aspect of centers; it is quite general; and its distribution is so current that it cannot have affected the centers studied. In view of these facts, precise criteria for the evaluation of neighborhood centers are not available from official sources. Instead, these criteria must be inferred from an analysis of events which actually occurred and from a review of the few written materials available.

The criteria for evaluation suggested below are not mutually exclusive but each emphasizes a particular characteristic that can be considered on a reasonably separate basis.

Criterion 1. Local Outreach

Centers are considered to be mechanisms for reaching out in a neighborhood to contact the poor residents. There is the belief that the poor do not have adequate contacts with the organizations representing the social, political and economic structure and with each other. The center is conceived of as an important institution to overcome this deficiency. All concepts of the proper center role tend to hinge on the ability of centers to create a clientele of poor people who have some kind of continuing relationship with the centers. The nature and extent of the outreach of centers is clearly an important consideration in their evaluation.

Criterion 2. Integration

The CAA is supposed to be a device to integrate a wide variety of interests so that they will deal constructively, efficiently and comprehensively with the problem of poverty in the community. The neighborhood center is to carry out this same role at the neighborhood level—the level affording the most direct contact with the poor.

Criterion 3. Maximum Feasible Participation

Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act defines a community action program as one which, among other things, "is developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups served." Although this mandate is interpreted in a wide variety of ways it is clear that centers should be organizations where the maximum feasible participation is taking place.

Criterion 4. Significant Change

One of the basic postulates underlying the entire OEO effort is that there should be changes in the ways existing institutions relate to the poor and the ways in which the poor relate to these institutions and other aspects of their environment. Thus, it is clear that centers must be agents for change.

Criterion 5. Reasonable Cost

A criterion for considering any program or institution is that its costs bear some reasonable relationship to the results it is achieving and that alternative approaches do not offer equivalent solutions at considerably less cost.

It is believed that the inter-related criteria set forth above provide useful broad categories for developing an evaluation framework. More precise and specific criteria within these broad categories will be utilized when considering the available data. Thus, the following evaluation introduces and develops additional specific criteria as necessary.

OUTREACH

Discussion

The materials presented in previous sections of this report and in Attachment 1 describe both the strengths and weaknesses of neighborhood centers in terms of their outreach to the poor. To review, there is clear evidence that a very considerable effort, indeed the major effort at most centers, is being devoted to reaching the poor. The records maintained at centers are so inadequate that it is difficult to assess quantitatively the results of the outreach effort, but two conclusions may be drawn: First, the work is having some success because a clientele for services and center participation has developed in every case; and second, the success is very small in terms of the total numbers of persons to be reached, the quality of these contacts, and the extent to which the "hard to reach" poor are being drawn to center programs. An attempt is being made to do a job never before accomplished, and the attempt is being made with brand new organizations and staffs composed largely of people with only the most meagre work experience and an almost complete lack of prior training. In view of the shortcomings and the problems, it is indeed remarkable that the program has accom-