



# CULTURALLY SPECIFIC SERVICES AT COMUNIDADES LATINAS UNIDAS EN SERVICIO (CLUES) EVALUATION REPORT

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## Executive Summary

Ramsey County provides the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) employment services internally through its Workforce Solutions (WFS) department and in partnership with other community organizations that provide employment services.

Ramsey County recognizes that Latino/Hispanic participants are experiencing poorer MFIP service outcomes than White participants. The county also recognizes that it alone could not reduce racial disparities in outcomes without engaging the communities experiencing the disparities. To address the issues of disparate MFIP outcomes, Ramsey County WFS established a strategic partnership, “Partners for Equity,” with Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES) to deliver a combination of holistic culturally specific services to individuals and cohort groups of Latino MFIP participants.

### **Purpose and objectives of the evaluation**

The purpose of this evaluation was to collaboratively learn (co-learn) about the role of culturally specific service model towards ensuring economic self-sufficiency and family stabilization by engaging with service partners and program participants. And the objectives were to learn and understand the extent to which the culturally specific services at CLUES are positively impacting parents and their children in attaining economic self-sufficiency and family stabilization, building a more connected community, and ensuring that participants adapt well in the community they live.

**Methods:** Qualitative data was collected using focus group discussion, structured and open-ended survey questions collaboratively developed by WFS and CLUES staff. Quantitative program outcome data was collected from Workforce One (WF1) database.

**Results:** A total of 19 respondents participated in this evaluation and shared their experience: nine MFIP program participants, eight MFIP employment counselors from four employment service provider organizations, and two CLUES staff. In addition, quantitative service outcome data of 45 participants on education, engagement and employment activities was collected from WF1. The following are some of the important findings:

- There was overall positive response from participants about the referral process, experience /interactions with their MFIP employment counselors and the culturally specific services they have received at CLUES in the past.
- The culturally specific service at CLUES is helping participants to adapt to the communities they currently live in by providing a wide range of needs-based services to parents and contributing to family stabilization (see Table 1). Parents stated that their family is “more connected because of the services they received at CLUES”.
- Participants experience with the CLUES workshops and cohort activities in strengthening family interactions and establishing parents support circle, was positive.
- The pre-and post-enrollment hours comparison result shows that program participants have done better than they were doing prior to participating in CLUES culturally specific services. Education, engagement, and employment hours increased one quarter after participants enrolled in CLUES services (see table 5).

- Mutual sharing of experience, connection to and relationship with partner organizations staff/employment counselors and program participants is found to be “very important that it almost always makes the difference” in successfully engaging participants in CLUES services.
- Participants’ overall motivation to engage in employment and education activities since they began participating in the culturally specific services at CLUES has increased.
- The majority of MFIP employment counselors (83%) provide a formal referral (paperwork) for participants to connect with CLUES and access services; while only 17% said that they share details with participants about CLUES, including their personal experiences with the program or those of other participants they have worked with. And 75% of this employment counselors believe that personal or family crises and participant’s employment schedule (60%), which regularly conflicts with CLUES program service schedule, interfere with the participant’s ability to attend CLUES programs.
- Culturally specific service program staff turnover at CLUES was high. This has caused and /is causing service interruption and is negatively affecting the relationship between CLUES and program participants. Participants expressed their disappointment stating that they are not receiving help anymore. Because the staff persons who assisted them well in the past to meeting their needs and whom they have establish strong relationship with have left the organization. They go on to say, “my experience has been great, but the assistance that we had before with Georgina is gone; now there is a hole there. I have documents from the county that I need to fill out and send but now since I don’t have a caseworker to help me, it has become very difficult”. Staff turnover has also created communication gap between CLUES staff and employment counselors making MFIP participant referrals, which in turn, has slowed down the participant referral flow. Some employment counselors in this survey described this situation stating that “participants who were in a great need of culturally specific services and referred to CLUES got lost during staff transitioning”.
- Communication and collaborative efforts between CLUES staff and employment counselors from Partners for Equity organizations needs improvement. This can also help to successfully connect MFIP participants to the CLUES culturally specific services to improve the referral process and the overall program service outcomes.
- Participants and employment counselors experience shows the importance of retaining experienced program staff in maintaining strong relationship to ensuring resident centered and needs based service delivery and program service continuity.
- The total number of referrals were generally low across the years. There were only 45 participant enrollments from January 1,2020-December 31,2022 in the span of three years (see Table 2). This shows the need to collaboratively design program promotion and outreach strategy to reach as many eligible MFIP participants as possible.
- Forty percent of participants enrolled in the CLUES program have no assigned education, engagement, and employment activities as required in WF1 (see Table 2).

## Recommendations

- Resolve program service interruption by recruiting and hiring “a cultural navigator”.
- Implement staff retention mechanism by identifying the main reason causing staff to leave the cultural navigator role. Looking for best practices on staff retention strategies including compensation and benefit packages of organizations in similar service sector in the area as CLUES would be one important consideration.
- Establish a regular and continuous engagement platform between CLUES staff and employment counselors who make MFIP participant referrals to strengthen collaboration.
- Create and enforce a clear action plan including communication methods for collaborative participant engagement with Partners for Equity organizations providing MFIP employment services and CLUES to increase the number and frequency of MFIP participant referrals to culturally specific services, including parent outreach and program promotion strategy and an in-depth participant orientation/ information session document. This can benefit more parents and their children to get connected to culturally relevant resources to better serve them and improve outcomes for their family.
- Organize cultural events and build network of families and promote program services among the Hispanic/Latino community.
- Improve engagement efforts between MFIP participants, employment counselors and CLUES staff and share about the CLUES program in detail, resources available to them and success stories of current and or previous program participants in the community and educate the importance of the culturally specific services CLUES is providing in helping whole family. This can help MFIP participants gain better knowledge and understanding of the program and see the value in the services. This could also be one way to increase number of participant referrals to services and benefit as many deserving MFIP participants as possible.
- Educate the community members about the tangible service activity plans, the goals, and the ways in which participating in the program can help parents and their children to achieve their goals.
- Enter program outcome data accurately and timely and assign participants education, engagement, and employment activity outcomes in WF1 as required by the program.
- Adapt a flexible service schedule that can accommodate participant’s work schedule and other family situations and meet residents where they are at. This will help mitigate the participant’s employment or personal schedule challenges, which regularly conflict with CLUES service schedules and interfere with participants ability to attend programs. This will allow sufficient time to engage with participants and provide the services they need to better help them to achieve better employment and other related outcomes that lead to financial stability.
- It is also important to establish a follow up and support plan for participants in the time of family crises.

## Introduction

Ramsey County provides the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) employment services internally through its Workforce Solutions (WFS) department and in partnership with other community organizations that provide employment services. MFIP is a jointly funded, federal-state program that provides income assistance to eligible low-income participants.

The overarching goal at Ramsey County Workforce Solutions (WFS) is to maximize economic self-sufficiency. This goal is reached through strengthening parent's essential skills, personal agency, and self-determination to choose and pursue the activities that matter most to them on their path to gaining and retaining employment at higher wages and utilizing the support that MFIP provides during the process of reaching self-sustaining income.

Ramsey County recognizes that Latino/Hispanic participants are experiencing poorer MFIP service outcomes than White participants. The county also recognizes that it alone could not reduce racial disparities in outcomes without engaging the communities experiencing the disparities.

To address these issues of disparate MFIP outcomes, Ramsey County WFS established a strategic partnership, "Partners for Equity", with Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES) to deliver a combination of holistic culturally specific services to individuals and cohort groups of Hispanic/Latino families participating in MFIP and living in Ramsey County to reduce racial disparities in program outcomes.

**Partners for Equity:** The services that the Contractor(s) ("Contractor") will deliver to assist the County will be referred to as Partners for Equity ("PE") as a strategy to reduce racial disparities in program outcomes. The partners for equity services including but not limited to:

- Assessment including a pre-and post-assessment to indicate self-sufficiency and retention skills.
- Supporting participants' involvement with required MFIP-Employment Service (ES) work requirement activities.
- Supporting participants' development of their employment plans, including discussion of their incremental steps-to-employment goal setting.
- Collecting and recording documentation.
- Referral to and collaboration with other service contractors involved with participants, including social services, crisis counseling, health care, mental health, childcare and education resources, housing, domestic violence advocacy services, and transportation services.

