

National Evaluation of ConnectHome

Client: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Project Overview

The ConnectHome initiative, launched in July 2015, is a collaboration among communities, the private sector, and the federal government to expand high-speed internet across the country and bridge the digital divide. ConnectHome aims to provide support to enable more than 275,000 low-income households—and nearly 200,000 children—to access the internet at home. The initiative is being piloted in 27 cities and 1 tribal nation. The goal of this 3-year study is to evaluate the initiative’s effectiveness. Insight will determine whether ConnectHome increases internet access in these communities; qualitatively assess how internet access affects residents’ quality of life; and describe the implementation experience of participating communities.



The multipronged evaluation includes three primary components:

1. A mail survey with in-person and telephone follow-up to assess baseline levels of internet access across the 28 participating communities. Insight helped develop and pretested the survey instrument; designed and implemented the sampling strategy; developed a database for entering the data; received, entered, and cleaned the survey data; developed survey weights; analyzed the survey findings; and summarized key findings into a policy brief.
2. A telephone survey to assess how and for what purposes residents of the participating communities use the internet, how internet access affects families’ lives, and levels of digital literacy. Insight developed and pretested the telephone survey instrument. Following receipt of Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance, Insight will field the survey, clean and analyze the data, and develop a summary report of key findings.
3. Case studies of five of the participating communities, including five focus groups per community, to probe further how internet access affects residents’ lives and how communities have implemented the ConnectHome initiative at the local level. Insight developed focus group protocols for public housing residents who are ConnectHome subscribers and nonsubscribers; developed semistructured interview protocols for local implementation staff; recruited case study communities; and prepared training materials for communities to recruit focus group resident participants. Following receipt of OMB clearance, Insight will conduct the focus groups, analyze the data, and develop five case study reports.

Core Activities

Survey Design; Cognitive Interviews; Sampling; Telephone Surveys; Mail Surveys; Database Development; Focus Groups; Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis; Document Reviews; Survey Estimation

Products

Mail survey and associated materials; telephone survey and associated materials; webinars; baseline access summary brief; five case study reports; telephone survey summary report of findings

