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¿Cómo se dice cooperativa en inglés?

Building a network of support
for immigrant entrepreneurs



City of Boston
Immigrant Advancement

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MOIA

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

CENTRO COOPERATIVO DE DESARROLLO Y SOLIDARIDAD

EAST BOSTON HARBORSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

ENGLISH FOR NEW BOSTONIANS

SPECIAL THANKS TO MXM CONSULTING FOR THEIR SUPPORT

BOSTON IMMIGRANT COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE



City of Boston
Immigrant Advancement

The Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement's

mission is to strengthen the ability of immigrants and Boston's diverse cultural and linguistic communities to fully participate in the economic, civil, social, and cultural life in Boston.



CENTRO COOPERATIVO DE
DESARROLLO Y SOLIDARIDAD-CCDS

The Center for Cooperative Development and Solidarity-

CCDS mission is to provide educational, technical, and organizational support to groups of people, in and around East Boston, mostly low-income immigrants, to explore the creation of worker- owned cooperatives as an alternative that will help forward the economic, social, cultural, and racial justice of our immigrant communities in Boston within the solidarity economy framework.



East Boston Harborside
Community School

The East Boston Harborside Education Program's

Mission is to provide quality educational programming for the East Boston Community. The Education Program offers courses that will help residents improve their quality of life by empowering them with the tools to succeed in their jobs, furthering their education, and contributing to their communities through civic participation.



english for **NEW**
BOSTONIANS

English for New Bostonians ensures access to high-quality English classes so that adult immigrants across race, education, and migratory backgrounds can pursue their aspirations and contribute to a Commonwealth that fully values their talents and voices.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over a three year grant period, the strategic partnership of the **Boston Immigrant Cooperative Alliance (BICA)** has built a collaborative referral network across local grassroots cooperative developers, ESOL organizations and local government.

The project, which was funded through a multi-year grant from Massachusetts General Hospital's Center for Community Health Improvement (CCHI) Determination of Need Investment Program, has allowed for the Center for Cooperative Development and Solidarity, English for New Bostonians, East Boston Harborside Community School, and the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement to partner and gather information on best practices for longterm, multi-partner alliances to support immigrant led worker-owned cooperatives.

We have included these best practices and participant testimonials in the report, highlighting lessons learned from this project and overall partnership.



BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2020, English for New Bostonians (ENB) and the Center for Cooperative Development and Solidarity (CCDS) applied for a three-year grant in the amount of \$375,000 from Massachusetts General Hospital CCHI, with the support of Boston Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA). This grant allowed for the creation of the Boston Immigrant Cooperative Alliance (BICA).

As part of the partnership, CCDS recruits and trains Latino residents of East Boston who aspire to join or build a cooperative. CCDS connects them to BICA resources so that they can improve their English language skills. This includes connecting the students to the grant-funded English classes at the East Boston Harborside Community School which are based off of a tailored curriculum developed by ENB and Harborside. These classes are customized to promote their professional growth by enhancing their language skills and expanding their knowledge of the cooperative model. The classes are conducted online for 20 weeks, and participants receive a monetary incentive to ease the burden of not being able to work during those hours or cover childcare expenses. All students received a Chromebook which they were allowed to keep upon completion of the course.

Overall, BICA aims to facilitate the economic integration of Boston's immigrant communities by (1) strengthening Boston immigrants' English skills, and (2) increasing immigrants' knowledge on worker-owned cooperatives. Through language and professional training, BICA has supported the economic recovery of Boston immigrants affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the establishment of BICA, MOIA has been conducting bi-annual conversations with project partners and co-op participants to document the impacts and learnings of this grant-funded project. This report encompasses the initiative's goals, the process used, the outcomes attained, the lessons learned, and the best practices from the experience. Additionally, the report features participant quotes and profiles of each partner that describes their respective goals, procedures, and impacts. By sharing the project's successes and challenges, this document aims to contribute to the collective knowledge of cooperative development and immigrant empowerment, providing a roadmap for other organizations looking to promote cooperativism as a social and economic development strategy in immigrant communities.



