

SPF Sustainability Checklist



Objectives: This Checklist is designed to help each Coalition:

- Identify the Coalition's current ability to conduct specific elements of the SPF
- Identify those SPF elements which the Coalition has sufficient skills and resources to complete
- Establish goals for each element for their continued implementation after the current funding ends
- Identify technical assistance and other support needed to conduct each element

Core Competencies: The checklist is based on the following Core competencies identified as crucial elements of the Strategic Prevention Framework:

Assessment:

1. Assess community needs and resources.
2. Analyze problems and goals.
3. Develop a framework or model of change.

Planning and Implementation

4. Develop strategic and action plans.
5. Develop and implement interventions.
6. Advocate for change and influencing policy development.

Evaluation and Sustainability

7. Evaluate the Coalition's efforts
8. Sustain the Coalition's projects and initiatives

Capacity and Cultural Competence

9. Create and maintain the Coalition's partnerships.
10. Increase participation and membership.
11. Improve leadership, organizational management and development.
12. Enhance cultural competence.

1. Assess Community Needs and Resources

Members should know that it takes a local Coalition to understand community issues and concerns and to facilitate needed change. The variety of perspectives, data and information made possible by a large and diverse membership base enables a more complete understanding of community problems.

- a. Define the Coalition's "community" (place, interest or experience) and boundaries (neighborhood, city, county, island, etc.)
- b. Conduct qualitative data collection via community forums, focus groups, listening sessions, key informant interviews and surveys.
- c. Collect quantitative data from partners and outside sources, including related archival and survey data.
- d. Assess community and Coalition's resources available to engage in substance abuse prevention efforts
- e. Describe and build on the relevant local history of community mobilization and drug abuse prevention efforts.
- f. Construct functional problem or goal statements that reflect true community concerns and facilitate good problem analysis.

2. Analyze Problems and Goals

Once identified, community problems should be framed in a manner that is representative of the community. Problems should be analyzed to discover root causes and local conditions that make these causal factors (often called risk or protective factors) more prevalent in the community.

- a. Review and share community assessment data with community and team members.
- b. Facilitate group problem analysis techniques including the "But, Why?, But Why Here? Techniques or other problem analysis techniques.
- c. Apply a risk and protective factor framework that focuses on both individual and environmental factors contributing to problem behaviors.
- d. Include and incorporate the experience and expertise of team members to thoroughly name and frame problems and goals.
- e. Facilitate prioritization of problems, root causes and local conditions

3. Develop a Framework or Model of Change (Logic Model)

Logic models are “road maps” or diagrams that describe identified problems, root causes and local conditions in a community. The logic models are used to facilitate planning and evaluation of comprehensive strategies. The logic models allow a Coalition to chart progress through establishing short-, intermediate- and long-term objectives goals for the community prevention efforts.

- a. Engage community members in logic modeling process for each specific problem analyzed using problem analysis techniques
- b. Develop logic model based on community assessment data and community input. Each element of the logic model must be associated with two pieces of data.
- c. Critique logic model to validate “line logic”, completeness and adequacy to produce results
- d. Ensure consensus for the logic model, especially the degree to which the model’s language, elements and visual references reflect the culture and values of the community

4. Develop Strategic and Action Plans

Strategic plans align Coalition logic models with larger and often long-term priorities and opportunities. Action plans ensure that all team members are involved in carrying out the work of the Coalition and that they are doing so with sufficient support and appropriate accountability. Action planning conducted as a group process encourages members to “own” or publicly accept responsibility for implementation.

- a. Develop population-level short-, intermediate- and long-term objectives based on the Coalition logic models.
- b. Develop comprehensive strategies for each local condition identified on the Coalition logic models. Consider the following strategies: provide information, build skills, provide support, change access/barriers, consequences, physical design and policies.
- c. Ensure that action plans effectively link assets and resources to the identified strategies.
- d. Identify needed action steps and then assign the tasks, establish timelines and identify resources needed to complete each task.

5. Develop and Implement Interventions (Comprehensive, Evidence-based Strategies)

Creating a comprehensive response to identified community concerns is the central task of Coalition work. Comprehensive interventions are those that use multiple strategies in multiple sectors to change the local conditions that make substance abuse in the community more likely. Strategies must be selected and implemented based on proven effects and then to adapted the strategies to fit the local context. Further, Coalitions must be able to develop unique local interventions based on their understanding of community needs and resources.

- a. Identify, adapt and implement comprehensive, evidence-based programs and practices to address local conditions identified on the Coalition logic models. .
- b. Implement strategies in a way that are appropriate to the community’s needs and resources while being aware of the cultural and ethical issues involved in this process. Customize local strategies on an as needed basis to reflect unique characteristics of the community.
- c. Prioritize and schedule strategies based on available resources, community readiness and relationship to other strategies.
- d. Engage team members and partner organizations to coordinate implementation of comprehensive strategies.

6. Advocate for Change and Influence Policy Development and Enforcement

Comprehensive strategies often include the need to establish or modify local policies, laws and ordinances. Coalitions are often looked to by community and organizational leaders for education, planning and coordination of policy implementation efforts. To do this Coalitions will provide needed information by bringing those affected by policy choices into the community dialogue.

- a. Conduct policy and advocacy research effort to identify legal issues associated with the policy change. Develop an issue brief summarizing the problem and proposed policy change.
- b. Identify potential allies who can work with the Coalition and partners to get the policy approved/passed. Conduct a power analysis to identify who might support and / or oppose the proposed policy change.
- c. Identify needed resources and assets necessary to support the long-term policy change effort.
- d. Design a policy / advocacy campaign to inform and mobilize community members to support the proposed policy change.
- e. Ensure community voices are heard in local decision-making processes.
- f. Support effective policy implementation and enforcement.