The programs at CLUES complement the efforts of employment service providers and Workforce Solution (WFS) to move participants towards obtaining and retaining employment on specific MFIP outcome measures (education, employment, employment retention, intergenerational support/ family stability, and engagement).

MFIP employment counselors from employment service provider partner organizations refer MFIP Latina/Latino /Hispanic families to the CLUES culturally specific services by sending a completed Partners for Equity referral form to CLUES staff. CLUES provide a comprehensive and culturally specific family stability services to the Latina/Latino /Hispanic families.

Some of the activities at CLUES include English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, General Education Diploma (GED), career development workshops, family enhancement activities (housing, childcare, parenting skills workshops, financial workshops) and individual stability (mental and physical health). The cohort-based activities include pathway to employment, financial literacy, job club, platicas en familia, youth in action, citizenship classes and voting awareness.

### **Purpose and objective of the evaluation**

**Purpose:** Ramsey County WFS designed this evaluation plan in collaboration with CLUES to create a co-learning process that ensures active engagement of MFIP program participants who are enrolled in culturally specific services at CLUES and MFIP employment counselors to share their experience about the program services; and use that lesson to improve services for the future. The participatory learning-oriented plan also presented partners the opportunity to work together and learn from each other reflecting on the program experience.

**Objective:** The objectives of the evaluation were to learn and understand:

- The extent to which the culturally specific services at CLUES are positively impacting parents and their children in attaining self-sufficiency and family stabilization, building a more connected community, and ensuring that participants adapt well in the community they live.
- Participant's engagement experience with employment counselors during the referral process for services at CLUES and thereafter.
- The overall changes that the culturally specific services have brought and /are bringing in participants living situations.

**Target population:** Latino/Hispanic participants who are currently active on Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and enrolled in culturally specific services at CLUES.

In this report abbreviations and various technical terminologies such as: "Culturally specific services", "Partners for Equity", "racial disparity", "self-determination" and more are used. Definition for each term is attached (See Appendix 1).

## Methods

This evaluation plan process was a collaborative learning-oriented approach. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used to collect service-related information, participant's views in the context of their cultural values and experiences from staff.

### Data collection

Qualitative data that provided detailed information about the participants experience with the referral process, interaction with employment counselors and their overall views of the changes that have come about in their family's living situation because of the services provided, in their cultural context, was collected using focus group discussions and participant interview methods. Program participants were randomly selected and a total of nine participants took part in the focus group discussion. The discussion was facilitated in Spanish. Responses were transcribed from Spanish to English by the notetaker, who is bi-lingual in Spanish and English languages. A \$30 gift card was provided to focus group participants as a thank you for participating on the focus group discussion and sharing their experience about the program.

In addition, service-related data was collected from MFIP employment counselors from four different employment service providers "Partners for Equity" organizations, namely: WFS, AVIVO, Hired, Goodwill-Ester Seals and two CLUES staff by survey method.

A total of eight employment counselors who make MFIP participant referrals to the culturally specific services at CLUES were purposively selected and completed the survey questions and reflected on the challenges they faced with and success stories about the changes they observed in participant's overall motivation to engage in education and employment activities, the referral process to CLUES and the significance of collaboration between CLUES staff and employment counselors.

A link containing open-ended survey questions was sent to each of the selected employment counselors via email. Responses were analyzed by descriptive and content analysis methods.

Quantitative service outcome data of 45 participants including the total number of participants served from January 1,2020 to December 31,2022 was collected from the Workforce One (WF1) database on the identified program outcomes namely: engagement, education, employment, and employment retention of participants. Results were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods namely: counts, average, percentage, and percentage points computed with Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and presented using tables and graphs.

### Limitations

- Participant enrollment was generally low. There were only 45 participants enrolled in the culturally specific services at CLUES from January 1,2020-December 31,2022.
- Quantitative program outcome data was collected from the 45 participants enrolled in the program; and a total of nineteen people participated in the focus group discussion and the survey. This is not a large enough number to generalize about the importance of the culturally specific services model. It does, however, allow us to learn from the experiences of these people.
- The focus group discussion was transcribed from Spanish to English, and this could have potentially caused translation bias.



## Results and Discussion

The main purpose of this evaluation is to collaboratively learn (co-learn) about the culturally specific services at CLUES by engaging with stakeholders and learn from each other and use the learning to improve services for the future.

The analysis and reporting in this paper will focus on the service process effectiveness with regards to the referral process, participants experience with employment counselors, with the service they have received/receiving at CLUES and the impacts that have come about in their living situation in a culturally specific context. The views and experiences of the employment counselors and CLUES staff about the importance of the partnership, factors affecting the referral process, and the overall motivation they have observed on program participants to engage in employment and education activities have also been considered.

Responses were received from a total of 19 respondents in the following order: nine program participants, eight employment counselors from four employment service provider organizations, and two CLUES staff. And quantitative program outcome data was collected from 45 participants enrolled in the program.

Program participants shared their views and experiences about the services they received at CLUES, how the services have impacted their family's living situation, what service they hoped to have been provided, their concerns and disappointments about the continuous service interruptions at CLUES because of staff turnover.

There was overall positive response from parents participated in the focus group discussion on the services they have received at CLUES in the past. However, there were also serious concerns among the respondents that need improvement.

MFIP employment counselors and CLUES staff have also shared about their experience. In addition, quantitative service outcome data on education, engagement and employment was collected from WF1.

## Responses from MFIP participants

A total of nine program participants have participated in the focus group discussion and shared their experience about the culturally specific services at CLUES. Overall, there were positive responses in all the service outcomes that they were able to access through CLUES cultural navigators in the past. Participants have also openly expressed their disappointments about the service interruption at CLUES since the past several months.

### **Who referred you to CLUES? How soon were you contacted by CLUES staff after the referral? Was the referral process quick?**

In addition to their employment counselors, focus group participants mentioned several ways on how they get connected to CLUES services including: families and friends, CLUES cultural navigators, in person walk-ins, via their social worker and, previous personal acquaintance with CLUES:

- *I found out about CLUES through my sister-in-law.*
- *Michael was the one who contacted me from CLUES through my social worker.*
- *Through Adriana, afterwards I studied English classes here, but it has been a while since I had come here.*
- *I already knew about CLUES, although I had not come here physically. I have received a lot of help through CLUES, especially through Aime.*
- *I had come to CLUES some years ago looking for diapers, now I have a different necessity due to a surgery that I had and that is why I am here.*

When asked about how soon they have been contacted by CLUES staff after referred by their MFIP employment counselors, participants responses were consistently positive. They said, “everything was fast” and they were contacted by CLUES staff quickly mentioning staff persons:

- *For me everything was fast, Georgina contacted me right away and that’s why I started coming to the workshops. They also got in contact with me quickly, first with Georgina and then with Perla.*

The above responses show that former CLUES staff were able to connect with participants on a timely manner once referrals are made. Thus, the low number of participant referral might not necessarily be caused by slow response from CLUES at least for the period the above-named staff were working with participants.

Participants overall experience with their employment counselors was positive. They described their experience stating:

- *My experience has been good, I have had appointments with him so that he can guide me, and he has helped me a lot.*
- *It has been a positive experience with my employment counselor.*
- *My employment counselor is very good, she is always attentive and helped me join the workshops.*
- *I talked to Aime right after I was diagnosed with cancer, and they contacted me very quickly. Georgina helped me a lot, she is very good.*
- *The only thing we couldn't resolve was when she helped me get in touch with a lawyer.*

In addition to job search and other support services, participants stated that they have been enrolled to different CLUES program activities at different times:

- *I was in the empowerment workshop, business entrepreneurship.*
- *I was in the CLUES gardening activity where you can plant seeds.*
- *I was in the personal empowerment workshop.*
- *I was in the early successes, sowing success, personal empowerment, CPR, and English classes.*

When asked how the culturally specific service at CLUES is helping them to achieve their goals, mixed responses were received.