DOCUMENTATION

Documentation Goals

The goal of this documentation is not to evaluate the project, rather, it is to understand the critical dynamics that are important for multi-year partnerships. MOIA's interest in this initiative goes beyond documenting its outcomes, it aims to provide support and highlight the collaborations between project partners and cooperative participants. In that sense, this report serves to:

1

Tell the story of the partnership BICA by documenting the roles of key partners involved. We want to also highlight the experiences of the program participants, and the overall lessons learned over the 3 year grant period.

2

Share the impact of the project in the community BICA worked in, and how the program had positive ripple effects beyond entrepreneurial and ESOL support. To do so, we are including some of the stories we gathered from our one-on-one conversations.

3

Highlight the partner organizations within BICA and share the ways our previous experiences shaped what we have learned in this grass-roots community based collaboration.

4

Document and understand each partner's goals for the project and also how we have grown as individual organizations as a result of the partnership.

5

Document the best practices, crucial components, and identifying lessons learned to help other neighborhoods/cities and other organizations as they commit to long-term partnerships for project implementations.

Documentation Process

MOIA conducted bi-annual documentation calls with partners and co-op participants to document the impacts and learnings of the BICA initiative. At the start of the initiative, partners were asked an initial set of questions, and follow-up questions were asked as the initiative progressed. Similarly, participants were selected and asked a set of questions, which remained consistent throughout the process. MOIA, as a non-grantee but interested party, wanted to examine how cross-sectoral collaboration can be built amongst community based organizations. Through these calls, MOIA obtained information about the process used to establish BICA, the challenges faced by the organizations involved, and the successes achieved by the co-op participants.

The documentation calls were an invaluable tool for MOIA in examining the BICA establishment process and documenting the partnership between the organizations, thereby contributing to the collective knowledge of cooperative development and immigrant empowerment. The interview questions below were asked:

Partner Initial Questions Asked

These questions were asked during the initial documentation call:

- In your own words, what is the vision and mission of your organization?
What would you like people to know about your organization and its work?
- What experiences led you/your organization to get involved with BICA?
- What was the value added you saw in the ecosystem?
- What do you hope to learn and accomplish through BICA?

Partner Follow Up Questions Asked

These questions were asked in the cycle-by-cycle follow-up interviews:

- Can you share with me what BICA's overarching goal is? Do you think it has shifted or changed in any way?
- What did your organization do this cycle to move closer to that goal?
- What do you think we have all collectively accomplished as BICA thus far?
- What has gone really well in your work with BICA?
- What are the challenges or barriers that you've faced in implementing the program thus far?



Partner Follow Up Questions Asked Continued

- What other key items or processes do you think are important to document from your work?
- Are there any materials that you could share with me that would be useful for documentation?
- Regarding learning and growth: In what ways has your organization been transformed/impacted by the BICA partnership/What has the BICA partnership brought to your organization since the last check-in?

Participant Questions Asked

- How did you first hear about the cooperative work model?
- What motivated you to form a cooperative with others in your community?
- Have English classes impacted the development of your cooperative?
- How have you seen an improvement in your English skills since you started classes?
- In what way do the English skills of the course impact your day to day (beyond business)?
- How has your understanding of cooperative formation changed or expanded since you joined BICA?
- What can be done to improve this program for future participants?
- How are you thinking about the importance of the community after going through this process? What positive change would you like to see in/or for your community?



Image Source: CCDS

PARTNER PROFILES



The Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA)

The Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA) is the city agency responsible for promoting immigrant participation in all aspects of city life. MOIA's mission is to strengthen the ability of immigrants to participate in social, civic, and economic activities and to recognize the contribution of immigrants to Boston. MOIA has identified the difficulties that immigrant communities face in establishing successful small businesses and entrepreneurship opportunities. Some of these difficulties include language barriers, access to technical assistance and legal support and access to a network of support in a new city. During the pandemic, the demand for alternative employment opportunities and entrepreneurship support by immigrant communities grew as service and retail jobs declined and immigrants sought autonomous employment opportunities.

