



**BUILDING  
CHANGES**  
END HOMELESSNESS  
TOGETHER

# FAQ

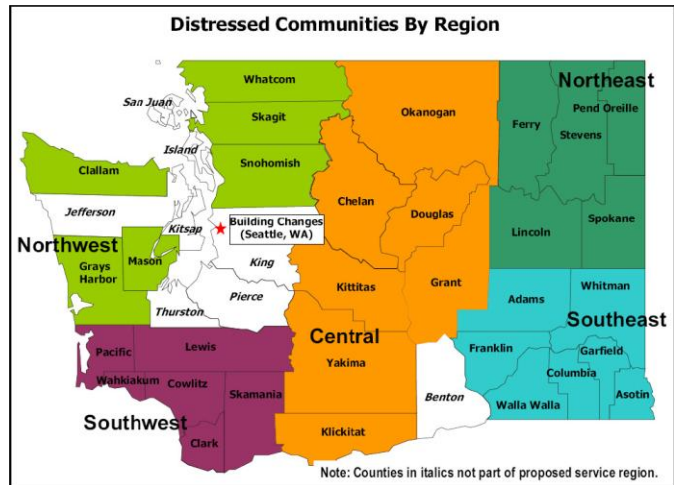
## Building Changes' \$1 Million Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building Program Grant

Building Changes received a \$1 million federal grant from the Strengthening Communities Fund (SCF) Nonprofit Capacity Building Program. The award is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), a stimulus package enacted by Congress in February 2009.

Building Changes is one of 35 organizations nationwide selected for a grant through the Strengthening Communities Fund (SCF) Nonprofit Capacity Building Program. The purpose of the grant is to improve the ability of nonprofit organizations to promote the economic recovery of people with low incomes.

With this two-year SCF grant, Building Changes will reach out to the **31 most economically distressed counties in Washington state**.

Building Changes will provide expert advice and grants to eligible, small community- and faith-based nonprofits that serve families and individuals who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or have very low incomes.



### Q: What is the SCF grant/award?

A: The purpose of the grants is to improve the ability of nonprofit organizations to promote the economic recovery of people with low incomes.

### Q: Which Federal agency gives out this award?

A: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families' Office of Community Services (ACF/OCS).

### Q: How did Building Changes get this award?

A: Building Changes applied for this award in late July 2009.

### Q: What will Building Changes do with this money?

A: Building Changes will use its two-year SCF grant money to work with nonprofit agencies in two ways:

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- 1) Grant Making: Approximately 60 percent of the funds will be granted to nonprofits for activities that increase the capacity of these agencies to promote the economic recovery of people with low incomes. Grants for direct service activities will not be eligible.
- 2) Expert Advice: Approximately 40 percent of the funds will be used to provide training, planning, and technical assistance to nonprofits. Expert advice will be given in these five capacity-building categories:
  - Organizational development
  - Leadership development
  - Program development
  - Collaboration and community engagement
  - Evaluation of effectiveness

**Q: What is the timeframe for dispersing these funds?**

A: The SCF grant will have two grant cycles. We will be dispersing grants in 2010 and in 2011.

**Q: Will grantees be eligible to reapply for these grants after 2011?**

A: No. The SCF grant is a one-time, two-year grant from ARRA to Building Changes.

**Q: What will be the size of the grants?**

A: The size of the grants will be determined at a later date.

**Q: What types of agencies are eligible to receive grants?**

A: Nonprofits in the 31 counties that are working to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better quality jobs, and gain greater access to state and Federal benefits and tax credits.

**Q: What types of agencies are eligible to receive expert advice?**

A: Nonprofits in the 31 counties that are working to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better quality jobs, and gain greater access to state and Federal benefits and tax credits. Agencies that receive grants will be automatically eligible to receive expert advice.

**Q: What are the 31 counties, and why were they chosen?**

A: The 31 counties were chosen based on whether, as of May 2009, they reported poverty and/or unemployment rates that were higher than the overall state or U.S. rate. These measures were established by HHS for this grant to indicate the economic distress of a community.

**Q: How will agencies be selected to receive grants or expert advice?**

A: Agencies will apply to receive expert advice and grants. The process for selection will include outreach to more than 500 agencies. The first step will be to ask agencies to complete an organizational self-assessment survey that will include questions about the organizations' needs. This information will help Building Changes to design its expert advice and grant making parameters. Applications will be reviewed by a panel.

**Q: Does the receiving organization pay for expert advice?**

A: Building Changes will provide expert advice at no cost to organizations that receive grants.

**Q: When will expert advice and grants be made available?**

A: Expert advice and grants will be available beginning in early 2010.

**Q: How does my agency ensure that we have the opportunity to apply for expert advice and grants?**

A: Please send your contact information to Mark Putnam (see contact information below).

**Q: Who are the people this grant will be serving?**

A: People who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or are very low income.

**Q: Is Building Changes partnering with any other organizations to do this work?**

A: Yes, [Clegg & Associates](#), a Washington state consulting firm, will partner with Building Changes. They will participate as trainers and serve as the evaluators of this program.

**Q: Why does Building Changes work with a consulting firm?**

A: As we identify needs in the counties, we work to match those needs with the right consultants. By partnering with Clegg & Associates, Building Changes can better meet the needs of our grantees.

**Q: Will there be an evaluation component? Who will serve as the evaluators for the project?**

A: Yes. Clegg & Associates will serve as our evaluators.

**Q: Did any other organizations in Washington state receive grant money?**

A: Yes. Other SCF grant recipients in Washington state include: the Northwest Leadership Foundation (\$1 million); Seattle's Human Services Department (\$250,000); and the Confederate Tribes of Colville Reservation (\$249,301).

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**For media queries, contact:**

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