While participants have greatly appreciated and acknowledged the support they received at CLUES in the past, they have also expressed their disappointment and concerns regarding the current situation of the services at CLUES stating:

- *CLUES has helped me a lot, I went to the early achievements workshop where they teach you how to have your own daycare business, but I wasn't able to do the business because where I live, they won't give you the permit needed, so I am looking for work and now that Georgina is no longer here, I don't know who to lean on. Filling out paperwork in English is difficult for me, and before I had Georgina to help me but now that's not the case. My employment coach gave me documents to fill out, but they are in English.*
- *When Georgina worked here, she helped me a lot, but now that she has left CLUES, and nobody is helping me.*
- *Now they are no longer assisting me, but they did help me a lot before, even in how to ask for help and look for resources. They give you the knowledge to help others as well, I have told other people I know about the help that CLUES provides. Yes, CLUES also helped me help someone else. I was able to help a friend and give her resources.*

- *They have helped me in the past. Now I do have a need because of the surgery I had in my head but, I haven't received any help. I have three kids, and I need help.*
- *My experience has been great, but the assistance that we had before with Georgina is gone and now there is a hole there. I have documents from the county that I need to fill out and send and now since I don't have a caseworker to help me it has become very difficult.*
- *I have received a lot of help at CLUES in the past, although now I don't have anyone to speak to at CLUES.*

Participants have consistently said that they are not receiving help since Georgina, the cultural navigator staff person, who worked and have established strong relationship with them has left CLUES early in the year and the position has not been filled. Participant's experience show the importance of retaining experienced program staff in maintaining strong relationship, ensuring resident centered and needs based service delivery and program service continuity.

**Tell us how the employment and education related services you have received/ are receiving at CLUES are meeting yours and your children's expectations?**

- *They helped me with looking for a job.*
- *Georgina was a very big motivation for me. She was very positive with me; she was a strength for me, and I learned a lot from her. CLUES, through her, gave me a lot of support. That is what I have learned from here, and I have gotten a lot of support.*

Participants experience with the workshops and cohort activities, connection to the culturally specific services at CLUES in strengthening family interactions and establishing parents support circle, was positive:

- *I believe that CLUES as an association is very good. Before coming to CLUES, I haven't had help between my children and I specifically. I have always been a rigid mother, and during my cancer, Lisa spoke to my kids, telling them that their mom could do it, that she could win the battle. My family is now more united than before.*
- *They have helped me a lot because I am here alone with my baby, and they have helped me in learning more about how to raise and take care of my baby, as well as being a part of the circle of support here.*
- *The workshops were important to me because they helped me in looking for work, being a better mom, and being a better person...they have been very important.*

### What did CLUES do to help you adapt to the community you currently live in?

- *I am one of the pioneers of the consulate, I was one of the people pushing for there to be a consulate of Mexico here in Minnesota, so community matters a lot to me.*
- *Yes, CLUES did help me out to adapt to the community.*
- *They have helped me in knowing how to navigate the system, because when you are new here you don't know how to take the bus, transportation, and so many more things.*
- *I came from my country while I was pregnant and they helped me find medical assistance, even how to navigate the medical system too.*
- *CLUES helped me in getting a psychologist for my daughter, in filling out paperwork, and in that way, they have helped both my daughter and I in adapting better.*

Participants described the support they received from culturally specific services at CLUES:

- *I have received support to pay my bills, when I was left without work, they also helped me in getting food stamps. They also give food to families here. I think us Latinos sometimes don't feel welcome even if we are legal residents or citizens here and having a place that is also Latino to come to helps in feeling supported.*
- *I definitely felt supported by CLUES. They helped me get medical insurance for my son, diapers, as well as just feeling empowered through the workshops. They also helped me get healthy food and that was important for my son and I, since being in a new country was difficult. Filling out documents was also a huge help, and they assisted me with all of that.*
- *Well, what was said above about helping me and my daughter, that would be my same answer.*

On the importance of the culturally specific services at CLUES, participants expressed their appreciation to each aspect of the service they received, saying that all the service were very important to them in meeting their needs in so many ways. For example, one of the discussion participants reflected their experience more compressively stating:

- *They helped me in getting custody of my son, and that was the most important thing for me. It has all been important, but everything related to my son's growth, since being here alone with no other support. It has been hard, but the assistance CLUES has given me related to that is what's most important. Basically, I thought to myself "what are the things I can do so my son can be well, what would be best for him?". CLUES was able to give me answers to that question.*

Some of the focus group participants have also shared their concerns about service-related assistance that they have hoped to receive from Ramsey County:

- *This is for Ramsey County, I belong to an association that focuses on cancer, and I am wondering why the county doesn't help people in crisis situations that have cancer. There are people I know who truly need the help and when we try to get help through the county, we are denied that assistance. I would like to know what is happening there, what is the issue?*
- *In my case my assistance has been suspended, same with the food stamps. Whenever I try to talk to someone about my case, the social worker only speaks English and that is a barrier. Now is when I need help the most and now is when that help is being denied to me.*

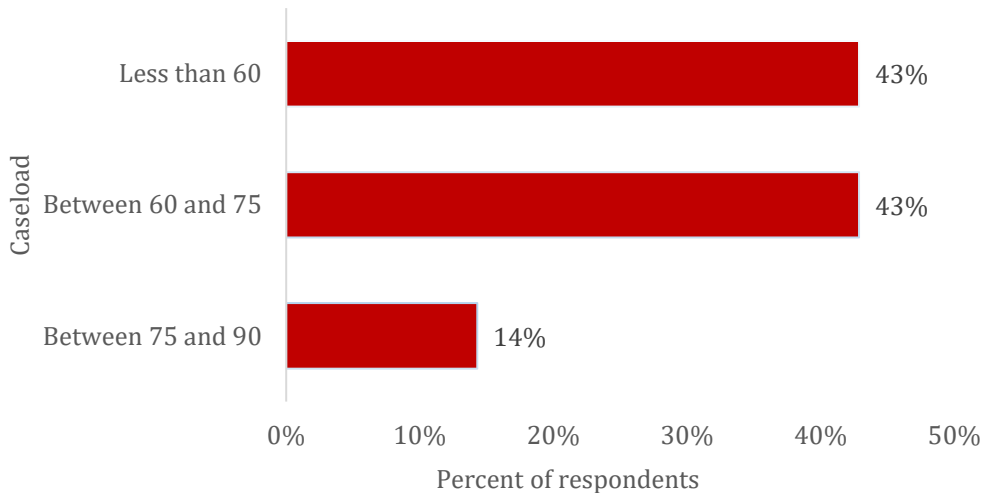
**Responses from employment counselors**

Thirty three percent of the employment counselors participated in this survey identify themselves as Hispanic/Latino, other 33% White; and the remaining 17% identify themselves as African American and Hmong respectively. Overall, 43% of these employment counselors have served in their current role for more than five years, 29% of them have served from two to five years while the remaining 29% served less than two years in their current role.

When asked about their level of familiarity with CLUES, the majority of the employment counselors (86%) stated that they are familiar with CLUES program from basic understanding (43%) to deep understanding (43%) of the CLUES program. Only 14% of these respondents stated that “they don’t know much about the CLUES program”.