To create sustainable means of income for immigrants, MOIA supported BICA's cooperative vision as a viable pathway for entrepreneurship through community-based organizing and language skills training. MOIA recognized the value of English language obtention in promoting economic well-being and as a means for individual entrepreneurs to advocate and grow their businesses. MOIA collaborated with English for New Bostonians (ENB) and CCDS to promote a partnership that could act as a single resource for cooperative members rather than making them go through multiple venues to achieve their goals. MOIA also connected CCDS to cooperative financing institutions that could support members as they built their businesses.



Positive Gains of the Partnership

MOIA's involvement in the BICA initiative demonstrates its commitment to supporting immigrant entrepreneurs by promoting partnerships among organizations that serve them. Through this program, MOIA has expanded its relationships with CCDS and Harborside, and strengthened its preexisting collaborations with ENB. MOIA has also been gratified to support multi-year programs in a system that usually builds out programming from fiscal year to fiscal year.

MOIA's interest in working with BICA was to support immigrant constituents as they move from entrepreneurship by necessity to entrepreneurship opportunities. Being able to use their cooperative and business skills in English has resulted in positive ripple effects beyond simple entrepreneurial vocabulary. For example, participants reported greater technology skills due to online class formats and they were also able to use the English skills acquired to secure and maintain day-jobs as they developed their cooperatives. Through BICA, MOIA hopes to demonstrate the potential of cooperatives as a business model for immigrant communities and pave the way for new workforce development paths to be explored by others. By promoting immigrant participation in all aspects of city life and advocating for their contributions to Boston, MOIA is working towards its vision of enabling immigrants to thrive and make Boston their home.



Centro Cooperativo de Desarrollo y Solidaridad (CCDS)

CCDS is a vital part of a cooperative ecosystem by providing foundational knowledge on cooperatives and building a community of entrepreneurs that was able to benefit from the English classes.

CCDS's aim is to create a conducive environment where members can work together on their cooperative business plans by also learning English through ENB's curriculum.

This meant that most participants were well versed in cooperative matters and connected to a cooperative project by the time they started classes. As a result, they utilized the ESOL class to practice what they had previously developed with CCDS's support in Spanish, but in English, such as refining their business models and presentations. Although the classes do not directly help with their business plans, they provide the necessary space for members to collaborate effectively.

Throughout the three year process, CCDS has grown as an organization through staff and also by incorporating new cooperative members into their ecosystem. While staff changes resulted in some organization workflow alterations, CCDS has always referred members to the BICA classes and has continued to run its "Instituto" class. The "instituto" class serves as an introduction to cooperatives in Spanish so that members gain coop knowledge and community first in their native language before being referred to English lessons.



Image Source: CCDS

Positive Gains of the Partnership

Over the 3 years of the project, CCDS has developed partnerships with each organization and has promoted a better understanding of worker-owned cooperatives, especially regarding the broader social and political aspects of its vision. CCDS noted in check-in interviews that BICA members have been committed and responsible, and that Harborside and ENB worked collaboratively to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of the ecosystem participants. Additionally, the teachers have been patient and accommodating, catering to the varying levels of English proficiency among the members which has increased members confidence overall.

While accommodating the differing levels of proficiency among student participants has been one of the primary challenges faced by CCDS, they have jointly worked through the challenge with Harborside and appreciated the teacher's flexibility. Despite enrollment numbers and English levels varying across cycles, the program thanks to the funders support as well as ENB's openness to change allowed the program to adapt to different levels of English proficiency. Another challenge CCDS has faced through the three years of the program is the entrepreneurial turn around times. Given the collaborative nature of worker-owned cooperatives some members of coops have shuffled and left while new ones have joined. Others have decided to pursue different business ventures or models after feasibility studies and therefore, the member base has fluctuated. Despite that, the interest in ESOL skills by all its members has remained constant and the main challenge was to match classes to their language levels.

As a result of three years of work, CCDS has made significant progress in achieving its goals. The providers' commitment and responsibility and the teachers' accommodating nature have led to happy participants. However, the challenge of accommodating varying levels of proficiency among members requires attention. Follow-up processes are necessary to monitor members' progress and how they use their English language acquisition in their co-ops.

