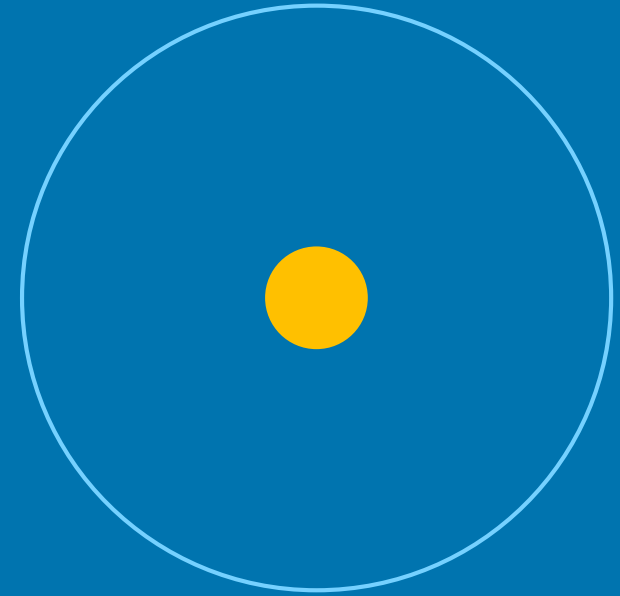


**A HOUSE DIVIDED CANNOT STAND:
CAPACITY BUILDING IN COMMUNITY
BASED DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

**Nathaniel S. Wright PhD
Texas Tech University**



Community Based Development Organizations

- ▶ Are grassroots housing and commercial developers that build homes, develop commercial land, and partner with neighborhood leaders and local government officials
- ▶ CBDOs are often formed by local residents, small business owners, faith-based organizations, and other local stakeholders

Community Based Development Organizations

- ▶ CBDOs build sustainable coalitions to influence state and local policy
- ▶ National Congress for Community Economic Development (NCCED) estimates that over 4600 CBDOs are now operating across the United States

Research Question



What strategic combination of capacity building strategies can be used by nonprofit and public managers to move the organization forward?

SURVEY



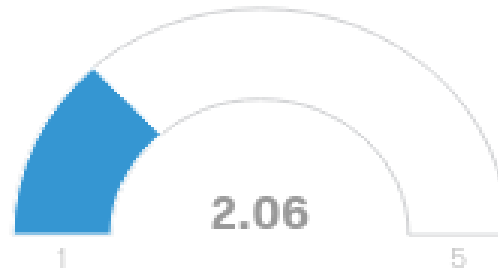
Community Based Capacity Building Survey

Organizational Capacity

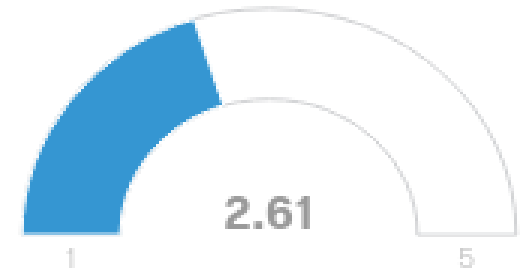
Review organizational performance regularly



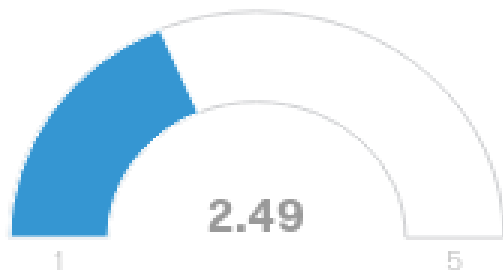
Recruit board members with expertise and external contacts



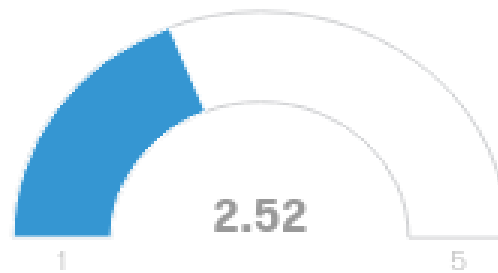
Train relevant staff using up-to-date fiscal management skills