Regarding caseload in the past six months, 43% of the employment counselors who completed this survey stated that they worked with less than 60 MFIP participants and other 43% worked with 60-75 participants, while 14% have case load of between 75-90 (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Employment counselors’ caseload**

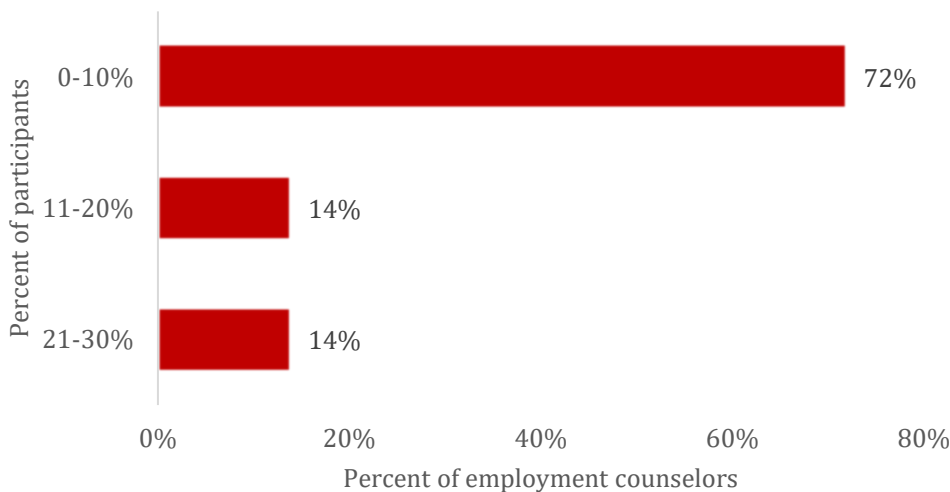


The majority of respondents (72%) stated that only up to 10% of the participants they work with identify as Hispanic/Latino whereas 14% stated 11- 20% and the remaining 14% stated that 21-30% of the participants in their MFIP caseload identify as Hispanic/Latino in the past six months (see Figure 2).

This is not a large enough data to conclude if the percentage of MFIP participants on the employment counselor’s caseload who identify as Hispanic/Latino has contributed to the low number of referrals made to CLUES for culturally specific services. It does, however, allow us to suggest from this experience that there was a direct correlation between the percent of Hispanic/Latino participants on employment counselor’s case load and the total number of referrals made to the culturally specific services.

Thus, one can suggest that the caseload might be one contributing factor for the low number of referrals among many other factors (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2:Percent of MFIP participants who identify as Hispanic/Latino**



**How often do you refer MFIP participants you work with to CLUES?**

Only 43% of the employment counselors stated that they make MFIP participant referrals to CLUES “frequently” while 57% said they make participant referrals “sometimes”.

This shows that there is a need to devise a collaborative effort between Partners for Equity organizations providing MFIP employment services and CLUES to increase the number and frequency of MFIP participant referrals to CLUES for culturally specific services to benefit more parents and their children to get connected to culturally relevant resources to better serve them and improve outcomes for their family.

On the other hand, the majority of employment counselors in this survey (75%) stated that personal or family crises interfere with the participant’s ability to attend CLUES programs. One of the respondent employment counselors added stating that “participants are employed full-time and no time to engage in additional programming”. This statement might hold true in certain situations, particularly in a situation where participants opt to pick any job to meet their family’s immediate needs but may not reflect the circumstances of all participants. It is very



important to remember that the goal of MFIP is to increase earnings and decrease cash assistance. This goal can be achieved by helping parents find gainful employment. MFIP participants enrolled in CLUES culturally specific services who took part in the focus group discussion consistently stated that they still need help on a wide range of areas to meet their family's needs. This shows that there is a need for culturally specific services in Hispanic/Latino community.

To mitigate the conflict in scheduling between participants availability and CLUES program service schedule, it is important to adapt a flexible service schedule that can accommodate participant's work schedule to some extent and meet residents where they are at. This will allow sufficient time to engage with participants and provide the services they need to better help them achieve better employment and other related outcomes that lead to financial stability.

### **How do you connect MFIP participants to the CLUES programs?**

MFIP employment counselors (83%) provide a formal referral (paperwork) for participants to connect participants to access CLUES services; while only 17% said that they share details with participants about CLUES, including their personal experiences with the program and with other participants they have worked with.

Providing a formal referral form (paperwork) to participants to access services is an important step in the referral process. However, there is a need to improve engagement efforts with participants, share about the program in detail, including success stories, resources available to them and their families. This can help participants gain better knowledge and understanding of the program and see the value in the services. This in turn can contribute towards effectiveness of the referral process and benefit many deserving participants.

The majority of respondents in this survey (75%) stated that personal or family crises and participant's employment or personal schedule (60%), which regularly conflicts with CLUES program service schedules, participants failure to connect with CLUES to attend orientation, or not being able to see any value in the program after attending orientation and CLUES slow response to connect with participants in a timely manner to the referral (50%) are among the factors that very significantly interfere with successful referral to CLUES services. Other 50% of the respondents said that participant's MFIP employment services case closure moderately interfere with the referral process.

### **Which of the following factors are most important in your determination to refer a participant to CLUES?**

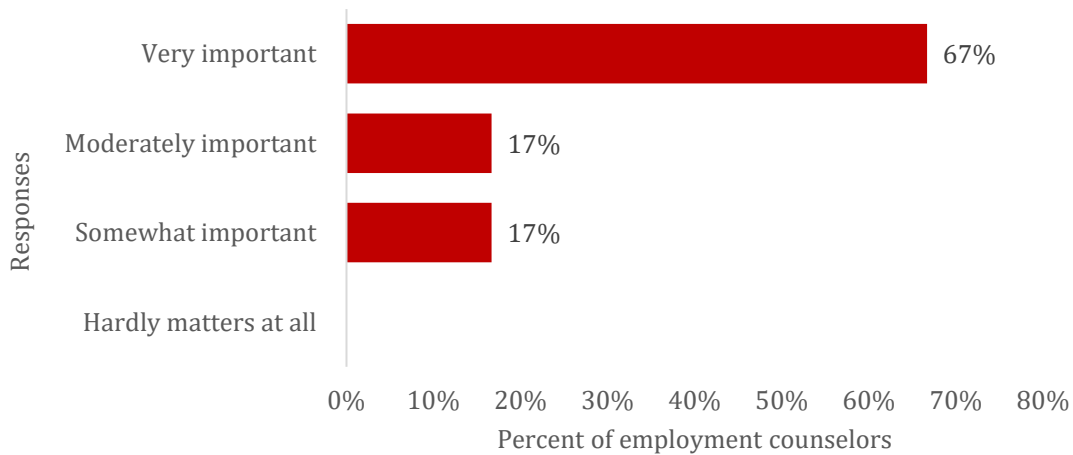
Participants motivation to engage with CLUES, employment counselors personal experience with and understanding of CLUES services (100%) and goal-oriented discussion with participants needs (80%) are found to be very important determinants for employment counselors to refer Hispanic/Latino MFIP participants to CLUES. Whereas agency expectations of MFIP employment counselors to refer all Hispanic/Latino families whose case is more than 48 months old, was rated the lowest (17%) in the importance list. Thus, agency expectations doesn't seem to prompt employment counselors to make referrals to CLUES services to a larger extent.

**To what extent do you believe that your connection to and relationship with CLUES staff is an important factor in successfully engaging participants in CLUES services?**

The majority of the employment counselors (67%) believe that connection to and relationship with CLUES staff is very important that it almost always makes the difference, while 33% believe that it is moderately important – that it often makes a difference. This shows that 100% of the employment counselors in this survey believe that connection to and relationship with CLUES is an important factor to successfully engage participants in services. Similarly, 67% of the employment counselors believe that their active participation in CLUES programming is very important that it almost always makes the difference to successfully engage participants in CLUES services. The remaining 17% believe that the relationship is moderately important –that it often makes a difference. This shows that 84% of the employment counselors believe that active participation in and experience with culturally specific service programming is an important factor for successful participant engagement in services. In this regard, some of the respondents attested to this and shared their personal experience stating, “the engagement I have had with CLUES staff has made a difference in connecting participants to CLUES programs and support”.

In addition to sharing experience with CLUES staff, 67% of the employment counselors believe that sharing experiences with parents through dialogue, is a very important factor that it almost always makes a difference in successfully enrolling participants to CLUES services, 17% said moderately important and the remaining 17% somewhat important.

**Figure 3:MFIP Employment counselors views on the importance of sharing experience with parents through dialogue**



**What difference/s did you observe in participants overall motivation to engage in employment and education activities since they began participating in the culturally specific services at CLUES?**

MFIP employment counselors and CLUES staff in this survey had similar observation about participants' overall motivation to engage in employment and education activities since they began participating in the culturally specific services at CLUES.

