A wide range of nonprofit organizations are working in the area of black male achievement, representing an array of issue areas and approaches. Some have a population-based focus, be it black men and boys or boys and men of color. Others employ place-based strategies in neighborhoods with a high percentage of black residents. Still others focus on specific issues that disproportionately affect black males.

While there is no official “census” of this work, we can look at several data points to get a general sense of the nonprofit landscape. Based on Foundation Center data, between 2008 and 2011, foundations distributed larger grants ($10,000 or more) to 424 unique organizations for work explicitly designated to support black males. Including grants for boys and men of color, the number more than doubles to 860. Many of these organizations are based in New York City and the DC metro area. Most are educational institutions.

However, the Foundation Center database only includes nonprofit organizations receiving grants. There are many more organizations doing this work that do not receive support from foundations. When the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation issued a call for proposals for Forward Promise, its boys and men of color initiative, the Foundation received more than 1,200 submissions from across the country, ultimately awarding grants to 10 nonprofit organizations.

The Institute for Black Male Achievement (IBMA), managed by PolicyLink and Root Cause, aims to resource and network all leaders and organizations working to improve the life outcomes of black men and boys (see sidebar on p. 55). Its membership also gives us insight into the scope of the nonprofit sector doing this work. As of April 2014, the IBMA included 1,680 organizations in its membership. Nonprofits are only part of the IBMA network, which invites membership from every sector. Nearly half of all IBMA members represent nonprofit organizations. The IBMA advocates a black male achievement lens, but it is inclusive of individuals and organizations that may be working from different frames. According to IBMA membership survey data, completed by 435 nonprofits, only 13 percent indicated that their work is explicitly and exclusively focused on black males (see p. 21). Others embed their work with black males within the broader umbrella of black families or communities (59 percent), boys and men of color (63 percent), and/or families or communities of color (52 percent).

“A key next step for the field is] everything that concerns the capacity of nonprofits’ institutional building and leadership pipeline. This will just be another foundation trend if [nonprofit] organizations aren’t strengthened and if leaders aren’t developed.”

Tia Martinez, consultant, California Endowment
IBMA NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS WORKING EXPLICITLY WITH BLACK MEN & BOYS¹

**Most IBMA Nonprofits with Black Male Frame Engage in Direct Service Activities.**

- Direct Service & Support: 62%
- Community Organizing, Public Policy, & Systems Change: 12%
- Communications: 7%

**Most of these organizations or their black male achievement programs have budgets under $1 million.²**

- Less than $1 million: 65%
- $1 million - $5 million: 17%
- Over $5 million: 8%

**The vast majority of these nonprofits work in local communities.³**

- Cities & Neighborhoods: 80%
- National: 34%
- State: 32%

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¹ Institute for Black Male Achievement, 2014. Unpublished data based on member survey responses as of April 2, 2014. Figures are based on the 252 unique nonprofit organizations indicating that their activities have an explicit black male frame.

² Budget reflects either the overall organization or a specific black male achievement program, department, or initiative within the organization.

³ Organizations may have more than one geographic focus.
PART 1: MAPPING THE FIELD

For IBMA nonprofits engaged in work explicitly focused on black men and boys (252 organizations), the vast majority (80 percent) work in local communities. New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Detroit, and Washington, DC were the most commonly cited locations. Roughly one-third have a statewide focus (32 percent) and/or a national focus (34 percent).

Most IBMA nonprofits working explicitly with black males are engaged in direct service activities (62 percent), with much smaller percentages working in other areas such as community organizing, public policy and systems change, and communications.

Notably, most organizations or black male achievement-focused programs (65 percent) have smaller budgets under $1 million; 52 percent have budgets below $500,000. Only 6 percent indicated that their budgets are $10 million or greater.

For the many nonprofit organizations involved in supporting black men and boys, the IBMA seeks to develop their capacity and connect them to a broader network, indeed a national movement, of black male achievement. For this to happen, fostering deep connections is essential, among individuals within shared practice areas, as well as across organizations and issues.

Alexis McGill Johnson, executive director of American Values Institute, observes, “We have to think about how we develop organizations to be more intersectional, to apply the fight across areas. We have to make the case for black men and boys and jobs, black men and boys and climate, black men and boys and reproductive rights.”

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Alexis McGill Johnson, executive director, American Values Institute

One such area of opportunity is the work taking place around mass incarceration. Says Judith Browne Dianis, co-director of Advancement Project, “A lot of folks who are doing mass incarceration work are not necessarily operating in the world of black male achievement, even though their work is clearly related.”
BUILDING A BELOVED COMMUNITY

The Foundation Center