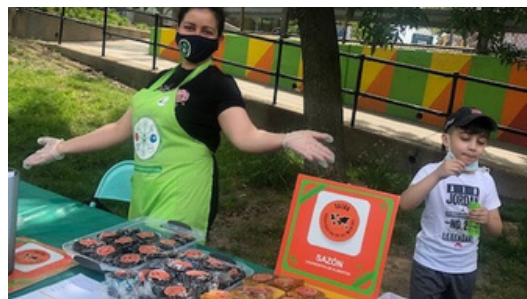


Image Source: CCDS



English For New Bostonians

The mission of ENB is:

To ensure access to high-quality English classes so that adult immigrants across race, education, and migratory backgrounds can pursue their aspirations and contribute to a Commonwealth that fully values their talents and voices.

ENB's vision for this project was to build opportunities for English Language learning for individuals seeking to create worker-owned cooperatives in Boston with accessible times and content that responded to the students' unique entrepreneurial and cooperative needs.

ENB wanted people to understand the importance of supporting English language learning to enable immigrants to fully participate in Boston, and the value that immigrants brought to society and the economy. ENB also aimed to promote the many ways that English language classes could be adapted to meet individuals' needs and help them reach their goals.

ENB's experiences with seeing the power of English language acquisition to help people advance economically, as well as seeing the challenges faced by those who could not access language acquisition due to their migratory status or ineligibility for benefits and programs, led them to partner with CCDS to create BICA. ENB saw the opportunity to collaborate with existing grassroots organizations that had knowledge and experience with community building and economic opportunity creation through cooperatives.



Image Source: ENB

Positive Gains of the Partnership

For ENB, this project has yielded positive results with regards to coop members having advanced their connections and their ESOL skills. Initially, the duration of the English classes was 20 weeks, which was good for beginners, but not for other levels. However, as the initiative progressed, more understanding of the needs of the coop members was achieved, and the goal evolved. Despite challenges, ENB remained flexible in accommodating the needs of partners and participants. Evaluation work has been done for the funder to reflect on the initiative's progress, which is focused on centering the work within the city's economic development.

The English language skills that the members have gained through the classes have allowed them to make significant progress and two of the coops in particular have shown great use of their ESOL skills when it came to obtaining child care licensing and bidding for large cleaning and maintenance contracts in English.

ENB underscores that working in partnership and allyship with community-based partners has been a learning experience for the partners involved. The project has taught ENB a lot about working with a cooperative system, their grassroots nature, and it has also forced them to develop a system of working bilingually which in turn correlates with their process in achieving language justice. Despite being a work in progress and being affected by people's life circumstances, the initiative has been a humbling and moving experience for all involved. The lessons learned will help in ENB's design of future programs that work effectively and sustainably.



FEMALE, CYCLE 1

*Las clases de inglés han sido de gran ayuda. **Las clases dan una avenida de comunicación** para ayudar a otros y nos permite a los miembros de Renacer presentar nuestro proyecto de manera bilingüe. Las clases fueron una especie de reunión social durante la pandemia, lo cual me mantuvo motivada.*

*The English classes have been very helpful. **The classes provide a means of communication to help others** and allow us as Renacer members to present our project in a bilingual way. The classes were a kind of social gathering during the pandemic, which kept me motivated.*



East Boston Harborside Community School

Harborside played a vital role in achieving the BICA initiative's goal by providing customized English language classes for cooperatives, which included rigorous teaching methods and qualified and subject matter trained teachers. This curriculum expanded on ENB's pre-existing "English for Entrepreneurs curriculum" and was adapted for this specific grant's use for coops. Despite facing challenges such as recruitment and adapting to different language levels of cohorts, Harborside was successful in providing high-quality instruction, meeting each cohort's ESOL needs, and reaching a good number of students every cycle. The BICA initiative provided the necessary knowledge to navigate the challenges of this work, and Harborside was able to contextualize ways to learn English with a focus on cooperatives.

Harborside recognized its responsibility to provide high-quality educational services that met the diverse needs of the East Boston community, which included not only the educational aspects but also the economic, cultural, and social dimensions of community life. Harborside knew that teaching English had a significant impact on the community's well-being and wanted to be the location that people could rely on for support in all aspects of life. The content of BICA's curriculum made it an obvious choice for Harborside, as they had been actively seeking community-based projects.

While Harborside exercised caution when approaching certain aspects of BICA due to the extensive record-keeping, administrative work, and reporting required, they recognized the value of this work and aimed to learn and achieve more through the initiative. Harborside's immediate objective was to serve the cooperative members, and in the long run, explore opportunities to collaborate with CCDS beyond BICA. Harborside envisioned future programming possibilities, such as a half-English and half-Spanish class on building cooperatives through CCDS, and aimed to continue this mutually beneficial relationship between the organizations, particularly since they were located in the same community.

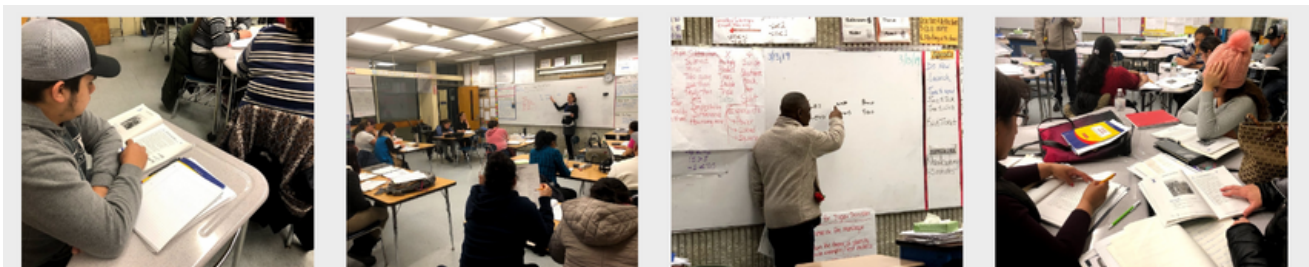


Image Source: East Boston Community School

Positive Gains of the Partnership

Despite the successes noted above, one of the main challenges faced by Harborside is recruitment, which was not a part of its mandate. The low number of participants in each cycle led to additional responsibilities for the organization, resulting in an increased workload that was not anticipated. Another challenge was the different language levels of cohorts, requiring the adaptation of syllabuses and curriculum every 20 weeks.

To further the initiative's goal, Harborside documented key items as they related to the progress of students, such as post-test, post-interview conversations, and feedback from class participants. The feedback has provided insight into the class's effectiveness.

The BICA partnership has brought many benefits to Harborside, strengthening the relationship between the organization and CCDS, and participants have seen the difference in classes remotely and in-person. In conclusion, Harborside's role in providing English language classes conceptualized for cooperatives has been an essential part of the BICA initiative. Despite challenges, the organization has maintained high-quality instruction, and the partnership has brought significant benefits to Harborside and strengthened its relationship with CCDS.



FEMALE, CYCLE 1

Puedo conversar con mis doctores especialmente dado el año que tuve. **Mi inglés ha mejorado tanto, que ahora siento confianza en el hacer preguntas** porque ahora puedo entender la respuesta (especialmente cuando hablan lento). Antes no me atrevía a hacer preguntas porque no me podía expresar en inglés, muchas veces no entendía lo que me contestaban, prefiero no pasar por esa vergüenza. Ahora **me siento empoderada a conversar**.

I can talk to my doctors especially given the year I had. **My English has improved so much that now I feel confident in asking questions** because I can understand the response (especially when they speak slowly). Before, I didn't dare to ask questions because I couldn't express myself in English, often I didn't understand what they answered, I prefer not to go through that embarrassment. **Now I feel empowered to converse**.



IMPACT

In 2020 and 2021, the BICA initiative was fostered by ENB to bring together grassroots initiatives, ESOL providers, and local government to support the cooperative ecosystem by enhancing local entrepreneurs' English language skills. **BICA sought to promote the economic and social development of cooperatives, providing alternative pathways for individuals facing barriers such as immigration, lack of connections, and other challenges to a legal source of income.** The initiative relied on a three-year partnership which has grown and strengthened throughout the collaboration. BICA succeeded in achieving these goals by adapting the ESOL curriculum to meet participants' needs, and teachers catering to the varying levels of English proficiency among members. Each month the BICA members met to check-in on progress allowed for steady improvements on work from cycle to cycle. In that sense, the overarching goal of BICA has remained consistent throughout the cycles of the program. However, the partners noted throughout each interview how BICA's approach to achieving the goal has shifted over time based on their learning and discovery process.



FEMALE, CYCLE 3

Como que ya no me da miedo salir a la calle y aun no sé hablar inglés de manera corrida pero ya no siento ese temor a salir a la calle. Y pienso que, ya con los conceptos, la formación, con el proceso, lo que nos permite es enamorar a otras personas de estos procesos cooperativos. Como mostrarles y contarles que esto sí se puede, que no solo es ficticio. **Que nosotros, las personas inmigrantes, si podemos tener posio en este país** y con nuestras acciones diarias, podemos generar esos impactos que también queremos y sentirnos útiles. En mi caso, es eso, sentirme útil, que pueda ser productivo, que pueda ayudar a otros.

It's like I'm no longer afraid to go out on the streets, and even though I still don't speak English fluently, I don't feel that fear of going out anymore. And I think that with the concepts, the training, and the process, what it allows us to do is to make other people fall in love with these cooperative processes. To show them and tell them that this is possible, that it's not just fictional. **That we, as immigrants, can have a place in this country** and with our daily actions, we can generate the impacts we want and feel useful. In my case, it's that, feeling useful, being productive, and being able to help others.



Impact as reported by participants in the ESOL classes are:

- Improved confidence in English uses for their cooperative and expanded vocabulary as it relates to entrepreneurship
- Improved confidence using English in their everyday lives
- Increased technological skills as a result of the digital aspects of taking the class online
- A sense of community and belonging by meeting with like-minded individuals also involved in the cooperative business development
- As immigrants, many reported a sense of belonging and contributing to their Boston community, something that was sorely sought, especially during the hardest lock-down periods of COVID-19.

Impact as reported by BICA collaboration organizations:

- A long-term learning and collaboration opportunity for multi-year programs (most projects have been planned on a single fiscal year cycle).
- A greater understanding of what each BICA member does in the immigrant-serving ecosystem and strong relationship-building gains
- Increased collaboration on projects beyond the scope of BICA (An example is that some of CCDS' coops participated in ENB's business pitch contests in English).
- Referral network growth that will continue beyond the BICA grant timeframe.

After concluding the three-year collaboration the most significant gains and impacts can be summed up as follows:

- Through the English language skills training provided by BICA's classes, cooperatives have benefited from significant advancements in their linguistic integration which in turn has positive economic and social ripple effects.
- The classes have provided alternative pathways for individuals facing barriers to employment so that they could secure incomes in a very difficult time for entrepreneurs.
- The acquired English language skills had positive effects beyond business development on participants' daily lives and health.
- BICA's efforts have resulted in improved cross-organizational collaboration amongst ENB, Harborside, CCDS and MOIA.



- Member organizations now all have a deeper understanding of the different stages of cooperative development and are aware of the various programs each organization runs beyond the scope of BICA. This resource sharing has resulted in further support for the cooperative ecosystem that the partners are building and has strengthened an internal referral network,
- By creating strong connections between organizations, BICA's work has helped to reinforce the community's work and cultivated a shared sense of dedication to cooperatives among both participants and BICA members.

Overall, the initiative has been successful in achieving its goals and sustaining a three-year partnership. There have been significant positive impacts on both the individual members and the cooperative ecosystem as a whole. Additionally, the partnerships fostered by the long-term collaboration across the City-Grass Roots Org-ESOL providers has built a strong referral system and lasting working relationships amongst the partners.

The English classes provided by BICA have helped members make significant progress in their ability to build and maintain their co-ops but also had positive ripple effects beyond cooperative development, such as a digital literacy and ability to converse in English and advocate for individual needs. This progress is reflected in the co-ops being out in public spaces, indicating progress in economic development and growth trajectory. The connections members have advanced through BICA have been instrumental in reinforcing the community's work and spreading passion for cooperatives among both participants and BICA members.