They described participants overall motivation stating:

- *Attitude, feeling more support, able to get things done faster without any language barriers.*
- *Participants receive additional supports for resources on employment, spoken in their native language with staff who share similar cultural values.*
- *Participants were able to have a contact person in their primary language. Access one-on-one support with Ramsey County applications, forms and hourly logs that are mandatory to comply with MFIP. And additional incentives for completing programming at CLUES.*
- *I feel like participants are more engaged and we capture more information on what's going on with the whole family, they often start goals that they have mentioned for a long time, but don't commit until referred to CLUES.*
- *Participants are really engaged with all the activities of CLUES.*

On the other hand, employment counselors in this survey expressed their concern on how the staff turnover at CLUES and service interruption because of this is negatively affecting the successful referral process and service delivery to participants in need of services stating:

- *Participants who were referred got lost during staff transitioning and in a great need of culturally specific services.*
- *I think it's important to be understanding and flexible when working with participants who are experiencing a lot of life stressors, sometimes that isn't always understood, especially in our Hispanic/Latine culture, we sometimes think that "if people wanted to, they would" it's a common phrase we have. I hope CLUES can continue to be flexible and understanding when it comes to clients who "fall out of connection" it's not because they "aren't motivated or aren't trying hard enough". Life happens, folks experience mental health issues and we all just have to have a little more patience and continue trying to engage them. Also, when it comes to support services you can rely on us, employment counselors, to pick them up and get them to the client too, but if clients aren't able to pick it up, it doesn't seem fair that they lose out on them if they can't pick them up. Overall thanks for the amazing partnership thus far.*

## Responses from CLUES staff

The CLUES cultural navigator, who closely worked with parents in 2022, reported that program participants visited CLUES looking for support on a wide range of service areas to meet their personal and family needs in the proportion listed in (see Table 1).

Currently, the cultural navigator position is vacant and the closest staff who connect with program participants in this program at CLUES have completed the survey. Both staff members identify themselves as Hispanic/Latina and have worked in their current roles from a little less than two years to over seven years. They stated that they are engaging with staff from “Partner for Equity” organizations on daily basis.

When asked about how the referral process is going and the aspect of the referral process that needs improvement, one of the respondent staff stated, “I would like to have the opportunity to help more participants and receive more referrals”. While the other staff respondent stated that “the referral process is good. Communication is very important to us”.

This implies that there is a need to increase the number of participant referrals to CLUES culturally specific services. This is consistent with the low number of referrals recorded in the span of the past three years.

When asked about the reasons that significantly interfere with a successful referral of MFIP participants to CLUES services, CLUES staff stated that among many factors, “personal or family crises and CLUES’s slow response to connect with participants in a timely manner in response to the referrals made very significantly interfere with the participant’s ability to attend CLUES programs”. Moreover, conflict of participant’s personal schedule or work with CLUES program schedules, MFIP employment services case closure, participants failure to initially connect with CLUES to attend the orientation found to moderately affect the referral process. On the other hand, participants choice not to enroll in CLUES programs even after attending orientation session has also interfered with the referral process to some extent because they do not see value in the program.

This calls for devising effective outreach and program promotion strategy to educate about the importance of the culturally specific services in the Hispanic/Latino community.

The CLUES staff who completed this survey stated that their relationship with employment counselors that make MFIP participant referrals to their organization is good and they usually communicate via email, phone, and in-person. They also believe that mutual sharing of experience, connection to and relationship with partner organizations staff/employment counselors is “very important—that it almost always makes the difference” in successfully engaging participants in CLUES services. These staff shared closely similar observation about program participants overall motivation to engage in employment and education activities since they began participating in the culturally specific services at CLUES saying:

- *Participants seem very engaged with activities at CLUES.*
- *Participants are really engaged with all the activities of CLUES.*

**Table 1: CLUES participant needs, activities, and reason for visit**

<b>Service type and reason for visit</b>	<b>Percent of participants seeking the listed service</b>
ESL class	75%
County/State applications forms support	67%
Job search	58%
SNAP related support	56%
Platicas en Familia (Support with family issues)	53%
Housing related support	45%
Personal development related	45%
Connecting to mental health service	42%
Circulo de apoyo (Support circle)	39%
Computer use	33%
Career development	25%

Source: CLUES cultural navigator record, 2022

## Program outcome data

Quantitative service outcome data of the 45 participants including the total number of participant referrals made from January 1,2020 to December 31,2022, total number of participants enrolled in program activities viz, education, engagement, and employment and corresponding activity hours completed one quarter before enrollment (“pre-enrollment”) and one quarter after enrollment (“post-enrollment”) to CLUES services in each activity category was collected from the Workforce One (WF1) database and presented in the tables and graphs below. Successful cohort activity completion rate was computed, pre-and post-enrollment activity hours were compared.

The total number of referrals to CLUES program during the past three program years was generally low. The WF1 data shows that there were only 45 participant referrals on the record from January 1,2020-December 31,2022. Sixty-five participants enrolled in group activities. The total number of participant enrollment to activities (see Table 6) is usually higher than the number of total participant referrals made (see Table 2); because participants can enroll in one or more of the CLUES group activities at any given point in time after the referral is completed successfully.

The number of referrals has increased from a total of 10 participants in 2020 to a total of 23 participants in 2022. However, the number of successful participants, those who were able to complete one of the CLUES activities, after enrollment was very low in 2023 (see Table 2). From the total of 45 participants, 57% of them have successfully completed one or more of the CLUES group activities/ cohorts (education, engagement, and employment) out of which 23% of enrolled participants are working.

The pre-enrollment and post-enrollment hours comparison result shows that participants do better than they were doing prior to participating in CLUES culturally specific services. When compared to the pre-enrollment hours, one quarter after participants enrolled to CLUES services (post-enrollment):

- Engagement hours increased by 118.8%.
- Employment hours increased by 77%.
- Education hours increased by 9.8%.
- Total participants activity hours in education, engagement and employment has increased by 71%, which is, from 2174 hours recorded a quarter prior to enrollment to CLUES service to 3720 a quarter after completed CLUES services ( see Figure 5).

The increase in the education activity hours (9.8%) a quarter after completing CLUES program, is very low in the span of three years. There was a decline in education activity hours by 32.8% during 2021 program year one quarter after enrollment. This might be attributed to many factors including:

- Participant’s needs to enroll in education activities.
- Personal/family situations.
- Program service schedule inconvenience with their work schedule.

Compared to the 2020 program year, total activity hours in all the three activity areas have increased by 41% in 2021 and by 132% in 2022. This shows that there has been a significant effort made from the CLUES cultural navigators resulting to such a positive progress in the total number of hours participants invested across the three activities. The increase in the total activity hours in 2022 in education, engagement, and employment might be attributed to several factors that needs further multiple factor analysis including examining the negative impacts of COVID 19 on program services delivery in 2020. However, it is possible to suggest with some degree of certainty that the increase in participants activity hours might not be achieved without the culturally specific services participants received at CLUES.

**Table 2: Total participant referrals to CLUES by year**

Parameters	Referral year			
	2020	2021	2022	Total
Number of successful participants	9	7	10	26
Number of unsuccessful participants	0	1	0	1
Cases with no assigned activity in WF1	1	4	13	18
Total number of referrals	10	12	23	<b>45</b>
Percent of successful participants /year	90%	58%	43%	

Source: [Workforce One \(WF1\)](#)

**Table 3: Participant pre-enrollment activity hours record**

Year	Number of hours by activity type			
	Education	Engagement	Employment	Total activity hours by year
2020	6	119	240	365
2021	396	26	165	587
2022	4	201	1017	1222
Total pre-enrollment hours by activity type	406	346	1422	2174

Source: [Workforce One \(WF1\)](#)

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<sup>1</sup> **Successful** is used for participants that did complete one of the CLUES group activities (cohorts) and **unsuccessful** is used for participants that did not complete any of the CLUES group activities (cohorts) and exited from program.

