

Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP) Process Evaluation and Market Characterization Report

Final Report

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NYSERDA Record of Revision

Document Title
Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP) Process Evaluation and Market Characterization Report July 2021

Revision Date	Description of Changes	Revision on Page(s)
July 2021	Original Issue	Original Issue

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1 Introduction

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) has contracted with Industrial Economics, Inc. (IEc, hereafter Market Evaluation Team) to review and evaluate the Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP). This evaluation includes a market characterization and process evaluation and will inform possible improvements to a new community-based outreach and engagement initiative where funding will be disbursed. The first goal of this effort is to understand the successes and barriers in program implementation and evaluate the market impacts of the program in the context of those successes and barriers. The second goal is to identify lessons learned: findings from the CEEP evaluation will help NYSERDA consider possible improvements for the next iteration of the program, which will be broader in scope and investment. The next round of NYSERDA program investment aims to build on CEEP and other previous outreach initiatives and will include community campaigns to increase clean energy adoption rates, especially in disadvantaged communities (DACs).

1.1 Program Description – CEEP

CEEP focuses on connecting customers to clean energy services and assistance such as EmPower New York or Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®. For the CEEP, NYSERDA contracts with community-based and locally-based organizations (CBOs and LBOs) to connect with residents, small businesses, and multi-family building owners in the state and support them in applying for assistance with, and executing, clean energy or energy efficiency projects on their properties. NYSERDA aligns the CEEP program with the 10 economic development regions in New York State and deploys one CBO/LBO to facilitate community outreach and provide customer support in each economic region (10 CBO/LBOs total).¹ NYSERDA customers assisted by Community Energy Advisors range from market-rate (MR) and low-to-moderate income (LMI) single-family property owners to tenants, and from multi-family property owners to small commercial businesses.² CBOs/LBOs employ Community Energy Advisors (CEAs), individuals who perform outreach in their communities to introduce the energy efficiency programs available through NYSERDA, utilities and other agencies to potential customers,^{3,4} and support applicants in identifying appropriate opportunities, navigating program application processes, and implementing energy efficiency projects. In this way, CEEP does not provide clean energy services directly, but positions CEAs within each economic region as a support or resource for customers seeking clean energy services or assistance.

Typical CEA outreach involves connecting with potential customers at public venues such as farmer's markets, food pantries, or community fairs; tabling at community events focused on homeownership or environmental stewardship; or presenting at partner venues or other sponsored events. CEAs also establish working relationships with partner organizations to effectively recruit customers through cross-referrals and (where possible) leverage non-NYSERDA investment toward implementation of clean energy projects

¹ Economic regions are depicted on NYSERDA's Community Energy Advisors page:

<https://www.nyserdera.ny.gov/Contractors/Find-a-Contractor/Community-Energy-Resource>

² NYSERDA programs are listed on the All Programs page: <https://www.nyserdera.ny.gov/All-Programs>

³ Long Island is the exception to CBO/LBO activities in other regions. Because Long Island residents do not pay the same NYSERDA system benefits charge that residents in other economic regions do. Long Island's CEA works most closely with utility partners (e.g., PSEG, National Grid).

⁴ CEAs also work with non-energy partner organizations, e.g., local housing authorities or departments of social services.

for customers. Generally, the CEA will collect customer contact information during the initial outreach and follow up afterward to share information about NYSERDA clean energy programs for which the customer may be eligible, e.g., EmPower New York, The Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® program (AHPwES), Residential Energy Audit Program, Clean Heating and Cooling Communities, Solar for All, NY-Sun, Green Jobs Green New York (GJGNY) Energy Study Program, and the Multifamily Performance Program.⁵ If a customer is interested and eligible for participation in one or more NYSERDA clean energy programs, they can receive application assistance from the CEA. Finally, the CEA enters customer lead (i.e., contact information), application status data, cost share (non-NYSERDA investment) or financing information (dollar amounts by provider) and “description” notes into NYSERDA’s Salesforce portal for context. On the NYSERDA back end, the customer information can be used for additional outreach (as with GJGNY’s Energy Study Program) or for CEEP reporting (e.g., customers engaged, projects implemented, applications submitted).

Different NYSERDA programs are designed with different customer populations in mind. For example, EmPower New York and the Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® programs are designed for LMI customers, the Multifamily Performance Program is designed for multifamily building owners, and Green Jobs Green New York Energy Studies Program is designed for small businesses or non-profits.

1.2 Summary of Evaluation Objectives and Methods

One of NYSERDA’s organizing principles for this process evaluation and market characterization is to identify immediate opportunities for program improvement, organized around three objectives (**Table 1**). This evaluation highlights actionable feedback aligned based on a synthesis of primary data collection efforts that includes: 11 in-depth interviews with CEAs, three CEA follow-up interviews focused on small commercial customers (e.g., small businesses, non-profits, and multi-family building owners), 20 “key” partner organizations (KPOs, response rate of 66.7 percent, **section 4.3**) who engage closely with CEAs to meet customer needs. Also included in primary data collection are: an online survey of 102 “other” partner organizations who may not work as closely with CEAs as KPOs do (response rate of 17.4 percent), but nevertheless provide other types of support (e.g., venues for outreach), and a telephone-based survey of 206 CEEP customers (leads from the CEEP Opportunities dataset who may or may not have been assisted by a CEA, response rate of 6.2 percent).⁶ The market evaluation also focuses on the analysis of NYSERDA program data (entered into Salesforce by CEAs) and interviews with NYSERDA staff for key programs.

Table 1. Evaluation objectives, purpose, and methods used for assessment.

OBJECTIVE	PURPOSE	METHOD
Determine effectiveness of CEEP Contractor outreach (section 2.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish program background and regional context Identify outreach activities Ensure program is reaching targeted customer populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview CEAs Interview KPOs Survey CEEP customers Analyze CEEP Opportunities data
Monitor clean energy relationships built within the community (section 2.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify community partnerships Document the type and scope of coordination between CEAs and their partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview CEAs Interview KPOs Survey “Other” Partners Survey CEEP customers

⁵ GJGNY refers to legislation requiring NYSERDA to provide New Yorkers with access to energy assessments, installation services, low interest financing, and pathways to training for various green-collar careers. The Market Evaluation Team refers herein to the GJGNY Energy Study Program specifically, which is a small piece of the larger collection of programs under the GJGNY heading.

⁶ Numbers listed refer to the quantity of successful respondents, not the number of potential customers or organizations asked to participate in a given survey. For example, 206 CEEP customers successfully completed the phone survey.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify wider program reach and areas of possible improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze CEEP Opportunities data
Process Evaluation (section 2.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify barriers to participation and areas of possible improvement • Determine level of customer satisfaction with outreach • Evaluate process effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview CEAs • Interview KPOs • Analyze CEEP Opportunities data • Survey CEEP customers
Added: Additional Outreach and Engagement (section 2.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characterize regional and small commercial outreach and engagement efforts • Reflect on overall CEA effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview CEAs • Interview KPOs • Interview GJGNY Energy Study Program Staff • Interview GJGNY Energy Study Program outreach contractor • Analyze CEEP Opportunities data • Survey CEEP customers

This report includes three additional sections, as follows:

- **Section 2: Results and Findings** – this section outlines the results from interviews, web surveys, phone surveys, and program data analysis and is organized by evaluation question.
- **Section 3: Recommendations** – This section highlights lessons learned and recommendations for NYSERDA with respect to the future of CEEP.
- **Section 4: Methods** – This section discusses data collection strategies, sample sizes, and analysis.

2 Assessment Results

Outcomes from the market characterization and process evaluation are outlined in this section, focusing on the evaluation questions outlined in **Table 3** below, and documented further in **Appendix A**. The section includes results related to outreach and engagement relating to questions about: regional engagement and small commercial outreach, specifically (**Section 2.4**).

The section includes findings for the three main evaluation objectives: effectiveness of CEA outreach, clean energy relationships built within the community, and process evaluation. Each area is further subdivided by evaluation questions, as indicated in **Table 3**. In general, the Market Evaluation Team stratified customer results (customer survey data and CEEP Opportunities data) by LMI and MR income groups. Justification and methodology for this stratification can be found in **Section 4**.

Table 2. Evaluation questions and corresponding data sources.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	DATA SOURCES USED
Determine effectiveness of CEA outreach	1. Did LMI and market-rate households, small businesses and multifamily building owners participate in clean energy activities after outreach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • Customer Survey • Program Data (i.e., CEEP Opportunities data)
	2. How many customers are “first time” clean energy project implementers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Survey
	3. How many loan applications were facilitated through CEAs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Survey • Program Data
	4. How much leveraged funding was used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Data
	5. What type of regional pilot programs were implemented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regionally Specific Initiative Data
Monitor clean energy relationships built within the community	6. Which other organizations did LBOs/CBOs develop relationships with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey • Program Data
	7. What synergies were realized as a result of these relationships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey
	8. Did partnerships between local organizations lead to increased outreach activity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey • Program Data • CEEP Engagement/Activities Data
	9. Did partnerships between local organizations lead to increased project implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews
Process evaluation	10. What types of partner organizations led to more leveraged funds?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Program Data
	11. What types of activities/partnerships were most successful at gaining and retaining new LMI customers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • Other Partner Survey • Customer Survey • Program Data
	12. What services/programs were the most used among LMI customers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Survey • Program Data
	13. How can initiative efficiency and effectiveness be improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey • Customer Survey

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	DATA SOURCES USED
	14. Are there data documenting customer satisfaction with different aspects of the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Survey
	15. What are the key barriers to participation in the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey • Customer Survey

2.1 Effectiveness of CEA Outreach

This evaluation objective establishes program background and regional context, identifies CEA outreach activities, and ensures the program is reaching targeted customer populations. CEA outreach is two-pronged: one focus is on general education and awareness, which involves reaching a wide audience through presentations, workshops and tabling at events; the other is on customer recruitment for NYSERDA clean energy services and assistance programs, with a focus on LMI households and communities.⁷ The Market Evaluation Team defines effectiveness as how well CEA efforts toward engagement and outreach translated to tangible outcomes.

This evaluation assesses the effectiveness of CEA outreach through a number of factors, including:

- Overall program participation in the relevant region (i.e., the number of people with whom the CEAs have engaged as “leads,” which measures education and recruitment efforts).
- Number of first-time customers.
- Number of applications.
- Number of completed projects (this more specifically measures the conversion of leads to NYSERDA program applicants).
- Number of loan applications.
- Amount of leveraged (non-NYSERDA) funding.

The questions within the following sections are designed to assess the effectiveness of outreach in the context of the CEA job description and Clean Energy Fund Investment Plan logic model. The Market Evaluation Team describes trends in the CEA outreach effectiveness in **Sections 2.1.1– 2.1.10**. Data include program data trends, customer survey outcomes, and thematic findings from CEA interviews for context.

Table 3. Evaluation questions and data sources for the CEA outreach effectiveness objective.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	DATA SOURCES USED
Determine effectiveness of CEA outreach	1. Did LMI and market-rate households, small businesses and multifamily building owners participate in clean energy activities after outreach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • Customer Survey • Program Data
	2. How many customers are “first time” clean energy project implementers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Survey
	3. How many loan applications were facilitated through CEAs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Survey • Program Data
	4. How much leveraged funding was used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Data
	5. What type of regional pilot programs were implemented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regionally Specific Initiative Data

⁷ Outreach goals are outlined in the CEA job description, found in Attachment C of PON 3588: Community Energy Engagement Program (2017). Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://portal.nyserdanyc.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00Pt0000002aLQTEA2>.

CEAs function as a touchpoint for the customer, engaging with them on clean energy assistance opportunities, recording contact information if the conversation gets far enough, following up afterward to see if the customer desires support in filling out the NYSERDA program applications or the customer requires assistance with identifying resources to implement recommended energy reduction measures after an energy audit is completed. After the application point (or even before), customer leads recorded in the CEEP Opportunities Salesforce data (June 2018 – July 2020) may turn into applicants or even have projects completed without CEA knowledge, because the customer may be applying directly, without CEA support.

CEEP Opportunities Salesforce data suggest that 2,315 total customers interacted with the program, including leads/contacts (entries in the CEEP Opportunities Salesforce database) who shared their information with the CEA and never responded to follow up. Of these, 206 potential customers were reported by CEAs as developing applications, 105 as submitting applications, 184 with approved applications. CEAs reported 38 customers with projects under contract and 524 with completed projects; another 516 never progressed past the “nurturing” stage, and the remaining customers had withdrawn applications (27) or had opportunities listed as “closed” due to ineligibility (6) or non-response from the customer (371).⁸ The remaining 338 customers have an unknown status.

CEEP customer contacts or leads are often listed with a “nurturing” status, indicating some initial contact with intent to follow up. Because status updates require manual input from a CEA, data completeness depends on CEA thoroughness in follow-up and data entry. “Nurturing” is a broad status category that conflates initial customer contact from two very different outreach strategies (via engagement events or through partner cross-referral) and requires customer contact information to be recorded in the database; “nurturing” is interpreted here as contact with customers that is linked only with an increase in awareness and customer-provided contact information. Therefore, the total number of customers marked with the “nurturing” status is likely an underestimate of general clean energy educational interactions because it is systematically missing anyone interacting with the CEA to gain some background knowledge or learn about opportunities to save money on their energy bill, but did *not* provide their contact information for follow-up.

Several key limitations affect the Market Evaluation Team’s interpretation of the data. Critically, CEEP lacks comprehensive tracking within the CEEP Opportunities or CEEP Activities data (January 2018 – September 2020) to link outreach efforts, events, or partner engagement to the final clean energy services application or implementation on a customer level (e.g., home energy audits or energy efficiency measure installations). Some CEAs do track information like outreach and initial contact notes in the description for each CEEP Opportunity, but others do not provide the same level of documentation. While customers at different stages of application are linked with various programs (e.g., EmPower New York), there is no consistent or systematic documentation of the form of outreach that first connected the customer with the activity. The program relies on self-reported data from the CEAs, but CEA interactions and follow-up with customers vary.⁹ Likewise, there is no systematic tracking of external referrals (from CEAs to partner organizations, utilities, or non-NYSERDA programs).

CEAs have access to the NYSERDA Salesforce data portal to enter customer leads, but CEAs do not receive notifications about application status or progression through projects from Salesforce. CEAs do have access

⁸ The Market Evaluation Team is unable to say anything additional about the “closed” or “withdrawn” applications because CEA notes on the opportunities are limited or missing altogether, a possible indication of differences in data entry across CBOs.

⁹ While some variation in data entry is to be expected, it appears as though CEAs in different regions may have used different definitions for “customer lead” at one time or another, resulting in some differences in data entry. This pattern of inconsistent reporting across regions shows up in the data throughout this report. This possible difference in definitions spills over to the CEEP Activities data as well, where CEAs in some regions reported significantly different hours for different types of activity (e.g., customer engagement vs. outreach activities).

to two other systems of record: EFS, the loan origination system used by NYSERDA to originate loans and NY HP Portal/Uplight, which houses information on customers that have completed an application for an energy audit through EmPower New York, Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® (AHPwES) or Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® (HPwES). A limitation is that CEAs cannot access the status of EmPower applications and can only access applications for AHPwES or HPwES if their organization is listed as the referral agent on the application, which is not always the case. The systems do not appear to communicate across platforms (i.e., update one another), so unless the CEA follows up individually with customers or NYSERDA programs and manually enters a status update, CEEP Opportunity entries for each customer are incomplete and often outdated.

2.1.1 Did LMI and market-rate households, small businesses and multifamily building owners participate in clean energy activities after outreach?

Outreach to consumers about clean energy services, energy efficiency measures, and clean energy assistance programs is a key task for CEAs. The CEEP request for proposals outlines metrics for evaluating outreach effectiveness, including the “number of residents, small businesses, and multifamily building owners assisted with clean energy applications (audit, grant (mainly federal, local, and other state funding outside of NYSERDA), and finance applications).”¹⁰ This evaluation question (2.1.1) endeavors to assess customer follow-through after outreach: did customers take the next step and participate in a clean energy activity?¹¹

Customer outreach took several forms, including:

- **In-person events like food drives/food pantry distributions, community fairs, and farmer’s markets are a critical engagement strategy for reaching “new” customers.** These three event types were mentioned as a key component of outreach by seven CEAs. Food drive outreach has been consistent, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, in some regions. Customers wait in their cars, and CEAs record names and contact information of those interested in a socially-distanced way. One CEA supervisor mentioned in interview that this approach generates approximately 20 to 30 contacts per event and that such contacts typically result in useful leads for CEAs on follow up.

¹⁰ NYSERDA. 2017. PON 3588: Community Energy Engagement Program. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://portal.nyserdan.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00Pt0000002aLQTEA2>.

¹¹ NYSERDA. 2020. Clean Energy Fund Investment Plan, Communities Chapter. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://www.nyserdan.gov/About/Funding/Clean-Energy-Fund>.

CEEP “Branding”

The issue of program and agency recognition (“branding”) is complex in the CEEP context. Three different types of identities may be important to prioritize, depending on the forward-looking program structure and focus:

- **NYSERDA and its programs:** Emphasis on the CEA as a facilitator of NYSERDA’s energy services might encourage recognition of, and continued engagement with, NYSERDA programs.
- **The CEA and organization:** “Branding” around the CBO/LBO and CEA as an organizational identity or community resource, particularly where the CBO/LBO is already a trusted community partner, may improve recognition of services through word of mouth, including but not limited to NYSERDA’s programs.
- **Specific CEEP program identity:** A state-wide identity for the CEEP role (e.g., the CEA or Energy Hub identity) could provide a clear and readily-recognized “entry point” for a range of NYSERDA programs, and potentially other government services (e.g., weatherization or healthy homes).

All of these “brands” are relevant; the preferred option will depend on the forward-looking structure of CEEP and its successor programs, but a clear approach to branding is important for avoiding confusion among participants.

- **Virtual outreach strategies to engage “new” customers have become the norm.** For both partner organizations and CBOs/LBOs, outreach is now primarily virtual due to COVID-19. This is a change from tabling at farmer’s markets, community festivals, environmental fairs, and church or other faith-based events that comprised the bulk of outreach by most CBOs/LBOs. Online engagement activities serve as marketing “touch points” but do not generate leads unless people sign up online prior to the event. Online outreach may remain an important form of outreach post-pandemic to generate initial interest in energy efficiency or educate customers about clean energy services available to them.
 - Zoom and webinars were both mentioned several times across 11 interviews.
 - Other online approaches mentioned by CEAs include Facebook Live events (e.g., livestreamed interviews with energy contractors), virtual meetups, social media posts, blog posts or newsletters.
- **Other media strategies are typically singular or one-off events but do tend to generate a flurry of responses from potential customers.**
 - Radio was mentioned infrequently as an avenue of outreach, but no specific examples were given, and no mention of leads generated occurred.
 - One CEA was able to secure a brief TV interview focusing on NYSERDA’s programs; this one interview alone reportedly generated hundreds of emails and phone calls.
- **Referrals from community partners.** Cross-referrals from community partners were repeatedly mentioned as a key avenue for customer engagement.

Interestingly, a minority of customer survey respondents reported adding their name to a contact list at a community fair or other event (**Figure 1**), despite a general CEA perception that this is a key customer outreach and recruitment activity (community fairs, food pantry distributions, and other similar tabling or pamphlet-distribution opportunities were highlighted as the main “outreach activities” in CEA interviews). While customer outreach through large events is important for CEEP education and awareness goals, 74 percent of customer survey respondents do not recall this interaction or are coming to CEEP through other avenues, such as referrals from partner organizations (146 of 196 customers). Most survey respondents who did report adding their name to a contact list at a community fair, farmer’s market, or other event implemented a clean energy or energy efficiency project in their home (35 of 46 customers, or 76 percent). NYSERDA’s Salesforce tracking includes a “Lead Source” field that is manually input by the CEAs; however, many of the program applications completed by customers do not include a “how did you hear about us?” categorical datapoint, so conclusions about how or where customers learn about NYSERDA programs are limited to self-reported data from CEAs.¹²

After initial outreach, customers engaged with clean energy services in various ways, from installing clean energy measures to having an energy audit on their home or apartment. Most customer survey respondents reported having energy efficiency measures installed (85 percent);¹³ however, over half of respondents who *received* energy efficiency measures reported that they *did not receive* financial support through grant or loan assistance for those measures (65 percent). These results imply that either: a) customer survey respondents are paying for energy efficiency measures themselves, or b) survey respondents are not

¹² The survey did not ask about where customers heard of CEEP, the CBO, or CEAs; however, customers were asked about whether they received support in completing a NYSERDA application or an energy efficiency project, and some did indicate that the assistance came from a CEA (discussed in **section 2.1.2**).

¹³ This outcome suggests that the survey population was self-selecting, where respondents who had clean energy services installed were more likely to respond to the survey due to relevance or general interest.

connecting the grant or loan to the energy project because it is going through the energy contractor (a result discussed in **Section 2.1.3**).

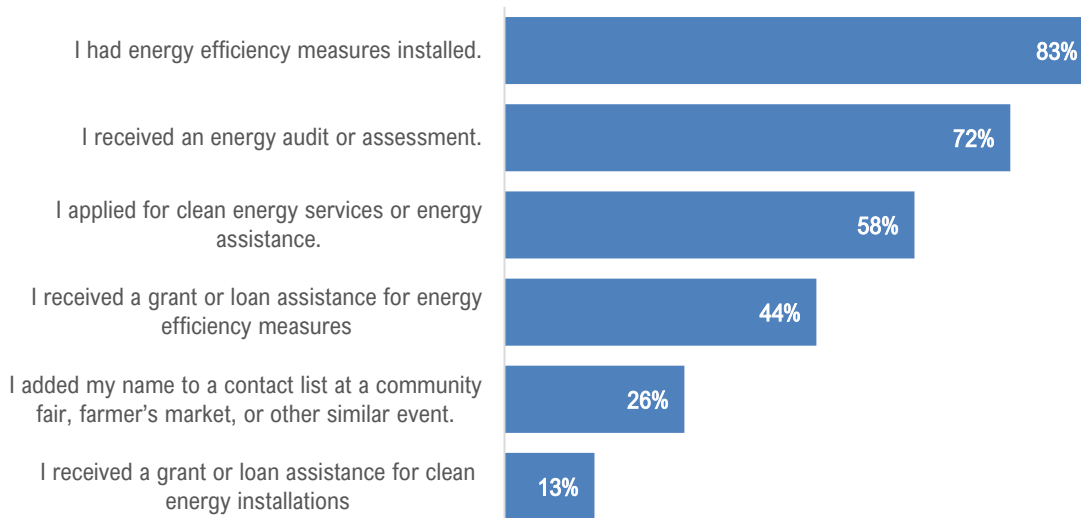


Figure 1. Please indicate whether you have engaged with clean energy services or energy assistance -- responses by type of services/assistance and recipient type (Select all that apply). Energy installations include equipment like heat pump and solar PV panels, while energy efficiency measures include blow-in insulation, LED light bulbs, and ENERGY STAR® appliances). *Note: this question was used as a screener for customer survey skip logic; respondents who responded “Does not apply” for all categories were asked a follow-up question about whether they were familiar with NYSERDA’s programs at all.*

Hours of customer engagement are not a 1:1 indicator of customer participation. When number of customers includes applicants (successful and unsuccessful), as well as contracted and completed projects, New York City, Finger Lakes, and Capital Region have the highest overall numbers of customers, with the only significant difference being the time spent on customer engagement in the Capital Region (**Table 5**).^{14,15} All three of these CBOs - the Affordable Housing Partnership in the Capital Region, the Center for New York City Neighborhoods in New York City, and PathStone in the Finger Lakes region - are high organizational capacity CBOs (i.e., they offer integrated customer support and assistance that extends beyond the scope of NYSERDA programs to meet individual needs). When normalized by population, Cornell Cooperative Extension offices in the Southern Tier and North Country regions are higher performing regions (**Figure 2**). PUSH Buffalo in Western New York is also high organizational capacity CBO but has moderate customer counts when compared to other CBOs. Central New York and Mohawk Valley had some of the fewest reported hours for customer engagement and a one of the lowest customer counts overall, which may be attributed to the change in CBOs midway through the CEEP. Cornell Cooperative Extension in Central New York joined as a CBO in 2020, via three local extension associations (Madison County, Onondaga County and Cortland County). This was a result of the original CBO not renewing their contract in late 2019. The Mohawk Valley region also saw a change in contracts with NYSERDA, where the original CBO did not renew their contract and the a new CBO was selected to cover the region (due to their existing contract with CEEP and their local presence). However, the North Country also had a mid-CEEP change in CBOs, and nevertheless reported far more

¹⁴ CEEP Opportunity entries are not a 1:1 indicator of customer participation. As indicated in section 2.1, opportunities listed as “nurturing” are more indicative of a surface-level customer interaction than genuine customer interest in clean energy activities. Including “nurturing” status opportunities in the analysis would have a negative and disproportionate impact on customer conversion. The Market Evaluation Team excludes “nurturing” entries from the analysis for this evaluation question.

¹⁵ Number of customers was normalized by population: (number of customers/total regional population) x 100,000.

customers than Central New York and Mohawk Valley. While change in CBO appears to have negatively impacted customer engagement in the regions where this occurred, the extent to which the change impacted customer engagement varies across regions. Finally, Long Island customers do not pay the system benefit charge on their utility bill that funds NYSERDA programming for customers, and therefore have a different relationship to their CEA than customers in other regions (the purpose is different, since many of the same clean energy services programs are not available to Long Islanders), which may explain the low customer count. The United Way in Long Island reportedly refers many customers outward to utility programs, but this is not captured in the CEEP Opportunities dataset.

Ultimately, differences in the reported number of customers may have less to do with engagement strategies or partners and more to do with depth of engagement (few customers, higher quality assistance, such as seeing a project start to finish), aligning engagement strategies to the CBO’s existing strengths or partner networks (e.g., AHP in the Capital Region has few partners, but the CEA works strategically with those existing partners to reach out to customers and connect them with clean energy services), or how CEAs are entering data into the CEEP Opportunities dataset. For example, the Center for New York City Neighborhoods and PUSH Buffalo both use systems in addition to NYSERDA’s CEEP Opportunities Salesforce portal for data entry, so it is possible that their total number of customers reported is artificially low. United Way in Long Island reported a lot of outward customer referrals to utilities and other partner organizations, which was not captured in the existing CEEP Opportunities dataset. Ultimately, better and more consistent data tracking will allow for more specific conclusions about outreach effectiveness and post-outreach customer engagement with NYSERDA programs. Improved data tracking may also identify “gaps” where NYSERDA customer counts or applications are low, because customers have been referred elsewhere. This is a viable and acceptable outcome of the CEA-customer interaction that builds and strengthens relationships with community partners as well.

Table 4. Unique CEEP customer contacts* in each of New York's 10 economic regions, with population.

REGION	TOTAL CEEP CUSTOMERS	TOTAL POPULATION
New York City	421	3,167,034
Long Island	2	936,278
Mid-Hudson	86	818,517
Western New York	148	580,906
Finger Lakes	728	486,353
Capital Region	498	434,249
Central New York	56	306,246
Southern Tier	273	259,036
Mohawk Valley	4	192,438
North Country	99	162,177

*Customer contacts were identified as unique using a combination of name and phone number. While there may be multiple opportunities per customer, only individual customers are counted here.

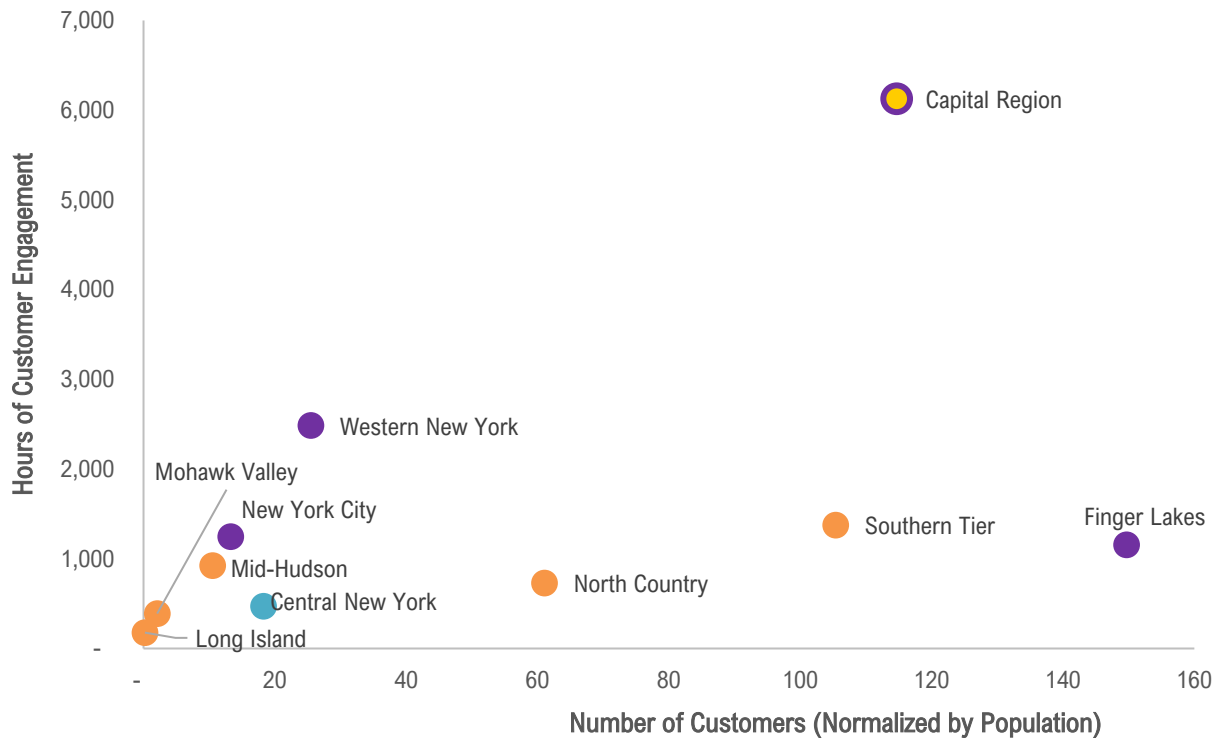


Figure 2. Total number of customers engaging with the program, 2018 – July 2020 (normalized by population). *Color codes: Purple = high-organizational capacity CBO, blue = CBO with highly experienced CEA, and orange = all other CBOs.*

The Center for NYC Neighborhoods in New York City, PathStone in the Finger Lakes region, and the Affordable Housing Partnership stand out from the rest of the CEEP CBOs for their high organizational capacity. These organizations all provide financial and other customer support services in addition to NYSERDA programs, offering integrated customer support and assistance to customers that extends beyond the scope of NYSERDA programs to meet individual needs. AHP provides training and resources for first time homebuyers, PathStone provides energy efficiency services, and the Center for NYC Neighborhoods offers their HomeFix and FloodHelp NY assistance programs to NYC residents.

CEEP Opportunities data show that overall, 524 projects were completed, with 38 clean energy or energy efficiency projects were contracted, and 184 applications approved July 13, 2020 (**Figure 3**). The Finger Lakes region had the most completed projects, with 182 more completed projects than the Southern Tier, and more than 200 completed projects than other regions. The Finger Lakes region also had proportionately more project completions for LMI customers than other regions.¹⁶ Western New York and the North Country also stand out in terms of the proportion of LMI project completions compared to Market Rate project completions (**Figure 4**).

¹⁶ The Market Evaluation Team reviewed US Census county-level population and income data aggregating up to the economic development region level for comparison with survey data. For each economic development region, we calculated the proportion of the population falling into each income stratum (population over \$50,000/total population as a rough approximation of MR and population under \$50,000/total population as a rough approximation of LMI) and compared the percentages of each region to similar proportions among survey respondents (e.g., LMI/(total LMI+MR)).

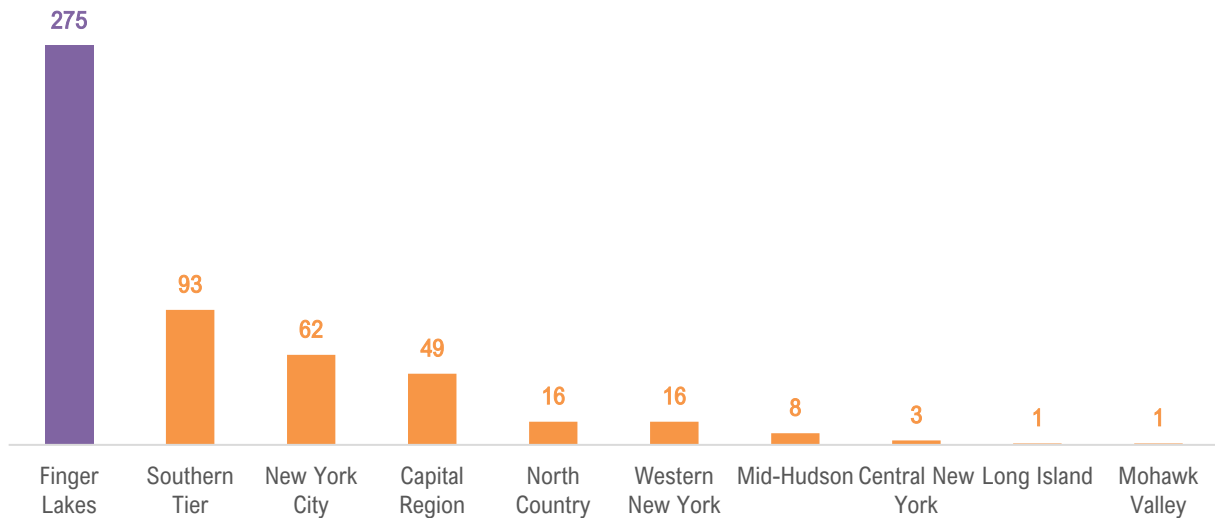


Figure 3. CEEP Opportunities data from July 13, 2020 show that customers *completed* over 500 energy and energy efficiency projects.

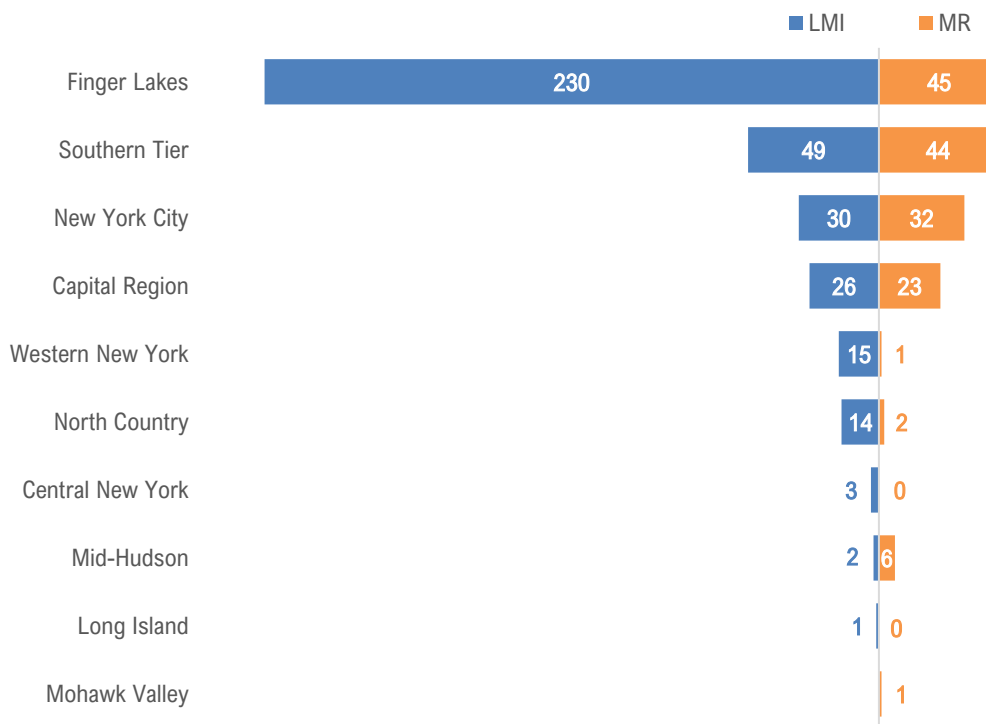


Figure 4. Completed projects by income strata (excluding unknowns). LMI = low-to-moderate income, MR = market rate. Total for each region is depicted in Figure 1.

Like the CEEP Opportunities data, customer survey data and interviews with CEAs indicate that **customers of all types did participate in clean energy activities after outreach.**¹⁷ Customer survey-reported

¹⁷ CEEP Opportunities data are assumed to be connected to CEEP outreach in some way. CEEP Opportunities data are the population from which customer survey samples were drawn. This approach was reviewed by NYSERDA staff.

participation in NYSERDA clean energy service programs was nearly evenly split between LMI (45 percent) and MR customers (40 percent), with the remaining 13 percent of customer survey respondents unknown (**Figure 5**). Consistent with the program emphasis on reaching LMI households, the programs most common among all surveyed customers are EmPower New York, AHPwES, and the Residential Energy Audit Program (**Figure 5**).¹⁸ Few multifamily respondents participated in EmPower New York and AHPwES, and none participated in the Residential Energy Audit Program.

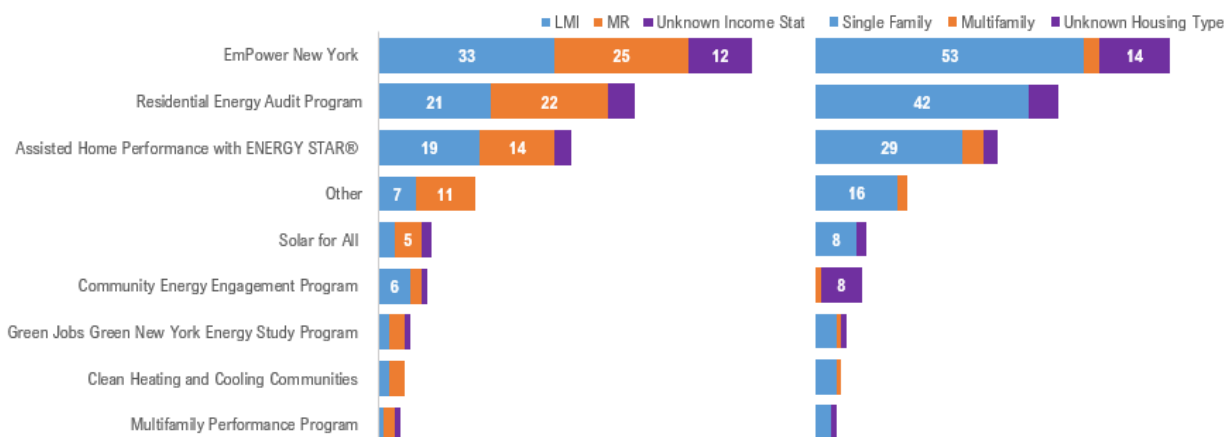


Figure 5. Program participation by housing type and income stratum (n=198). Left and right charts show the same respondent data but are divided differently to highlight different demographics across NYSERDA programs. Categories with fewer than five respondents are not labeled.

Both the Multifamily Performance and the Green Jobs Green NY Energy Study Program (GJGNY) for small commercial and non-profit energy audits were both identified by five or fewer respondents. This response is consistent with information from interviews with CBO/LBOs that noted the relative difficulties in engaging small commercial customers and multi-family building owners. Small commercial outreach is discussed in **Section 2.4.2**.

Single-family home dwellers represent 90 percent of customer survey respondents (and CEEP customer leads/opportunities), corroborated with insights from CEAs and partner organizations, who noted the relative complexity of engaging landlords and renters to implement clean energy projects. The survey result is inconsistent with housing demographics across the state, which suggests that there is almost an even split between single-family (47 percent) and multifamily units (53 percent).¹⁹ On a regional level, the survey results are under-representative of apartment dwellers, especially in the New York City region, where more than half of the respondents were single-family home dwellers (56 percent, compared to the regional percentage of 16 percent single-family units).

CEA interviews shed light on possible challenges in getting multi-family building owners to participate in programs after outreach. Multi-family/apartment building owner outreach is a significant challenge. While

¹⁸ In **Figure 5**, the bar marked “Other” responses may be capturing one or more possible scenarios: a) the respondent did not remember the NYSERDA program name, b) the respondent participated in a non-NYSERDA program providing energy audits and clean energy services, or c) the NYSERDA program no longer exists in its original function, as one NYSERDA program absorbed another (a possibility identified in conversations with NYSERDA Program Staff). Of all respondents surveyed, only 11 replied “does not apply” to all categories. Of those 11 respondents, 10 did not know of any NYSERDA program.

¹⁹ As with the county-level population data, the Market Evaluation Team reviewed American Community Survey (ACS) data for county-level housing demographics, aggregating up to the economic development region level for comparison with survey data. We calculated the percentage of ACS single units ((attached single units + detached single units)/total housing units) and the percentage of multifamily units ((total count of housing with 2-20 units + mobile units (including RV, boat, van, etc.)/total housing units) to compare with survey data on single-family vs. multifamily unit occupation.

tenants may qualify for a suite of programs based on income (e.g., EmPower New York, AHPwES), existing program structures require property owner sign-off on changes or installations and, in many cases, matching contributions from property owners. Interviewees reported that projects often stop when property owners learn that cost matching is required for the project to proceed.

- **Multi-family outreach challenges fall into two main categories:**
 - **Conflict of engagement timing.** This is an issue with larger multifamily apartment buildings, (i.e., those with five-plus or ten-plus units), because upgrades are often planned on a larger scale than they would be for a single-family home, and require lead times that can exceed the NYSERDA program cycle length. CEAs expressed that communication with multifamily building owners needs to be planned and initiated early, before planned repairs begin, making this more difficult to do in the later stages of the program.
 - **Split incentives.** For multi-family homes with fewer than five units, the homeowner/landlord often has slimmer cost margins. Landlords need to understand that the energy efficiency upgrades can improve their bottom line, because they do not want to undertake changes that will not be cost effective. They would rather “put their money into cosmetics and better-looking kitchens instead of insulation.” Where CEAs have been successful at engaging multi-family homeowners, such successes occur because the CBO/LBO has the needed organizational capacity to engage with landlords, or is engaging with a partner organization who specializes in working with landlords and/or spends considerable resources toward convincing landlords of energy savings.

Given the challenges outlined above, it is not surprising that a minority of customer survey respondents reported that they live in an apartment (**Figure 5**).²⁰ In addition to income-based qualification, renters require the cooperation of their building owner in applying for clean energy services or energy assistance, an added complication that single-family home-dwellers do not encounter. Single-family home-dwellers dominate the survey response (90 percent of respondents live in a single-family home), because they likewise dominate the list of customer leads/contacts in the CEEP Opportunities dataset (90 percent). Again, this is not representative of the NYS housing demographics across the state, and points to a need for targeted outreach to multifamily building owners by CEAs. Apartment dwellers often face lease restrictions that limit the number and type of changes they can make to their unit, and outside of removable/temporary energy efficiency measures, they rely on the building owner or landlord to make more permanent changes (such as upgrading to ENERGY STAR[®] appliances or installing blow-in insulation). Landlords and building owners may require a different marketing approach to link improvements to energy efficiency and tenant comfort to their own bottom line.

²⁰ The matrix-style question block was used as a branch logic screener question for the rest of the survey. For example, respondents who replied in the negative for all questions were routed to later questions in the survey, based on the assumption that a negative response indicates that they did not interact with NYSERDA past initial contact.

2.1.2 How many customers are “first time” clean energy project implementers?

Outreach and education are key CEEP objectives, along with applications supported and projects completed.²¹ “First time” project implementers is a metric assessing conversion rate of customer leads or applicants to project completions, excluding the portion of customers who may already be familiar with NYSERDA’s clean energy programs. The metric is not tracked in NYSERDA’s Salesforce database, so the customer survey was used as a primary data source.

Consistent with the objectives of the program, **most customer survey respondents (77 percent) indicated that it was their first time participating in a home energy audit, energy efficiency measures, or clean energy project (n = 178).** As outlined above, a key objective of CEEP is to engage and educate a variety of populations in learning about energy efficiency and clean energy measures, and with the customer support offered from the CEA in identifying appropriate NYSERDA programs, it is no surprise that education efforts by CEAs led to new customers. The CEEP Opportunities dataset includes customer contact information collected from these education events (e.g., food pantry drive, community fair flyer distributions, and informational tabling at farmer’s markets), and CEAs report that they often follow up to check on application or project status.

Customers reported CEA support at various stages of the application process and project lifecycle. Sixty-three percent of customer survey respondents completed their clean energy project (n=175), with 13 percent identifying as receiving assistance from the CEA’s organization (CBO/LBO) in *completing* their project. While it is possible that some of this is confusion about who performed the actual energy installation work, the CEA may have continued to support the customer by answering questions, checking in with NYSERDA programs staff about the application, or connecting with the contractor to ensure that the project work was being done on time and to the customer’s satisfaction. Sixty percent of respondents reported that they received assistance in the application stage (n=94), and 23 percent reported that application assistance came directly from a CEA.²²

2.1.3 How many grant or loan applications were facilitated through CBO/LBOs?

The number of grant or loan applications facilitated through CBO/LBOs illustrates the usefulness of the CBO/LBO model for the disbursement of NYSERDA investment funds. This metric is directly identified in the original CEEP RFP and logic model.^{23,24}

Available program data from NYSERDA reveal that CEAs facilitated a total of 243 loan or grant applications on behalf of CEEP customers from 2018 - 2020.²⁵ A total of 2,206 customer leads/contacts were identified by CEAs in the CEEP Opportunities dataset as loan or grant applicants. Of these applicants, 267 customer entries had a description with the word “loan” or “grant” in them.²⁶ Of this subset, 243

²¹ NYSERDA. 2017. PON 3588: Community Energy Engagement Program. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://portal.nyserdera.ny.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00Pt0000002aLQTEA2>.

²² Metrics reference herein are each based on the *total* respondents to each question.

²³ NYSERDA. 2017. PON 3588: Community Energy Engagement Program. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://portal.nyserdera.ny.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00Pt0000002aLQTEA2>.

²⁴ NYSERDA. 2020. Clean Energy Fund Investment Plan, Communities Chapter. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://www.nyserdera.ny.gov/About/Funding/Clean-Energy-Fund>.

²⁵ Detail in the CEEP Opportunities dataset is limited and not systematically captured. Loans or grant applications are for NYSERDA and other/non-NYSERDA resources.

²⁶ Customers who were tagged in the Salesforce data as grant/loan applicants but did not receive grants or loans expressed interest and may have: 1) applied successfully with another NYSERDA program, 2) applied with another program and rejected due to ineligibility, or 3) not followed through with the application at all.

customer lead/contract entries had a status of: application submitted, application approved, project contracted, project completed, or closed – customer ineligible.^{27,28} All of these application/contact statuses indicate that the application was successfully facilitated through the CEA.²⁹

While the customer survey data do not give us clear insights into the grants or loans facilitated by CEAs (customers did not always recall who had helped them with their grant or loan application), they do give a sense of individual customer grant or loan amounts. Of the 94 customer survey respondents who reported that they received a grant or loan toward the completion of a home or business energy assessment or clean energy installation (**Figure 1**), many customers did not know the grant or loan amount they received (33 percent). Other customers reported that they did not receive the invoice or that the grant or loan went directly to the contractor (29 percent). In total, 38 percent of customer survey respondents (32 customers) recalled the dollar amount of their grant or loan. Across these 32 customers, a total of \$192,320 in grant or loan funding was secured for their projects. Customers self-reported grant or loan amounts ranging from \$1,500 to \$30,000, with a median value of \$6,077 (across 32 customers).

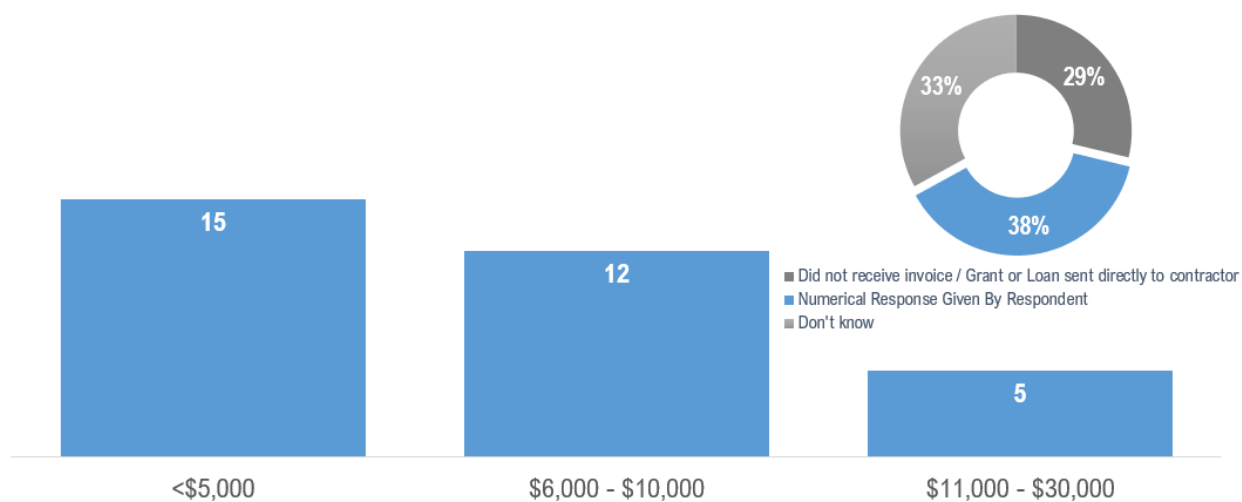


Figure 6. Customers did not always receive information about grants or loans, or recall seeing the amount of funding they received (n=94). Of the surveyed customers who were able to give a grant or loan amount, most received less than \$5,000 (n=32).

²⁷ Only five customers were identified as ineligible, and they may have later applied through other NYSERDA programs where they were eligible.

²⁸ Due to the lack of cross-communication between CEEP Opportunities Salesforce portals and the individual NYSERDA programs, it appears that CEAs do not always receive information about customer loan or grant outcomes, because the NYSERDA program takes control of the process with the customer after application. Again, it seems that CEAs are responsible for follow-up with customers or the NYSERDA programs to locate application outcome information on behalf of customers and for the CEEP Opportunities dataset.

²⁹ Note: the CEEP Opportunities data on loan or grant funding are limited and do not allow an accurate analysis of loan/grant funded as a percentage of the total completed projects. There is currently no systematic tracking of grant or loan funding received/denied within the Salesforce data.

2.1.4 How much leveraged funding was used?

Leveraged funding is another metric directly identified in the original CEEP RFP and logic model.^{30,31} Leveraged funds are equivalent to cost share, or funds contributed by another organization or agency toward the overall customer project budget. This is an investment outcome metric used to gauge meaningful partner engagement toward customer project completion. NYSERDA spending and cost share dollar values come from the self-reported CEEP Opportunities dataset and are incomplete (e.g., missing data altogether for Mid-Hudson and Mohawk Valley regions, and no leveraged funding other than non-profit funds reported for Central New York). Incomplete reporting is primarily a result of the indirect tieback between the CEEP Opportunities data portal to which CEAs have access and the NYSERDA programmatic project data.

Under CEEP, **NYSERDA’s investment was matched for \$2.1 million dollars (Table 6)**. Forty percent of total funding, representing a total of \$1.9 million dollars from leveraged sources, came from federal, other non-NYSERDA state agency, municipal, and non-profit sources. The additional \$247,612 came directly from customers and represents only five percent of the overall spending related to clean energy service projects with CEEP. Customer spending is not considered leveraged funding.

Table 5. NYSERDA spending and matching cost share. CEEP Opportunities data as of July 13, 2020.

Region	NYSERDA	Federal	Loan	Local Municipality	Non Profit	Other NY State Agency	Customer
North Country	\$16,300	-	-	-	-	\$4,000	-
Capital Region	\$44,573	-	-	-	-	\$12,695	\$2,143
New York City	\$66,716	\$40,000	-	-	-	-	\$200
Mid-Hudson*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Southern Tier	\$682,444	\$75,160	\$27,002	-	\$10,500	\$16,580	\$194,387
Central New York**	\$805,859	-	-	-	\$23,283	-	-
Mohawk Valley*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Finger Lakes	\$793,821	\$295,329	\$86,172	\$146,615	\$12,447	\$1,124,042	\$50,882
Western New York	\$58,450	-	\$10,000	-	-	\$17,050	-
Long Island*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$2,468,163	\$410,489	\$123,174	\$146,615	\$46,230	\$1,174,367	\$247,612
Total Non-NYSERDA	\$1,900,875	(40% of total funding)					

Note: CEEP Opportunities dataset is incomplete and may not be fully representative of cost share or NYSERDA funds. *Mohawk Valley, Long Island, and Mid-Hudson regions are missing both NYSERDA funding and cost share data; **Central New York appears to be missing cost share data as well.

2.1.5 How many regional pilot programs were implemented?

³⁰ NYSERDA. 2017. PON 3588: Community Energy Engagement Program. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://portal.nyserdera.ny.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00Pt0000002aLQTEA2>.

³¹ NYSERDA. 2020. Clean Energy Fund Investment Plan, Communities Chapter. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://www.nyserdera.ny.gov/About/Funding/Clean-Energy-Fund>.

The number of regional pilot programs is identified as a CEF Investment outcome metric, used to assess new customer outreach initiatives.³² Implementation of regional pilot programs is also highlighted as a goal for CEAs under the CEEP RFP.³³ Regional pilot programs implemented under the CEEP umbrella engaged a total of 150 customers (Table 7). **There were five total pilot programs implemented, four of which were successful in generating opportunities.** The Southern Tier and Mid-Hudson regions (both managed by Cornell Cooperative Extension offices) each implemented two pilot programs, while the Capital Region implemented one, meaning that 30 percent of CBO/LBOs implemented regional pilots between 2018-2020. One of the two programs in the Southern Tier was severely impacted by COVID-19 and ultimately stopped due to pandemic-related issues. The “School/Student Engagement in Clean Energy Initiative” was designed to focus on students and teachers in low-income rural Southern Tier School Districts to encourage participation in clean energy programs. COVID-19 and related restrictions in local schools during the 2020-2021 pandemic resulted in severe delays that hindered program engagement.

Table 6. Regionally Specific Initiatives pilot program engagement. Opportunities data on pilots is from May 27, 2021.

Region	Pilot Program Name	Description	Customer Count
Mid-Hudson	REALIGN - "Roundtable for Energy Affordability in Low-Income Groups and Neighborhoods"	Piloting stakeholder engagement of other service providers and agencies to develop a “no wrong door” referral system to better address gaps in services and increase participation available programs.	1
Capital Region	Healthy Homes Evaluator Pilot	A pilot to reduce the number of unsuccessful or deferred home energy projects due to health and safety concerns. This pilot implemented a comprehensive healthy home evaluation & energy assessment and provided assistance with gap funding to implement projects.	22
Southern Tier	Mobile Powerhouse Pilot	A high-performance tiny home exhibit to reach people where they are, w/ hands-on, interactive exhibits on energy efficiency, heating, lighting, solar, and other green technologies. Designed to help visitors understand how these technologies work, estimate potential savings, and learn about clean energy action steps they can take in their own home or business.	59
Mid-Hudson	Energy Navigator Expansion Pilot	Train-the-trainer program to build local capacity of local volunteer peer educators to provide information and advising around issues such as energy efficiency, renewable heat and power, etc. in their communities.	68

The CEEP Opportunities data indicates customer engagements in four of the five regional pilot programs listed above. Though only one program was stopped prematurely due to COVID-19, all of these efforts were all negatively impacted by the 2020-2021 pandemic (shutdowns and social distancing practices started in early 2020, which impacted the implementation of the regional pilot programs).³⁴

³² NYSERDA. 2020. Clean Energy Fund Investment Plan, Communities Chapter. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/About/Funding/Clean-Energy-Fund>.

³³ NYSERDA. 2017. PON 3588: Community Energy Engagement Program. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://portal.nyserda.ny.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00Pt0000002aLQTEA2>.

³⁴ Customers listed in Table 7 are not reflected in Table 5 or Figure 2; regional pilot data was a belated addition to the customer engagement analysis. Customers from regional pilots are likewise excluded from the survey sample frame.

2.2 Clean energy relationships built within the community

Clean energy relationships built within the wider community is an objective directly identified in the original CEEP RFP and logic model.^{35,36} The Market Evaluation Team defines clean energy relationships as formal and informal partnerships with local organizations that strive to address customer outreach and education about the value of clean energy and energy efficiency. These partnerships may also lower barriers to or facilitate clean energy measure adoption. CEAs have established two tiers of partnerships: KPOs (key partner organizations), defined by the project team and identified by each CEA as the top three partners working with that CEA, and “other partners,” defined as the larger list of partners outside of the top three that comprise the CEA’s partner network. It is important to note that both the CEA organization and its partner organizations can work both on energy services and, in some cases, on complementary services addressing issues such as housing, health, and nutrition. As a result, relationships may expand past “clean energy” topics.

This objective assesses program reach from a structural or network perspective, because the program logic dictates that partnerships with other organizations are an effective means of leveraging funds, gaining support for hosting events, and securing customer referrals. The purpose of this evaluation objective is to identify the number and type of community partnerships, document the scope and extent of coordination between CEAs and their partners, assess wider program reach, and identify areas of possible improvement for these partnerships/relationships. The Market Evaluation Team uses key analytical themes emerging from in-depth interviews with CEAs and KPOs, triangulated (where possible) using ‘other partner’ survey data (**Table 8**).

Table 7. Evaluation questions for the community clean energy relationships objective.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	DATA SOURCES USED
Monitor clean energy relationships built within the community	6. Which other organizations did LBOs develop relationships with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey • Program Data
	7. What synergies were realized as a result of these relationships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey
	8. Did partnerships between local organizations lead to increased outreach activity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey • Program Data • CEEP Engagement/Activities Data
	9. Did partnerships between local organizations lead to increased project implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews

The nature of the CEA position, i.e., assisting customers in navigating clean energy assistance programs and working to see if customers meet the requirements for eligibility, is relationship-based and customer service-focused, and varies by region depending on the constellation of organizations in that area and structure of the CEA organization itself. CEAs provide services not only to customers (e.g., checking in with customers to see if their projects were implemented, and making them aware of additional services from NYSERDA and in some cases other agencies or utilities), but also to the partner organizations that

³⁵ NYSERDA. 2017. PON 3588: Community Energy Engagement Program. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://portal.nyserd.ny.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00Pt0000002aLQTEA2>.

³⁶ NYSERDA. 2020. Clean Energy Fund Investment Plan, Communities Chapter. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://www.nyserd.ny.gov/About/Funding/Clean-Energy-Fund>.

work with CBOs/LBOs on energy and other services. In interviews, KPOs have expressed positive feedback about CEAs who check in regularly to ask about referred customers or share new information about changes in NYSERDA programs (e.g., in 2020, free energy studies for small businesses and non-profits became available).³⁷ Partner organizations also typically have close ties to the communities in which they work. Where partners have deep and ongoing relationships with customers, CEAs can lean on those relationships for entry into communities and as a first introduction to customers that usual CEEP engagement activities do not reach.

2.2.1 Which other organizations did CBO/LBOs develop relationships with?

This metric provides insight into the nature of CBO/LBO partnership networks. Understanding the types of organizations that CEAs have identified as partners is necessary for future program planning, guidance/support for new CEAs, and process improvements. The data used to support this metric include CEA interviews, KPO interviews, “other partner” surveys, and CEEP Activities data. Recall, “other partners” are defined here as non-KPOs, or partners outside of CEAs’ top three partners lists (see **section 1.1** for additional information).

CEAs developed relationships with a diverse group of partner organizations. These relationships primarily fall into three categories:

- (1) Energy (installation) contractors, including non-profit energy contractors;
- (2) Non-profits, typically those focused on offering comprehensive financial, family support, or wellness services; and
- (3) Municipal/local government offices, such as e.g., county Departments of Social Services.

The Center for NYC Neighborhoods, a comparatively high-intake CBO/LBO, indicated that partnerships are successful where partners know their strengths and limitations and are clear about the role they can play in supporting CBOs/LBOs. KPOs who understand the value of the relationship appear more willing to share information, cross-referrals, and other support where possible. Partners who are clear about their strengths and bandwidth save CEAs time and energy because the CEAs know whether the relationship is strictly one for referrals, or whether it is something to nurture for more collaborative work.

As with partner organization type, partner engagement also varies across NYSERDA regions (**Figure 7**). CEAs in Central New York and the Capital Region have more experience than CEAs in any other region. CEAs in these two regions appear to focus engagement efforts on a select number of partners. Regions with CBOs of high organizational capacity (Finger Lakes, New York City, Western New York) have a few more partners with similarly focused engagement. CEAs at PUSH Buffalo in Western New York told the Market Evaluation Team that PUSH is actively working on engaging energy contractors and other community partners in their region, an account which aligns with their reported partner engagement hours. Central New York, Southern Tier, Mid-Hudson, and North Country all have Cornell Cooperative Extension CBOs in their respective regions, and appear to use a range of partner strategies, resulting in different number of partners and hours of engagement in each region. Long Island and Mohawk Valley report the highest numbers of partners but spend some of fewest hours/partner. These regions likewise have the lowest number of customers reported in the CEEP Opportunities data.

³⁷ In an interview, the NYSERDA staff operating the GJGNY program noted that the free energy studies were popular and participation had increased; the evaluation questions to participants and CEAs did not explicitly examine whether this change in program structure had contributed to participation in specific regions through CEEP.

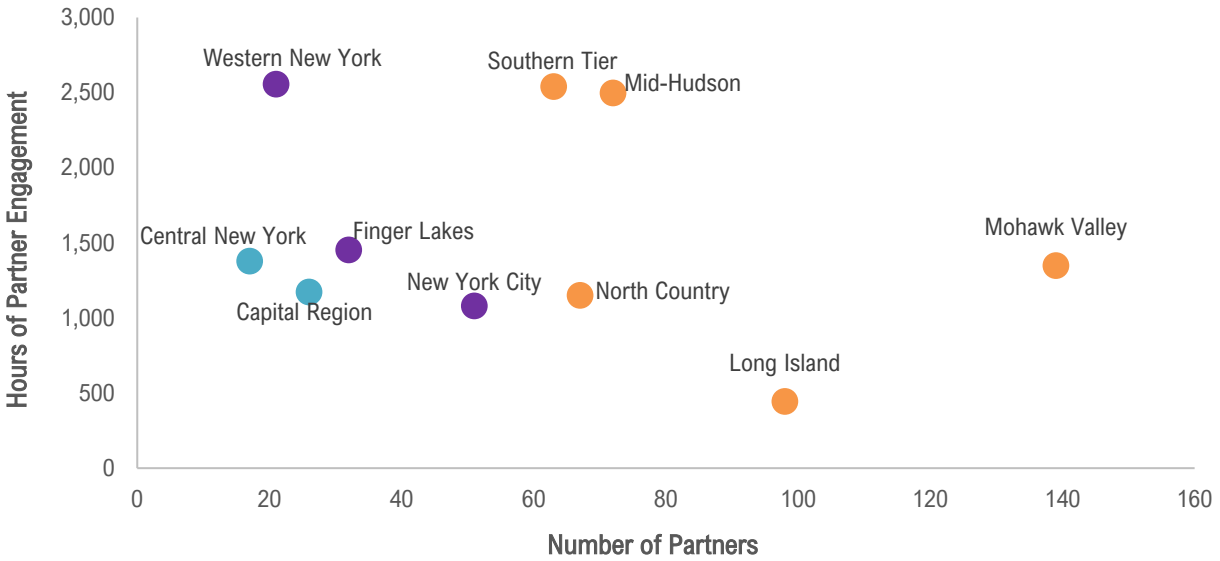


Figure 7. Number of partners by hours of partner engagement (includes energy contractors, which is recorded separately in the CEEP Activities data). Data from May 27, 2021. Color codes: Purple = high-organizational capacity CBO, blue = CBO with highly experienced CEA, and orange = all other CBOs.

Contractors as Partners

For contractors to be good partners, incentives need to be aligned. If contractors have a steady stream of work, they may pursue their backlog of market-rate clients instead of a complicated job requiring subcontractor work.

Projects work best when their lifecycle can be assured from beginning to end. CEAs can improve existing relationships with contractors by assuring project completion for sites that require extensive work.

CEAs can foster good relationships with new contractors through regular referrals, reduced administrative time for the contractor (i.e. supporting the homeowner in NYSERDA and other grant funding applications), and follow-up communication.

Interviews with CEAs and energy contractor KPOs suggest that the energy contractor relationship can be difficult to navigate for CEAs, because the focus of energy contractors is to maximize profits and optimize workload. In contrast, CEAs are focused on ensuring positive outcomes for households (e.g., increased energy efficiency, improved home comfort, reduced energy bills). As a result, CEEP customers may be less cost-effective for energy contractors; the projects contractors encounter often need more work than what the energy assistance program alone can cover. Project implementation with CEEP customers may also be more time-consuming for contractors than for their other clients, including “market rate” customers, due to the necessity of grant funding and/or loan applications.

Two of three KPO energy contractors interviewed reported a strong relationship with the CEA, based on mutual understanding and respect due to the contractor’s willingness to cooperate and the CEA’s institutional knowledge of NYSERDA programs, broad network of community contacts, and expertise of loans and grants that could be pieced together to support customers in completing their home energy projects. Another non-profit energy contractor indicated that they had a *competitive* relationship with the CEA when it came to NYSERDA’s clean energy programs and referred customers for the weatherization program that the CBO/LBO hosted, instead of energy programs like EmPower New York. One CEA described approaches to working with energy contractors as two extremes, where there are “sharks in the water along with the good folks, doing a [bad] job and really putting people at risk.” Another CEA shared:

“Some [contractors] view the program as a nuisance, even when we have good information that suggests they’ve gotten lots and lots of leads from this. They’d rather have NYSERDA out of this, it’s something they can take care of themselves... We do have some contractors that are, that love this program and work closely with it. The big problem for us is that it would be great if we could somehow, if there was a way to say, these contractors are interested and any lead that we have is going to them because they want to work on the program. The way it’s set up now, is that we are not supposed to recommend a [specific] contractor... we have certain contractors who we know, they won’t let the prospect down. They work with them to get their business unless the person doesn’t want it anymore.”

The interviewee expressed a dual-sided problem with contractor engagement, where some contractors are not at all interested in NYSERDA energy services work, and others are interested in additional work but limited by the NYSERDA directive to not favor any one energy contractor over another. For-profit contractors may struggle to be effective partners because they have enough market-rate work without projects from LMI residences, which may require extra steps, including the initial loan or grant assistance application to NYSERDA. One for-profit energy contractor explained that the LMI residence jobs he receives are often beyond the scope of his usual insulation business and require him to subcontract with other building specialists.³⁸

The current program structure does not allow CEAs to recommend or prioritize specific installation contractors, and differing financial priorities and incentives of contractors do not always align with project priorities; however, NYSERDA is currently both redesigning the single-family residential homes programs (e.g., EmPower), which will allow customers the flexibility to choose the contractor with whom they want to work, and piloting a process that separates the energy contractor and energy auditor roles, which eliminates a possible conflict of interest.

The partner organization-CEA mutualism appears to be clearest (for both parties) where clean energy services are a component of the service that the partner organization provides. Interviews suggest that where CEAs can make a case for clean energy services as a piece of customer overall well-being, the easier it is for partners and customers to understand. This finding holds in “other partner” survey responses as well. Many “other partner” respondents’ missions intersected with clean energy services (38 percent reported that they connect homeowners directly to this type of program, **Figure 8**). More frequently, respondents’ missions addressed overall respondent health and well-being. For example, utility bill savings from clean energy services can be a component of improving household finances or reducing debt. Only a small number of respondents (eight percent) identified that clean energy services were not applicable to their organization’s mission.

³⁸ One energy contractor described the need for water damage repair and new insulation installed prior to replacing a hot water heater, for example. In other cases, roof repair came up as a particular hurdle to installing blow-in insulation. Houses may experience weatherization or other issues as well.

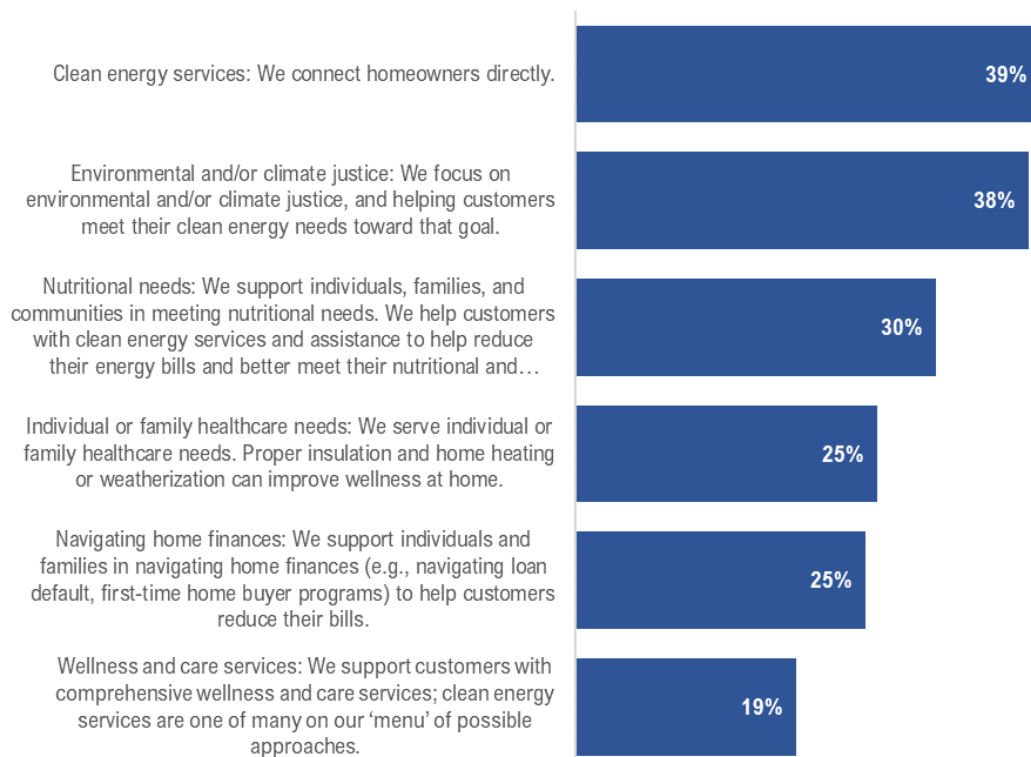


Figure 8. Responses to the “Other partner” survey question “How do clean energy services (e.g. home energy assistance, energy efficiency measures, energy audits, clean energy technologies) fit into your mission?” A *check-all-that-apply response* (n=102).

“Other partner” organization types ranged from state or federal agencies to block associations, from academic institutions to electric or gas utilities (**Figure 9**); however, over half (53 percent) were non-profit organizations that did not explicitly fit into the categories listed separately.³⁹ Nineteen percent of “other partner” survey respondents were municipal or local government officials, while nine percent were energy contractors. Given that the majority of CEEP-related cost share comes from federal and state agencies (**Section 2.1.4**), it is interesting that so few survey respondents identified as a state or federal agency (one percent).

³⁹ “Non-profit” was intended as a catch-all category to accommodate non-profit partners who did not fit into the specific categories named (e.g., faith-based and food bank) and responded to this question (53 percent of overall respondents). In the future, this should be deconstructed into multiple sub-categories to more accurately identify partners by type.

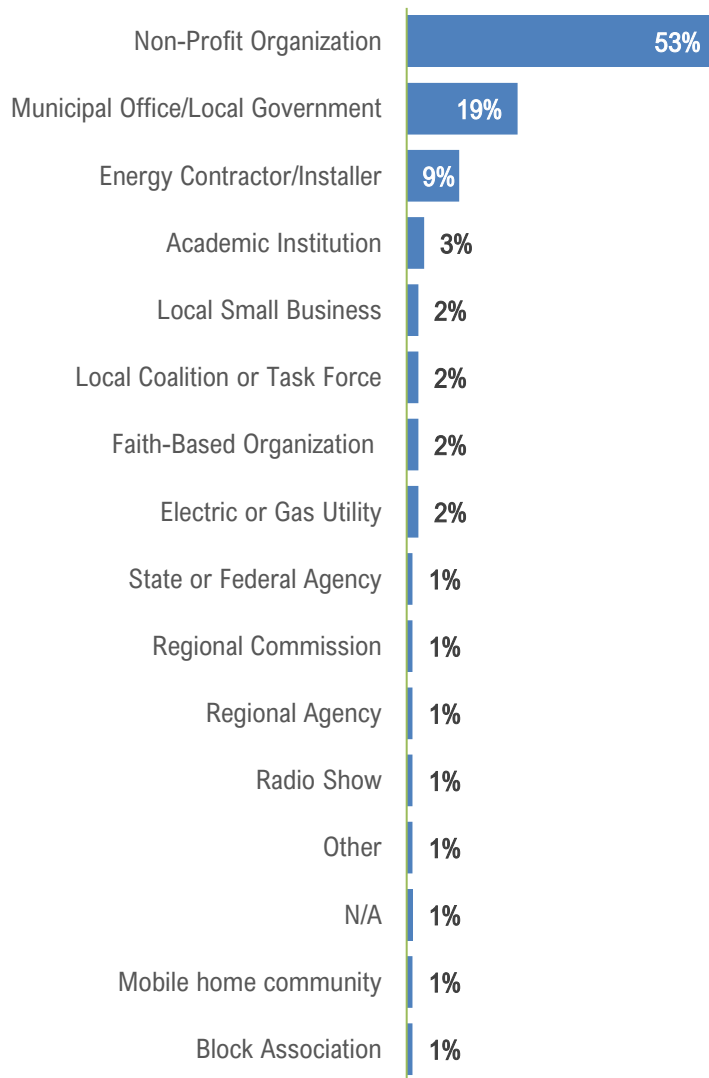


Figure 9. “Other partner” organizations by type (n=102). More than half of “other partner” survey respondents consider themselves to be a non-profit organization that is not faith-based.

2.2.2 What synergies were realized as a result of these relationships?

Synergies realized is a metric that identifies the ways that community partners benefit or work closely with CEAs. The Market Evaluation Team defines synergies as alignments of purpose and/or support provided (whether resources are financial, time, or other); for example, a partner organization and CEA working together to support a customer in financing their clean energy measures installation is considered a synergy. Data for this metric include CEA and KPO interviews, as well as ‘other partner’ survey responses.

Two main synergies highlighted in both CEA and KPO interviews include a) alignment of resources toward meeting a customer’s comprehensive list of needs and b) providing additional funding through grants or loans. When partners can refer customers to a CEA and vice versa, it creates a natural collaboration toward supporting the customer in a more comprehensive way. For example, if a customer

has debt and difficulty paying bills (something a home finance education non-profit or family support organization could address), clean energy services or energy efficiency measures would help reduce the customer's home energy bills. Establishing boundaries (e.g., what kinds of referrals to send, limiting duplication of effort for CEAs who also do things like helping customers navigate their finances) and building trust with the KPO (e.g., through follow up with both the customer and the referring organization: are customers being contacted after getting referred?) is important for this type of relationship to work. All CEA interviewees indicated that they have cross-referral relationships with various partners, and most KPOs interviewed validated this assertion.

While there appears to be a range of “other partner” strategies for connecting customers directly with clean energy services (**Figure 10**), a majority of the survey respondents' organizations refer customers directly to NYSERDA services (69 percent responded “occasionally” or “regularly”), hand out NYSERDA materials (68 percent), or refer to the local CEA (60 percent). There is not enough information from the survey question to know whether “other partner” referrals directly to NYSERDA are instead of or in addition to CEEP, but it likely varies on a case-by-case basis. Ten “other partner” respondents claimed that they never interact with the CEA, so it may be that too much time had elapsed since they last engaged with the CEA or that they were a planned partner who made it onto the list absent any real engagement.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Three of these respondents who claimed no interaction were in the Mohawk Valley region, two were in the Mid-Hudson region, and two were in the North Country.

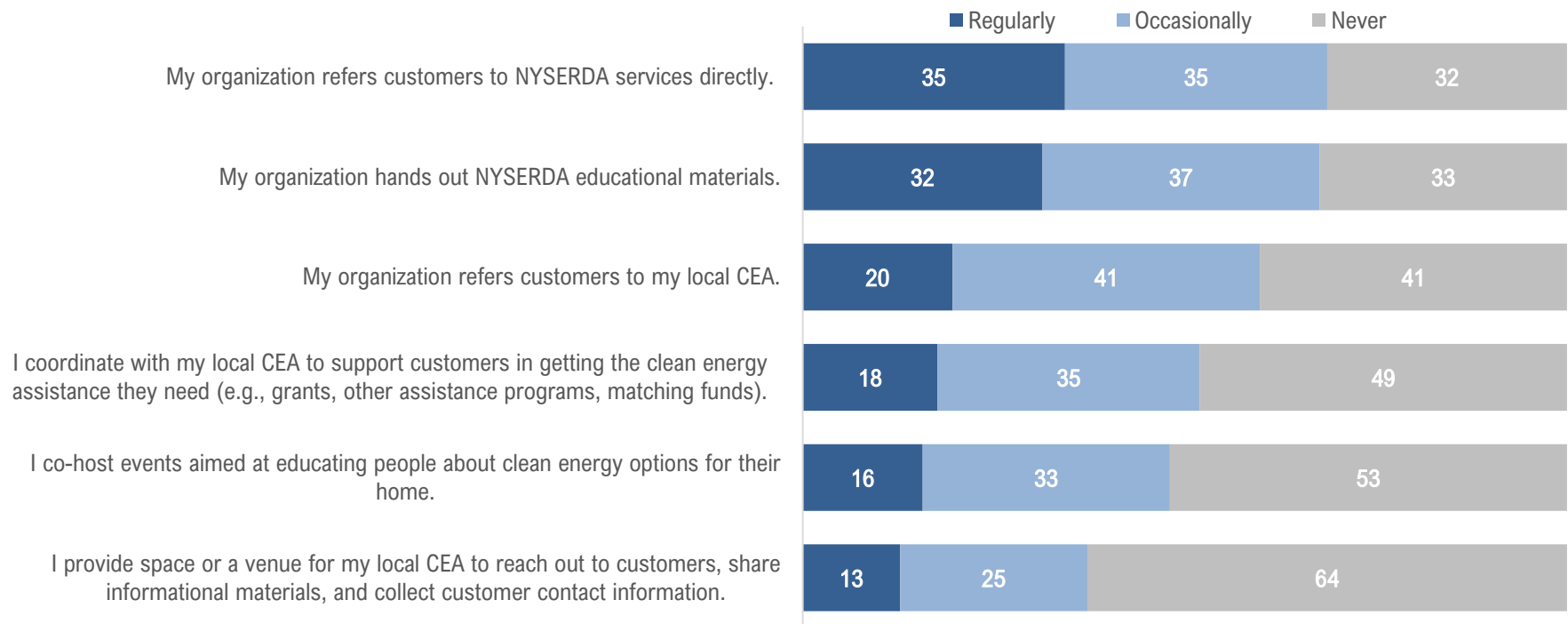


Figure 10. Synergies developed between CEAs and partner organizations, according to the “other partner” survey respondents. (n=102 total respondents).

Empower New York was the majority response from customers who did refer to NYSERDA programs (**Figure 5**). Fewer “other partner” respondents reported direct customer referrals to EmPower or AHPwES (**Figure 11**).⁴¹ This observation is supported by CEEP Opportunities program data, which suggest that EmPower New York and AHPwES are the two most common opportunities associated with CEEP (i.e., CEAs entered more data for applicants to those two programs than any other) (**section 2.3.3**). Likewise, EmPower, AHPwES, and Solar for All were mentioned in CEA interviews more than other NYSERDA programs.

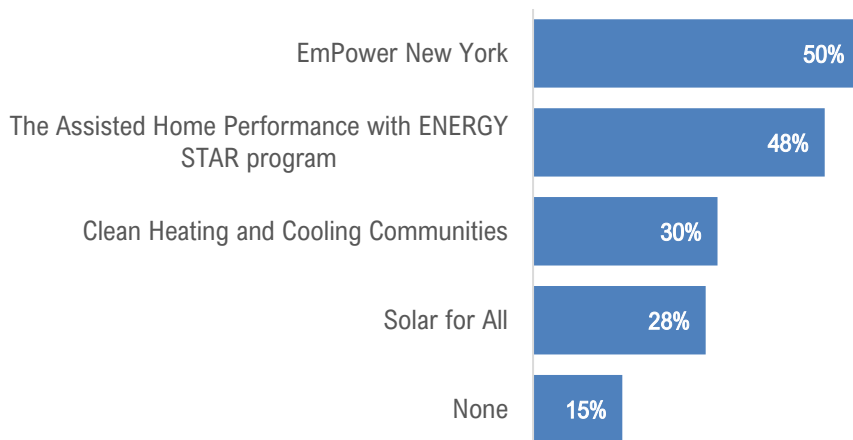


Figure 11. NYSERDA programs to which other partners have referred customers (a check-all-that-apply question, n=102).

Working together to provide or procure funding to fill clean energy project financing gaps is a rarer kind of collaboration but can lead to successful project completion. Partner organizations who work with CEAs to meet customer financial needs outside of clean energy services (especially non-profit housing support organizations and government/municipal offices) are often valuable to CEEP, because they are positioned to leverage funding for activities that can improve the participation in NYSERDA programs through CEEP. PathStone in the Finger Lakes region has comparative success in customer project completion (**Figure 3**). According to KPO interviews, the Affordable Housing Partnership in the Capital Region and the Cornell Cooperative Extension in the North Country region seem have had creative positive outcomes in this area. In the case of the Affordable Housing Partnership, these creative positive outcomes were attributed to the CEA’s background in project financing and diligence in helping the customer find solutions that work for their unique situations. The CEA has a good working knowledge of grant and loan opportunities that come from years of experience and was able to draw on that to support customers. Where this CEA is unable to support the customer directly in applying for assistance, they refer the customer to KPOs who can provide the support, instead. In the case of the North Country Cornell Cooperative Extension Office, the CEA worked with the KPO and NYSERDA to come up with a novel project category to fit the customer needs. This creative solution allowed the financing and completion of the project prior to move-in.

When asked what benefits the “other partner” organizations received from their relationship with the CEA, responses varied (**Figure 12**). While “other partners” were (by definition) less involved with CEAs than KPOs, many reported activities indicating expanded capacity due to their relationship with the CEA. These activities include sharing educational materials with the CEA for wider outreach, expanding offerings for customers (due to CEEP referrals), and cross-posting social media content to engage customers online. Four of five respondents who answered “other” to the question about benefits referred to specific collaborations they had undertaken in collaboration with the CEA. The fifth respondent

⁴¹ These two programs are places where CEAs play a role in customer recruitment and application support.

mentioned that they would be open to more activities in the future, but that they did not currently have a collaborative relationship with the CEA. Sixteen respondents (nine percent) reported that the response categories were not applicable to them, while nine respondents claimed that they experienced no benefits from the relationship with the CEA (five percent).

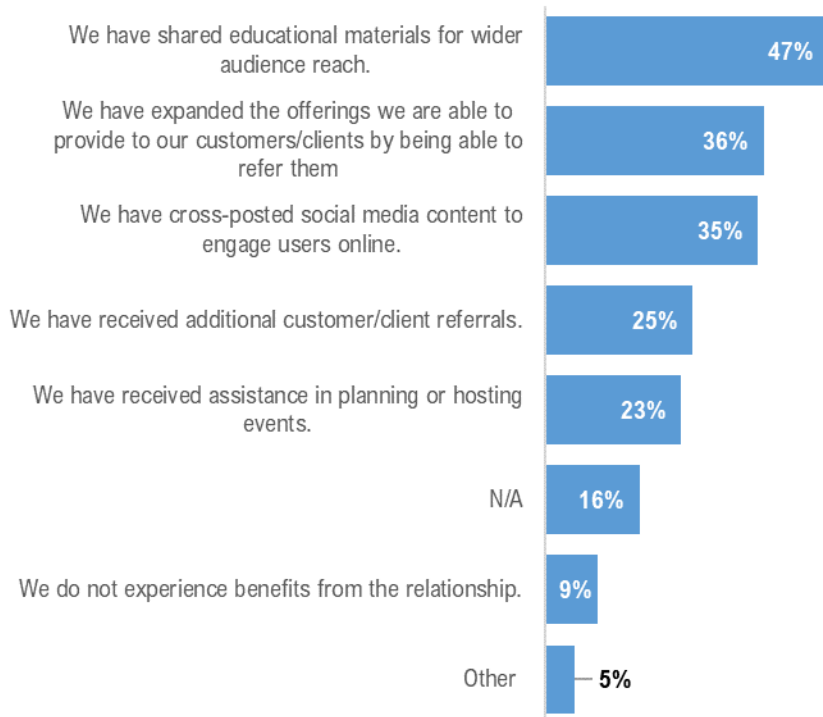


Figure 12. Benefits from partnership with CEAs (a “check-all-that-apply” response, n=102).

2.2.3 Did partnerships between local organizations lead to increased outreach activity?

This metric is important because it connects partnerships directly with the outreach activity essential to CEEP, providing insight to the larger question about the role of partnerships in improving outreach effectiveness. Partnerships leverage NYSERDA resources for outreach, drawing upon a larger network to increase access to a broad customer base.^{42,43} As with other partnership-related metrics, the interaction between partners and particular NYSERDA customers assisted by CEAs (e.g., whether the customer attended a partner-held event, came to the CEA through partner referral, etc.) is not systematically recorded in the CEEP Opportunities data. Some CEAs have indicated this type of context in the open-ended “Description” field, but such annotation is an exception, rather than the rule. Data for this metric thus include CEA and KPO interviews, “other partner” survey responses, and program data.

Based on CEEP Opportunities and CEEP Activities data, as well as responses to the “other partner” survey, it appears that **partnerships between CEAs and local organizations led to increased outreach activity**. Fifty-two percent of “other partner” respondents reported that they had referred customers directly to CEAs

⁴² NYSERDA. 2017. PON 3588: Community Energy Engagement Program. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://portal.nyserderda.ny.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00Pt0000002aLQTEA2>.

⁴³ NYSERDA. 2020. Clean Energy Fund Investment Plan, Communities Chapter. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://www.nyserderda.ny.gov/About/Funding/Clean-Energy-Fund>.

(n = 102), and there is a positive relationship between number of partners and hours spent on outreach activities (**Figure 13**). Based on the descriptions of these activities, it appears that many of these hours are a result of partner-related activity, including: educating new customer audiences (many with the help of partners), tabling at partner events, time spent planning collaborative outreach activities with partners, getting partners up to speed on program details, and checking in with partners about customer.⁴⁴ PUSH Buffalo in Western New York is an outlier, reporting more than two times the total hours spent on outreach activity than other regions. Again, this may be a result of being a new CBO, and working to establish themselves as the local/regional interface for NYSERDA energy programs. Other outliers include Mohawk Valley Economic Development District and United Way of Long Island, both of whom reported the two highest partner counts, and the two lowest customer counts. CEAs at the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District and United Way of Long Island reported focusing their outreach to small commercial customers, which may explain some of the difference.⁴⁵ Alternatively, this discrepancy may be related to inconsistent reporting in the Salesforce CRM, or regional-specific challenges in customer engagement (discussed further in **section 2.4.1**). Ultimately, regions seem to have different capacities for different types of engagement, but the Market Evaluation Team is limited in their pursuit of these possible explanations further because the available data is limited.

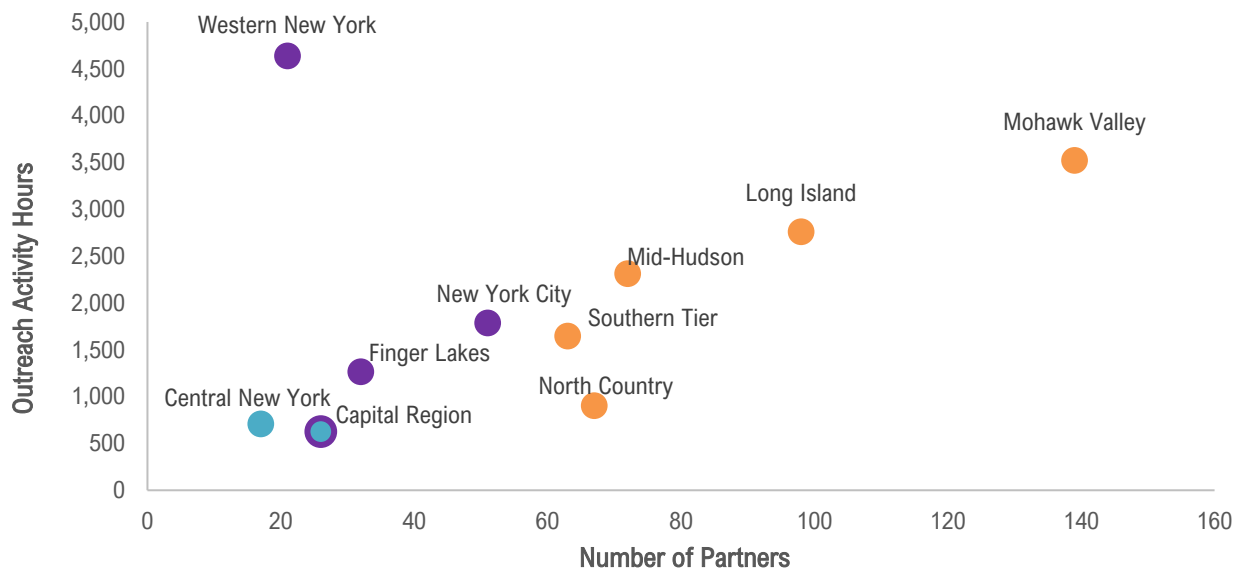


Figure 13. Number of outreach activity hours has a positive relationship with number of partners. *Color codes: Purple = high-organizational capacity CBO, blue = CBO with highly experienced CEA, and orange = all other CBOs.*

Most CEAs emphasized that their success in reaching customers was driven by their community partners, and in large part a result of the resources and the alternate inroads with different parts of the community these partner organizations provided. As described above in **Section 2.2.7**, partner outreach takes various shapes and forms:

⁴⁴ The Market Evaluation Team did not code the outreach hours description for all 3,500 CEEP Activities data entries from January 2018 – September 2020. The noted observation is based on a cursory review of the data.

⁴⁵ While the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District appears to evenly split outreach between residential and small commercial customers, United Way of Long Island reports focusing their outreach primarily on small commercial customers and only had one small commercial customer in the CEEP Opportunities dataset. The Long Island region is unique in the administration of NYSERDA programs for customers, but the small number of customers reported as compared to partners suggests that there may be differences in how United Way is entering their data.

- Digital outreach methods,
- Sharing information for newsletter features or blog posts,
- Presenting to attendees at a partner-hosted event or venue, and
- Cross-referral of customers from partner organizations.

Community partners and CEAs provide complementary offerings and resources, access to specific communities/organizations (sharing networks), and referrals (**Section 2.2.2**). While cross-referral is an important outreach mechanism for most CEAs, digital outreach and blogs or newsletters took priority for all CEAs during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Customer views or clicks is not a CEEP metric, but the prevalence of partner-reported digital outreach and cross-posting does suggest that “signal boosting” (raising awareness through external channels) might be a useful indicator of outreach in the future.

One CEA offered the insight that sharing an overarching message or end goal helps to improve collaborations toward engaging customers. Another CEA mentioned that understanding the program they are partnering with is key to successful outreach. Both themes were highlighted in the KPO interviews as well. Evidence supporting this idea of shared messaging as a driver of successful partnerships is borne out in the “other partner” survey results, where 39 percent of respondents reported that their organization’s mission aligned with clean energy services (**Figure 8**).

Coordination with local coalitions or groups of partners seems particularly valuable in garnering interest and laying groundwork for collaborative outreach and mutual strategy where CBOs/LBOs and partner organizations share a mission or specific goals. For example, the Market Evaluation Team interviewed multiple KPOs in the Finger Lakes region that were part of a climate-focused coalition aimed at educating customers on energy savings, improving access to energy assistance, and promoting energy saving behaviors, including uptake of energy efficiency and clean energy measures.⁴⁶ This coalition has started to hold regular meetings and had even started scheduling some community-fair style events before the pandemic forced them to cancel their plans. The coalition reportedly continued digital outreach efforts and hosted a series of webinars, but the switch to digital somewhat undermined earlier planning efforts. Similarly, PUSH Buffalo CEAs reported engaging with networks of local partners as a means of growing their own network and access to customers.

The pandemic interrupted many efforts like these as they were beginning to gain momentum. The CEEP Activities data shows a decline in partner and customer engagement activity alike during 2020-2021 for all regions. For the most part, engagement hours have not yet recovered to 2019 levels.⁴⁷ The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted network development toward mutual goals of customer outreach, but this will likely remain a focus for the CBOs/LBOs and partner organizations as the region emerges from the pandemic.

2.2.4 Did partnerships between local organizations lead to increased project implementation?

As described in **Sections 2.2.2** and **2.2.3**, partnerships are part of CEEP’s program logic. This metric is a complement to increased outreach through partnerships, because the latter touches on only one goal of customer outreach (education), while project implementation sees the outreach through to actual project implementation. The Market Evaluation Team relies on CEA and KPO interview data to inform this assessment.

⁴⁶ PathStone was also part of this coalition.

⁴⁷ The COVID impacts to the CEEP Activities data (January 2018 – September 2020) are such that the Market Evaluation Team is unable to draw meaningful conclusions about activity patterns over time (other than noting the COVID interruption).

Partnerships with local organizations are critical to outreach, the partnership connection to increasing project implementation is more nuanced. Discussed in further detail in the process evaluation (**Section 2.2.8**), CBOs/LBOs identified partner organizations as critical to success in the work of connecting customers with clean energy services. While fewer CEAs saw regular financial reciprocity (e.g., leveraged funds toward customer project completion) from their partner organizations, those that reported partnerships with organizations offering comprehensive family support, financial navigation, or weatherization programs appear to be successful in engaging customers. Partnerships appear to be most helpful in project implementation where they can provide customer support outside of the CBO's portfolio to help address complicated or unusual projects.

One example that a KPO highlighted in an interview was the collaboration between their organization and the CEA toward proposing and receiving approval for a new type of project so that the customer could have clean energy measures and energy efficiency upgrades installed prior to move-in (first introduced in **section 2.2.2**). The scenario was unique because the KPO's role is to support the financing and (re)construction of single-family homes, while NYSERDA's residential programs typically apply to owner-occupied properties. The KPO provided a great deal of non-profit funding for the project, and a NYSERDA program was used for clean energy project implementation. The Market Evaluation Team heard from CEAs that similar scenarios unfold when the community partner can provide support for weatherization (not covered by NYSERDA), improving the seal on the home prior to upgrading to blow-in insulation or installing energy-saving appliances.

The number of partner organizations is not tied to the count of customer projects in a meaningful way (**Figure 14**); partnerships are a quality-over-quantity metric, where fewer deeply involved partners add more value than a great many partners whose purpose is to share outreach materials. For example, one function of partner organizations appears to be helping unique CEEP customer projects to completion, work which is highly individualized and/or situation specific. If there were a way to grade projects by level of challenge or difficulty, the connection between partners and projects might become clearer for high organizational capacity CBOs like AHP in the Capital Region. Mohawk Valley and Long Island have the greatest number of partners, but the fewest completed customer projects. In Long Island, this low project count is closely connected with customer eligibility for NYSERDA programs (Long Islanders do not pay the system benefit charge on their utility that funds NYSERDA programming for customers); however, Long Island does have relationships with partners that function in reverse—United Way Long Island is in a key position to connect potential customers with utility and other non-NYSERDA services in their region. As a reminder, utility customer referrals are not captured by the CEEP Opportunities dataset.

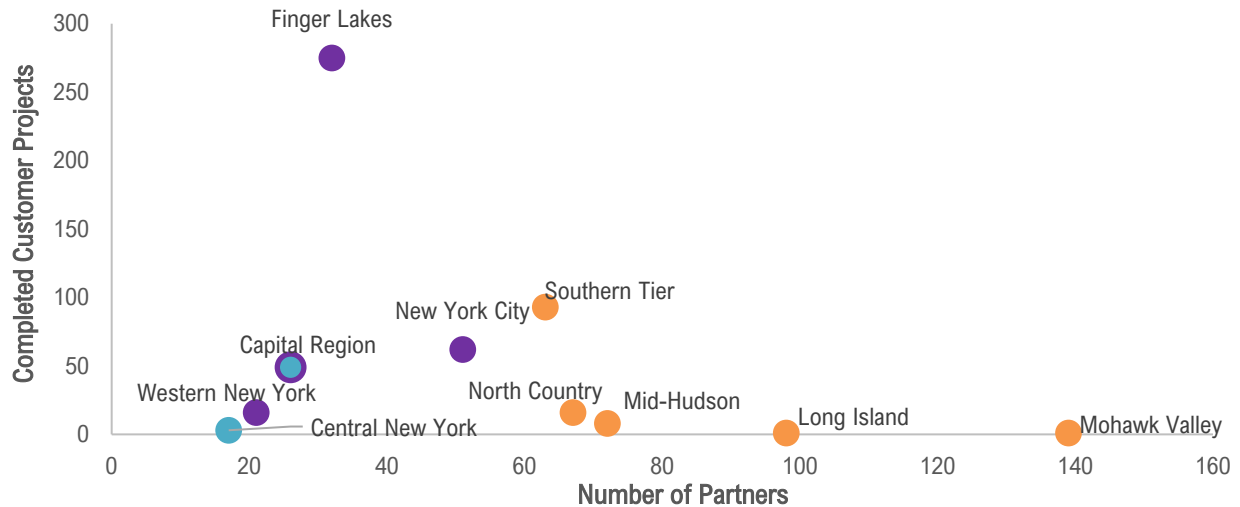


Figure 14. Normalized total count of completed customer projects compared to number of partners by region (CEEP Opportunities data, July 2020). *Purple = high-organizational capacity CBO, blue = CBO with highly experienced CEA, and orange = all other CBOs.*

Moving from outreach to implementation with the support of community partners is one reason why program longevity and consistency or effectiveness in “branding” is important. The longevity of the CBO/LBO as the “hub” for NYSERDA programs, the CEA in the clean energy assistance navigator role, and the CEEP (or similar program) is critical for community partner planning. Longevity supports CEAs in their role long-term because it gives them time to develop a partner network, establish themselves as the point of contact for customers, and promote NYSERDA programs in the region. For example, the CEA in the Capital Region worked in finance for more than a decade before their current role, and has established themselves as not only a local resource, but also as a mentor to other CEAs because of their knowledge of grants and loans customers can use to finance home energy improvements. In interviews, CEAs reported that the advice of the Capital Region CEA helped them improve their own customer outreach and assistance practices.

2.3 Process Evaluation

The purpose of the process evaluation objective is to identify barriers to participation and areas of possible improvement, determine level of customer satisfaction with outreach and clean energy services, and evaluate process effectiveness. To achieve this purpose, the Market Evaluation Team analyzed customer survey and program data where evaluation questions are focused on leveraged funds, programs most used, and customer satisfaction (**Table 9**). Partnerships were identified by type using ‘other partner’ survey data and evidence from CEA and KPO interviews. Finally, program effectiveness and barriers to success were identified using observations and reflections from CEAs (enhanced by findings from KPO interviews).

Table 8. Evaluation questions for the process evaluation objective.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	DATA SOURCES USED
Process evaluation	10. What types of partner organizations led to more leveraged funds?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Program Data
	11. What types of activities/partnerships were most successful at gaining and retaining new LMI customers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • Other Partner Survey • Customer Survey • Program Data

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	DATA SOURCES USED
	12. What services/programs were the most used among LMI customers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Survey • Program Data
	13. How can initiative efficiency and effectiveness be improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey
	14. Are there data documenting customer satisfaction with different aspects of the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Survey
	15. What are the key barriers to participation in the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA Interviews • KPO Interviews • Other Partner Survey • Customer Survey

A significant limitation to this process evaluation is the lack of cross-program data for NYSERDA customers. Customer retention (LMI or otherwise) is a critical indicator of a successful process, but is a difficult metric to track. Customer retention refers to customers who move beyond the initial contact phase into submitting an application or following through on an energy efficiency project in their home. The difficulty in tracking this metric is due to lack of access to customer or application progress retention data through the CEEP Opportunities dataset. NYSERDA data systems to which CEAs have access do not connect to NYSERDA program data to update customer information. And, unless the CEA is tagged by the customer in their application, CEAs must follow up with customers or NYSERDA program staff and record customer retention themselves (i.e., the CEA manually updates the data to reflect the change in CEEP Opportunity status). The CEEP Opportunities dataset also does not track partner support in relation to customer outreach or project implementation; this makes tracing the link between partnerships and customer retention challenging. While the CEEP Opportunities data can be filtered by application stage, the Market Evaluation Team was unable to link application stage with community partnerships due to the lack of formal tracking. With improved Salesforce data tracking (e.g., fields specifically highlighting partners by name, instead of by type in relation to cost share), NYSERDA can achieve a more granular understanding about the benefits of partnership, such as leveraged funding and customer retention.

2.3.1 What types of partner organizations led to more leveraged funds?

Leveraged funds are non-NYSERDA funds that are used to pay for actual project installation by the customer. As discussed in **Section 2.1.4**, leveraged funding is a metric directly identified in the original CEEP RFP and logic model, as program structure and coordination encourages expansion to other types of funding (e.g., loans and grant cost share).^{48,49} As with amount of leveraged funds and partnerships toward project implementation (**Section 2.2.4**), this is a metric used to gauge partner engagement toward customer project completion. While the CEEP Opportunities dataset does not systematically track specific partners contributing to project cost share, it does track types of contributing leveraged funds. The Market Evaluation Team explored the topic of leveraged funds in CEA interviews, and found that CEAs think of “leverage” in a broader sense than financing, encompassing both financial and in-kind resources and support.

⁴⁸ NYSERDA. 2017. PON 3588: Community Energy Engagement Program. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://portal.nyserderda.ny.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00Pt0000002aLQTEA2>.

⁴⁹ NYSERDA. 2020. Clean Energy Fund Investment Plan, Communities Chapter. Accessed 5/4/21 at: <https://www.nyserderda.ny.gov/About/Funding/Clean-Energy-Fund>.

Other (non-NYSERDA) NYS agencies provided the highest amount of cost share overall, followed by federal agencies (**Figure 15**).⁵⁰ Non-profit leveraged funds were the smallest source of leveraged funds. Overall, the total cost share (\$1.9 million in leveraged funds) recorded in the CEEP Opportunities database surpassed the total leveraged funds reported in the 2020 CEF Investment Plan (\$1.18 million dollars leveraged between 2017 – 2019) by more than \$0.7 million, or a 61 percent increase. While several CEAs mentioned leveraging funds with a variety of partners (**Section 2.1.8**), this type of “leverage” may also come in the form of services, like customer outreach support or shared responsibility of co-sponsoring an event, rather than solely consisting of leveraged funds. Only the most reciprocal relationships seem to result in partners leveraging funds toward customer project completion, and this tends to happen only where the partner organization identified some value-added component of the CEA’s work, such as providing access to a program (e.g., EmPower) not covered in the partner organization’s scope of work.

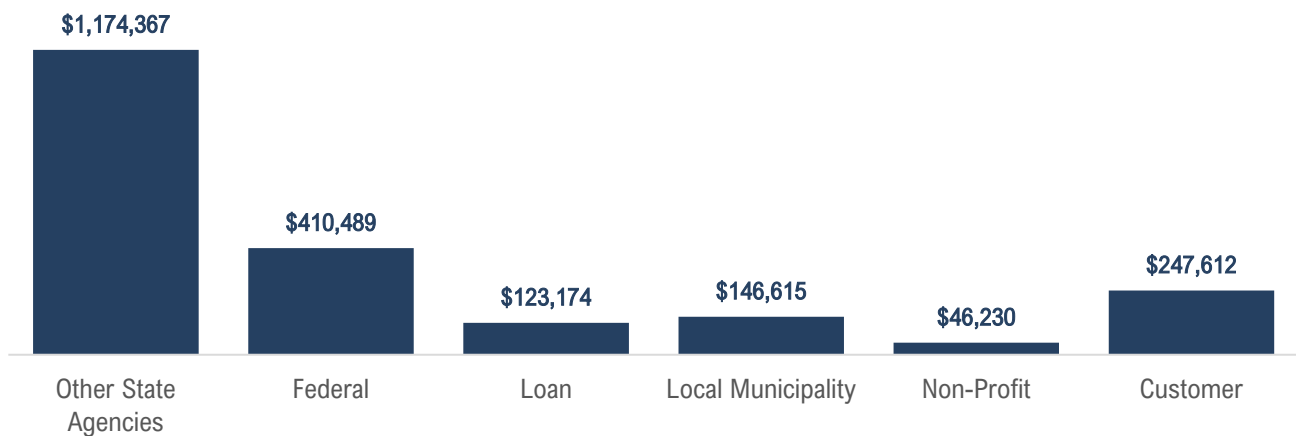


Figure 15. Cost share by non-NYSERDA source (see Table 1 for regional data). Total non-NYSERDA cost share (excluding customer spending) is \$1.9 million.

2.3.2 What types of activities/partnerships were most successful at gaining and retaining new LMI customers?

This metric addresses two topics: (1) successful activities and (2) successful partnerships, wherein “success” is defined in terms of gaining LMI customers, a key focus of the CEEP. Market Evaluation Team defines “customer-gaining activity” as any outreach that leads to customer leads or contacts in the CEEP Opportunities database (Salesforce CRM), while “retaining” refers to customer follow-through from the initial contact phase to NYSERDA program application, undertaking an energy audit, or installing energy efficiency measures. This particular metric (customers gained) is data-limited in the sense that partner-related activities are not explicitly tracked in the CEEP Opportunities dataset, so there is no link to specific customers and the partners with whom they have come into contact or vice versa. Partner-related activities are tracked separately in the Salesforce CRM. Customer survey open-ended responses about organizations who supported them in completing projects and filling out applications were sparse for non-CEA organizations. As such, the Market Evaluation Team focuses this analysis on partnerships toward gaining and retaining LMI customers, primarily using the “other partner” survey, as well as CEA and KPO interview data. This analysis relies on CEA interview data, and KPO interview data for data validation.

⁵⁰ The CEEP Opportunities dataset lacks granularity in the leveraged funds data, so we are unable to break this value down by agency type to find the most prevalent NYS partner agencies.

According to the “other partner” survey results, partners engage a full spectrum of customers with a particular focus on LMI populations. Seventy-six percent of these organizations report outreach to LMI customers specifically. Partnerships that appear to work with LMI customers include those directly focused on financial, family, or health and safety of the home (**Figure 16**).⁵¹ Higher-volume service-based KPOs, such as the Department of Social Services (DSS), Office for the Aging, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Education Program (SNAP-ED), reported working almost solely with LMI populations; these organizations seem to be particularly well-positioned for referring LMI customers. Interviews with KPOs and CEAs alike corroborated these findings. Finally, as described in **Section 2.1.2**, events such as food drives and community fairs are important for direct LMI customer outreach activity. CEAs meet customers and collect contact information or pass out informational program materials (e.g., pamphlets, fact sheets, brochures), following up afterward via phone or email to ask about their home energy needs or offer their assistance in completing NYSERDA program applications.

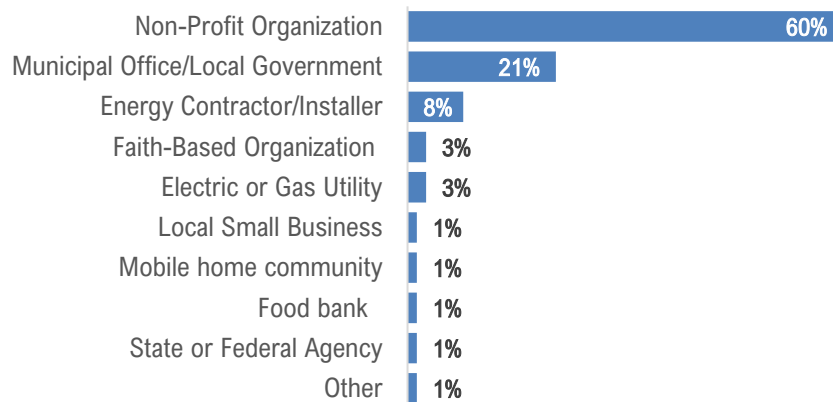


Figure 16. Types of “other partner” organizations engaging LMI customers specifically (n=102).

2.3.3 What services/programs were the most used among LMI customers?

This metric builds on the previous evaluation question (**Section 2.3.2**) to assess *how* LMI customers are being engaged. The Market Evaluation Team uses customer survey data and CEEP Opportunities data to assess this metric.

Customer survey responses show that EmPower New York (37 percent), Residential Energy Audit Program (24 percent), and AHPwES (21 percent) are the three most-used programs among LMI customers and among all customers (**Figure 5**, n = 89 LMI respondents total).⁵² The CEEP Opportunities data are consistent with the customer survey results in terms of top three programs by participation; however, CEEP Opportunities data suggest that AHPwES has greater participation than any other program (**Figure 17**). CEEP Opportunities data also highlight the different level of LMI customer engagement by region. For

⁵¹ “Non-profit” was intended as a catch-all category to accommodate non-profit partners who did not fit into the specific categories named (e.g., faith-based and food bank), but it captured 47 percent of “other partner” respondents to this question (53 percent of overall respondents identified themselves this way). In the future, this should be deconstructed into multiple sub-categories to identify partners more accurately by type.

⁵² Note: while the Residential Energy Audit Program is available to customers, the high response rate suggests that customers may have confused this with the AHPwES or HPwES program. In 2020 NYSERDA eliminated the HPwES program for market rate where they had to kick-in cost share to cover the cost of an audit. This was replaced with the Residential Energy Audit program, which expanded free energy audits to all customers, including market-rate customers, and eliminated the need to go through an application process to get an audit. Customers can now go to one or more contractors to request an audit and quote for energy efficiency work.

example, the Finger Lakes region, where PathStone is the CBO/LBO, sees more LMI customers than any other region (including New York City). PUSH Buffalo in Western New York also appears to have an LMI-centric outreach program.

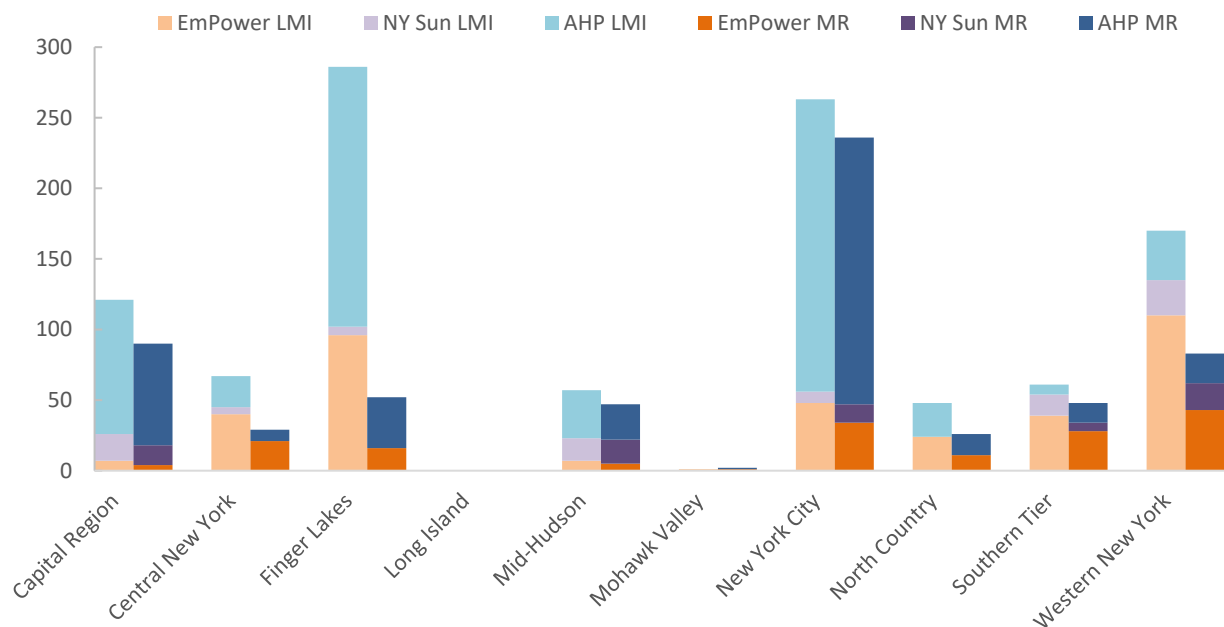


Figure 17. LMI and MR customer participation in top three programs across 10 regions. Note: lighter (left) columns are LMI customers; darker (right) columns indicate MR customers. “AHP” refers to “Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® (AHPwES).”

2.3.4 How can initiative efficiency and effectiveness be improved?

This metric is critical to ascertaining improvements to CEEP from those who are most familiar with its workings in preparation for the next iteration of the program. Data to evaluate this metric include CEA and KPO interviews, as well as “other partner” survey responses.

Better or **improved communication about new and existing NYSERDA programs** was a suggestion that came up in several CEA interviews and most of the KPO interviews. This ties into the theme about CEEP “branding” and program “identity” outlined in **Section 2.1.1**. CEAs report having to clarify their role, purpose, or the opportunities with NYSERDA programs for potential partners and energy contractors before making substantive progress in collaboration or outreach. While repeated outreach and follow-up solidify relationships over time, CEAs would be better supported with top-down marketing so that community partners are primed for interaction, rather than requiring CEAs to explain the entirety of NYSERDA’s offerings and the associated processes to potential collaborators before getting buy-in.

“Other Partners” provided survey feedback about their relationships with local CEAs, and barriers in the way of developing a better relationship (**Figure 18**). The Market Evaluation Team coded 102 open-ended survey responses to identify the top barriers or issues expressed by “other partner” respondents. Of the 102 respondents, 28 felt that the relationship with the CEA was working well (27 percent), and 24 did not have anything to say (N/A response, 24 percent). An N/A response in this case should be interpreted as “the relationship is working about as well as expected,” since many respondents (14) who were unfamiliar with

their local CEA mentioned this in the comments. This is a surprisingly positive response given that the question asked participants to consider improvements to their relationship with their local CEA.

The greatest overall critique in response was that “other partners” did not have enough information about topics that would support their relationship. These topics include: NYSERDA programs, the CBO/LBO, or customer awareness. This evidence supports the suggestion above from KPOs and CEAs that top-down communication from NYSERDA to communities across the state regarding its different programs could be improved; another area of emphasis could be a unified branding approach that would focus awareness.



Figure 18. Summary of open-ended responses to "Is the relationship with your local CEA working as well as it could be?" (Responses coded under multiple thematic labels, much like a “check-all-that-apply” question, n=102)

Most CEAs and KPOs indicated that the application process for NYSERDA programs is onerous for customers. Multiple CEAs and *KPOs* highlighted a **more streamlined application and customer data tracking** as a key recommendation for improvement. CEAs are particularly challenged by the customer follow-up burden created by a Salesforce system that limits access to cross-program data. Most CEAs either reported frustration with the NYSERDA Salesforce data management and application tracking or explained that their organization uses another system on top of NYSERDA’s Salesforce to track applicants (A feature unavailable in NYSERDA’s Salesforce CRM. CEAs self-reporting successes in customer outreach personally followed up with the customer and the NYSERDA Program Staff to check on the status of the clean energy project application or implementation process. “Other partner” survey results suggest that communication could be improved (**Figure 18**).

Reducing the burden on the customer through a more consolidated application and tracking process will save time for the CEA and lower the administrative barrier for customer participation; a conclusion corroborated by KPO interviewees.

- Two CEAs mentioned that the issue goes deeper than tracking; ideally, the application process could be streamlined so that customers only have to fill out one application, rather than going through the application process only to be formally rejected in order to apply for another program.

- Partner organization interviews reinforced that application/process tracking is an important aspect of customer service, and partners are limited in their ability to serve the customer if they do not know what is happening with the application once it is submitted. The majority of KPOs interviewed mentioned this as an issue.
- KPO interviews suggest that tight feedback loops between partner organizations, energy contractors, and customer can improve customer connection with resources. One long-time KPO emphasized that the responsibility lies with the CEA to make sure that the customer feels supported through the process, and that partner organizations are kept apprised of project completion.

Better strategies or support for landlord/building owner outreach would help CEAs reach apartment dwellers. Multifamily building owner outreach was an issue for nearly all CEAs. Where CBOs/LBOs were in regions with urban centers, the CEA was usually better equipped to handle multi-family housing (e.g., PathStone in the Finger Lakes region, or the Center for NYC Neighborhoods in New York City). There were a few CBOs/LBOs whose missions explicitly address multifamily housing, but where CBOs/LBOs had such capacity built-in, CEAs reported greater success (e.g. Center for NYC Neighborhoods, PathStone). While community partnerships appear to support CEAs in reaching tenants, unless every region has community partners who work specifically with multi-family housing (not always reality in more rural counties), this will continue to be an area for improvement in most regions.

2.3.5 Are there data documenting customer satisfaction with different aspects of the program?

Customer satisfaction with CEEP characterizes program performance from a customer perspective. If customers do not have a good experience or are unsatisfied with the energy efficiency or clean energy measures installed in their home, CEEP or NYSERDA may experience adverse reputational effects. Importantly, **no CEAs document customer satisfaction**. An improved customer data management and tracking system would facilitate customer experience data collection (e.g., customer satisfaction).

The Market Evaluation Team surveyed customers about their satisfaction with various aspects of the program. Results indicate that most respondents agree or strongly agree to statements about their satisfaction with program outcomes, pointing to successful customer engagement (**Figure 19**). Where customers reported “does not apply,” it is possible that the customer does not remember their interaction with the CEA, did not seek help in applying to NYSERDA programs after the initial informational discussion, or has not yet had energy efficiency or clean energy measures installed.⁵³

⁵³ We see this at the bottom of the chart (Figure 15), where the “does not apply” gray striped bars get larger. It is likely that the customers responding to this question have not yet had work done. COVID interrupted the regular CEEP functions in a significant way through 2021.

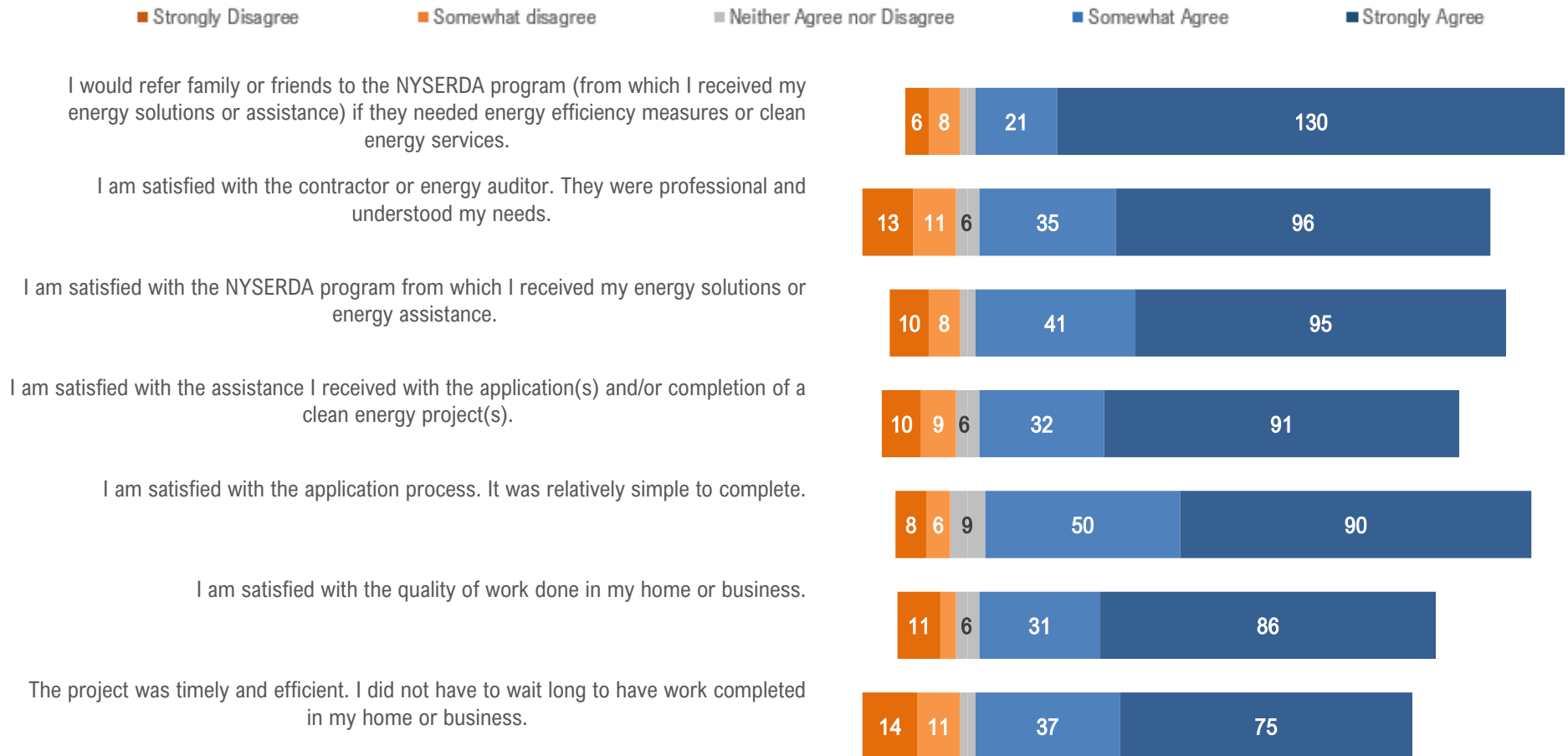


Figure 19. Customer satisfaction with different aspects of the CEEP program and clean energy project implementation. Gap between columns at zero on the X-axis represent the “Neither agree nor disagree” response. Categories with fewer than 5 responses are not labeled.

2.3.6 What are the key barriers to participation in the program?

Key barriers is a metric that enables a program to assess structural issues in the way of improved customer participation. The Market Evaluation Team defines “barrier” as a systematic challenge or difficulty that prevents CEAs from engaging customers or that discourage customers from applying or pursuing. The data used herein include customer and “other partner” survey results, as well as CEA and KPO interviews for context.

The customer survey was critical to understanding barriers to participation in NYSERDA programs. When asked what about their experience could be improved, a majority of customer survey respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that they wish they had known about NYSERDA programs sooner (65 percent, **Figure 20**). Likewise, over half of customer survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed they would like assistance to cover the full project (51 percent).

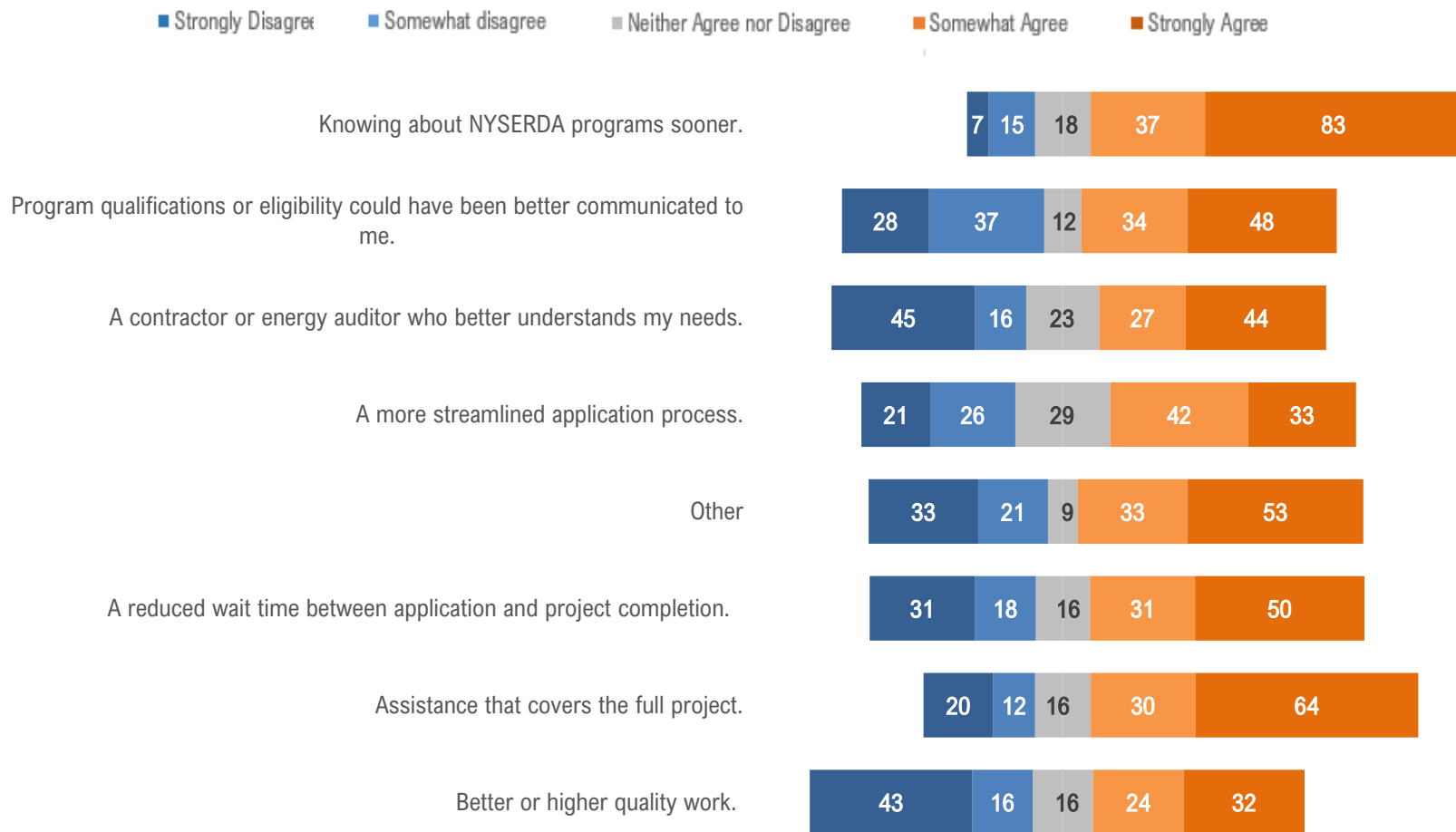


Figure 20. Suggestions for program improvement. Gap between columns at zero on the X-axis represent the “Neither agree nor disagree” response. Note: colors scale is reversed from Figure 15 because here, “Strongly Agree” indicates a need for improvement.

The “other partner” survey asked respondents about key barriers in the way of the relationship with their local CEA. Unsurprisingly, limited time and funding were the top two barriers standing in the way of a better relationship; however, many respondents felt that their organization lacked information about the CBO/LBO and the role of the CEA in CEEP and other NYSERDA programs. This lack of information can be interpreted as a branding issue. Just as customers may not recognize CEEP or other NYSERDA programs by name, potential community partners may not be familiar with NYSERDA programs and their benefits for customers. Likewise, potential community partners may not be aware of the cross-referral benefits from a relationship with a CEA.

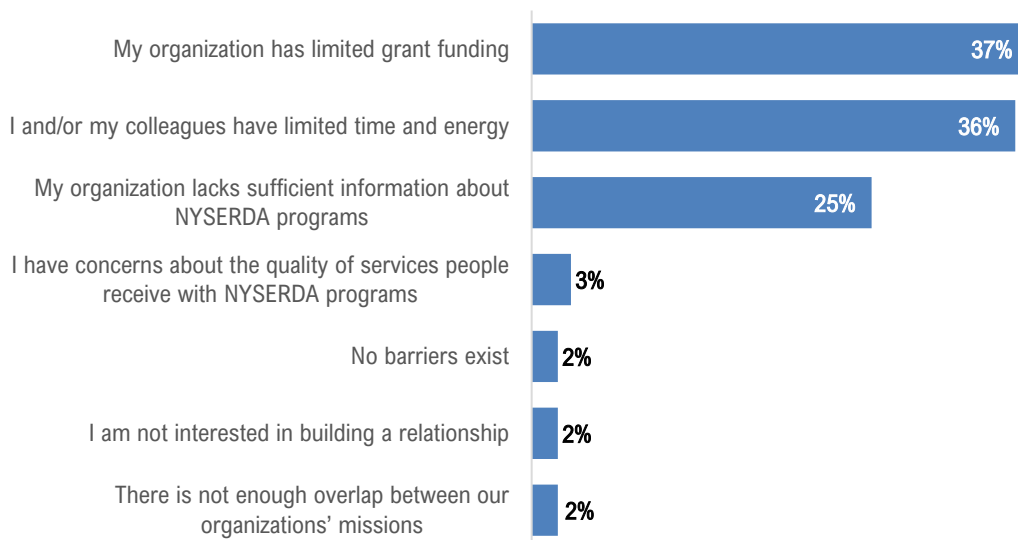


Figure 21. Respondents answering: “Are there barriers in the way of building the relationship with your local CEA?”

Key partnership barriers identified by CEAs and KPOs in interview underscore those outlined above:

- Time, necessary to establishing productive relationships in the region;
- Lack of clear communication about NYSERDA programs; and
- Bureaucratic hurdles requiring, or resulting in, extra paperwork.

Time is a key barrier for newer CEAs, who have been hired specifically for the role or are newly stepping into a position that was vacant for a long period of time prior to their hire. Time is necessary to developing networks in the region, especially where the effectiveness of the CEA role comes from the relationships built with community partners and the face-to-face engagement with customers, helping them to understand the clean energy services available through NYSERDA and navigate the different program applications. Some CEAs interviewed were new to the CEA role, and had to simultaneously facilitate clean energy programming while also developing community and customer relationships. This appeared to have been more of a challenge for new CEAs at CBOs where the organization did not necessarily have existing clean energy programming. In contrast, the new CEA at the high-organizational capacity PathStone benefitted from well-established partnerships in the Finger Lakes region would likely have been able to connect with customers with or without NYSERDA funding. A few CEAs commented on the short-term turnover of CEEP or related NYSERDA programs (three years) as detrimental to building working relationships or making inroads within a new customer community. Where the entire CBO was new to working with NYSERDA programs, customer recruitment and partnership building was likewise challenging. PUSH Buffalo in Western New York spent more total partner engagement hours (this includes both energy

contractor engagement), outreach and activity hours, and customer engagement hours than any other CBO (except for the Affordable Housing Partnership, which is the notable outlier in customer engagement). The continuity in the CEA position or of the CBO/LBO as the NYSERDA point of contact in the region appears to be important for promoting the program identity.

Lack of clear communication about NYSERDA programs, specifically CEEP-related program offerings, was highlighted by CBOs/LBOs as a barrier to engagement that could be addressed through additional top-down support. Interviewees pointed to a need for both top-down marketing communication from NYSERDA, so that they would not need to start from scratch with potential customers (i.e., improving broad customer awareness of NYSERDA offerings across the state), and marketing materials (pamphlets, factsheets, etc.) to facilitate CEAs' own outreach. A few CEAs reported spending time on updating or creating outreach materials in their outreach hours, which is duplicative with CEAs across 10 regions. NYSERDA is better positioned than CEAs to cultivate and maintain a collection of marketing materials. A top-down effort to create a bank of marketing materials for CEAs to access would be a more efficient use of time. KPOs had similar conclusions, i.e., that NYSERDA could do a better job of advertising about and outlining qualifications for different programs, explaining their similarities and differences. One partner organization called the NYSERDA programs a "hidden gem" because despite the incredible value the programs provide to homeowners, they are challenging to encounter or learn about, and other partners that work outside of the CEA's region may not know about the opportunities available. This barrier relates to the need for improved "branding" and clear "identities" for NYSERDA programs. Though it is the role of the CEA to connect customers with NYSERDA resources, improved clarity around NYSERDA program identifies for KPOs can reinforce the cross-referral process.

The problem with "hidden gems" is that they are difficult to find. Clear public communication about NYSERDA programs would likewise support "brand" recognition amongst potential customers. One industrious CEA generated hundreds of contacts by advertising CEEP and CEA customer support for applying to NYSERDA programs on the radio. While not all of these contacts turned into customers, it did generate interest.

Bureaucratic hurdles: One specific bureaucratic hurdle highlighted by a KPO was the unusual connection between EmPower eligibility and the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) benefit program. HEAP HERR is administered through the NY Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), a completely separate program with a completely separate NYS agency. However, if a customer is qualified for the EmPower program and is rejected by OTDA for assistance with a heating equipment emergency for HERR the customer may qualify assistance through EmPower instead of HEAP, maximizing the original EmPower benefit. This interagency complication creates an unnecessary administrative burden on the customer and a possible barrier to participation. One CEA highlighted this particular challenge in asking a customer to fill out multiple applications because it dissuades them from pursuing the assistance, especially if they "keep getting rejected." The cross-agency application process likewise makes it challenging for the CEA to maintain lines of communication about the application process.⁵⁴ The benefit of such an application appears to be for NYSERDA internal accounting, ensuring that the customer receives energy assistance through the appropriate channels; however, the extra step(s) for the customer may lead to confusion and frustration with the process, ultimately discouraging the customer from moving forward or continuing to pursue assistance. While this is one specific project/eligibility peculiarity, it was identified in multiple KPO and CEA interviews and thus bears mentioning.

⁵⁴ Worth noting is that the CEA would have an additional party to follow up with for HEAP even if the NYSERDA Salesforce system was more user-friendly or tracked applications, precisely because the HEAP is managed through the ODTA and not NYSERDA.

2.4 Additional Outreach and Engagement Findings

In this section, the Market Evaluation Team describes additional findings regarding outreach and engagement that did not directly respond to specific evaluation questions. The Market Evaluation Team reviewed regional outreach and engagement, engagement of small commercial customers specifically, and the key characteristics of effective CEAs. The discussion herein is part analysis and part reflection, calling on “other partner” survey data, CEA and KPO interviews, and interviews with both NYSERDA program staff and contractors for the GJGNY Energy Study Program.

2.4.1 Regional Outreach and Engagement

Although not highlighted in analysis as a critical barrier, the Market Evaluation Team also examined the successes and challenges associated with the regional model, and the need for each CEA to find ways to serve a broad region. Specifically, CEAs discussed the relative success of past efforts to ensure region-wide outreach and participation. Responses varied amongst the CEAs (with some supplementary information about the topic from KPO interviews), but the main theme is that outreach strategies often align with, and are constrained by, set geographic areas. For example, KPO funding is sometimes restricted to a county or municipal area of service, and CEAs work within those boundaries for outreach as needed. This is where larger and stronger partner networks play an important role in customer outreach. Partnerships can help CEAs extend outreach beyond boundaries within their region and reach populations who may not be covered by regular outreach from the CEA or their KPOs.

One KPO interviewee indicated that they infrequently work with the CEA because the KPO does not fund urban projects (rural-only focus), but when they are able to find synergistic projects, their collaboration works very well. Different areas require different approaches, so where area-based partners cannot extend beyond their boundaries, CEAs who have robust networks appear to have less difficulty reaching all counties or municipalities in their regions. This is also true for KPOs and CEAs facing unique institutional boundaries. For example, Long Island customers do not pay into the utility system fee for NYSERDA programs, and thus have access to different programs through their utilities. The Long Island CBO/LBO (United Way) sends residential customers directly to the utility (PSEG or National Grid), and works with other partners to address small business customer needs.

Some CEAs are able to lower many of these barriers (including communication), but this appears to be individual (i.e., no pattern). Program managers reflecting on continued success throughout the pandemic had multiple years of experience working with NYSERDA programs or on similar issues in their region. The Center for NYC Neighborhoods in New York City and the Affordable Housing Partnership in the Capital Region stand out as two CBOs/LBOs that perceived no significant change in customer engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. They attributed their reported success to the longevity of their networks and having customers “in the pipeline” who were ready to complete partially finished projects or finally embark on an installation. While these CBOs perceived continued success in customer engagement, the reality is that the type of engagement shifted meaningfully during COVID-19; essentially, the total number of hours may have been similar, but were likely focused on follow-up calls, check-ins with partner organizations, and focusing more time on individual customers. The rate of customer opportunity entry decreased dramatically across all regions during the pandemic, supporting the narrative that while CEAs spent their outreach time following up with individuals already in the system.

Another factor contributing to CBOs/LBOs’ comparative success is institutional knowledge; CEAs in both regions have a strong working knowledge of which NYSERDA programs cover which customer types and where to look (either internally within NYSERDA programs, or externally with partner organizations) to

fill the assistance gaps that arise when attempting to initiate and complete clean energy projects. Continuity in staffing is an important factor in the CEAs' comparative success (i.e., relative lack of interruption) during the pandemic. While CEAs engage in outreach and attend partner events to give talks or do tabling, the CEAs who experienced little change in time spent on customer engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic are those with long-time experience, or a high organizational capacity CBO.

2.4.2 Small Commercial Outreach and Engagement

While CEEP includes outreach to small commercial customers, program data and interviews with CEAs, apart from a few regions (Mid-Hudson, Western New York, New York City), CEAs appeared to struggle with small commercial customer recruitment. The focus of many CEA is on supporting residential customers. Outreach activities, partner engagement, and engagement of residential and small commercial customers are ultimately different activities, possibly requiring different networks or skillsets altogether.

Networks and skillsets aside, a key challenge in small commercial customer recruitment appears to be linked with a structural disconnect in program flow. CEAs may recruit small commercial customers, but often the list of potential customers comes to CEAs after the audit/assessment has been conducted (**Figure 21**). L&S Energy Services, the GJGNY Energy Study Program implementation contractor, regularly sends a list of potential customers to CEAs, who then determine which customers are in their service area, reach out, and work to figure out next steps with each customer. CEAs must quickly familiarize themselves with the audit results and customer experience with NYSERDA to date before following up to support the customer with application next steps.

CEAs report that it is challenging to pick up momentum after customers have received a possibly confusing energy audit report, and they are left with the difficult task of communicating about the potential for long-term energy savings from energy efficiency measures and the benefits to a small business owner's (or non-profit's) bottom line. The movement of customers between NYSERDA programs has the potential to be confusing to both customer and program staff or contractors if lines of communication are not well-maintained. The structural disconnect with the movement of customers through GJGNY Energy Study Program recruitment, audit implementation, and then follow-up for clean energy services or assistance is further challenged by the NYSERDA's Salesforce portal for CEAs. CEAs do not have access to GJGNY Energy Study Program customer data, though GJGNY has access to CEA-input customer data. Instead, the GJGNY Energy Study Program contracts with L&S Energy Services to communicate indirectly with CEAs about small commercial customer leads. GJGNY Energy Study Program staff download customer lead information from Salesforce to send to L&S, who then follows up with CEAs after the GJGNY Energy Study Program audit has already been performed. The GJGNY Energy Study program appears to have anticipated some of this difficulty in their outreach materials (**Figure 22**), identifying CEAs by name for their customers so that the customer may be empowered to initiate contact with CEAs if they do not receive CEA follow-up after the energy audit.

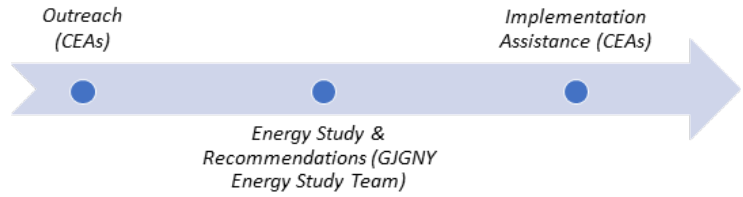


Figure 22. The GJGNY Energy Study Program integrates Community Energy Advisors (CEAs) directly into their program flow at two key touchpoints: before and after the energy audit. *Source: GJGNY CEA standard operating procedure, version 4, shared by NYSERDA program staff.*

Assistance for Implementation of Recommendations

This study provides recommendations on specific actions to take to increase energy efficiency; the next step is implementing the recommendation(s). Complimentary assistance with implementing energy efficiency recommendations is available through NYSERDA's Regional Community Energy Advisors (CEAs).

The Regional CEA can assist with identifying utility company incentives and various financing options available for energy efficiency improvements, such as GJGNY Loans, or Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (CPACE) on-bill Financing.

Your Community Energy Advisor is:

Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County

Figure 23. GJGNY Energy Study program outreach includes direct instruction to contact the NYSERDA Regional Community Energy Advisor (CEA), and advertises the next step as "complimentary assistance". *Source: Screenshot image of GJGNY Energy Study Program customer outreach material excerpt, shared by a CEA*

The CEEP list of 99 small commercial program opportunities included business owners, non-profit organizations, and multi-family building owners, each in various stages of interaction with NYSERDA programs. Only six NYSERDA programs were identified by CEAs as relevant to the individual contacts. GJGNY Energy Study Program was the dominant program (88 customers), and most of the opportunities were concentrated in the Mid-Hudson region (**Figure 24**). The Market Evaluation Team confirmed that 16 small commercial customers had completed projects through GJGNY Energy Study Program, 67 were in the “nurturing” stage (i.e., the customer expressed interest in the program but had not yet pursued an application), and six were in application development or further in the process.

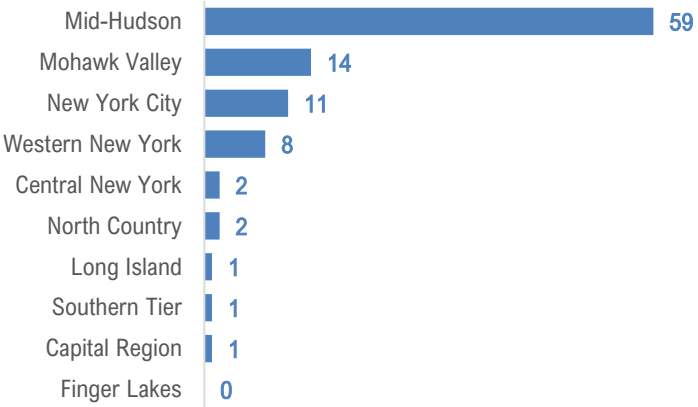


Figure 24. Small commercial opportunity counts by region.

Interestingly, Mohawk Valley appears to have performed similarly across both residential and small commercial customer engagement. The United Way of Long Island CEA likewise indicated that they focused on small commercial outreach because of the alternative NYSERDA program structure in that particular region; however, this focus does not seem to translate into small commercial customer counts, so there appear to be some differences in data entry or reporting across regions. Mid-Hudson, Mohawk Valley, New York City, and Western New York regions were comparatively more successful with small commercial customers than other regions; Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County (Mid-Hudson) CEAs were listed as the CEEP opportunity “owners” for 60 percent of the leads/customer contacts (**Figure 24**) for this sector. The Market Evaluation Team interviewed PUSH Buffalo (Western New York), Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County (Mid-Hudson) and the Center for NYC Neighborhoods (New York City). The CEA interviews suggest that the key to this success was the direct recruitment support from L&S Energy Services. L&S sends lists of GJGNY Energy Study Program small commercial customers (who have already completed a GJGNY Energy Study) to CEAs, intending the CEA to follow up with the customer to discuss their needs for clean energy services or assistance. The CEA then directs the customer to the appropriate program, or helps them apply for financing through the GJGNY Financing Program (notably separate from the GJGNY Energy Study Program). Ultimately, the CEAs most effective at turning small commercial leads into customers were those who followed up on the GJGNY Energy Study Program leads from L&S.

2.4.3 Overall CEA Effectiveness

Recall that the Market Evaluation Team defined effectiveness in terms of how well CEA efforts toward engagement and outreach translate into tangible outcomes, such as applications, completed projects, and leveraged funding. Where the aforementioned topics were covered in **sections 2.1 – 2.3**, the focus of this section is on interpretive findings from CEA and KPO interviews. These findings are cross-cutting and flow directly into the evaluation recommendations (**section 3**).

CEA effectiveness varies by economic region and organizational capacity of the CBO/LBO, and is tied to a few key characteristics:

- **Commitment to customer service through the application (and sometimes project implementation) process:** Effective CEAs follow up with customers and NYSERDA program staff to make sure that customers have the support they need to identify appropriate NYSERDA programs, confirm qualifications, and move forward in the application process or receive the services in which they are interested. While many regions saw a decline in customer activity during the pandemic, New York City and the Capital Region had customers “in the pipeline” and simply shifted from more traditional outreach and engagement activities to following up on existing contacts, customers who had previously expressed an interest in energy efficiency measures, energy audits, or clean energy equipment.
- **Strong local partner networks:** CEAs who establish strong local networks appear better positioned to work with partners to leverage services and resources to host events for customer outreach and ensure that the customer gets the services they need. Networking was a significant theme in CEA interviews and some regions (e.g., Western New York) dedicated a significant amount of time to partner outreach. This appears to be somewhat easier for CEAs at high-organizational CBOs with some existing long-term partnerships. The Market Evaluation Team interviewed a KPO who defined themselves as a competitor, and still considered their relationship with the CBO to be strong due to the support they have offered KPO customers over time (this

particular CBO also supports customers with applications to the Weatherization Program as a regular part of their offerings.⁵⁵

- **Institutional knowledge:** Continuity of experience or exposure to NYSERDA is a significant factor in CEA success; CEA interviewees identified changes in staff as a factor that can affect outreach as newer staff build networks and knowledge. Awareness of programs and services offered, expertise in recommending appropriate grants and loans, and even a technical understanding of what is required for certain projects (i.e., mold removal prior to new insulation). For example, if the CBO has high organizational capacity (and does not necessarily need CEEP funding to support customers in meeting their clean energy services or energy efficiency needs), CEAs are at a greater advantage when they start the position, as some level of institutional knowledge is likely built into their training for the position with the CBO.
- **Creativity:** Effective CEAs find ways to work with their partners and NYSERDA to support new and/or changing customer needs. CEA creativity was highlighted in the success stories a KPO told about one particular CEA advocating for the addition of a “new NYSERDA project type” (sic) so a house could have work performed prior to the homeowner moving in. The same CEA secured an interview on a local radio station to increase customer awareness of NYSERDA programs and exposure to potential partners in their region, which resulted in hundreds of new customer contacts.

⁵⁵ The Weatherization Program is run through the NYS Department of Homes and Community Renewal: <https://hcr.ny.gov/weatherization>.

3 Recommendations

This evaluation concludes that the community-focused model that CEEP employs has been generally successful in a number of areas, including:

- Raising awareness of energy efficiency options and encouraging participation by “new” customers;
- Reaching LMI households across the state; and
- Building working relationships with key community partner organizations that can reinforce and expand the work that CEEP is doing.

In addition, a number of limitations and constraints noted through interviews and surveys are related to the broader structure of the housing market and NYSERDA’s specific program offerings; these are beyond the scope of this evaluation but are noteworthy, and include:

- Difficulty reaching residents of multifamily housing and rental units due to the need to engage property owners (both financially and logistically);
- Uncertainty related to the different program cycles that govern both CEEP and the underlying NYSERDA programs; scheduled changes in program structure can constrain the ability to nurture initial contacts through project completion;
- Difficulty aligning the priorities and structure of CEEP and NYSERDA programs with the economic structure of the energy installation market and installation contractors, who are focused on rapid implementation and on optimizing revenue, rather than cost savings. In addition, utility sponsored programs can in some cases intersect with (or “compete” with) NYSERDA projects.

In addition, the evaluation findings point to three higher-level recommendations for NYSERDA to consider across programs. While these recommendations are beyond the scope of CEEP to address independently, CEEP’s cross-program coordination role both increases the impacts of the issues addressed here on CEEP and its operations, and places CEEP and its successor Energy Hub program in the position to provide critical insights into improvements.

- ✓ Streamline and, where possible, integrate the application process for NYSERDA programs.
- ✓ Consider changes to incentives for installation contractors.
- ✓ Improve NYSERDA’s cross-program tracking using Salesforce so that it can effectively support the type of program integration that CEAs represent.

3.1 Core Program Recommendations

1. **Ensure that clear information about NYSERDA programs is available to CEAs and customers, including program-level promotional materials from NYSERDA for clean energy service programs (e.g., brochures for outreach events); materials focused on integrated services (e.g., factsheets on the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) benefit program); and program application process support information.** NYSERDA contractor business cards for CEAs, pamphlets summarizing the full suite of residential or small commercial programs, or basic presentation slides for use with partner organizations and their customers/clients would reduce the burden on CEAs and may help KPOs champion NYSERDA programs

for the services they provide for customers.⁵⁶ These types of materials can support the “branding” and recognition of NYSERDA as an agency, and paired with a centralized resource (like a website) with clear infographics (e.g., Venn diagrams or logic models) to explain the key steps in the application/approval process, can further empower CEAs and KPOs in advocating for the wide array of NYSERDA programs available for different types of customers.

2. **Design for continuity by planning for CBO and CEA turnover and designing around loss of institutional knowledge.** CEAs developing long-standing relationships with partners and customers takes time and must outlive typical NYSERDA program cycles but can easily be disrupted by changes in the programs, terminated contracts with CBOs, and by CEA turnover. NYSERDA staff should work with CEAs to develop a more formal bi-directional reporting process between NYSERDA and CEAs that provides routine opportunities to a) inform CEAs of program updates and changes (new offerings, changes to eligibility requirements), and b) confirm CEA activities, partner interactions, and project outcomes.

3. **Expand documentation of customer service and CEA partnerships to clarify networks and improve analysis of program performance.** One possible way to collect these data is through a customer satisfaction or partnership satisfaction questionnaire, which could take the form of an informal conversation over the phone or a web survey received via email; however, CBOs also need to be consistent about their metadata entry into the CEEP Opportunities and CEEP Engagement/Activities databases. NYSERDA should standardize tracking customer service through CEAs including: lateral recommendations across programs (e.g., when a customer is referred outside of NYSERDA for other services or when a partner refers a customer to CEEP); partner involvement in specific projects and program level resources (e.g., cost share).

3.2 Cross-Program Recommendations

1. **Streamline and, where possible, integrate the application process for NYSERDA programs, such as a cross-program application using a web-based interface that collects and stores application data, or, at minimum, a standardized fillable form to save applicants time when applying for multiple programs.** The most significant service CEAs provide is helping customers navigate the application process, but the current process requires individual applications for each program and can be onerous, redundant, or confusing for the applicant and for the CEA with differing eligibility requirements across programs. Streamlining data collection (e.g., fill in EmPower information and have other applications auto-populate with the information, or have a flag for what other possible programs the applicant could qualify for based on their responses to an intake survey) or automating application status change based on NYSERDA back-end data in Salesforce would support even the self-reported successful CEAs by saving time on follow-up.⁵⁷

2. **Improve customer data tracking across NYSERDA programs to improve customer service, reduce follow-up burden for CEAs, and facilitate real-time measurement of CEEP’s performance or impacts.** The functionality of Salesforce is limited for CEAs, who are not currently able to access the full

⁵⁶ NYSERDA promotional materials available to CEAs are typically factsheet-based and only available in English. NYSERDA program factsheets can be found at: <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/About/Publications/Fact-Sheets>.

⁵⁷ An additional issue is ensuring that applications are not delayed or denied due to data limitations. One CEA shared that customers who have applied in the past may not remember (e.g., seniors), and CEAs have no way to recover that information. If a customer has completed small projects under a program with a ceiling (or didn’t use all the money in a prior award), CEAs do not have the capacity to easily find out how much money is still available.

breadth of the system to determine whether customers are advancing with projects, resulting in frustration for customers who rely on the CEA as a point of contact with the program, and double customer data entry where CBOs have adopted programs in addition to Salesforce to support data management. NYSERDA should consider expanding access to Salesforce functionality for CEAs, who may benefit from improved customer tracking and having quick and user-friendly access to descriptive statistics or graphics (e.g., number of LMI customer leads in “nurturing” stage vs. “application in progress,” number of successful multi-family applicants, or number of applications receiving leveraged funds) to enhance their ability to address under-represented customer groups in their outreach.

4 Methods

The discussion of approach is broken into the following sections: surveys, CEEP program data (Opportunities, Activities, and Regionally Specific Initiative pilot data), interviews, and limitations. Web surveys (102 “other partners”) and phone surveys (206 customers) methods are described together, as they share a similar mode of data collection (**section 4.1**). CEEP Opportunities and CEEP Activities data are primary data generated by CEAs, and were analyzed for summary-level information and regional comparisons (**section 4.2**). As previously described, the Market Evaluation Team completed the following interviews: 11 CBO/LBO initial interviews, 20 KPOs, and 3 CEA follow-up interviews focused on small commercial customers (**section 4.3**). Limitations are extensively mentioned in **sections 2.1-2.4**, and are described more generally here in terms of their impact to data analysis and interpretation (**section 4.4**).

4.1 Surveys

In addition to KPOs, CEAs were asked to identify lists of all partners working with the CBO/LBO toward CEEP program goals. The comprehensive list of “other” partners (universe of n=586) was the basis for an online survey, with a final response of 102 completed surveys, representing 101 different partner organizations, or 17.2 percent of the original universe. One respondent claimed to work with two different CEAs, so the final results include both responses. Both responses are included here because the responses are specific to the experience with the CEA, not the partner organization. **Appendix D** includes the list of “other partner” online survey questions, and **Figure 25** below indicates the total partner organization respondents by region, which ranged from 4 to 18.

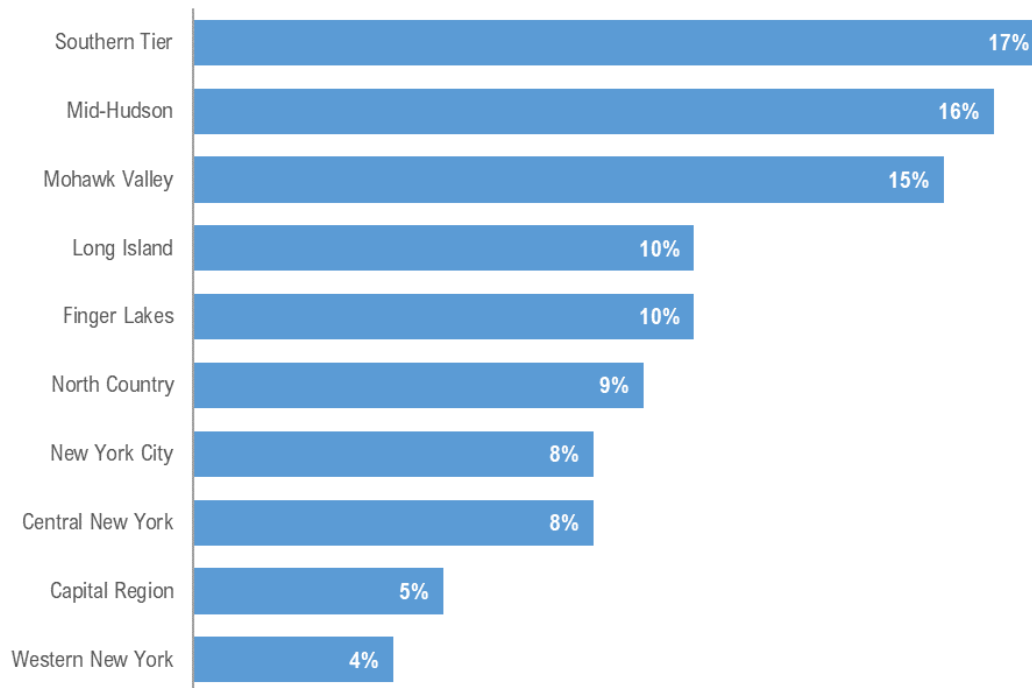


Figure 25. Count of "other partner" respondents by region (n=102). NYSEERDA regions graphic source: <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Contractors/Find-a-Contractor/Community-Energy-Resource>.

A universe of 3,229 customers was identified for the customer phone survey using a combination of InfoGroup and NYSERDA CEEP Opportunities data (described in **section 4.2**). InfoGroup, Inc. provides customer data and relevant market information for NYSERDA and other government agencies (non-profits, small businesses, etc.) at cost. InfoGroup’s database was queried on the CEEP Opportunities dataset to determine income level, housing demographic information, contact information (phone number), and other customer data to limit the total number of questions in the phone survey. The merged CEEP Opportunities and InfoGroup data (referred to throughout the document as CEEP Opportunities data) facilitated a deeper analysis of applicant type (single family, multi-family, LMI, market-rate) and distribution LMI populations have household incomes that are less than or equal to 80 percent of median household income for the county where they live. Because this study aims to characterize CEEP outcomes across the entire state (median household income in NY State is \$63,486 (2019 USD))⁵⁸, the Market Evaluation Team used the statewide LMI threshold approximately \$51,000. For the purpose of this evaluation, the Market Evaluation Team identifies LMI customers as those meeting the InfoGroup household income threshold of \$49,999 or less (\$51,000 falls within an InfoGroup income range). Market rate (MR) customers are those with household incomes of \$50,000 or more. The Market Evaluation Team stratified the customer universe by income level (1,935 LMI customers and 1,294 MR, **Figure 26**). Contacts from each income stratum were selected randomly for the phone survey. To achieve a 90 percent confidence and 10 percent margin of error threshold, the target samples for LMI and MR strata were 66 completes and 65 completes, respectively.

The Market Evaluation Team categorized customer survey respondents by a few additional attributes: region, and single-family dwelling (house) vs. multi-family dwelling (apartment) (**Figure 26**). RMS supplemented the survey sample for multi-family/single family attributes. Customers were identified as living in multi-family housing if the InfoGroup home type was listed as “Apartment” (n=16), while “House” home type was used to identify customers in single-family housing (n=150). Customers are identified as living in an urban (n= 103) or rural area (n = 66) based on the population of their municipality (town, city), where urban municipalities have populations of 53,000 or more, and all other municipalities are considered rural.^{59,60} The customer survey data, along with the program data, are the basis for the market evaluation. **Appendix E** includes the list of customer phone survey questions.

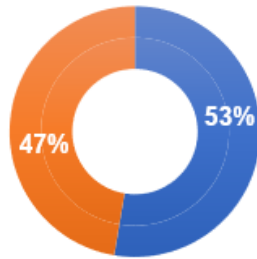
LMI and MR survey distributions, as well as single-family and multi-family survey distributions, were compared against U.S. Census and American Community Survey data at the county level and aggregated to the economic regional level, to give a sense of how survey data are representative (or not) of New York populations across the state. For each economic region, the Market Evaluation Team calculated the proportion of the Census population falling into each income stratum (LMI, MR) and compared the percentages of each region LMI and MR survey respondents. Similarly, the Market Evaluation Team calculated the proportion of single housing units and multifamily units (including mobile units) to compare with the proportion of single-family home dweller and apartment dweller survey respondents.

⁵⁸ Quick Facts for New York. United States Census. Updated 2019. Accessed on 1/20/21 at: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/newyorkcitynewyork/INC110219>

⁵⁹ We used the Census Bureau’s list of urban areas in NY (https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/policy-and-strategy/darb/dai-unit/tss/repository/nyua_uc.pdf) and used the list to inform a municipality-specific cutoff of 23,000 for the “urban” designation (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cities_in_New_York#:~:text=List%20of%20cities%20%20%20%20City%20,%20%203606576540%20%2035%20more%20rows%20), based on the smallest municipality from the urban area list (Kingston, NY).

⁶⁰ While the Market Evaluation Team ultimately did not include the rural vs. urban analysis in the report, it did inform data collection. Ultimately, the regional analysis was more illustrative of patterns across NYS.

LMI and MR customers were nearly evenly split.



There were more single-family home dwellers than multi-family home dwellers.

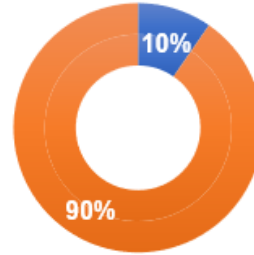


Figure 26. Customer survey respondents by income stratum and dwelling type.

The Market Evaluation Team also identified respondents by their region (**Figure 27**). Long Island and Mohawk Valley regions had few survey respondents because there were few customer leads in the “CEEP Opportunities” dataset.

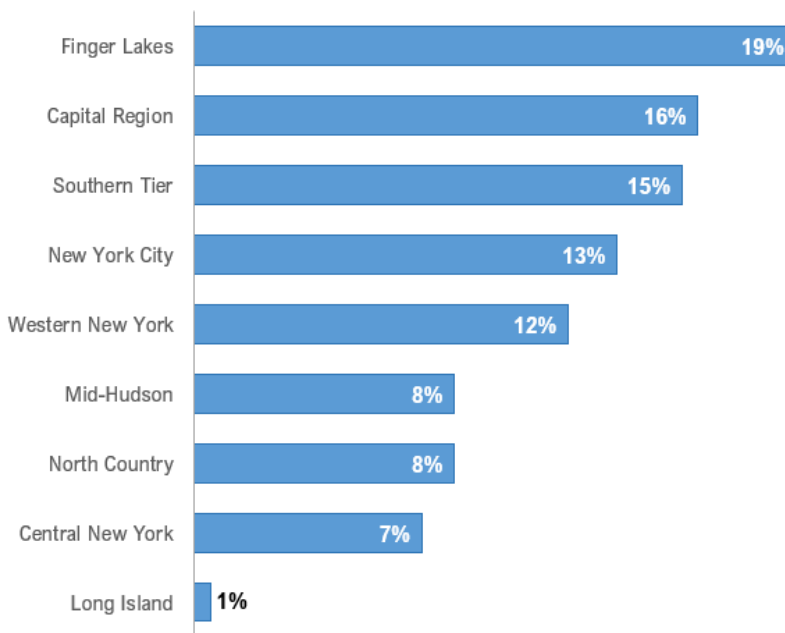


Figure 27. Customer survey respondents by region (n=198). NYSERDA regions graphic source: <https://www.nysERDA.ny.gov/Contractors/Find-a-Contractor/Community-Energy-Resource>.

4.2 CEEP Program Data

The Market Evaluation Team reviewed NYSERDA’s CEEP Opportunities data from a range of programs: GJGNY Energy Study Program, Solar for All, New York Sun, EmPower New York, AHPwES, etc. The Market Evaluation Team combined and reviewed data for all programs and summarized descriptive statistics (e.g., count or percentage of “opportunities”, i.e., customers, applicants, and leads) for: region, opportunity status (i.e., application progress recorded), applicant type, and relevant economic development region. Opportunity statuses include nurturing, where the contact is a lead and has not expressed interest in

pursuing applications to NYSERDA programs; application in development, where the CEA is actively assisting an applicant in putting together their application or locating necessary information prior to submission; application submitted; application approved; project contracted, where work has begun; and project completed.⁶¹ **Table 10** summarizes programs with recorded opportunities at any stage of the process.

Table 9. NYSERDA programs with 50 or more opportunities (customers, applicants, and leads). Data as of July, 2020.

NYSERDA PROGRAM NAME	DESCRIPTION	CUSTOMERS, APPLICANTS, AND LEADS
Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® (AHPwES)	Offers income-qualified homeowners in New York State a comprehensive, whole-house approach to improving energy efficiency and home comfort while saving money.	2,998
EmPower New York	Offers no-cost energy efficiency services such as insulation, air sealing, energy efficient light bulbs, and replacement of an inefficient refrigerator and freezer to low-income homeowners and renters.	1,421
NY-Sun	Provides incentives and financing to make solar-generated electricity accessible and affordable for all New York homeowners, renters, and businesses. Using solar can help lower energy costs compared to using conventionally generated electricity. Additional program components include training for installers and public officials, standardized permitting processes, and consumer education.	445
Residential Financing Options	Residential Financing offers loan options to help finance energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements to NY State homeowners.	100
NYS Clean Heat - Statewide Heat Pump Program	Heat pumps are a more efficient heating and cooling option that eliminate fossil fuels, can provide up to 100 percent of your heating and cooling needs, and help you save on your energy bills.	94
Green Jobs Green New York Energy Studies	Offers subsidized energy studies to eligible small businesses and not-for-profits to help identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy costs.	88

The Market Evaluation Team also reviewed CEEP Activities data to better characterize the level of effort from CEAs in each region and understand this in the context of both customer and partner counts. In a few places, the Market Evaluation Team developed a scatter plot graphic to compare regional outcomes (**Figure 2, Figure 7, Figure 13**), with normalized number of customers or partners on the x-axis and level of effort in hours recorded on the y-axis. Number of customers was normalized by population: (number of customers/total regional population) x 100,000. While the values could be reported in their ratio format, they have been multiplied by 100,000 to support reader interpretation of the data and make the x-axis of the scatterplot figures more manageable.

A spatiotemporal analysis of activities (plotting number of hours of partner engagement, customer engagement, and outreach activities over time) yielded no patterns of note, other than the fact that COVID

⁶¹ Notably, CEAs also assist customers with applying to non-NYSERDA programs for grants, loans, or other financial support.

interrupted all CEEP efforts in all regions. The period between the start of CEEP and the start of the pandemic was too truncated for any trends to manifest in a visible way. The results are *not* included here, other than brief commentary on the impacts of COVID.

Finally, the Market Evaluation Team reviewed CEEP Regional Pilot Program data for the **section 2.1.5** analysis. Projects are summarized by their total count of participants and combined these counts with the descriptive information received from NYSERDA Program Staff regarding project purpose and goals.

4.3 Interviews

Interviews were conducted with CEAs and KPOs for the generation of contextual program and process information. Notes on CBO/LBO and KPO responses were recorded verbatim during interviews and were later qualitatively coded for themes by a single analyst, with regular peer check-ins amongst the Market Evaluation Team to validate thematic-level interpretations.

The Market Evaluation Team performed in-depth interviews (45-60 minutes each) with CEAs and CEEP program leaders from all 10 NYSERDA regions, with one additional high-level interview in the Southern Tier region for a total of 11 interviews (**Table 11**). Interviews with CEAs covered a range of topics, including types of customers and partners, types of engagement activities, successes and challenges in engaging different types of partners and customers, leveraged funding, areas of improvement, and COVID-19 impacts to outreach.

Table 10. CBO/LBO interviews conducted.

Primary Contractor Organization*	REGION
PathStone Corporation	Finger Lakes
Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County	Mid-Hudson
Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, Inc. (MVEDD)	Mohawk Valley
Affordable Housing Partnership	Capital Region
Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County	North Country
Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County	Southern Tier
Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County	Central New York
Center for NYC Neighborhoods	New York City
PUSH Buffalo	Western New York
United Way of Long Island	Long Island

***Note:** Primary contractor organization for each region has a contractual relationship with NYSERDA. The list above does not include subcontractor organizations who also serve as CEAs in some regions.

Each CEA was also asked to identify three KPO interview candidates to provide an outside perspective on the program; three KPO contacts per each of 10 CBO\LBOs resulted in a total universe of 30 KPOs. Toward that end, the Market Evaluation Team also performed in-depth 30-minute interviews with 20 KPOs, a sample size which achieves 90 percent confidence with 10 percent margin of error. For reporting purposes, KPOs have been de-identified up to organization type due to some interviewee concerns about anonymity

(e.g., some interviewees’ organizations receive NYSERDA funding). **Table 12** lists KPO types and links them with both region and CEA.

Table 11. KPO interviews conducted.

PO TYPE	CEEP CONTRACTOR	REGION
Non-profit	Affordable Housing Partnership	Capital Region
Contractor	Affordable Housing Partnership	Capital Region
Non-profit	Affordable Housing Partnership	Capital Region
Non-profit	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County	Central New York
Non-profit	PathStone Corporation	Finger Lakes
Contractor	PathStone Corporation	Finger Lakes
Non-profit	PathStone Corporation	Finger Lakes
Utility	United Way	Long Island
Utility	United Way	Long Island
Government/Municipal	Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County	Mid-Hudson
Non-profit	Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County,	Mid-Hudson
Government/Municipal	Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, Inc.	Mohawk Valley
Non-profit	Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, Inc.	Mohawk Valley
Government/Municipal	Center for NYC Neighborhoods	New York City
Non-profit	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County	North Country
Contractor	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County	North Country
Government/Municipal	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County	Southern Tier
Government/Municipal	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County	Southern Tier
Non-profit	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County	Southern Tier
Non-profit	PUSH Buffalo	Western New York

Small commercial customers represent the smallest portion of customer leads in the CEEP Opportunities database. GJGNY Energy Study is the program receiving the greatest proportion of customer applications within the small commercial customer subset, so the Market Evaluation Team investigated the small commercial customer recruitment process through the GJGNY Energy Study Program, specifically. The Market Evaluation Team interviewed three CEAs with CBOs that have had some measure of success in engaging small commercial customers (Dutchess County Cornell Cooperative Extension in the Mid-Hudson region, PUSH Buffalo in Western New York, and the Center for NYC Neighborhoods in New York City), two NYSERDA GJGNY Energy Study Program Staff (in a group interview), and NYSERDA’s GJGNY Energy Study program primary implementation contractor, L&S. Interviews were approximately 60 minutes each, and **Appendix B** includes the list of questions for small commercial follow-up interviews. The purpose of the follow-up interviews was to determine where customer recruitment bottlenecks exist and why.

4.4 Limitations

Discussion of data limitations follows the same order as the previous sections (surveys, CEEP Program data, and interviews). Please refer to **sections 2.1-2.4** for a more specific analysis of data limitations.

Customer survey samples were drawn from the CEEP Opportunities data, augmented by Infogroup data. As mentioned throughout section 2, CEEP Opportunities data appear to be inconsistent across regions. For example, cost share data was missing entirely from two regions, and appeared to be incomplete for a third region. Inconsistent data entry may have had an impact on survey sampling. The InfoGroup data likewise had its limitations. InfoGroup data were used to determine income level and housing demographics, but the data are occasionally outdated or given in a format that is inconsistent with data needs. For example, household income is given in \$10,000 ranges between \$20,000 (below which household incomes are listed as “less than \$20,000”) and \$200,000 (above which household incomes are listed as “more than \$200,000”), with no additional specificity beyond the maximum and minimum. The urban/rural designation is up for debate in spatial analytical circles; it seems that the more straightforward the definition (e.g., by county), the higher the margin for error. The more nuanced the definition (e.g., Census Bureau-identified urban areas), the more challenging it is to apply to a dataset in a clear way. The Market Evaluation Team adopted a hybrid approach by identifying a municipality-specific population cutoff informed by Census Bureau-identified urban areas; thus, the urban/rural analysis was ultimately excluded from the body of this report in favor of the economic region-level analysis.

Customer survey data limitations also include:

- Customer grant or loan data are self-reported, and many customers did not recall or did not see the grant or loan amount because it went directly to the energy contractor.
- Because the CEEP Opportunities data did not include information about partner-customer interaction, the Market Evaluation Team included survey questions to try and piece together the connection between partners and customer applications/projects completed (to address evaluation **sections 2.2.4** and **2.3.2**); however, very few customers offered additional insights in the open-ended response about who supported them in their application or in completing their project.
- A positive response bias from customers who have completed projects with NYSERDA funding. With a majority of customers reporting that they had a completed project, the survey is not representative of the overall CEEP Opportunities

While CEAs’ “other partners” across all 10 NYSERDA regions responded to the survey, the Market Evaluation Team received 10 or fewer responses from eight regions, with the smallest number of responses from Western New York (4 total). Therefore, survey responses were not representative of the overall partner lists. In some cases, the survey responses revealed that the “other partner” did not seem to know the CEA at all, or had no memory of working with them previously. Ultimately, KPO interviews were important for filling in context, as open-ended responses from the survey were occasionally limited.

CEEP Opportunities data limitations are described throughout this report, but a few items are worth underscoring here:

- The dataset contains no systematic reporting for partner-customer interaction; this means that there is no traceable connection between specific partners and number of CEEP customers gained from the specific partner relationship.
- Information about loan and grant application outcomes are often limited to the description column unless the project was complete, under contract, or the application was rejected because the customer was ineligible.
- Information about cost share is limited to dollar amount by source of cost share (categorized by organization type); for example, there is no clarifying information about which NYS agency, municipality, or non-profit organization is providing grant funding.

Appendix A. Evaluation Questions

Table 12. Evaluation questions and corresponding data sources.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	CEA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	KPO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	OTHER PARTNER (ONLINE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER (PHONE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	NYSERDA PROGRAM DATA FIELD(S)
Determine effectiveness of CEEP Contractor outreach	1. Did LMI and market-rate households, small businesses and multifamily building owners participate in clean energy activities after outreach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of consumers do you engage? (single family, multi-family, commercial business owners?) • What do your base outreach activities usually consist of? • What are you doing to reach different consumer types? • Uptake or adoption of clean energy technologies and energy efficiency measures by LMI communities is one area that NYSERDA's CEEP program is especially committed to improving. Do you or your partner organizations engage LMI communities, specifically? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What strategies for outreach do you typically use? (e.g., phone calls, tabling at events, mailers, webinars, etc.) • What outreach strategies have you worked with [CEA] on? • What programs were most used among LMI participants? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not covered in other partner surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please indicate which of the NYSERDA programs have worked with you on clean energy projects in your home, small business, or non-profit. If you have participated in more than one program, please identify the program from which you received the most work to your home or business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Type and application 'stage'/status'. Use: Summarize and potentially stratify customers into Residential, Small Commercial, Market rate, Not-for-profit, and Multifamily
	2. How many participants are "first time" clean energy project implementers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you doing to reach different consumer types? • How do you target or try to reach people who haven't been reached before? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are you reaching new people (i.e., people who haven't been reached by the program)? • Has the relationship or the collaborative activities led to increased outreach activity (i.e., are you reaching more people as a result of the relationship)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not covered in other partner surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was this your first time participating in a home energy audit, energy efficiency measures, or clean energy project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data point in CEEP program datasets.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	CEA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	KPO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	OTHER PARTNER (ONLINE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER (PHONE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	NYSERDA PROGRAM DATA FIELD(S)
	3. How many loan applications were facilitated through CEAs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered by the CEA interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered by KPO interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered in other partner surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did you receive a loan in order to work on the home energy audit, energy efficiency measures, or clean energy project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEEP opportunities with a CEA and Cost-share loan column, Cost Share – Loan Use: Count unique customers/projects that have received loans. This assumes that loan applications were facilitated through the LBOs, which might not necessarily be the case.
	4. How much leveraged funding was used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered by the CEA interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you been able to leverage funding along with the CEA to help people get the resources they need for energy projects? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered in other partner surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future grant or loan amounts are typically based on accurate information about past averages. Please write the amount of the grant or loan received. (numerical open ended) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost Share (excluding "Loan" category). Use: Sum across other Cost Share fields to determine how much leveraged funding was used.
	5. What type of regional pilot programs were implemented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional programming is another area that NYSERDA's CEEP program is especially interested in improving. How successful have regional efforts been in the past? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered in KPO interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered in other partner surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered in customer survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NYSERDA Program, Other NYSERDA Program, Other Program.
Monitor clean energy relationships built within the community	6. Which other organizations did LBOs develop relationships with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What partner organizations do you work with? What organizations have you had the greatest successes with? (top 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the specific mission of your organization and where does your partnership with the CEA fit into that? How does your relationship with the CEA compare to other relationships you may have? What other organizations are you working with? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check ONE response that best describes your organization. Check ONE response that best describes your relationship with [CEA]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered in customer survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data point in CEEP program datasets.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	CEA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	KPO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	OTHER PARTNER (ONLINE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER (PHONE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	NYSERDA PROGRAM DATA FIELD(S)
	7. What synergies were realized as a result of these relationships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of outreach and engagement activities do [your partners] usually do? • What makes a good partnership, and what are the barriers you encounter? • Has your organization received feedback from partner organizations, and what are the major themes, both positive and negative? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the nature of your relationship with the CEA? Do you refer customers? Do you collaborate on outreach? • What relationship successes have you had? • What synergies were identified as a result of this relationship? For example, cross-references or program referrals? • Has working with the CEA been beneficial? • Is the relationship reciprocal? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do energy services, like home energy audits, heat pump installation, energy services, clean energy technologies, fit into your mission? Please select ONE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not covered in customer survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data point in CEEP program datasets.
	8. Did partnerships between local organizations lead to increased outreach activity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a good partnership, and what are the barriers you encounter? • What organizations have you had the greatest successes with? • What do you think have been the greatest successes of your work in connecting consumers to resources? • What kind of outreach and engagement activities do [your partners] usually do? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What outreach strategies have you worked with [CEA] on? (what strategies have been most successful and why? What strategies have not been successful and why?) • Has the relationship or the collaborative activities led to increased outreach activity (i.e., are you reaching more people now than you were before, as a result of the relationship)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check ONE response that best describes your relationship with [CEA]. • Do you refer customers to [CEA]? Check ONE. • What benefit has your organization received from this relationship? Check ALL THAT APPLY. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not covered in customer survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data point in CEEP program datasets.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	CEA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	KPO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	OTHER PARTNER (ONLINE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER (PHONE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	NYSERDA PROGRAM DATA FIELD(S)
	9. Did partnerships between local organizations lead to increased project implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a good partnership, and what are the barriers you encounter? • What organizations have you had the greatest successes with? • What do you think have been the greatest successes of your work in connecting consumers to resources? • What kind of outreach and engagement activities do [your partners] usually do? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the relationship or the collaborative activities led to increased numbers of people completing clean energy or home energy efficiency projects? • Are more customers receiving assistance with clean energy applications? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not covered in "other partner" survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not covered in customer survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEA audit – link between CBO and audit contractor/leads data points. Note: these are contractor specific.
Process evaluation	10. What types of partner organizations led to more leveraged funds?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a good partnership, and what are the barriers you encounter? • Are there barriers in the way of relationships preventing them from working as well as they could? • What do you think have been the greatest successes of your work in connecting consumers to resources? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you been able to leverage funding along with [CEA] to help people get the resources they need for energy projects? (What types of relationships led to more leveraged funds?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check ONE response that best describes your organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What organization, if any, assisted you with the loan or grant? [open ended response] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data point in CEEP program datasets.
	11. What types of activities/partnerships were most successful at gaining and retaining new LMI participants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uptake or adoption of clean energy technologies and energy efficiency measures by LMI communities is one area that NYSERDA's CEEP program is especially committed to improving. Do you or your partner organizations engage LMI communities, specifically? • Do you or your partner organizations have targeted strategies for reaching people in multi-family housing or apartment buildings? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not covered in KPO interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check ALL responses that describe the customers or clients you work with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was this your first time participating in a clean energy project? • If you have participated in one or more of the listed NYSERDA programs, did you complete the project? • If you did NOT complete the project, please describe the reason. [open-ended response] • Are you considering home energy efficiency or clean energy services in the future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity Name, NYSERDA Program, STATUS. Use: Link with InfoGroup data to make sense of LMI vs. Market Rate customer participation.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	CEA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	KPO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	OTHER PARTNER (ONLINE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER (PHONE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	NYSERDA PROGRAM DATA FIELD(S)
	12. What services/programs were the most used among LMI participants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are your partner organizations directing consumers to particular NYSERDA programs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What programs were most used among LMI participants? (specifically interested in the NYSERDA programs, but if they have other answers to this, programs that couple well with NYSERDA programs, that's fine too) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please identify which programs you refer customers to. If you can't remember the program name, briefly describe the program focus instead. [Open-ended response] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please indicate which of the NYSERDA programs have worked with you on clean energy projects in your home. Check all that apply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity Name, NYSERDA program indicated in program data, filtered by income threshold data from InfoGroup.
	13. How can initiative efficiency and effectiveness be improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What challenges does your organization face in working to improve consumer uptake of clean energy technologies and energy efficiency improvements? Bonus: Is there anything else you want NYSERDA to know? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What could be done to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the program(s)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your relationship to [CEA]. Is the relationship working as well as it should in providing people with access to home energy assistance or clean energy services? If not, what is in the way of ensuring that customers receive these resources? How can the relationship with [CEA] better benefit your organization? [Open-ended response] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What about your experience could be improved? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data point in CEEP program datasets.
	14. Are there data documenting participant satisfaction with different aspects of the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered by the CEA interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you document customer satisfaction with this/these programs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not covered in other partner survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer satisfaction is important to NYSERDA. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements. Response options are as follows: Does not apply, strongly disagree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probability (%), Stage, Next Step, Description. Use: Status of projects and narrative descriptions can identify projects that are more or less frequently completed.

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTION	CEA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	KPO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	OTHER PARTNER (ONLINE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	CUSTOMER (PHONE) SURVEY QUESTIONS	NYSERDA PROGRAM DATA FIELD(S)
	15. What are the key barriers to participation in the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What challenges does your organization face in working to improve consumer uptake of clean energy technologies and energy efficiency improvements? • Are split incentives an issue in multi-family consumer uptake of improvements? • How do you deal with split incentives? • Regional programming is another area that NYSERDA's CEEP program is especially interested in improving. How successful have regional efforts been in the past? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there key barriers in the way of success? And, if so, what do you think could be done to address those barriers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there barriers in the way of building the relationship or working with [CEA]? Please identify possible barriers in the way of relationship-building or serving clients/customers. Check ALL THAT APPLY. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about your experience could be improved? I will read a series of statements about customer experience. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements. Response options are as follows: Does not apply, strongly disagree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data point in CEEP program datasets.

Appendix B. CBO/LBO Interview Materials

❖ INTERVIEW OUTREACH EMAIL - CEAs*

**To be emailed by Bianca Shaw, CEEP Project Manager at NYSERDA*

Subject: ACTION REQUIRED – Seeking Your Input

Good Morning,

NYSERDA is reaching out to several organizations in a fast-turnaround project aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP). NYSERDA will hold interviews ~30-45 minutes in length and focus on the following topics:

- How organizations leverage funding from multiple programs and other organizations for customers, and the relative success of those efforts;
- Program success and effectiveness, especially where comprehensive or overlapping services encouraged participation;
- Areas for potential improvement, and resources required to implement these changes;
- Partner organization and customer satisfaction with CEEP;
- Barriers to customer and/or partner organization participation in CEEP and other programs, and ways of overcoming these barriers; and
- The challenges facing underserved and disadvantaged communities and shifting programmatic focus to meeting needs for housing, health, and warmth, especially in light of COVID-19.

Your feedback is critical to informing the evaluation of CEEP. NYSERDA would like to schedule a 30 to 45-minute interview with you or someone in your organization, such as a Community Energy Advisor at a mutually available date and time in the next few weeks. To proceed with scheduling, please reply to contractor Bonni Nelson (BonniN@rmsresults.com, copied here), with Research Marketing and Strategies, Inc. (RMS), and indicate your general availability.

Thank you for your help in this effort.

Regards,

❖ CEEP LBO/CBO INTERVIEW GUIDE

Notes for NYSERDA:

- Questions listed in **bold text** are critical questions.
- Plain text questions are likely to be addressed naturally during the course of the conversation; if not, IEc will ask as follow-up questions.

Introduction [~5 mins]

We are contracting with the NYSERDA Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP) to evaluate their program in the context of future investment. As you know, many households and communities are not aware of clean energy opportunities that are available to them. In other cases, they experience financial barriers that prevent them from seizing these opportunities. This is especially true of low-to-moderate income (LMI) consumers. These LMI consumers also tend to pay a larger share of their income towards energy costs, so they stand to benefit greatly from the implementation of clean energy actions. As a constituency-based organization/locally-based organization, you play a critical role in helping to match consumers to programs from which they could benefit. The purpose of this interview is to learn about you, your program, and how you are connecting consumers with clean energy opportunities. In addition, NYSERDA is interested in (a) the support you are offering to communities in which you operate, and (b) your working relationship with other partner organizations that help you in this work.

1. **Can you tell us a little bit about your program?**
 - a. What do you do and how long have you been with the program?
2. **What kinds of consumers do you engage?**
 - a. **Single family, multi-family, commercial business owners?**

Partner Organizations [~20 to 25 mins]

3. **What partner organizations do you work with?**
4. **What kind of outreach and engagement activities do they typically do?**
 - a. Are your partner organizations directing consumers to particular NYSERDA programs?
 - b. What consumers are they engaging?
 - c. How are they reaching out to different consumer types?
5. **What makes a good partnership, and what are the barriers you encounter?**
 - a. **What organizations have you had the greatest successes with? (Top 3?)**
 - b. **Are there barriers in the way of other relationships preventing them from working as well as they could?**
 - c. What would you suggest to improve those relationships? I.e., what could change?
6. **Do you make efforts to leverage funding for multiple programs and organizations for customers?**
 - a. How successful have those efforts been?
 - b. What challenges prevent the success of those efforts?
 - c. What can be done to make those efforts more successful?
7. **Has your organization received feedback from partner organizations, and what are the major themes, both positive and negative?**

Consumers [~20 to 25 mins]

8. **What do your base outreach activities usually consist of?**
 - a. What are you doing to reach different consumer types?

- i. Does your outreach differ for multi-family consumers, for instance?
 - ii. How would you describe community reception of outreach efforts?
- b. Are there any significant barriers to consumer participation?
- 9. How do you target or try to reach people who haven't been reached before?**
 - a. How do you structure partnerships to reach 'new' people?
 - b. Do you or your partner organizations follow up with consumers to see if they went through with energy consultations or installations?
- 10. Uptake or adoption of clean energy technologies and energy efficiency measures by LMI communities is one area that NYSERDA's CEEP program is especially committed to improving. Do you or your partner organizations engage LMI communities, specifically?**
 - a. Do you or your partner organizations have targeted strategies for reaching people in multi-family housing or apartment buildings?
 - b. How successful have outreach efforts been?
- 11. Regional programming is another area that NYSERDA's CEEP program is especially interested in improving. How successful have regional efforts been in the past?**
 - a. What region did your organization work in prior to the CEEP contract?
 - b. Do you feel you have the resources to reach your entire economic region?
 - c. Do partner organizations aid or hinder regional programming?
- 12. How has COVID-19 impacted your outreach to consumers?**
 - a. How has COVID-19 impacted the response of consumers to this outreach?
 - b. New customers in particular?
 - c. LMI communities in particular?
 - d. Has your organization adopted any new or creative strategies to continue to meet customer needs during COVID-19?
 - e. What kinds of strategies do you see being useful in meeting more critical needs, such as housing, safety, and health?
- 13. What do you think have been the greatest successes of your work in connecting consumers to resources?**
 - a. How do you measure successes in the program?
 - i. What factors drive success or failure?
- 14. What challenges does your organization face in working to improve consumer uptake of clean energy technologies and energy efficiency improvements?**
 - a. Are split incentives an issue in multi-family consumer uptake of improvements?
 - b. How do you deal with split incentives?
 - c. What, in your estimation, could be done to address these challenges or otherwise improve the program?

Wrap-Up [~5 mins]

- 15. What is your overall level of satisfaction with CEEP?**
 - a. What could be done to improve your level of satisfaction with CEEP?
- 16. A next step in this process is to interview partners organizations, to understand how outreach is working from that end. Would you be willing to facilitate introductions to your partner organizations?**

❖ **OUTREACH EMAIL FOR SMALL COMMERCIAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH CEAs**

Subject: Follow up NSYERDA interview

Hello,

As you know, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) is performing a research study to learn about local collaborations and outreach for installing energy efficiency measures, conducting home/building energy assessments, and implementing other energy services.

You or someone else at your organization participated in an earlier interview aimed at helping NYSERDA learn about what they can do to improve participation in their energy programs, improve the customer experience, and bolster support for customers. NYSERDA has identified your organization is particularly effective in recruiting customers for small commercial programs like Green Jobs Green New York.

The purpose of this interview is to have a candid conversation about your experience with small commercial customers, from recruitment through the application process. Small commercial customers represented a small fraction of the total Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP) outreach and engagement, so NYSERDA is interested in hearing from you about best practices.

We would like to schedule a 1 hour follow-up interview with the CEAs who work for you at [COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION] at a mutually available date and time in the next few week or so. Please let us know about your general availability.

Thank you for your help in this effort.

Regards,

❖ SMALL COMMERCIAL FOLLOW-UP: CEA IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

Notes for NYSERDA: *ESTIMATED TIME is 60 MINUTES.*

Introductory Script: As you already know, we are contracting with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). NYSERDA has identified your organization as having comparative success in recruiting commercial and industrial customers for programs such as Green Jobs Green New York. NYSERDA is interested in learning about what you would consider “best practices” for recruiting small commercial customers, recommendations for other CEEP contractors, and recommendations for NYSERDA to bolster the support and resources available to this type of customer. The purpose of this interview is to have a candid conversation with you about your experience with the GJGNY customer recruitment.

1. Are you engaging with commercial business owners, non-profits, or multi-family building owners?
 - a. What kinds of outreach and engagement activities are you doing to reach these types of customers?
 - b. What NYSERDA programs are you connecting them with?
 - i. **Commercial Tenant Program** supports tenants, landlords, and industry consultants in improving leased spaces through thoughtful design, proactive maintenance and operations, and actionable plans to reduce energy consumption over the life of a lease. The program covers up to 100% of the consultant’s eligible professional service fees.
 - ii. **Energy Storage** – provides access incentives and technical resources for installing energy storage for businesses.
 - iii. **Energy Study Aggregation Program** - explores innovative and streamlined approaches for providing objective energy efficiency studies to commercial facilities. Through the aggregation of participating commercial facilities into a portfolio of efficiency studies, the program will assess whether commonalities across the facilities can make assessing energy efficiency opportunities less costly and more timely.
 - iv. **Flexible Technical Assistance Program** - shares the cost to produce an objective, site-specific, and targeted study on how best to implement clean energy and/or energy efficiency technologies.
 - v. **On-site Energy Manager** – program pays a portion of salary for an energy manager on-site.
 - vi. **Strategic Energy Management** – an online course focusing on energy savings. Companies may send a representative to attend, focuses on saving energy.
2. Where do you find your small commercial customer leads? (e.g., Community Fairs or networking events, partner organizations)
 - a. What kinds of strategies do you usually employ to recruit/nurture/engage small commercial customers for GJGNY and other small commercial programs?
 - b. How has COVID-19 impacted these strategies and overall recruitment/nurturing/engagement of GJGNY/small commercial customers?
3. How do your GJGNY/small commercial recruitment/nurturing/engagement strategies align with or differ from strategies you use for working with customers for residential NYSERDA programs?

- a. For example, do you use a different engagement process, or target different kinds of events?
 - b. In other words, is small commercial recruitment structured into your regular engagement activities?
 - c. What is working well?
 - d. What isn't working well?
 - e. How can process efficiency and effectiveness be improved?
4. Last time we interviewed someone from your organization, we discussed partnerships that aid you in customer outreach and community networking. You also shared with us a long list of partners who are associated with CEEP work. Do you collaborate with any of these partners on small commercial outreach, in particular?
 - a. E.g.: Regional councils, municipal offices, chambers of commerce, or local coalitions geared toward sustainability?
5. There are more customer leads listed with the "nurturing" status than there are other application steps. This is true for your organization, but also for others. Can you describe any process bottlenecks or other challenges you notice in this process?
 - a. Please describe the success rate for converting leads to applicants for small commercial programs.
 - b. Based on our data, it appears that many small commercial customer leads do not make it through to the actual application stage of the process. This is confirmed by GJGNY data, where a sample subset of customers actually applied and had projects completed. In your experience, why do people drop out of the process prior to application stage?
 - c. How has COVID impacted the actual application process?
 - d. What will need to change in your process post-COVID? For example, a few CEAs we spoke with have committed to individual follow-up calls or emails with customer leads to see if folks are willing to take the plunge on clean energy services.
 - i. Do you plan on shifting more to the online space for engagement and customer follow up? Is this something you've already done?
 - ii. Do you have thoughts about how to tailor communications to small businesses who have suffered economic losses from COVID changes to consumer demand and the retail experience?
6. Are many small commercial customers first-time applicants for clean energy services, or have they been informed about clean energy programs through another kind of program (e.g., residential NYSERDA program or utility program)?
7. What advice would you offer to other CEAs who are struggling with small commercial outreach?
8. Is there anything else you wish to discuss about this topic?

Appendix C. Key Partner Interview Materials

❖ INTERVIEW OUTREACH PHONE/EMAIL SCRIPT FOR KPO*

Red text denotes a need to insert **CEA NAME into the script.*

Hello,

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) is performing a research study to learn about local collaborations and outreach for installing energy efficiency measures, conducting home performance assessments, and implementing other energy services. [CEA NAME (s) at CBO] has identified your organization as having a key working relationship with them in their work of connecting customers with needed energy services in the region. Would you be willing to speak with us about your organization's mission and relationships in an information-gathering interview?

Interviews are expected to take no longer than 30 minutes, with 15 short questions. The purpose of the exercise is to help NYSERDA to learn about what they can do to improve their energy services programs, bolster the education, outreach, and resources available to customers, and support organizations like yours.

Please let us know if you would be willing to interview with us virtually and we can set up a time that is convenient to your schedule. Thank you!

Regards,

❖ KEY PARTNER ORGANIZATION IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

Notes for NYSERDA:

- **RED TEXT** Denotes a need to insert CEEP contractor name into interview Guide
- [Probe] Indicates a follow up if interviewee does not provide details.
- *ESTIMATED TIME: 30 MINUTES.*

Introductory Script: We are contracting with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). NYSERDA is interested in learning about local cooperative relationships and outreach for installing energy efficiency measures, conducting home performance assessments, and implementing other energy services. [CEA] has identified you/your organization as a key partner in their work of connecting customers with clean energy services in the region. The purpose of this interview is to help NYSERDA to learn about what they can do to improve their energy services programs, bolster the resources available to customers, and support both their contractors and contractors' peer organizations in their customer education and outreach. Do you have any questions for us before we begin?

Nature of the Relationship

1. How did your relationship with [CEA] start?
 - a. [Probe] How long have you been working together?
2. What is the nature of your relationship with [CEA]?
 - a. [Probe] Do you refer customers?
 - b. [Probe] Do you collaborate on outreach events?
3. What is your specific mission of your organization, and where does your partnership with [CEA] fit into that?
 - a. [Probe] How does your relationship with [CEA] compare to other relationships you may have?
 - b. [Probe] What other organizations are you working with?
4. What synergies were identified as a result of this relationships? For example, cross references or program referrals, events, knowledge-sharing or peer-to-peer learning.
5. Has working with [CEA] been beneficial? Is the relationship reciprocal (give-and-take)?
6. What relationship successes have you had?
7. Are there key barriers in the way of success? And, if so, what do you think could be done to address those barriers?

Strategies for Outreach

8. What strategies for outreach do you typically use? (e.g. phone calls, tabling at events, mailers, webinars, etc.)
9. What outreach strategies have you worked with [CEA] on?
 - a. [Probe] What strategies have been most successful? Why?
 - b. [Probe] What strategies have not been as successful? Why?
 - c. How could [CEA] better support your organization in outreach?

10. Has the relationship or the collaborative activities led to increased outreach activity (i.e., are you reaching more people now than you were before, as a result of the relationship)?
11. How are you reaching new people (i.e., people who haven't yet been reached by the program)?
12. Has the relationship or the collaborative activities led to increased numbers of people completing clean energy or home energy efficiency projects?
 - a. **[Probe]** Are more customers receiving assistance with clean energy applications?
13. How has the relationship with the **[CEA]** benefitted you?
14. Do you refer your customers to clean energy assistance programs?
 - a. **[Probe]** If so, are any of these NYSERDA programs?
 - i. Which ones? For instance, the EmPOWER and Assisted Home Performance have more complicated application processes and NYSERDA has partnered with Contractors in each of 10 regions to help guide customers through the application process, but other programs like HEAP or Solar for All may require less assistance.
 - b. What programs were most used among LMI participants? (specifically interested in the NYSERDA programs, but if they have other answers to this, programs that couple well with NYSERDA programs, that's fine too)
 - c. Do you document customer satisfaction with this/these programs?
 - i. Are these data something you would be willing to share with us? [follow up via email]

Leveraged Funds and Services/Program Needs

15. Have you been able to leverage funding along with **[CEA]** to help people get the resources they need for energy projects?
 - a. **[Probe]** What types of relationships led to more leveraged funds?
16. What could be done to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the program(s)?

Appendix D. Other Partner Survey Materials

❖ OUTREACH EMAIL TO 'LITE' PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS FOR ONLINE SURVEY INVITATION

Subject: NYSERDA seeks your feedback about collaboration

Hello,

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) is performing a research study to learn about local collaborations and outreach for installing energy efficiency measures, conducting home performance assessments, and implementing other energy services. Your organization's work and mission have been identified as relevant to NYSERDA's goal of connecting customers with needed energy services.

You have been invited to participate in a brief (five to seven minutes, 10 questions) online survey, aimed at helping NYSERDA learn about what they can do to improve participation in their energy programs, bolster the resources available to customers, and support organizations like yours.

The survey is designed to be completed in a single sitting, but you can stop and return at a later time if necessary. You may exit the survey at any time if you feel uncomfortable.

Please follow this link to participate: _____

Regards,

❖ ‘OTHER’ PARTNER ORGANIZATION ONLINE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Notes for Programmer:

- [Indicates the need to have a logic in place to pull contractor from the correct region, based on the participant response to Q1]
- Below is the list of 10 CEEP Contractors and their regions. Please use this list to create the in-fill logic for the questions with [RED TEXT] in brackets.

REGION(S)	CEEP CONTRACTOR
Finger Lakes	PathStone Corporation
Mohawk Valley	Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, Inc.
Mid-Hudson	Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County
North Country	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County
Southern Tier	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County
Central New York	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County
New York City	Center for NYC Neighborhoods
Western New York	PUSH Buffalo
Capital Region	Affordable Housing Partnership
Long Island	United Way of Long Island

- **Directional buttons >>** Tell the respondent to advance to the next question.
- Checkbox** indicates check all that apply (language in question will mirror option type)
- **Open bubble** indicates select one (language in question will mirror this option type)

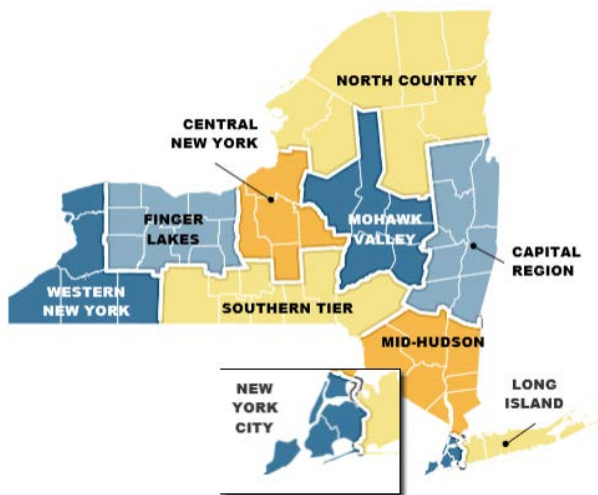
Survey begins on the following page

TITLE: NYSERDA Community Partners Survey

Screening Question

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) is conducting research to learn about local cooperative relationships and outreach for installing energy efficiency measures, conducting home performance assessments, and implementing other clean energy services. You or your organization was identified by a NYSERDA contractor as a collaborator in the work of connecting customers with clean energy services and assistance programs in the region. The purpose of this survey is to help NYSERDA to learn about what they can do to improve their energy services programs, bolster the resources available to customers, and support both their contractors and contractors' peer organizations in their customer education and outreach. This set of questions is aimed at evaluating your experience with the NYSERDA Community Energy Advisor in your region.

The following survey is 10 questions long, and estimated to take 5 - 7 minutes.



1. If you are willing to participate in the survey, please select the region in which your organization operates from the list and press the “next” button. If your organization operates in more than one region, select the region in which your home office is located. Please select ONE.

- NYC
- Long Island
- Central NY
- Mid-Hudson
- Capital Region
- Southern Tier
- Mohawk Valley
- North Country
- Finger Lakes
- Western NY

NEXT >>

2. Select ONE response that best describes your group or organization:
- Food Bank
 - Faith-Based Organization
 - Other Non-Profit Organization
 - Local Coalition or Task Force
 - Municipal Office/Local Government
 - State or Federal Agency
 - Sovereign Tribal Nation
 - Energy Contractor/Installer
 - Academic Institution
 - Local Small Business
 - Electric or Gas Utility
 - Other: _____

3. Check ALL responses that describe the customers or clients you work with:

- Local small businesses
- Non-profits
- Single-family homeowners
- Multi-family (4 units or less) property owners
- Multi-family apartment building (5 units or more) property owners
- Renters
- Low-to-moderate income customers
- Market rate customers
- Senior (60+) customers
- Disabled customers
- Other: _____

4. How do clean energy services (e.g. home energy assistance, energy efficiency measures, energy audits, clean energy technologies) fit into your mission? Please select All that apply.

- Clean energy services: We connect homeowners directly.
- Navigating home finances: We support individuals and families in navigating home finances (e.g., navigating loan default, first-time home buyer programs) to help customers reduce their bills.
- Individual or family healthcare needs: We serve individual or family healthcare needs. Proper insulation and home heating or weatherization can improve wellness at home.
- Nutritional needs: We support individuals, families, and communities in meeting nutritional needs. We help customers with clean energy services and assistance to help reduce their energy bills and better meet their nutritional and wellness needs.
- Environmental and/or climate justice: We focus on environmental and/or climate justice, and helping customers meet their clean energy needs toward that goal.
- Wellness and care services: We support customers with comprehensive wellness and care services; clean energy services are one of many on our ‘menu’ of possible approaches.
- Other: _____
- I don't know.
- N/A

5. Select ONE response for each row that best describes your relationship with **[CEEP contractor]**:

Question	Never	Occasionally	Regularly
I coordinate with [CEEP contractor] to support customers in getting the clean energy assistance they need (e.g., grants, other assistance programs, matching funds).			
I co-host events aimed at educating people about clean energy options for their home.			
I provide space or a venue for [CEEP contractor] to reach out to customers, share informational materials, and collect customer contact information.			

Question	Never	Occasionall y	Regularly
My organization hands out NYSERDA educational materials.			
My organization refers customers to NYSERDA services directly.			
My organization refers customers to [CEEP contractor] .			
Other: _____			

6. What benefit has your organization received from this relationship? Check ALL THAT APPLY.
- We have received additional customer/client referrals.
 - We have expanded the offerings we are able to provide to our customers/clients by being able to refer them to **[CEEP contractor]** and clean energy programs.
 - We have received assistance in planning or hosting events.
 - We have shared educational materials for wider audience reach.
 - We have cross-posted social media content to engage users online.
 - We do not experience benefits from the relationship.
 - Other: _____
 - I don't know
 - N/A
7. Is the relationship with **[CEEP contractor]** working as well as it could in providing people with access to home energy assistance or clean energy services? If not, what could be done better to benefit your organization and ensure that customers receive the resources they need? [**Open-ended response**]
8. Are there barriers in the way of building the relationship or working with **[CEEP contractor]**? Please identify possible barriers in the way of relationship-building or serving clients/customers. Check ALL THAT APPLY.
- My organization has limited grant/funding resources.
 - I and/or my colleagues have limited time and energy.
 - My organization lacks sufficient information about **[CEEP contractor]**.
 - There is not enough overlap between our organizations' missions.
 - I have concerns about the quality of services people receive with NYSERDA programs.
 - I am not interested in building a relationship.
 - No barriers exist, I have an exemplary relationship with **[CEEP contractor]**.
 - Other: _____
9. Do you refer customers to **[CEEP contractor]**? Select ONE.
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
 - N/A
10. Which programs do you refer customers to? Select ALL THAT APPLY.

- ❑ **EmPower New York** provides no-cost energy efficiency solutions to income-eligible New Yorkers. Whether you own your home or rent, a contractor will be assigned to you to assess if your home would benefit from energy upgrades such as: energy improvements, tips on energy saving, installation of high-efficiency lighting, insulation, replacement of old refrigerators and freezers, water-saving devices, or a monthly electric bill credit up to \$15 from community solar.
- ❑ **The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** helps low-income people pay the cost of heating their homes. If you are eligible, you may receive one regular HEAP benefit per season and could also be eligible for an emergency HEAP benefit if you are in danger of running out of fuel or having your utility service shut off. HEAP may be able to help you if you heat your home with: electricity, natural gas, oil, coal, propane, wood/wood pellets, kerosene, corn.
- ❑ **The Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® program** helps income-eligible homeowners across the NY lower their energy bills and live more comfortably. It provides those who qualify with a discount covering 50% of the cost of energy efficiency improvements up to \$5,000 for single-family homes (up to \$10,000 for eligible multi-family homes). An energy assessment provides customers with a top-to-bottom look at energy losses and inefficiencies in the home.
- ❑ **Clean Heating and Cooling Communities** is aimed at getting groups of homes and businesses in NY to install clean heating and cooling (CH&C) technologies like heat pumps, solar, and biomass. CH&C technologies can lower energy bills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions while making living/working spaces more comfortable. CH&C Campaigns help homes and businesses install these technologies through locally organized community outreach.
- ❑ **Solar for All** - Solar for All is a utility bill assistance program that helps income-eligible New Yorkers save up to \$180 annually. NY is funding solar farms to benefit residents, providing the benefits of clean energy while lowering energy costs. You may be eligible if you: rent or own your home; are a veteran receiving disability benefits; are on a fixed income; earn a minimum wage; or you participate in assistance programs.
- ❑ Other: _____
- ❑ None; I do not refer customers to NYSERDA programs.

Appendix E. Customer Survey Materials

❖ DRAFT OUTREACH EMAIL FOR CUSTOMER PHONE SURVEY

Subject: NYSERDA seeks your feedback about clean energy solutions programs

Hello,

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) is performing a research study to learn about local collaborations and outreach for installing energy efficiency measures, conducting home/building energy assessments, and implementing other energy solutions in your home or business.

You have been invited to participate in a brief (15 minutes, 15 questions) phone survey aimed at helping NYSERDA learn about what they can do to improve participation in their energy programs, improve the overall customer experience, and bolster support available for customers.

Please let us know what date/time in the next week would be best for you, or let us know if there is someone else in your family or at your organization who would be willing to participate, instead.

Regards,

RMS Analytics Team

❖ NYSDERDA CUSTOMER PHONE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Notes for Phone Interviewer:

- Q4 text is intended to be read if the respondent is not familiar with the program names.
- [Indicates the need to have a logic in place for the correct CEEP contractor, based on the participant response to Q1 – what is your county?]
- Q2 is a major skip-logic question, many of the other questions depend on the participant responses to this question. E.g., if the participant answers FALSE to all questions, they skip right to Q14 and the survey is only 3 questions total.
- Attached is a worksheet with the list of 10 CEEP Contractors and their regions/counties along with a map for reference. Please use this list to identify the appropriate CEEP contractor from the respondent's COUNTY information, and create the logic for the questions with [RED TEXT] in brackets in Q9 and Q15.

BEGIN SURVEY

[Interviewer: Read the following] INTRODUCTION: This is (state name) with Research & Marketing Strategies (RMS) and we are conducting a quick survey about your experience with clean energy service programs. We’d greatly value your opinions on this topic. Will you help us out today?

Thank you for your willingness to participate! The following survey is brief, and is estimated to take no more than 15 minutes.

1. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) is conducting research to learn about individual perceptions related to installing energy efficiency measures, receiving home performance assessments or energy audits, and receiving other clean energy services. NYSEDA has identified you as someone who may have received clean energy services or energy assistance from one of its many programs. The purpose of this survey is learn what NYSEDA can do to improve existing clean energy services programs and bolster resources available. The survey questions are aimed at understanding your experience with applying for energy assistance and/or installing clean energy solutions in your home or small business. What COUNTY do you live in? **[interviewer: record response and refer to list on page one to identify the respondent’s CEEP CONTRACTOR] [Programmer drop down with list of counties]**

[Interviewer: read the following to the respondent] This is a two-step question. I will read a series of statements to you, and you can tell me if it is your experience or not, true or false. For example I might say, “True or False: I bought an LED light bulb”. If you respond “True”, I would like you to tell me where the statement applies. For example, “in my home” or “in my apartment”. Please indicate whether you have engaged with clean energy services or energy assistance in any of the following ways (select all that apply for each row):

Statement	1=FALSE	2=TRUE: In my single-family home.	3=TRUE: In my apartment.	4=TRUE: In my multi-family building.	5=TRUE: In my small business or non-profit.
2. I had energy efficiency measures (e.g., insulation, LED light bulbs, ENERGY STAR® appliances) installed.					
3. I received an energy audit or assessment.					
4. I received a grant or loan assistance for energy efficiency measures (e.g., insulation, LED light bulbs,					

Statement	1=FALSE	2=TRUE: In my single-family home.	3=TRUE: In my apartment.	4=TRUE: In my multi-family building.	5=TRUE: In my small business or non-profit.
ENERGY STAR® appliances).					
5. I received a grant or loan assistance for clean energy installations (e.g., heat pump, rooftop solar).					
6. I applied for clean energy services or energy assistance.					
7. I added my name to a contact list at a community fair, farmer's market, or other similar event.					

8. [Q2=1 and Q3=1 and Q4=1 and Q5=1 and Q6=1 and Q7=1] Are you familiar with NYSEDA's energy assistance programs such as EmPower New York, Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®, Clean Heating and Cooling Communities, Residential Energy Audit Program, or Solar for All, Green Jobs Green New York Energy Study Program, Multifamily Performance Program, etc.? [Interviewer: read options and record response]
- Yes [Go to Q9]
 - No [Go to Q35]
 - I don't know [Go to Q35]

9. [(Q2=2,3, 4 or 5) or (Q3=2,3,4, or 5) or (Q4=2, 3,4, or 5) or (Q5=2,3,4, or 5) or (Q6=2,3,4, or 5) or Q7=2,3,4, or 5] I am going to read a list of NYSEDA programs. Please indicate which of the NYSEDA programs have worked with you on clean energy projects in your home, small business, or non-profit. If you do not recognize the name of the program or are not sure, I can read brief program descriptions to you and you can select from one of those. If you have participated in more than one program, please identify the program from which you received the most work to your home or business. [Interviewer: record participant response; if the participant needs additional information, please read from the list of options below.] **SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.**

- EmPower New York** provides no-cost energy efficiency solutions to income-eligible New Yorkers. Whether you own your home or rent, a contractor will be assigned to you to assess if your home would benefit from energy upgrades such as: energy improvements, tips on energy saving, installation of high-efficiency lighting, insulation, replacement of old refrigerators and freezers, water-saving devices, or a monthly electric bill credit up to \$15 from community solar.
- The Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® program** helps income-eligible homeowners across the NY lower their energy bills and live more comfortably. It provides those who qualify with a discount covering 50% of the cost of energy efficiency

improvements up to \$5,000 for single-family homes (up to \$10,000 for eligible multi-family homes). An energy assessment provides customers with a top-to-bottom look at energy losses and inefficiencies in the home.

- Residential Energy Audit Program** - A no cost home energy audit conducted by participating residential auditors. The audit provides you with a top-to-bottom look at where your home is wasting energy. You will learn the root cause of any drafts, inconsistent temperatures, excessive energy usage, heating and cooling system failures, or other problems you may be experiencing.
- Clean Heating and Cooling Communities** is aimed at getting groups of homes and businesses in NY to install clean heating and cooling (CH&C) technologies like heat pumps, solar, and biomass. CH&C technologies can lower energy bills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions while making living/working spaces more comfortable. CH&C Campaigns help homes and businesses install these technologies through locally organized community outreach.
- Solar for All** - Solar for All is a utility bill assistance program that helps income-eligible New Yorkers save up to \$180 annually. NY is funding solar farms to benefit residents, providing the benefits of clean energy while lowering energy costs. You may be eligible if you: rent or own your home; are a veteran receiving disability benefits; are on a fixed income; earn a minimum wage; or you participate in assistance programs.
- Green Jobs Green New York Energy Study Program** – Energy studies identify and analyze opportunities to make buildings more efficient, lowering associated energy costs. Small businesses with 100 or fewer employees and non-profits of any size are eligible for this offering. Program includes utility bill analysis, evaluation of possible energy efficiency upgrades, and an energy study report that outlines potential energy and cost savings opportunities.
- Multifamily Performance Program** provides incentives from \$700-\$3,500 per unit for affordable multifamily property owners and managers to make improvements to help lower your building’s ongoing operating costs. A NYSERDA-qualified Multifamily Building Solutions Provider assesses the property and creates a customized plan toward achieving energy savings.
- Community Energy Engagement Program** provides support for residents and businesses to help them reduce their energy consumption and energy costs and make informed energy decisions. Community Energy Advisors can connect you to resources and networks that provide cost-saving opportunities in your communities.
- Other: _____ **[Interviewer: only record “other” if the participant has a name or description of the program]**
- None; I have not worked with any of these NYSERDA programs. **[Interviewer: this should be a mutually exclusive response]**

10. [((Q2=2,3, 4 or 5) or (Q3=2,3,4, or 5) or (Q4=2, 3,4, or 5) or (Q5=2,3,4, or 5))] Was this your first time participating in a home energy audit, energy efficiency measures, or clean energy project? **[Interviewer: read options and record response]**
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I don’t know
 - d. N/A does not apply

11. **[(Q9=1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, or 9)]** If you have participated in one or more of the listed NYSERDA programs, did you complete the project? **[Interviewer: read options and record response]**
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
 - N/A does not apply
12. **[Q11=2]** If you did **NOT** complete the project, please briefly describe the main reason. **[open-ended response]**
13. **[(Q4=2,3,4, or 5) or (Q5=2,3,4, or 5)]** Future grant or loan amounts are typically based on accurate information about past funding usage. What was the amount of the grant or loan received? **[Interviewer: record numerical response only]**
14. **[(Q4=2,3,4, or 5) or (Q5=2,3,4, or 5)]** Did an organization assist you in completing the application for the clean energy solution loan or grant? For example, **[CEEP Contractor]** is an organization in your area that has Community Energy Advisors to support applicants in navigating NYSERDA clean energy grant applications.
- Yes: _____ **[Interviewer: follow up, Q15]**
 - No
 - I don't know
15. **[Q14 = YES only]** Which organization? _____ **[open-ended response]**
16. **[(Q2=2,3,4, or 5) or (Q3=2,3,4, or 5)]** Did an organization assist you in completing a clean energy project in your home or business? For example, a contractor from ABC Insulation Company.
- Yes: _____ **[Interviewer: If yes, follow up Q17]**
 - No
 - I don't know
17. **[Q16 = YES only]** Which organization? _____ **[open-ended response]**

Customer satisfaction is important to NYSERDA. As in the multi-part question we did earlier, I will read a series of statements about customer satisfaction. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements. Response options are as follows: Does not apply, strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree. **[Interviewer: read options and record responses]**

Statement	1 = Does not Apply	2=Strongly Disagree	3=Somewhat disagree	4=Neither Agree nor Disagree	5=Somewhat Agree	6=Strongly Agree
18. I am satisfied with the application process. It was relatively simple to complete.						
19. I am satisfied with the contractor or energy auditor. They were professional and understood my needs.						
20. The project was timely and efficient. I did not have to wait long to have work completed in my home or business.						
21. I am satisfied with the quality of work done in my home or business.						
22. I am satisfied with the assistance I received with the application(s) and/or completion of a clean energy project(s).						

Statement	1 = Does not Apply	2=Strongly Disagree	3=Somewhat disagree	4=Neither Agree nor Disagree	5=Somewhat Agree	6=Strongly Agree
23. I am satisfied with the NYSERDA program from which I received my energy solutions or energy assistance.						
24. I would refer family or friends to the NYSERDA program (from which I received my energy solutions or assistance) if they needed energy efficiency measures or clean energy services.						

What about your experience could be improved? Again, I will read a series of statements about customer experience. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements. Response options are as follows: Does not apply, strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree. **[Interviewer: read options and record responses]**

Statement	1= Does not Apply	2= Strongly Disagree	3= Somewhat disagree	4= Neither Agree nor Disagree	5= Somewhat Agree	6= Strongly Agree
25. A more streamlined application process.						
26. A contractor or energy auditor who better understands my needs.						
27. Knowing about NYSERDA programs sooner.						
28. Program qualifications or eligibility could have been better communicated to me.						
29. A reduced wait time between application and project completion.						
30. Better or higher quality work.						

Statement	1= Does not Apply	2= Strongly Disagree	3= Somewhat disagree	4= Neither Agree nor Disagree	5= Somewhat Agree	6= Strongly Agree
31. Assistance that covers the full project.						
32. More information about what to expect throughout the application and work on my home or business.						
33. Other: _____ [Interviewer: respondent must have a modifier for “other” to select this option]						

34. How do these NYSERDA programs compare to other assistance programs you may have participated in? [Interviewer: read options and record responses]
- Better**; these programs are an improvement over other assistance programs I have participated in.
 - Neither better nor worse**; these programs are comparable to other assistance programs I have participated in
 - Worse**; these programs are not as good as other assistance programs I have participated in
 - N/A**; I have never participated in any kind of assistance program.
35. Are you considering home energy efficiency or clean energy services in the future? [Interviewer: read options and record responses]
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
 - N/A does not apply
36. [Interviewer: Please refer to the participant response from Q1 and make sure to identify the CEEP Contractor from the list before proceeding. Fill in red text with CEEP Contractor name]. NYSERDA programs are administered locally through home energy contractors, local non-profits, and NYSERDA-contracted community outreach organizations. The Community Energy Engagement Program provides support to help residents and businesses reduce their energy consumption and energy costs and make informed energy decisions. Community Energy Advisors can connect you to resources and networks that provide cost-saving opportunities in your communities. In your county, organization with a local Community Energy Advisor is [CEEP Contractor]. Please indicate one option that best describes your familiarity with [CEEP Contractor]: [Interviewer: read options and record responses]
- Unfamiliar: I am **not** familiar with [CEEP Contractor].
 - Vaguely familiar: I have heard of [CEEP Contractor] but I am not familiar with their services or programs.
 - Received assistance or services: [CEEP Contractor] helped me fill out an application or receive NYSERDA program services.

- d. Received information on available resources: **[CEEP Contractor]** provided me with information materials so that I could find the resources I need.
- e. Received referral: **[CEEP Contractor]** was unable to provide direct assistance but they referred me to someone else who could help me find the resources I need.