

*United States*

Comprehensive planning and co-ordination under non-governmental auspices at the local level has a long history of development in the United States. Because of the existence of some 500 community welfare councils, in which public and voluntary organizations, together with citizen leaders, have worked on the overall social problems of their communities, local organizations specifically oriented to planning and co-ordination in the field of the aging have not taken root under either public or voluntary auspices. The welfare councils have been closely related to the federated fund raising bodies in their localities, thus permitting a degree of local integration between the planning and financing bodies.

More recently, important developments have been taking place at the national level. In the early 1950's, following on the heels of the National Conference on Aging, a National Committee on Aging was founded as a subsidiary organization to the National Social Welfare Assembly. In 1961, with heavy financial support from the Ford Foundation, this Committee became an autonomous organization offering planning and consultation services in many specific sectors of the field of aging. This organization has sought to become a national non-governmental planning body, but its success to date has been limited. Nevertheless, it has produced some of the basic manuals in use throughout the English-speaking world on numerous aspects of aging. It has also supported planning and co-ordination developments in the field of aging at state and local levels.

Within the federal government, a Federal Council on Aging attached to the Office of the President was established in 1956. Its purpose was to draw the various federal departments concerned with the aged into closer co-operation and co-ordination. It also played a role in the organization of the White House Conference on Aging held in 1961. The Federal Council was replaced in 1963 by a President's Council on Aging, and a permanent Office of Aging was established within the Welfare Administration of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The federal government has also demonstrated its interest in co-ordination and planning through its recent social legislation in a variety of fields which encourages and supports planning and co-ordinating structures at the state and community levels through various grants-in-aid.

However, because of the greatly awakened interest in stimulating planning and co-ordination in a variety of fields at the national level, by federal and state governments and by the larger philanthropic foundations, local planning bodies have come under heavy pressure to expand their scope to include social, economic and physical community planning. In consequence, a number of adaptations or newly-created organizations, loosely termed "planning coalitions", have developed at the local level. Although highly experimental in nature, nevertheless they give some indication of how local planning and co-ordinating organizations may develop in the future.

The new planning and co-ordinating approaches at the federal level, as illustrated in the "War on Poverty" program under the Office of Economic Opportunities which reports directly to the President, contain some promise for the development of a more adequate federal planning and co-ordinating structure in which both social and economic factors are brought into close relationship.

At the state level, planning and co-ordinating structures are much less developed, although comprehensive voluntary social planning and co-ordinating bodies of one kind or another are found in about ten states. One of the few fields in which attempts at planning and co-ordination within state governments has been made is in that of aging. The impetus here was the need to prepare for the White House Conference on Aging in 1961. Various govern-