Employ technical consultants when necessary

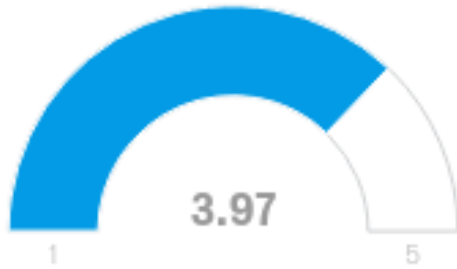


Compensate (salaries, benefits, and pensions) employees commensurate with skills, experience, and commitment to CBDO

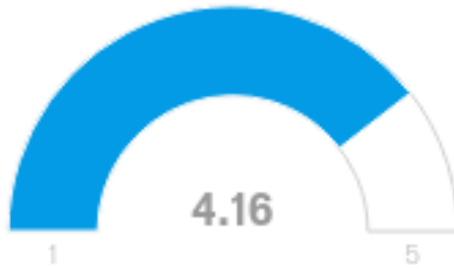


Programmatic Capacity

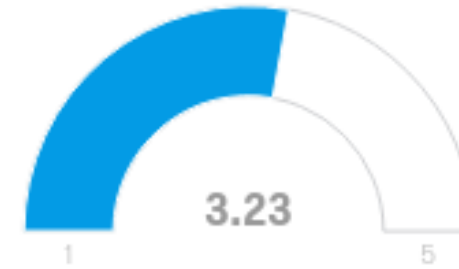
Continually reassess community needs and incorporate them into the organization's mission



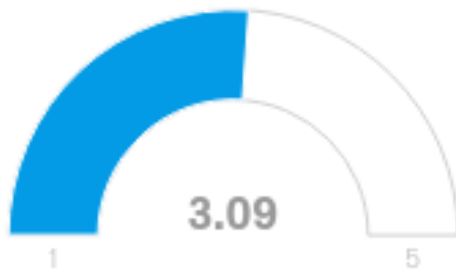
Hire staff with knowledge of and a strong commitment to the community



Promote education of community members to reduce unemployment and increase wages



Provide training and technical assistance in all skill areas

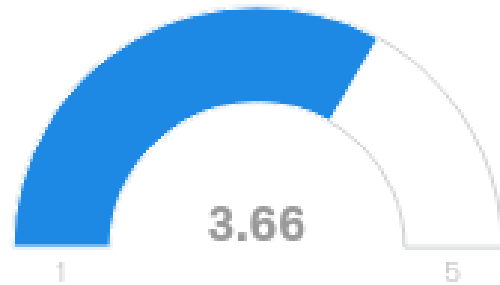


Participate in public and private economic development projects

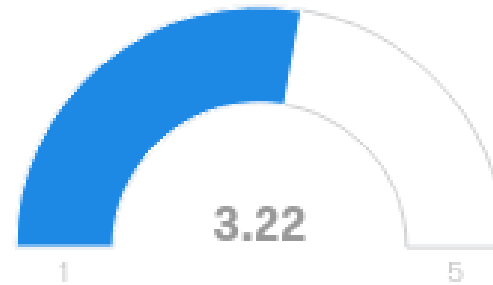


Resource Capacity

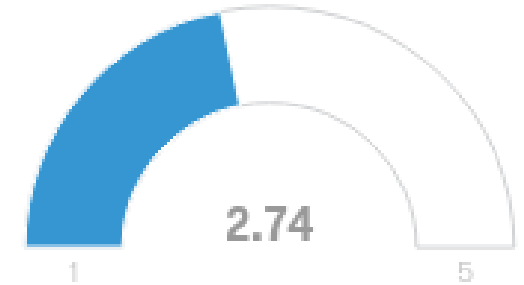
Devote major effort to securing flexible, multiyear support