**Table 4: Participants post-enrollment activity hours**

Year	Number of hours by activity type			Total activity hours by year
	Education	Engagement	Employment	
2020	153	178	323	654
2021	266	158	499	923
2022	27	421	1695	2143
Total post-enrollment hours by activity type	446	757	2517	<b>3720</b>

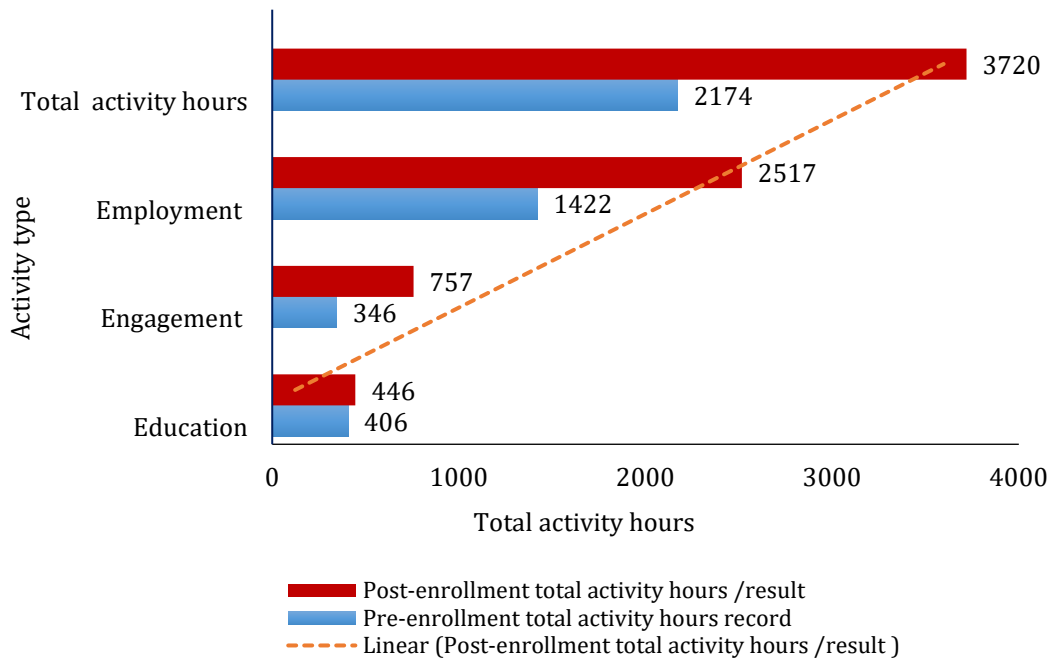
Source: [Workforce One \(WF1\)](#)

**Table 5: Pre-and post-enrollment total activity hours**

Activity type	Pre-enrollment total activity hours record	Post-enrollment total activity hours /result	Percent increase in activity hours
Education	406	446	9.85%
Engagement	346	757	118.80%
Employment	1422	2517	77%
Total hours by activity	2174	3720	71%

Source: [Workforce One \(WF1\)](#)

**Figure 4: Pre-and post-enrollment activity hours**





**Table 6: Total number of participant enrollment to CLUES activities**

Activity type	Number of participants enrolled in activities			
	2020	2021	2022	Total enrollment by activity
Education	5	6	1	12
Engagement	10	10	18	38
Employment	2	3	10	15
<b>Total enrollment by year</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>65</b>

Source: [Workforce One \(WF1\)](#)

## Lessons learned

- Listening to program participants' and other stakeholders' voices and hearing their experience in the service process and learn about the challenges families face is a very important input for program improvement.
- The need to adapt a flexible service schedule that accommodates participant's work schedule and meet residents where they are at will help mitigate the participant's employment or personal schedule which regularly conflicts with service providers schedules and interferes with participants ability to attend programs. This will allow sufficient time to engage with participants and provide the services they need to better help them achieve better employment and other related outcomes that lead to financial stability.
- Retaining experienced program staff is a very important factor in maintaining strong relationship with cultural communities and partner organizations to ensuring resident centered and needs based service delivery and program service continuity.

## Recommendations

- Resolve program service interruption by recruiting and hiring a “cultural navigator “.
- Implement staff retention mechanism by identifying the main reason causing staff to leave the cultural navigator role. Assessment of compensation and benefit package practices from organizations in similar service sector in the area as CLUES, would also be one important consideration.
- Put staff replacement plan in place in the occasions when staff resign from the role to avoid program service interruption.
- Establish a regular and continuous engagement platform between CLUES staff and employment counselors who make MFIP participant referrals to strengthen collaboration.
- Create and enforce a clear action plan including communication methods for collaborative participant engagement with Partners for Equity organizations providing MFIP employment services and CLUES to increase the number and frequency of MFIP participant referrals to culturally specific services, including parent outreach and program promotion strategy and an in-depth participant orientation/ information session document. This can benefit more parents and their children to get connected to culturally relevant resources to better serve them and improve outcomes for their family.
- Organize cultural events to build network of families and promote program services among the Hispanic/Latino community. Educate the community members about the tangible service activity plans, the goals, and the ways in which participating in the program can help parents and their children achieve their goals.
- Improve employment counselors’ engagement with MFIP participants to share about the CLUES program in detail, resources available to them and success stories of current or previous program participants in the community and educate the importance of the culturally specific services CLUES is providing in helping whole family. This can help MFIP participants gain better knowledge and understanding of the program and see the value in the services. This could also be one way to increase number of participant referrals to services and benefit as many deserving MFIP participants as possible.
- Enter program outcome data accurately and timely and assign participants education, engagement, and employment activity outcomes in WF1 as required by the program.
- Adapt a flexible service schedule that can accommodate participant’s work schedule and other family situations to meet residents where they are at. This will help mitigate the participant’s employment or personal schedule challenges, which regularly conflict with CLUES service schedules and interfere with participants ability to attend programs. This will allow sufficient time to engage with participants and provide the services they need to better help them to achieve better employment and other related outcomes that lead to financial stability. It is also important to establish a follow up and support plan for participants in a time of family crises.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Definition of terms and abbreviations

According to the Ramsey County Request for Proposals "RFP" Document, (2018),

**Culturally specific means:**

- The mission of the contracted agency is rooted in the culture(s) and cultural identity(ies) of the participants served.
- The majority of the board and key executive leadership of the contracted agency represent the race(s), ethnicities, and culture(s) of the participants served.
- Employs, or intends to employ, management and direct service staff who, in part, reflect the race(s), ethnicities, and culture(s) of the participants.
- The agency delivers services to increase participants' employability in a manner that both acknowledges and responds to the legacies of historical trauma, racism, inequality, and poverty that have negatively affected access to, and success with, education and employment opportunities.
- Agency services incorporate and build on participants' values, beliefs, worldviews, and traditions, many of which are rooted in or informed by culture and experience.

**Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP):** Minnesota's welfare reform program for low-income families with children. MFIP helps families move to work.

**Partners for Equity:** The services that the Contractor(s) ("Contractor") will deliver to assist the County will be referred to as Partners for Equity ("PE") as a strategy to reduce racial disparities in program outcomes.

**Co-learning/Collaborative learning:**

An approach of learning through working together. "Collaborative learning is based on the model that knowledge can be created within a population where members actively interact by sharing experiences". The process of collaborative learning allows participants to achieve higher levels of thought.

According to Lev Vygotsky's social development theory, "community is an important factor in the process of creating meaning and knowledge"

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collaborative\\_learning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collaborative_learning)).

**Racial disparity:** According to the Minnesota Department of Human Services ("DHS"), differences between White participants and participants from other racial/ethnic groups on specific MFIP outcome measures that are greater than five percentage points constitute a racial disparity.

**Family Stabilization Services ("FSS"):** FSS is a service track in MFIP for both pre- and post-60-month MFIP participants who: 1) have disabilities; 2) have family members with serious disabilities; 3) are age 60 or older; or 4) are new immigrants. Services are delivered through a strength-based, case management model. Activities in each FSS Employment Plan center on tasks that promote personal and family stability. These participants are identified as "FSS" because the primary caregiver or a second parent on the grant, or a dependent child, has a medically documented disabling physical or mental health condition. Rather than address these participants as "unable to work or train for work," WFS supports the belief that all participants,

regardless of their challenges can work (Ramsey County Request for Proposals "RFP" Document, 2018).