7. Evaluate the Coalition's Efforts

Evaluation helps the Coalition improve its work, coordinate more effectively, be accountable to participants, funders and the community. The evaluation allows the Coalition to monitor the effects of the Coalition's work, celebrate progress along the way to achieving community-level outcomes and sustain the Coalition's effort long enough to make a difference in community life. Evaluation requires the documentation of how Coalition efforts (outputs) contribute to changes in the community (as identified on the Coalition logic models).

- a. Identify stakeholders and stakeholder concerns that must be addressed by the Coalition's efforts.
- b. Ensure accountability requirements of funders are cooperatively met by the Coalition.
- c. Use the Coalition logic models to create and Evaluation Data Collection Plans that identifies specific data to be collected, the sources of the data and the frequency of data collection.
- d. Use appropriate data collection tools to track the Coalition's processes and outputs.
- e. Create an Evaluation Report that provides conclusions about the Coalition's contributions to changes in the community. Effectively communicate the findings with stakeholders and the broader community.

8. Sustain the Coalition's Projects and Initiatives

Successful community Coalitions do not leave their survival to chance. They develop sustainability plans that chart precisely what resources the Coalition needs and appropriate strategies to secure these resources. Good sustainability plans, like good intervention plans, do not rely on single or limited strategies, but seek to ensure success through a comprehensive approach.

- a. Assess the Coalition's effort to-date to make an informed decision as to whether and how to continue the work of the Coalition into the future.
- b. Take steps to ensure the Coalition has a strong volunteer and membership base, uses the SPF process is a credible way and demonstrates its ability to address community concerns.
- c. Identify the current technology, money, personnel, space and communication needs of the Coalition. Project the future needs of the Coalition for a time period long enough to achieve community level changes.
- d. Develop a diversified funding plan to meet the future resource needs of the Coalition. Identify potential sources of resources identified in the funding plan.
- e. Use full membership participation in implementation of the sustainability plan with regular opportunities for feedback and improvements

9. Create and Maintain the Coalition's Partnerships

The Coalition must clearly define a shared vision and mission for its work in the community which will help potential collaborators to understand the key role the Coalition plays in the work of community health. Coalition leaders can work with local leaders and organizations to identify and recruit potential community partners to join in the Coalition's efforts. The Coalition can maintain relationships with Coalition partners through collaborative and inclusive Coalition processes and decision making.

- a. Develop and communicate the Coalition's Vision and Mission.
- b. Work with community leaders to Identify key collaborators (organizations and individuals) to partner with the Coalition.
- c. Recruit individuals and organizations to join the Coalition's efforts. Provide appropriate training and orientation materials to the new Coalition partners.
- d. Establish Coalition process that promote brainstorming, encourage consensus building and promote shared decision-making

10. Increase participation and membership.

Successful Coalitions create a working environment that promotes diversity, participation and success. A key element in this equation is how the Coalition intentionally involves an ever enlarging circle of community members and sectors engaged in the prevention effort. The Coalition also must foster the ongoing and active participation of existing members and seek feedback from the membership on the functioning of the Coalition and how it can be improved.

- a. Engage in "targeted recruiting" and outreach to specific individuals and organizations to engage in specific Coalition activities.
- b. Build relationships and motivate participants to engage in the shared work. Assess whether current involvement is sufficient - how and why members are engaged, remain engaged or leave the effort - and make needed changes in the participation plan.
- c. Ensure team members have an opportunity to have active roles and engage in meaning work. The Coalition develops job descriptions, Work Group Descriptions and other tools to engage community members.
- d. Communicate effectively with community members using appropriate technology and messaging.

11. Improve leadership and organizational development

Shared leadership is an essential element to Coalition success. Successful Coalitions intentionally nurture the abilities of members to assume leadership roles and to serve the group with an increasing set of skills. Coalition organizational development entails the utilization of tools and resources that support efficient and effective use of Coalition resources including by-laws, conflict resolution techniques, MOU/MOA's with partner organizations, timelines and organization charts.

- a. Identify multiple opportunities for team members to serve in leadership roles within the effort. The leadership roles are clearly defined.
- b. Identify and cultivate potential leaders from the community. Potential leaders can be recruited from each of the sectors identified as community partners. Youth can be recruited as leaders.
- c. Assess Coalition capacity and infrastructure needs which involves surveying team members and leadership to identify opportunities for improvement in Coalition operations.
- d. Use appropriate tools to address specific organization and infrastructure needs including by-laws, conflict resolution techniques, MOU/MOA's with partner organizations, timelines and organization charts

12. Enhance cultural competence

Cultural competence is not an added benefit or feature of Coalition work, rather it is a prerequisite to Coalition success. Viewed organizationally, Coalitions can institute processes that promote cultural competence and build on the value of diversity within the community. Cultural competence is an essential aspect of every other individual competency and Coalition process.

- a. Assess the level of cultural competence in the Coalition's processes and work through cultural audits
- b. Communicate the importance of diversity and cultural competence in community work to reduce substance abuse.
- c. Establish training and group conversations that identify the steps required to promote cultural sensitivity.
- d. Ally with multiple cultural groups and create an honest and open space for collaborative work on shared goals and concerns

SPF Sustainability Questionnaire

1. Which elements can the coalition do on it's own without any Staff support?

2. Which elements can the coalition do with some technical assistance / support?

3. Which elements would the coalition be unable to implement?

4. What additional training / technical assistance is currently needed by the Coalition?