WORTH unique identifier, other than it be capable of tracking individuals or homes across programs and results across WORTH collaborative members.

During the webinar, it was suggested that a unique identifier might be created as a combination of letters in a person’s name and their birth date (e.g., the first and third letters of their first and last names and the date and month of their date of birth). While grantees should feel free to use an identifier like this for the purposes of tracking data across collaborative partners, **Urban asks that the unique identifier you report to us not include any direct identifiers or portions of identifiers (such as names or birth dates)** that might make it possible for someone to connect any reported data to a specific person.

Why do we need to report data to Urban Institute through an encrypted site if you don't want us to provide you with PII?

Although data submitted to Urban Institute should not contain any direct identifiers, individual-level data can still potentially contain PII and so, out of an abundance of caution, Urban is treating all individual-level data submitted by grantees as potentially being identifiable. All individual-level data should be submitted through the SFTP. Instructions for submitting data via SFTP to the Urban Institute WORTH evaluation team can be found in the Resources for WORTH Grantees folder, under the data collection guidance subfolder, also available through this link.

Any suggestions on performing deduplication of data across partners when multiple intake agencies are not collecting or sharing PII among themselves?

Without knowing more details about the circumstances, it is hard to offer specific guidance. Sharing some amount of PII across WORTH collaborative members is necessary for deduplication. Even if one person has used multiple services or worked with multiple partners, they need to have the same unique identifier across the different services for data reporting and to avoid double counting. Each Collaborative's data partner/lead is responsible for data collection and all other partners should work with them to enable smooth and accurate collection and reporting. One option would be for the intake agencies to share PII with a trusted third party, rather than each other, for the purposes of deduplication. Ensuring a proper data sharing agreement is in place is key for governing collection and use of data across partners. For key elements of data sharing agreements, and a collection of example agreements, see the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership.

Are we required to provide all the data in the template?

All the data in the template is helpful for our analysis. Before the first reporting period, we sent the template to each Collaborative and asked each of your which data would or would not be possible to report for your market. We expect you to provide all of the data from the template – each metric in each sheet – unless we had direct communication with your data team to indicate an alternative plan. We understand that things change, so please let us know if new circumstances make providing information that you previously indicated you would be able to provide more challenging (or if you will be able to provide information you had previously thought would not be feasible to report). All this to say, we want to work with you to have the best measures, analysis, and understanding of your work. We want to understand how your strategies lead to homeownership, and part of that is looking at the data. The idea of this template is to collect and connect the data from implementation and use of your strategies to outcomes from these strategies, in particular new BIPOC homeowners.

Should subsequent data reporting to Wells Fargo and the Urban Institute be cumulative?

We want to identify changes in program participation. Most importantly, we want NEW info. New information would include:

1. People who enter their program and what steps they take.
2. People who were in their program, and took new steps – moving to participate in new services or phase process.
3. People who were in their program, and formally withdrew.

If your system exports all unique WORTH IDs, whether status has changed since last reporting period or not, you may report that cumulative data to us. It would be ideal if you could also provide us with de-duplicated data – that is data reflects only the new participants or changes in a client's status. The de-duplicated data would, for instance, exclude someone who completed an application for down payment assistance during the last reporting period but has not executed a loan agreement or participated in any other services since then and is in a sort of holding period. That said, if de-duplication poses an untenable burden, it is not strictly necessary.

What is the reporting period and schedule? How to the data reported to the Urban Institute relate to data reported directly to Wells Fargo through CyberGrants?

While data reported to Urban Institute (twice per year) are the data of record for the WORTH program, grantees must also submit data to CyberGrants via Impact Reports (once per year). The number of Impact Reports submitted via CyberGrants has been reduced from <u>twice to once per year</u>.

Summary of data reporting requirements:

	Urban Institute submission	CyberGrants "Impact Reports"
Content	The "official" WORTH data with metrics agreed upon between Urban and each grantee	As similar as possible to data submitted to Urban Institute but translated to fit into the CyberGrants definitions using the "cross walk" provided by Urban Institute
Frequency	Twice/year	Once/year
When	January 31st and June 30th each year	January 31st each year

The main data of record or official WORTH data are those submitted to the Urban Institute, twice a year, once by January 31st and once by June 30th. Urban will work with grantees on how to collect these data and setting the cut off period date, **which should be consistent each year**. Data is expected to be submitted to Urban in a fashion consistent with processes already agreed upon between each collaborative and Urban. We expect the data submitted to Urban will be much more nuanced and contextual than what is submitted to CyberGrants.

Separately, data will be submitted to Wells Fargo through CyberGrants in Impact Reports, once a year by January 31 to coincide with the data submitted to Urban Institute. No longer will grantees have to submit an Impact Report in July. The date that each grantee closes their data reporting for the mid-December report to Urban Institute **can be the same for the January 31 Impact Report**. The data submitted as the Impact Report are expected to generally be identical in content but will likely have different formatting requirements to align with metric definition within CyberGrants. Since CyberGrants has rigid and broadly defined data fields and Impact Reports will be based off of the data reported to Urban, we expect both the data itself and the reporting to be simpler. To clarify the translation of data submitted to Urban Institute into data submitted via CyberGrants, Urban developed and shared with grantees a generic "cross walk" between these two reporting methods.

By eliminating one CyberGrants submission, the Wells Fargo Foundation aims to reduce the reporting burden and to emphasize the importance of data submitted to Urban Institute as the key data of record.

Where can I find the most up-to-date information from the Urban Institute on data collection and reporting, including the training materials, metrics template, instructions for securely uploading data, and the most recent FAQs?

The materials can be found in the folder at this link.

Notes

1 Alexander Hermann, "In Nearly Every State, People of Color Are Less Likely to Own Homes Compared with White Households," *Housing Perspectives* (blog), Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, February 8, 2023, https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/nearly-every-state-people-color-are-less-likely-own-homes-compared-white-households.

2 See also Tim Henderson, "Black Families Fall Further Behind on Homeownership," Pew, last updated February 7, 2023, https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/trust/archive/winter-2023/black-families-fall-further-behind-on-homeownership. In this report, when we refer to homeowners, communities, or households of color, we mean households led by or comprising Black, Hispanic, Native American and Alaska Native, Asian, and multiracial people and people identifying as belong to an "other" race or ethnicity, not non-Hispanic white households.

3 The rural and tribal market is the only one not contiguous with a city boundary. This large market area includes counties in diverse rural regions, such as Appalachia, the Mississippi delta, the US-Mexico border region, and those home to established Native communities. For a more thorough description and analysis of each WORTH market, see Neal et al. (2023).

4 See also Rashawn Ray, Andre M. Perry, David Harshbarger, Samantha Elizondo, and Alexandra Gibbons, "Homeownership, Racial Segregation, and Policy Solutions to Racial Wealth Equity," Brookings Institution, September 1, 2021, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/homeownership-racial-segregation-and-policies-for-racial-wealth-equity/.

5 "Using Special Purpose Credit Programs to Expand Equality," National Fair Housing Alliance, November 4, 2020, https://nationalfairhousing.org/resource/using-special-purpose-credit-programs-to-expand-equality/; and Equal Credit Opportunity (Regulation B): Special Purpose Credit Programs, 86 Fed. Reg. 3762 (Jan. 15, 2021).

6 come dream. come build. has pioneered the MiCasita modular housing model that allows homebuyers to grow their homes as their financial capacity increases. Read more about the model, the 2020 winner of the Housing Affordability Breakthrough Construction category, at "cdcb: come dream. come build," Enterprise Community Partners," accessed January 18, 2024, https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/housing-affordability-breakthrough-challenge/2020-winners/cdcb-come-dream-come-build.

7 "What Is Collective Impact" Collective Impact Forum, accessed January 18, 2024, https://collectiveimpactforum.org/what-is-collective-impact/.

8 BIPOC refers to Black people, Indigenous people, and other people of color.

9 Michael Neal, "Recent Growth of Newly Built Smaller Homes Could Ease the Housing Shortage, but Higher Costs Hamper Affordability," *Urban Wire* (blog), Urban Institute, May 7, 2021, https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/recent-growth-newly-built-smaller-homes-could-ease-housing-shortage-higher-costs-hamper-affordability.

10 According to the US Bureau of Indian Affairs, "placing tribal land into a trust is the process where the Department of the Interior acquires the title to a land and holds it for the benefit of a tribe or individual tribal members." See "Benefits of Trust Land Acquisition (Fee to Trust)," US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, accessed January 18, 2024, https://www.bia.gov/service/trust-land-acquisition/benefits-trust-land-acquisition.

11 "New Residential Construction: Length of Time," US Census Bureau, accessed January 18, 2024, https://www.census.gov/construction/nrc/lengthoftime.html.

12 Liam Reynolds, Vanessa Perry, and Jung Hyun Choi, "Closing the Homeownership Gap Will Require Rooting Systemic Racism Out of Mortgage Underwriting," *Urban Wire* (blog), Urban Institute, October 13, 2021,

https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/closing-homeownership-gap-will-require-rooting-systemic-racism-out-mortgage-underwriting.

[13] Michael Neal, Michael Stegman, Janneke Ratcliffe, and Daniel Pang, "High Mortgage Rates Threaten Recent Homeownership Progress for Households of Color," *Urban Wire* (blog), Urban Institute, January 3, 2023, https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/high-mortgage-rates-threaten-recent-homeownership-progress-households-color.

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About the Authors

Corianne Payton Scally is a senior fellow in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where she explores affordable housing and community development policy and practice. From evaluating federal programs to assessing philanthropic investments, Scally's research focuses on multiple social determinants of health—from the affordable housing supply to quality drinking water to access to health and human services—and the policy environments and stakeholder capacities that affect community opportunity and well-being. Scally leads mixed-method research projects—directing extensive primary data collection via site visits, interviews, focus groups, and surveys—and leads analysis of secondary and administrative data to evaluate program processes, performance, and outcomes. Recent studies have focused on how technical assistance is provided to housing organizations, how service coordination works for residents of public housing, how to preserve and increase affordable rental housing supply through innovative finance and collaboration, and how to improve rural data and support asset-based development via a national typology of rural census tracts. Her work has been published in books, research reports, policy briefs, and refereed journals and featured on NPR, *Marketplace*, the *Washington Post*, and *USA Today*. She started her career as a housing and community economic developer and earned tenure as an associate professor of urban planning. From 2015 to 2016, she led data and research initiatives at the US Department of Agriculture's Rural Housing Service under contract with the Urban Institute. She received her PhD in urban planning and policy development from Rutgers University.

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