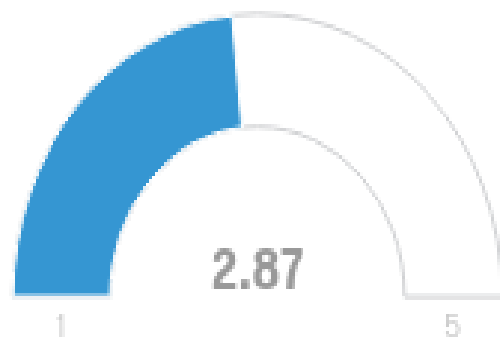
Allocate sufficient staff hours to researching and pursuing new funding sources



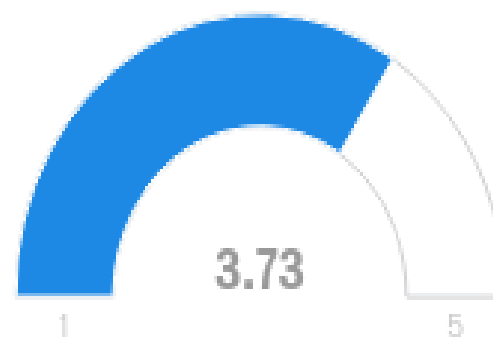
Train staff in grantwriting techniques



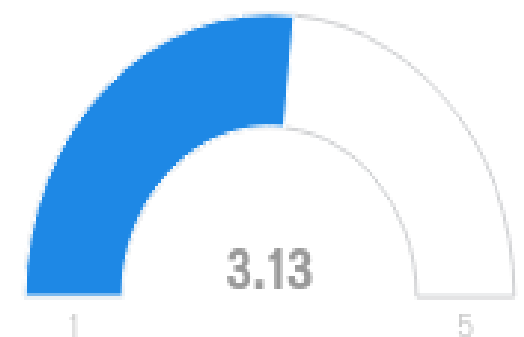
Obtain joint funding with other CBDOs to collaborate on projects



Attract and maintain multiple funders

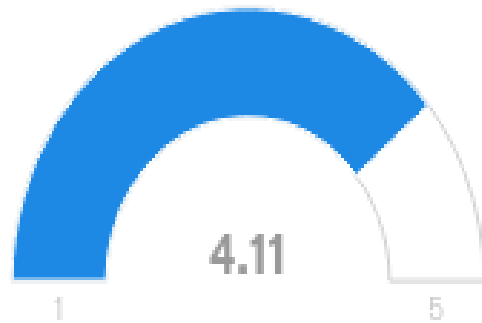


Establish arrangements for sharing space, labor and technical assistance

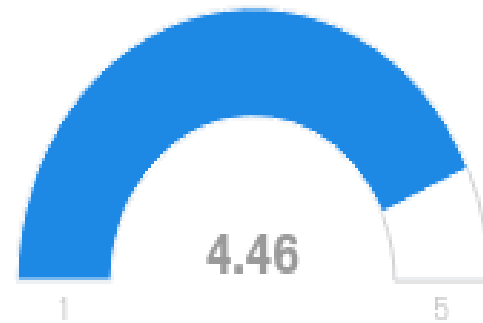


Political Capacity

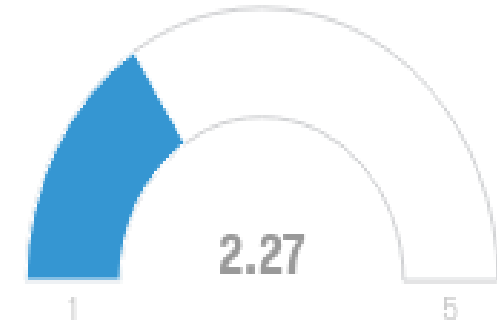
Include community representatives in setting agenda



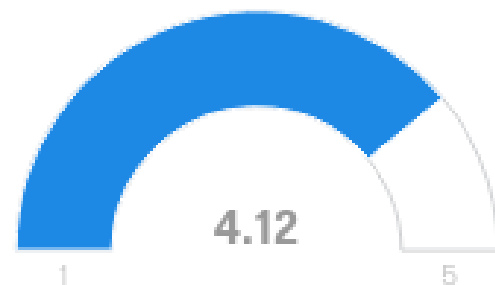
Ensure that board and staff are representative of the community



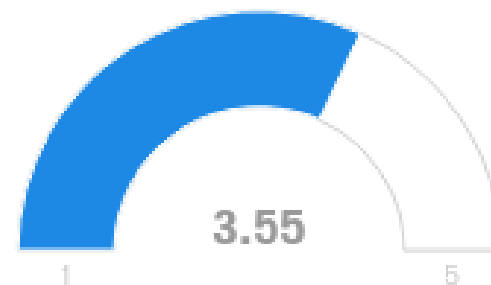
Facilitate voting within the community during elections



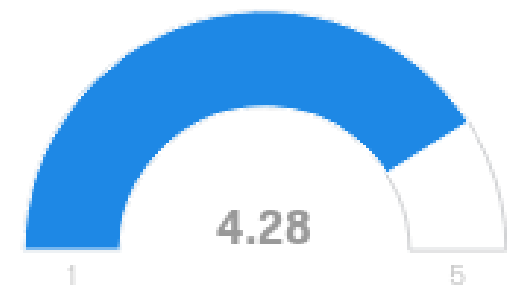
Advocate with, and educate public and private officials about, community needs



Disseminate information on government policy, activities, and economic forces that affect community members



Maintain strong and regular communication with all stakeholders



Network Capacity

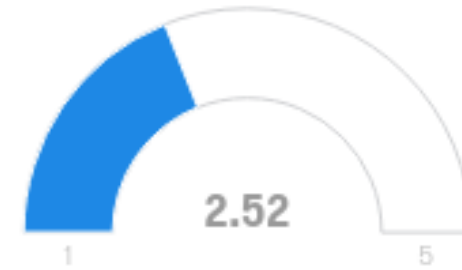
Choose new program areas that draw upon existing skills



Create and participate in networking opportunities, conferences, and social events



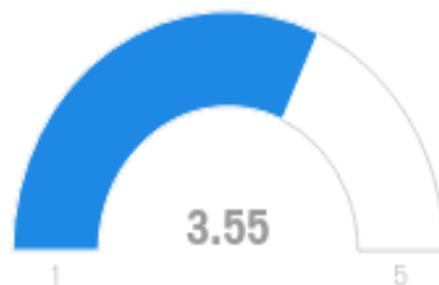
Disseminate regular updates of CBDO activity to existing and potential funders



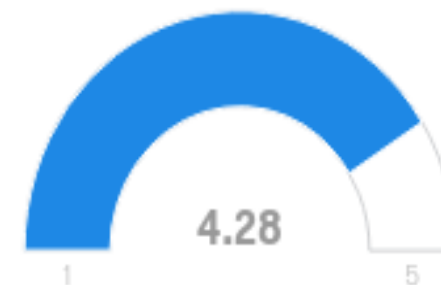
Advocate with, and educate public and private officials about, community needs

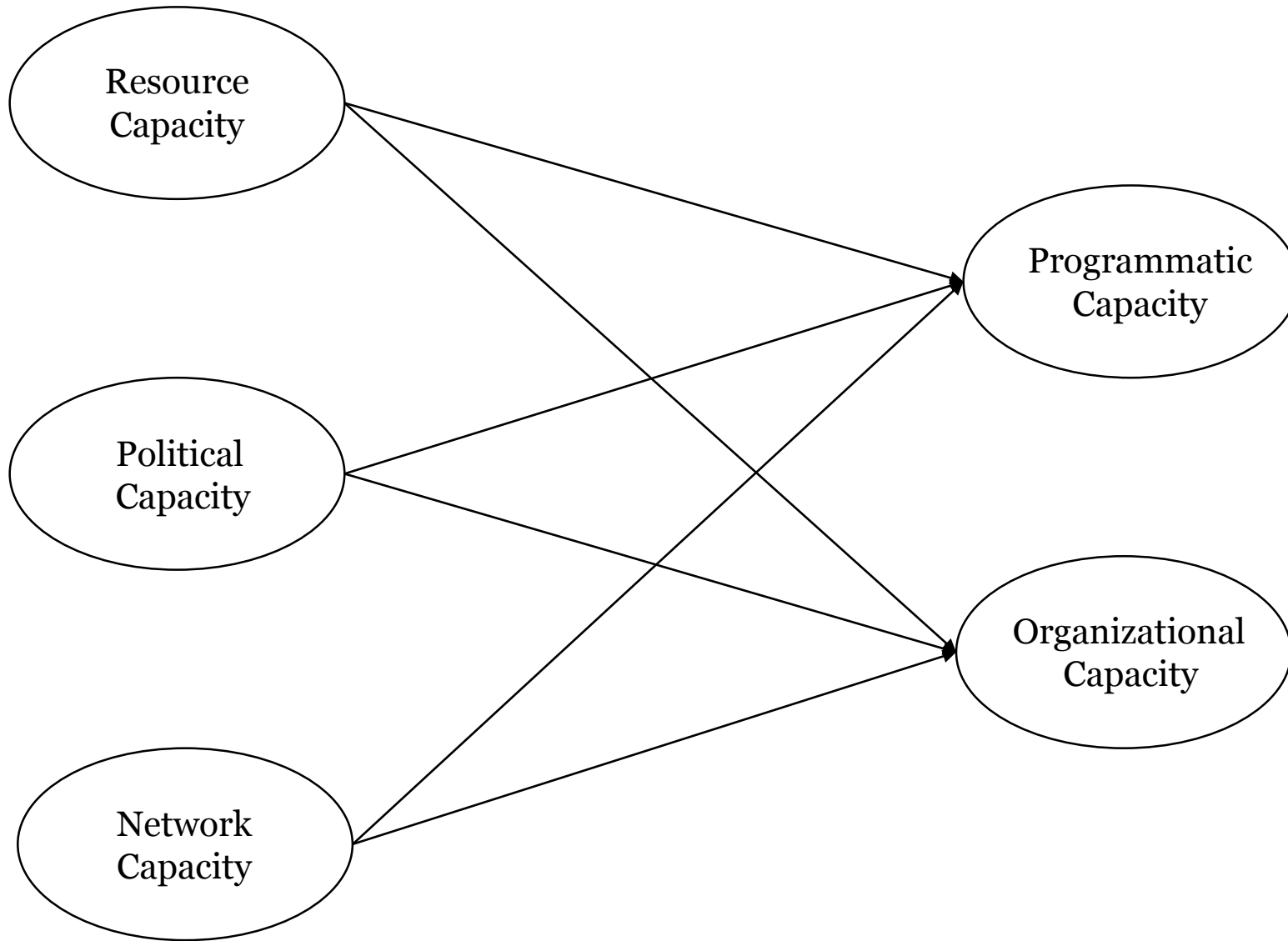


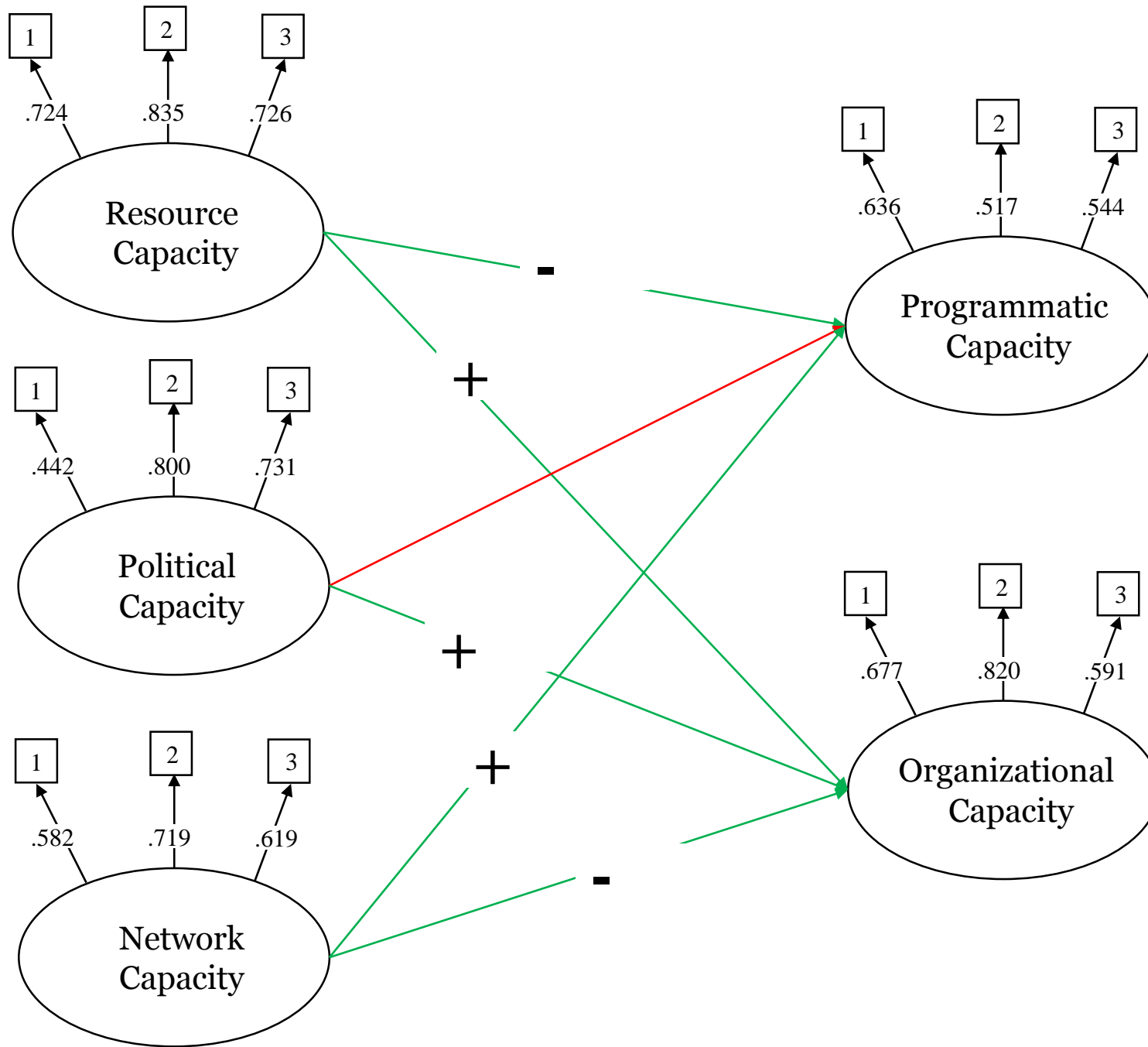
Disseminate information on government policy, activities, and economic forces that affect community members



Maintain strong and regular communication with all stakeholders







Concluding Thoughts

- **Networking capacity** enables CBDOs to do more and to extend their reach beyond what they could do on their own. As such, networking capacity building strategies can help CBDOs build job training and housing programs by working across sectors

Concluding Thoughts

- **Political capacity** equals legitimacy and participation, organizational capacity is enhanced as a result. However, CBDO leaders do not find **political capacity** strategies beneficial to building programmatic capacity.

Concluding Thoughts

- **Resource capacity** is clearly connected to the other components in critical ways. Sufficient resources, for example, enable a CDC to build organizational capacity by hiring staff with necessary skills.
- In regard to organizational capacity, CBDO leaders do not perceive **resource capacity** building strategies to be useful in building organizational capacity.