**Self-determination:** is believing you can control your own destiny. It is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead people to set goals for themselves, and to take the initiative to reach these goals. Self-determination involves many attitudes and abilities including self-awareness, assertiveness, creativity, and pride, and problem solving and self-advocacy skills. To take charge of your own life, you must be able to set goals, evaluate options, make choices, and then work to achieve your goals (<https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/independent-community-living/self-determination.asp>).

**SMART Indicators:** are quantitative indicators where the quantitative component is important and relate to changes in numbers.

**Semi-structured interview:** A method used to collect detailed information from a small number of people. Since a semi-structured interview is a combination of an unstructured interview and a structured interview, it has the advantages of both.

**Open ended question:** These are questions where respondents are free to express themselves in their own words. Provide insights that would have otherwise not received.

**Secondary data:** refers to data that is collected by someone other than the primary user.

**Successful:** is used for participants that did complete one of the CLUES cohorts.

**Unsuccessful:** is used for participants that did not complete any of the CLUES cohorts and exited from program.

**Pre-enrollment :** refers to participant's activity hours record one quarter before MFIP participants were enrolled to CLUES culturally specific services.

**Post-enrollment:** refers to participant's activity hours result one quarter after MFIP participants completed the CLUES culturally specific services program and successfully exited.

**Local Flag:** Activity in WF1 when CLUES Partners for Equity program referral is received from the MFIP Employment Counselor and CLUES staff begin working with the participant.

**Workforce One (WF1):** is a case management system used by Employment Service providers in Minnesota.

**ESL:** English as a second language.

**GED:** General educational diploma.

Appendix 2: Employment Counselors responses on the reasons that interfere with successful participant referral

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Very significant</b>	<b>Moderately significant</b>	<b>Somehow significant</b>	<b>Not significant at all</b>
Participant does not connect with CLUES initially or attend the orientation	50%	25%		25%
Participant attends orientation, but does not see value in the program chooses not to enroll in programs	50%	25%		25%
Participant's employment or personal schedule regularly conflicts with CLUES program times/schedules	60%	20%	20%	
Personal or family crises interfere with the participant's ability to attend CLUES programs	75%			25%
CLUES's slow response to connect with the participants in a timely manner in response to the referral	50%		25%	25%
CLUES does not partner with me or keep me informed regarding participants I have referred for services	25%	25%	25%	25%
The participant's MFIP employment services case closes	25%	50%		25%
Other reasons (please specify):				

Appendix 3: Employment counselors' response on factors for their determination to refer MFIP participant to CLUES

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Moderately important</b>	<b>Somehow important</b>	<b>Rarely important</b>
Participant articulates motivation to engage with CLUES based on a thorough understanding of the program	100%			
Participant requests a referral to CLUES	100%			
Based on a discussion of the participant's goals and needs, CLUES services seem most relevant to the participant's situation	80%		20%	
My agency's expectation that I refer all Hispanic families whose MFIP case is more than 48 months old prompts me to refer the participant to CLUES	16.6%		66.6%	16.6%
CLUES has a favorable reputation among fellow counselors and participants I've worked with before	60%	40%		
My personal experience with or understanding of CLUES's services	100%			

### Appendix 4: Logical framework for culturally specific services at CLUES

<b>Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maximize economic self-sufficiency, ensure family stability and contribute towards individuals/participants’ “self-determination”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 75% of program participants’ household earned median income increased and successfully exited from MFIP cash grant by the end of the contract cycle.</li> <li>Participants “self-efficacy” and confidence regarding their ability to play a critical role in their communities improved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WF1 database</li> <li>Participants survey feedback /evaluation report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*No crisis leading to a change in government fiscal policy</li> <li>*No pandemic outbreaks</li> <li>*No civil unrest</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase participants employability</li> <li>To increase participants employment retention</li> <li>To increase Intergenerational Support/ Family Stability through culturally specific services, cohort-based learning-education and pathways to employment activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of enrolled participants found gainful employment and working full-time (FSS) by the end of the program year</li> <li>Participants monthly earned median income increased by at least 33% at three months after completion of cohort group.</li> <li>100% of participants with English language barriers and enrolled in ESL classes acquired basic English language skills and enrolled in job clubs, pathway to employment activities and able to set their own goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WF1 Database, quarterly provider report</li> <li>Participants survey feedback/evaluation report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High to moderate labor force demand and no economic recession</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs/ Expected Results</b>	<p>Parent’s <b>engagement</b> in the following core components of the program services increased</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Employment:</b> services leading to increased skills and work readiness activities - pathways to employment activities</li> <li><b>Employment retention strategies:</b> Participants sustained employment leading to improved economic self-sufficiency</li> <li><b>Education /family stabilization activities:</b> Parents and their children benefit from skills learned in cohort groups, workshops, ESL and GED and through one-on-one programming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of participants reporting to job search hours increased by at least 33% at three months after completion of cohort group.</li> <li>100% of participants complete employment plan activity that includes job retention and career advancement strategies.</li> <li>70% of participants are working and still on MFIP are employed at any level three months after completion of cohort group.</li> <li>participants’ networks of support systems and mentoring relationships expand by 50% at three months after completion of the cohort group.</li> <li>Parents involvement in their children’s educational and social development increases by 50% at three months after completion of the cohort group.</li> <li>Participants are able to retain their employment because of the support system in place and skills they gained (FSS)</li> <li>100% of the parents with English language barrier are enrolled in ESL classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WF1 database/quarterly provider report</li> <li>Participants survey feedback /evaluation report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants are both willing and able to commit to services</li> <li>If there is continued and increased referral of MFIP participants to culturally specific services</li> </ul>
<b>Key activities</b>	<p><b>Providing job skill enhancement and work readiness services to participants:</b> Job coaching, employment plan development, workshops, career readiness /career development trainings, certification, and personal assistance for job skills develop, job placement.</p> <p><b>Education/training:</b> educational enrichment and financial empowerment, housing, and asset-building programs, resource navigation, and external referrals for services to address common barriers...ESL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job coaching, workshops, career readiness trainings, and educational enrichment services were provided to 100% of participants enrolled in the program by end of the cohort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provider service report</li> <li>Program monitoring report</li> <li>WF1 database activity report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If sufficient funds are available to run each program activities and services</li> </ul>
<b>Inputs</b>	Available resources -Financial, human, and material resources available for effective program operations			

<b>Date:</b> _____
<b>Facilitator:</b> _____
<b>Note Taker:</b> _____

Appendix 5: Focus group discussion and survey questions

Focus group discussion/Interview questions **for program participants**

**Facilitator’s note:**

- Welcome and thank everyone for coming to attend the interview/focus group discussion.
- Provide overview of the interview/focus group discussion and what we are using the information for.
- Explain that we are interested in their experience about culturally specific services, the referral process, and their engagement with employment counselors.
- The conversation will take no longer than 120 minutes for focus group discussions /group interviews unless someone wants to stay longer.
- To thank you for your time, you will receive a gift card at the end of the discussion (Participant’s signatures for receipt).

**The purpose of this interview/focus group discussion**

We want to hear your experience about:

- The interactions/engagement you had with your employment counselor related to referral for services at CLUES to better understand what the referral process looked like for you and how the employment counselor described the programs and services at CLUES to you.
- The importance of the culturally specific services you have received or currently receiving at CLLUES.

This feedback will help Ramsey County Workforce Solutions and CLUES to make services better for the future. Participation in the discussion is voluntary and will not affect the services you receive. Your name and personally identifying information during this discussion will not be connected with your responses or views.



**Questions:**

1. Who referred you to CLUES? \_\_\_\_\_  
After how many days/weeks were you contacted by CLUES staff from the referral date?
2. Please describe your experience about the referral to CLUES.
3. Please describe your experience/interactions with your MFIP employment counselor.
4. Which program activities have you been enrolled in CLUES?
5. How are the culturally **specific** services at CLUES helping you to achieve your goals?  
(Example: In finding job, keeping your job, find housing, enrolling in education for you and your children)
6. Tell us how the employment and education related services you have received/ are receiving at CLUES are meeting yours and your children's expectations?
7. What employment retention skills did you learn in CLUES program? and what services are currently provided to help you keep your job?
8. How has your connection to the culturally specific services at CLUES strengthened your family interaction?
9. How important were the workshops and group activities? please describe your experience.
10. What did CLUES do to help you adapt to the community you currently live in?
11. Please describe the support you received from culturally specific services at CLUES.
12. Which program/activity at CLUES was most important for you? Why?
13. If you were referred but didn't participate in the culturally specific services at CLUES, why not?
14. If you have any additional information that you want us to know to improve services for the future, please feel free to tell us.