BICA has been a learning experience for all involved. Through this partnership, the partners have gained valuable insights into working with a cooperative system, grassroots, and bilingual projects. The lessons learned from this project have provided a foundation for designing future sustainable programs, as the partners have come to understand the importance of flexibility and adaptability in meeting the needs of diverse communities. There is a deep sense of respect among the partners for one another, as well as for the city and ESOL providers. Overall, the initiative has been a valuable experience that has contributed to the economic and social development of cooperatives and the wider community.



LESSONS LEARNED

The information and experiences shared by stakeholders have enabled us to **identify key lessons, highlighting both successes and challenges** encountered throughout the project. By delving into these lessons, we aim to foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement, empowering organizations and initiatives to navigate similar endeavors with enhanced clarity and resilience

1

It is important to distribute, approve, and launch documentation plans as quickly as possible because it is harder to build a documentation plan midway through a program. We learned these lessons after a delayed start to the documentation calls with participants. MOIA learned it had to consult closely with CCDS to ensure participants' privacy and to have the questions approved by all BICA members.

2

Good use of the external evaluation team can help resolve questions and overlapping work. BICA was able to consolidate roles in the partnership after meeting with external technical assistance providers hired by MGH for data and results monitoring support (MXM Consulting). BICA was able to gather input on evaluation criteria and expected deliverables. These meetings should be prioritized and conducted as early as possible when setting out to build a multi-year project.

3

It is sustainable and desirable to hire ESOL providers who are informed of the subject matter and keep them for the whole program. This extensive knowledge of cooperatives and the associated entrepreneurial language made a huge impact on all the cohorts, regardless of the English level that was being taught. By building a consistent ESOL teacher base who are familiar with solidarity economy and popular education models, the participants benefited from tailored programming that would support their work. BICA was able to count on a single teacher who saw the program through all three years of classes. She was able to quickly establish a digital onboarding process for all new cohorts and she was an expert in content knowledge as well as a versed teacher.



4

Adapting services to community needs is important. Offering different levels of classes can help to ensure that all students have access to quality English instruction.

5

While enrollment and differing English levels posed some **challenges**, the program was able to adjust and develop alternative recruitment strategies, as well as maintain positive relationships with BICA partners through **regular** meetings. It is critical to set expectations that reflect the reality of enrollment and maintain monthly meetings with all parties

6

There is no one-size-fits-all prescription for establishing a long-term system intervention such as this. However, by building networks of trust among key providers we were able to successfully collaborate on a long-term organizational symbiosis between coop developers and ESOL providers.

7

Promoting the program can increase awareness and attract more individuals from specific communities. Recruitment was a challenge, especially since existing network members of CCDS had differing English language skills. In that sense, we had to adapt each cohort to the English level of each class, and it may be necessary to have different levels of classes to accommodate more students.

8

Having a follow-up process to track progress and additional enrollment was seen as an important step towards ensuring the program's long-term success.

9

Providing **leadership development and community building opportunities in addition to language instruction** can help students become more active and engaged members of their communities



BEST PRACTICES

A collection of meticulously curated best practices derived from extensive documentation and valuable input from participants and partners. These practices have been gleaned from the experiences of the Center for Cooperative Development and Solidarity, English for New Bostonians, East Boston Harborside Community School, and the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement. They serve as invaluable guidelines for organizations and initiatives seeking to empower and uplift immigrant entrepreneurs.



Communication channels among all partners involved should be clear and consistent to ensure that everyone is on the same page.



Maintain monthly meetings with all parties to set expectations.



Documentation plans should be distributed, approved, and launched quickly.



Use an external evaluation team which can help resolve questions and overlapping work.



Regular assessments and evaluations of the program help identify areas of improvement and ensure that it remains aligned with the overarching goals of the initiative.





Hire ESOL providers who are informed of the subject matter and keep them for the whole program provides tailored programming that supports participants' work.



Offer different levels of classes which ensures that all students have access to quality English instruction, and adapt each cohort to the English level of each class to accommodate more students.



Establish a follow-up process to track progress and additional enrollment ensures the program's long-term success.



Provide leadership development and community building opportunities in addition to language instruction helps students become more active and engaged members of their communities.



Seek opportunities to collaborate with other stakeholders, and emphasize the importance of allyship and working with grassroots organizations.