

Tools of Development

THE NEXT SET OF CHAPTERS covers some of the major tools and techniques used by community developers in community economic development (CED) practice. Once CED practitioners have decided on an organization's strategy, they then select and deploy the specific tactics in this section for realizing the organization's goals. The tools presented in this chapter are applicable in a variety of contexts, including work that is not related to CED. There are specialized professionals, national centers of expertise, bodies of literature, and funding sources available for using each of these tools in and of themselves. The chapters in this section are intended to provide social workers with a basic framework for understanding the applicability and the function of each of these tools. More in-depth knowledge and skill development would be appropriate for social workers who undertake extensive activities with programs using any of these particular techniques.

This section begins with tools that call on the core knowledge and skill set of social workers: developing human capital—in this case helping people in the community gain employment—and building high-performance organizations—in itself another kind of human capital, the managerial and organizational capability of the community-based development organization. These are areas of work in which social workers, particularly those with

community organizing and administrative training or experience, will likely find that they can comfortably apply previously mastered skills. The authors then move to tools that may be less familiar to social workers but are essential to CED practice, such as real estate, especially residential development, and development of financial capital mechanisms and businesses, including microenterprise. The last chapter of this section discusses advocacy and lobbying, tools often overlooked in the mission of CED.

This section includes case studies of three successful community development corporations (CDCs) that provide excellent examples of investing in human capital, building a high-performance organization, and applying best real estate practices. A fourth-wave CDC, New Economics for Women, is dedicated to enabling Latina single parents and their families in Los Angeles, California, to achieve economic self-sufficiency. The East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, a second-wave CDC in Oakland, California, is renowned for outstanding management and is considered to be one of the best-managed nonprofit organizations in the United States. Finally, Intercommunity Mercy Housing, a third-wave CDC, has used effective real estate tactics to build or renovate affordable housing for nearly 3,700 low-income people in Seattle, Washington.