Hunger Free Community Coalitions

PRIORITIZING AND ADDRESSING
NEEDS AND ISSUES IN THE COMMUNITY

If you can't feed a hundred people, feed just one"

MOTHER TERESA

E.A.T. MODEL

01 Examine

- Coalition Focus
- Community Needs
- Partnerships & Resources
- Overlaps and Gaps

02 Assign

- Priorities/Issues
- Specific Roles
- Action Steps
- Goals & Deadlines

03 Try.

- Deliver/Implement
- Evaluate
- Refine and Strengthen
- Future Versions

Examine

Coalition Focus

You cannot effectively address issues and needs without a clear and purposeful organizational focus. Your focus helps serve as a touchstone for the actions you take, the decisions you make and the projects you engage in.

- Leadership Structure
  - What is the best structure for us to utilize?

- Mission, vision and scope
  - What do we want our impact on the community to be?

- Teams/Committees
  - Who are we serving well? Who do we need to serve better?
  - What are our members interested in?

*Don't forget to share these updates with your partners/stakeholders

Community Needs

The first step to prioritizing and addressing issues and needs is identifying what those things are. While there are different ways to accomplish this, one of the easiest (and best) ways is through the use of the community assessment tool provided in the HFCC toolkit. This tool provides an asset-based assessment strategy for determining what are the big and small areas of interest and concern in your community.

Some of the methods for conducting this assessment include:
- Community Forums
- Small Group Listening Sessions
- One-on-one Conversations

Examine

Community Needs

Things to keep in mind about community needs assessments:

- Assessments are not static, they are fluid
- Assessments do not have to be major undertakings every time
- Assessments can come through a variety of sources/methods
- Assessments can be guided through your coalition focus

Examine

Partnerships & Resources

Addressing issues and needs should include conversations about your coalition's existing partnerships, potential new partnerships and existing/potential resources. Questions to ask in relationship to this include:

- Who are our existing partners - and are they really?
- Who are our potential partners - and are we thinking globally?
  - How do we engage these groups?
- What are our current resources (financial, human, physical, etc.)
- What are some of our goal resources? And how can we pursue those?
- What are some of our counterparts across the state doing ?

Overlaps & Gaps

Being deliberate in examining overlaps and gaps will help to ensure that your coalition is maximizing resources and supporting partners in the community. Doing this should involve:

- Identifying ongoing efforts in real time
- Hosting regular meetings/conversations
- Participating in community/organizational events and programs
- Identifying and engaging the Kevin Bacon's of your community
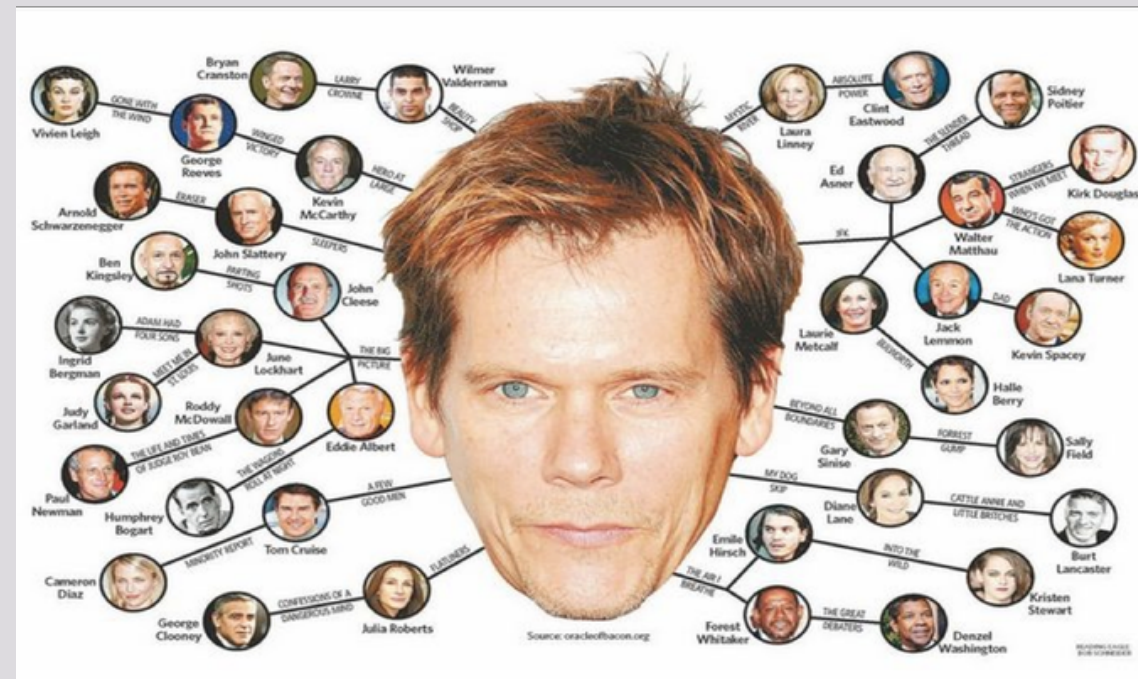
Assign

Priorities and Issues

Once you have examined all of these things (focus, needs, partnerships, resources, overlaps and gaps) immediate priorities/issues should be fairly apparent. The next step is to assign a rank (prioritize the priorities) to those needs by utilizing several lenses:

- Size of issue/priority
  - Major/Minor
- Timeline to address need
  - Immediate (0-3 months)
  - Mid-Range (3-6 months)
  - Long- Range (6-12 months)
- Resources required to address need
  - Financial, Personnel, Supplies, etc.

Assign

Specific Roles - Once you have prioritized the priorities then you need to assign roles by individual/organization to address those priorities. This is the "who" of the priority.

- Leadership
  - What individual/partner should lead the response to this issue/priority
    - Think about who this is impacting (long term and short term)
  -
- Required Attendees
  - Who/what is necessary/mandatory to address the issue/priority
    - Think about orgs/individuals who have highlighted this issue

- Optional Attendees
  - Who/what should be included but not required in the effort?
    - Think about orgs/individuals who have intersections with this issue

Try and make sure to give everyone a role - this helps with ownership and investment

Assign

Action Steps - this is the what, where and how of the issue/priority

What - what is our target outcome? What are we trying to achieve? What is the goal?

Where - where are we going to address this? In the coalition, in the community, in a particular organization, across disciplines and silos? Where do we share this information?

How - how will we address/approach this - what types of logistical support, staffing, etc. will be needed and have we included individuals/organizations who can offer this? Do we need training/education for individuals involved in addressing this issue/priority? Also, how we will assess the success?

Assign

Goals and Deadlines - this is where you create some firm accountability and awareness.

- Write it out - lay out your plans in an email/written form so everyone has the same information - use the tool that works best for your group!

- Set firm deadlines for actions and reporting - support with reminders

- Hold people accountable - even if it is uncomfortable

Try

Deliver & Implement

- Finalize your solution/method/response
  - Make the last tweaks/updates and get it ready to go

- Announce it, share it, invite people to it
  - Using your action steps, make sure your community is aware of what is going on

- Deliver it
  - Send your baby out into the world

Try

Evaluate

- Create opportunities for reporting/feedback - structure these with expectations
  - Feedback should be encouraged from:
    - Individuals/organizations involved in providing the response
    - Individuals/organizations affected by the response
    - Any other appropriate parties

- Provide templates for feedback based on your goals and outcomes
  - Make sure you are asking for the information you really need to make decisions and changes (if they are needed)

- Discuss
  - Encourage your team to discuss the feedback and brainstorm together

Try

Evaluate

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Try

Refine & Strengthen

- Be open to adjustments and changes - it is rare that something works perfectly the first time. Extend grace and allow for corrections.

- Make changes based on established goals and outcomes - not on personal feelings

- Don't be afraid to go back to the drawing board until you get it right

- Communicate openly and regularly to allow for evaluation from everyone

Try

Future Versions

- Once you have assessed and evaluated and feel good about the response, discuss how you can continue it either in this version or in future versions

  - How would it work if resources/partners change?
    - Can key elements be flexible enough to move through change?
      - What if funding changes?

  - How could it be expanded/grown?
    - Could this be done in other areas of our work?
  -
  - How could it work
    - If so, what would that look like?

COALITION
EXAMPLE

South Plains Hunger Solutions

Community Snackbags

South Plains Hunger Solutions

Coalition Focus - Addressing issues of food security and poverty through partnership with diverse organizations

  Leadership - Two Tiered Structure

  Vision - To Ensure all South Plains Residents have access to healthy food

  Teams - Hunger and Horticulture, Child Hunger, Adult Hunger, Double Up Food Bucks

Community Need:

  Community Forum identified need in snack bag area

  Existing partners were known snack bag organizations

  Potential partners were unknown

South Plains Hunger Solutions

Resources:
- Included organizations already providing snack bags (and their funding and staff)
- Goal resources included community funding, long term grant awards
- Across the state similar work being done by faith based groups, communities in schools

Overlaps were great, gaps were many.

South Plains Hunger Solutions

Major issue with immediate, mid-range and long-range needs

Resources were going to include volunteers, fiscal support and possibly transportation

Convened a meeting with stakeholders to lay out the efforts
    Became a regular weekly check in with updates and feedback

Assigned roles for - reporting, mapping/locations, communication and promotion, volunteers

Target outcome was to provide snack bags to as many students as possible

South Plains Hunger Solutions

Addressed through ISD's and Communities in School as well as Faith Based Organizations

Approached it by leaving the existing structure in tact as the foundation, building on to that

Rolled out firs strategic snack bag delivery mid-April and continued through the school year

Currently planning for fall 2020