**Follow up questions for Q #5 (Facilitator's reminder)**

5.1. How many of you have a job now? \_\_\_\_\_

5.2. When did you find the job? After you enrolled in CLUES program or before that?  
\_\_\_\_\_ After \_\_\_\_\_ Before

5.3. How many of you are attending or have attended classes such as English as a Second Language? \_\_\_\_\_

5.4. When did you start going to class? After you enrolled in CLUES program or before that?  
\_\_\_\_\_ After \_\_\_\_\_ Before

## CLUES Culturally specific services evaluation

Survey questions to be completed by **employment counselors**

This survey will help CLUES and Ramsey County Workforce Solutions to make services better for the future. Participation in this survey is voluntary. Participating or not participating will not impact your supervision or job performance. Your name and personally identifying information will not be connected to your response.

**Questions:**

1. What is the name of your agency: \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your role (Job title): \_\_\_\_\_
3. How do you identify yourself in terms of race/ethnicity? (Select all that apply)  
 African American  American Indian  Asian American  Hmong  White  
 Latino/Hispanic  Multi-racial  Other Asian immigrant  Other Black immigrant
4. How long have you been in your current role as an employment counselor?  
 One to six months,  Seven to 12 months  
 Greater than one year but less than 2 years,  Two to five years  
 Greater than five years
5. Which of the following statements best describes your familiarity with CLUES?  
 I have a deep understanding of the CLUES program  
 I have a basic understanding of the CLUES program  
 I don't know much about the CLUES program  
 I have not heard of the CLUES program
6. Based on the past six months, about how many MFIP participants do you work with at any given point in time?  
 Less than 60  Between 60 and 75  Between 75 and 90  More than 90
7. Based on the past six months, about what proportion of the MFIP participants you work with at any given point in time, identify as Hispanic? (In sliding scale to select a percentage 0% to 100% in 10 percentage-point increments)  
 0-10%  11-20%  21-30 %  31-40%  41-50%  51-60%  61-70%  
 71- 80%  81-90  91-100%

8. How often do you refer MFIP participants you work with to CLUES?

Frequently  Sometimes  Rarely  I have never referred a participant to CLUES.

If rarely or never referred a participant, why?

9. How do you connect participants to the CLUES program? (Select all that apply).

I provide a formal referral (paperwork) for the participant to access CLUES

I provide information to the participant about the CLUES program

I share details with the participant about CLUES, including my personal experiences with the program or those of other participants I have worked with

I engage the participant in an in-depth discussion about their values, the philosophy and

approach of CLUES, and share at-length about my personal experiences with the program

I develop and maintain an active relationship with the CLUES engagement and recruitment specialist

10. Which of the following factors are most important in your determination to refer a participant to CLUES?

Factors	Very important	Moderately important	Somehow important	Rarely important	Not important at all
Participant articulates motivation to engage with CLUES based on a thorough understanding of the program					
Participant requests a referral to CLUES					
Based on a discussion of the participant's goals and needs, CLUES services seem most relevant to the participant's situation					
My agency's expectation that I refer all Hispanic families whose MFIP case is more than 48 months old prompts me to refer the participant to CLUES					
CLUES has a favorable reputation among fellow counselors and participants I've worked with before					
My personal experience with or understanding of CLUES's services					

11. Which of the following reasons significantly interfere with a successful referral of MFIP participants to CLUES Services?

Reasons	Very significant	Moderately significant	Somehow significant	Not significant at all
Participant does not connect with CLUES initially or attend the orientation				
Participant attends orientation, but does not see value in the program chooses not to enroll in programs				
Participant's employment or personal schedule regularly conflicts with CLUES program times/schedules				
Personal or family crises interfere with the participant's ability to attend CLUES programs				
CLUES's slow response to connect with the participants in a timely manner in response to the referral				
CLUES does not partner with me or keep me informed regarding participants I have referred for services				
The participant's MFIP employment services case closes				
Other reasons (please specify):				

12. To what extent do you believe that your connection to and relationship with CLUES staff is an important factor in successfully engaging participants in CLUES services?

- Very important – it almost always makes the difference
- Moderately important – it often makes a difference
- Somewhat important – on occasion, it could make the difference
- Hardly matters at all – it rarely or does not make a difference

13. To what extent do you believe that your active participation and experience in CLUES programming (past or present) is an important factor in successfully engaging participants in CLUES services?

- Very important – it almost always makes the difference
- Moderately important – it often makes a difference
- Somewhat important – on occasion, it could make the difference
- Hardly matters at all – it rarely or does not make a difference

14. To what extent do you believe that sharing experiences between you and the participant through dialogue, is an important factor in successfully enrolling participants to CLUES services?

\_\_\_ Very important – it almost always makes the difference

\_\_\_ Moderately important – it often makes a difference

\_\_\_ Somewhat important – on occasion, it could make the difference

\_\_\_ Hardly matters at all – it rarely or does not make a difference

15. What difference/s did you observe in participants overall motivation to engage in employment and education activities since they began participating in the culturally specific services at CLUES?

16. If you have any additional comment or suggestion:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Culturally Specific Services evaluation -CLUES

Survey questions to be completed by **CLUES staff /Cultural Navigators**

This survey will help CLUES and Ramsey County Workforce Solutions to make services better for the future. Participation in this survey is voluntary. Participating or not participating will not impact your supervision or job performance. Your name and personally identifying information will not be connected to your response.

1. Your role (Job title): \_\_\_\_\_
2. How long have you been in your current role?  
\_\_\_ One to six months, \_\_\_ Seven to 12 months  
\_\_\_ Greater than one year but less than 2 years, \_\_\_ Two to five years \_\_\_ Greater than five years
3. How do you identify yourself in terms of race/ethnicity (select all that apply).  
\_\_\_ African American \_\_\_ American Indian \_\_\_ Asian American \_\_\_ Hmong  
\_\_\_ Latino/Hispanic \_\_\_ Multi-racial \_\_\_ Other Asian Immigrant \_\_\_ Other Black Immigrant \_\_\_ White
4. How many times do you engage with relevant staff, such as employment counselors or planners, from partner organizations in a typical month?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How is the referral process going? What aspect of the referral is going well and what needs to improve?



Reasons	Very significant	Moderately significant	Somehow significant	Not significant at all
Participant does not connect with CLUES initially or attend the orientation				
Participant attends orientation, but does not see value in the program and chooses not to enroll in programs				
Participant's employment or personal schedule regularly conflicts with CLUES program times/schedules				
Personal or family crises interfere with the participant's ability to attend CLUES programs				
CLUES's slow response to connect with the participants in a timely manner in response to the referral				
The participant's MFIP employment services case closes				
Other reasons (please specify):				

6. Which of the following reasons significantly interfere with a successful referral of MFIP participants to CLUES Services?

7. Please describe your relationship with employment counselors that make MFIP participant referrals to your organization?

8. To what extent do you believe that your connection to and relationship with partner organizations staff/employment counselors is an important factor in successfully engaging participants in CLUES services?

- Very important – it almost always makes the difference
- Moderately important – it often makes a difference
- Somewhat important – on occasion, it could make the difference
- Hardly matters at all – it rarely or does not make a difference

9. To what extent do you believe that mutual sharing of experience between you and the employment counselors is an important factor in successfully engaging participants in CLUES services?

- Very important – it almost always makes the difference
- Moderately important – it often makes a difference

\_\_\_ Somewhat important – on occasion, it could make the difference

\_\_\_ Hardly matters at all – it rarely or does not make a difference

10. What differences did you observe in program participants overall motivation to engage in employment and education activities since they began participating in the culturally specific services at CLUES?

11. If you have any additional feedback/suggestion that will help to make the referral process effective and efficient, please share: