TEXAS HUNGER INITIATIVE
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

A TOOLKIT FOR *DEVELOPING* AND *STRENGTHENING* HUNGER FREE COMMUNITY COALITIONS

food for good
fresh thinking by PepsiCo

Walmart Foundation

Dear partner,

The Texas Hunger Initiative and the Alliance to End Hunger have been working with communities for more than 10 years, and one thing we've learned is that they can do more when they work together.

Organizations and volunteers are doing incredible things for individuals and families across the country, but food insecurity is a complex issue that requires a response that exceeds the capabilities and resources of any one person, organization, agency or sector. When these groups all come together, they create a response that is greater than the sum of their parts and begin to develop scalable solutions that can truly reduce food insecurity.

This toolkit provides a step-by-step guide for building coalitions, plus it gives best practice examples from the field, ideas for implementation, and practical tools. We hope it serves as a jumping off point for your local community's efforts to find a solution to food insecurity.

As we continue to build collaborative solutions, we will create a larger community of coalitions that is also greater than the sum of its parts—a movement that brings an end to food insecurity in the U.S.

Thank you for your work,

Jeremy Everett
Executive Director
Texas Hunger Initiative
Baylor University

Rebecca Middleton
Executive Director
Alliance to End Hunger

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FACTS *ABOUT* FOOD INSECURITY

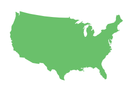
Families who experience food insecurity do not have consistent access to adequate food for a healthy lifestyle. Sometimes, families that are food insecure must make difficult financial decisions—pay the electric bill or buy groceries?—and there may be little money left for purchasing food.

In a nation as wealthy as ours no one should go hungry, but a lack of collaboration, inefficient programs and ineffective policies are keeping resources away from the people that need them most. The problem is complex, but by working together we can end food insecurity.

MORE THAN 41 MILLION PEOPLE ARE FOOD INSECURE IN THE UNITED STATES.

13 MILLION ARE CHILDREN.

U.S. Food-Insecure Households	*12.9%*
U.S. Food-Insecure Children	*17.5%*



Texas Food-Insecure Households	*15.4%*
Texas Food-Insecure Children	*23.0%*

Find out these food insecurity facts for your community by visiting Map the Meal Gap: http://map.feedingamerica.org

WHAT ARE *HUNGER FREE* COMMUNITY COALITIONS?

Communities across the state are full of people doing great work to reduce food insecurity, but often these individuals and organizations are working in silos, doing their own projects and having an impact but not connecting with others who have a stake in tackling this problem. Food insecurity is a complex issue requiring a response that exceeds the capabilities and resources of any one individual, organization or sector.

A Hunger Free Community Coalition is a group of organizations and individuals taking action together to end hunger in their community. We believe Hunger Free Community Coalitions are effective in reducing local food insecurity.

Hunger Free Community Coalitions strategically assess the structure and procedures of local food delivery systems, identify resources and gaps, make decisions for change, and implement action plans to ensure that more people have access to healthy and nutritious food. These Coalitions galvanize the community behind the cause, empower community leaders, build long-term bonds of collaboration, maximize effective use of resources and ensure mutual accountability for results.

Strong Hunger Free Community Coalitions bring together a diverse group of organizations and individuals representing different sectors of the community in order to take advantage of a diverse set of resources and expertise while ensuring broad community ownership. The exact mix and representation in each Coalition varies by community. Some of the types of organizations and sectors that are often included in Hunger Free Community Coalitions are:

- People experiencing food insecurity Food banks, pantries, and other food relief organizations
- Non-profit service agencies
- Congregations
- Schools and school districts
- Universities
- Local government
- Elected officials
- Corporations and local businesses
- Hospitals and clinics
- Diverse community volunteers

THI *SUPPORT* FOR HUNGER FREE COMMUNITY COALITIONS

The Texas Hunger Initiative (THI) has been working to develop Hunger Free Community Coalitions (originally termed Food Planning Associations) since 2009. We have helped launch numerous coalitions, including the Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions and the Tom Green County Hunger Coalition, and have provided support to many others.

TOOLKIT: PURPOSE AND SUGGESTED USE

Based on our experience in this work, as well as a review of our own research and the broader body of literature on coalitions, we have created this toolkit as a resource to assist communities in starting new Hunger Free Community Coalitions or enhancing existing ones. It is not a one-size-fits-all instruction manual but rather a guide that provides important strategies and best practice considerations for Coalitions in various settings and contexts.

This toolkit serves as a best practice guide to help move through important steps in building and sustaining a successful coalition. It is important to note that the order of the steps outlined serve as a guide and following this order is not always necessary. Additionally, we believe that existing Coalitions should take time to reflect on the overall sustainability and success of their Coalition. In doing so, they can use stand-alone sections of the toolkit at any time in order to continue to develop and strengthen all aspects of their work.

Please take note of these important components of this toolkit:

Best Practice Case Studies

Interwoven are special sections that highlight case studies of best practices in creating strong, impactful and sustainable Coalitions.

Tools and Resources

In the appendix you will find numerous tools designed to help you as you start or enhance your Hunger Free Community Coalitions.

THI CONSULTING SUPPORT: ONE-ON-ONE AND COHORTS

In addition to the toolkit, THI provides free guidance and support to newly forming and existing Coalitions through a one-on-one consulting agreement. THI also facilitates cohorts that provide an opportunity for leaders from Coalitions to learn from each other and THI staff, all while working to implement coalition best practices to ensure success and sustainability. For more information about these opportunities, contact the THI staff member in your region.

You can find a full list of THI staff under the About Us section of our website at www.texashunger.org

THI NETWORK OF HUNGER FREE COMMUNITY COALITIONS

All Hunger Free Community Coalitions in Texas are encouraged to join the THI Network of Hunger Free Community Coalitions. The Network provides a space for coalitions to learn about the work of other coalitions across Texas and share resources and best practices in creating strong coalitions, implementing innovative collaborative projects and engaging in effective public policy work. Network members can participate in information and resource-sharing conference calls and webinars, contribute stories to Network newsletters, and have access to an on-line resource bank. In the future, Network members will also be eligible to apply for mini-grants to support their coalition's work.

Learn more at www.texashungernetwork.org

STEP 1 RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS

IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS

In working to build or strengthen a Hunger Free Community Coalition, the first step is to identify and recruit key stakeholders. Stakeholders are individuals, groups, or organizations who are interested in or impacted by the issue of food insecurity. There are many types of stakeholders in the food insecurity space, all with different levels of interest and ability to enact change.

*The Identifying **Stakeholders Checklist** on page 38 serves as a starting point for identifying stakeholders, although the list does not necessarily represent all potential stakeholders in a given community.*

Although no coalition is likely to have all of these types of organizations at the table, getting as many different sectors involved is of great benefit in developing successful and sustainable coalitions. Using the Identifying Stakeholders Checklist as a guide, brainstorm specific organizations and individuals in the community that you can recruit. Once you have identified your stakeholders, it is helpful to complete some level of analysis to determine who you will prioritize reaching out to.

*Use the **Stakeholder Analysis Worksheet** on page 40 to help categorize the potential value that stakeholders bring to the coalition, including their interest level, connections, resources and capacity to impact food insecurity. Doing this analysis will help you prioritize who you put time and energy into recruiting.*

Keep in mind the following best practices when conducting outreach:

- ***Conduct one-on-one outreach.*** Meet with as many people as possible in a one-on-one setting in order to build relationships and identify what might interest them in getting involved in your coalition.

*The **Information Gathering Questions** on page 42 can help guide these conversations.*

- ***Start with existing relationships.*** Reach out first to prioritized stakeholders that you already know. Then ask those you meet with which other stakeholders they know and if they can connect you to those individuals or organizations.

- ***Consider how you can engage and involve people who have personally experienced food insecurity.*** Incorporating community members affected by food insecurity will give you a built-in reality check, add credibility to your effort, and make clear your commitment to a participatory process. Ideally, look for existing grassroots leaders who bring to the table both personal experience and strong relationships with community members.

- ***Talk to influential people or people with large networks.*** Even though they may not become active coalition members, it is often worth prioritizing outreach to elected officials, faith leaders and/or civic leaders who can support your effort within the community and introduce you to potential stakeholders. Of course, you might also gain the benefit of a prominent community leader who wants to play an integral role in the coalition.

- ***Actively seek demographic diversity.*** Make sure that the people you recruit to join the coalition reflect the racial/ethnic, age and geographic diversity of your community, including those you intend to serve. This will strengthen your coalition's voice and ensure that you have the experience and perspectives needed to understand the challenges and opportunities for making an impact.

- ***Use the Snowball Effect when recruiting.*** Get ideas from stakeholders as you identify them and then ask them to help you do outreach to the people they suggest.

- ***Advertise in various ways.*** While relationships are at the core of building a coalition, it is also helpful to get the word out widely in order to reach those whose interest you are unaware of or do not have time to engage directly. Some successful ways to get the word out are social media, community and organizational newsletters, announcements at other coalitions/association/religious meetings, targeted emails and word of mouth.

BEST METHOD OF CONTACT

The list below is in approximate order of effectiveness:

- Face-to-face meetings
- Phone calls
- E-mails
- Presenting at community meetings/events
- Social media

BEST PRACTICE : RECRUIT A DIVERSE, MULTI-SECTOR GROUP OF STAKEHOLDERS

The **Burnet County Hunger Alliance** is an active coalition of food pantries, churches, school administrators, elected officials, businesses, and other area leaders who have committed to end hunger in Burnet County. Beginning with volunteers from one church that saw the need for collaborative action to address hunger, volunteers identified 24 different entities to approach and set up one-on-one meetings to learn about the person, organization, interests, goals, and, above all, to build relationships. The result of this outreach was dramatic – every single person they met with came to the first meeting of the coalition. These attendees also helped spread the word to other interested organizations and businesses. Many of these organizations have remained engaged in the Alliance and have contributed in various ways to support the coalition.

CALL TO ACTION

In addition to doing one-on-one outreach to stakeholders, holding one or more group meetings can be helpful in building energy and excitement for a coalition even before the coalition has been officially established.

Group meetings can take different forms, including:

Informational Meeting: This is an opportunity to bring stakeholders together to discuss and share concerns about food insecurity in the community, brainstorm ideas for making an impact together and present the idea of creating a Hunger Free Community Coalition.

*See page 43 for a sample **meeting agenda***

- This approach can be particularly useful for showing stakeholders how many other stakeholders are also interested in creating a coalition.
- Keep in mind that who people see around the table will influence who else they think is interested and who they envision will participate in the coalition.

Hunger Summit: This is an event focused on bringing select stakeholders and/or the general public together to learn from each other and experts about food insecurity challenges and the initiatives already taking place in the community to help address these issues.

See page 45 for a sample ***summit agenda***

- Holding a hunger summit can be particularly helpful in communities where there are already a number of anti-hunger initiatives that may currently be operating in silos and be unaware of each other.
- A hunger summit is another way to galvanize broader community interest in the topic of hunger. Hosting a hunger summit in the early stages of coalition creation and/or once established can inspire participation by a wider range of stakeholders.
- This can also be a great way to include local elected officials. You could even consider asking them to "host" the event.

Variations on these types of call-to-action events can include things like a luncheon with a guest speaker or a film showing on food insecurity.

All of these initial group meetings are about building energy and interest in the idea of working collaboratively to address hunger and food insecurity. They should not be treated as a first coalition meeting. Instead, use them to help further identify stakeholders with enthusiasm for creating a coalition and to surface potential focus areas.

ASSEMBLING A CORE GROUP

For the formation and sustainability of your coalition, it is important to have a core group of passionate and committed individuals that feel a sense of ownership of the vision. This core group can help you recruit participants and guide coalition development. The core group will also likely serve as founding members of the official coalition leadership as it is developed and formalized.

As you identify stakeholders to recruit as coalition members, think about who you want to invite to be a part of the initial core group to help you further build out the coalition.

WHO BELONGS IN THE CORE GROUP?

When identifying potential members of your core group, think through the following questions:

- Who expressed the most interest and passion for the vision of creating a Hunger Free Community Coalition?
- Is there someone central to anti-hunger work in the community that the Hunger Free Community Coalition effort in your community would struggle to do without?
- Who has the available time to invest in this effort?
- Who has particular knowledge in the area of hunger and food insecurity through their work or direct personal experience?
- Who has relationships with several key potential stakeholders?
- Who has the capability of influencing people in the community to support and get involved in this effort?
- Who is an excellent team player and passionate about promoting collaboration?
- Who has proven experience in facilitation and is neutral in the community?
- Who has experience in playing a leadership role and bringing people together?

ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE CORE GROUP

The core group is responsible for guiding the initial development process, including recruiting stakeholders, organizing meetings, setting agendas, facilitating conversations and ensuring robust communication to participants. In coalitions that are getting started without staff support, the core group will also assist with the basics of sending out meeting announcements, sending reminders, taking minutes and following-up. As the coalition develops, it will be important to create a formal leadership structure that makes clear who has the roles and responsibilities to do all of these tasks in addition to leading the coalition's action projects.

BUILDING TRUST

Building trust with stakeholders in the community and potential coalition members is key to coalition buy-in, success and sustainability.

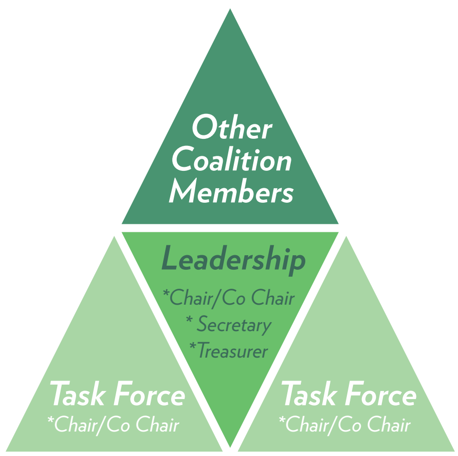
STEP 2 ESTABLISHING A COALITION STRUCTURE

DETERMINING A LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

Coalitions can have varying structures, but it is important that they have a leadership team (comprised of more than just one or two people) in order to ensure broader ownership and long-term sustainability. Two successful approaches THI-affiliated coalitions have utilized are:

- ***Two-tiered Leadership Structure:*** A leadership team made up primarily of representatives from key organizations meets regularly and oversees several action teams or work groups. These action teams meet separately and have chairs or co-chairs that serve on the leadership team. The leadership team can add or remove action teams over time as needed. As the coalition develops, additional individuals or organizations can be invited to join the leadership team, either to serve as action team chairs or to contribute in other ways. In this model, most people get involved in the coalition through the action teams.

- ***Integrated Leadership Structure:*** A core group of elected leaders (i.e. President, vice-president, treasurer, secretary) help plan for and guide regular general meetings. Task subcommittees or action teams, each with a chair, meet separately and then report at the general meeting. Often coalitions in smaller communities use this approach because there may not be enough leaders and/or participating organizations to have a separate leadership team, or there may be a desire to have everyone together at the same meeting to make it easier for community members to attend and feel part of the coalition as a whole.



It is important to ensure that the leadership structure includes clear procedures for leadership transition that allow people to step down if they are no longer able to actively contribute and to allow new leaders (people or organizations) to step in.

BEST PRACTICE : ESTABLISH A CLEAR COALITION STRUCTURE THAT PROMOTES MULTIPLE LEADERSHIP ROLES, DISPERSED RESPONSIBILITY AND MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The **South Plains Hunger Solutions** illustrates dispersed leadership and mutual accountability utilizing the two-tiered model. They have a steering committee that meets quarterly and three action teams that meet monthly – hunger and horticulture, child hunger, and senior hunger. Each action team has a chair or co-chairs that serve on the steering committee, serving as a connector between the action team and the steering committee. The coalition hosts an annual Hunger Summit, organized by the steering committee, at which the action teams update the community on priority projects they have identified, the strategies being used to address them, and their progress to date.

PROVIDING BACKBONE SUPPORT: COALITION COORDINATOR

It is ideal for a coalition to have a staff person from an organization who is committed to serving as the "backbone" for the coalition. This staff person serves as the Coalition Coordinator, providing some of the core logistical and administrative tasks needed to maintain an active coalition and support the involvement of community leaders. These tasks include, but are not limited to, scheduling meetings, securing meeting locations, sending out meeting reminders, taking meeting minutes and notes, tracking attendance, sending out meeting follow-ups and maintaining contact lists.

While having a Coalition Coordinator is ideal, this is often not immediately obtainable. Alternatives to ensuring the administrative details get accomplished include utilizing a volunteer that can contribute significant time, securing an intern (through the federal AmeriCorps VISTA program or a local college/university), or distributing administrative and logistical responsibilities among the coalition leadership.

Coalitions that have the capacity for considerable fundraising might also consider becoming a 501(c)(3), which could allow them to hire their own full- or part-time staff person to serve as Coalition Coordinator. Some challenges related to coalition fundraising are further explored below.

DEVELOPING A NAME, MISSION STATEMENT AND GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

Key elements to defining and establishing a coalition are developing a name, determining the scope of geographic focus and creating a mission statement. The name and mission statement indicate the coalition's goals and values and shape the direction and branding of the coalition. Determining a geographic scope is also critical because it limits the territory that the coalition will focus on and draw participants from.

Being part of developing these definitional elements is a powerful way for people to gain a sense of ownership of the coalition. For many, the core group or leadership team will develop and gain consensus around these elements together. Depending on the community landscape, it can be valuable to develop broader buy-in by giving a larger group of stakeholders a voice in this process. Keep in mind that changes can be made as the coalition grows and develops.

The following are examples of coalition mission statements:

- The **Denton Hunger Coalition** is a collaborative coalition made up of many city, state, government, non-profit and community agencies all dedicated to addressing the issue of hunger in **Denton County** by coordinating hunger relief efforts and facilitating programs that address the issue of hunger.

- The **Burnet County Hunger Alliance** is a volunteer group of food pantries, churches, school administrators, elected officials, area leaders and active citizens who have committed to **end hunger in Burnet County**. The alliance helps coordinate and direct local residents to existing resources and find gaps in community services, with the broader goal being that everyone in Burnet County receives three healthy meals daily.

When coalitions have separate, long-term action teams, it is possible for them to create their own mission statements that fold into the mission statement of the larger coalition. This is a way of creating a clearer focus on the issue, as well as developing buy-in and connection to the coalition at the action team level. The Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions provides a great example. Below are some of their action teams and respective mission statements:

- ***Urban Agriculture Action Team:*** Increase opportunities for urban food production in Dallas.
- ***Faith Community Hunger Solutions Action Team:*** Engage the faith community in implementing best practice hunger solutions.
- ***Public Policy Action Team:*** Advocate for public policies at the federal, state and local levels that 1) address the short- and long-term needs of those facing hunger and food insecurity, and 2) promote access to a healthy, nutritious diet for all residents at all stages of their lives.

BEST PRACTICE : USE AN OPEN CONSENSUS-BASED APPROACH TO GROUP DECISION-MAKING

The **Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions** started with the development of a Leadership Team that now consists of individuals representing twelve different organizations. The Leadership Team has a consensus-approach to decision-making, with facilitation of each meeting rotating month to month. The Leadership Team together sets and approves the budget for the Coalition, determines any changes to Coalition policy or structure and decides whether to invite new members. Any member can suggest items to be added to meeting agendas. As issues arise that require more in-depth discussion, Leadership Team members volunteer to lead short-term committees to then report back to the Leadership Team for final decision-making. This open process combined with a relationship-based and collegial environment encourages members to become invested in the Coalition and committed for the long-term.

*In the tools section on page 46 you will find sample steps for **developing a coalition mission statement**. You will also find on page 48 a handy guide for effective meeting planning and implementation, **Steps for Effective Meetings**, which will be useful for all of your coalition meetings.*

FUNDING FOR YOUR COALITION

Coalitions generally need funding for two things *1) project-related expenses, and 2) staff time to coordinate the coalition.* As mentioned earlier, not all coalitions utilize a Coalition Coordinator, although it can be very helpful, especially for long-term sustainability. Fundraising at a level required for a full- or part-time staff person can be challenging because organizations who participate in the coalition are often already pursuing the main sources of funding in the community and they may be wary of the coalition competing for funds.

On the other hand, it can be easier to obtain the needed resources for project-related expenses. This is particularly the case when there are a variety of organizations and institutions invested in the coalition and involved collaboratively in the project in question. They can often each provide some funds or in-kind support that together can meet the coalition's needs. Keep in mind that organizations and individuals are much more likely to provide funding or in-kind support for a particular project or activity that aligns with their mission or personal interests.

Examples of in-kind support include providing meeting space, making copies of handouts, allowing staff to participate in the meetings and helping market coalition events to the community or media. Take note of what resources participating organizations have that they might be able to contribute and then ask them for their support.

For both short-term funding for projects and long-term funding for staff support, there are certain foundations that recognize the importance of coalition work and support the development of coalitions, whether focused locally, regionally or statewide. These foundations may not directly work on hunger but on a related issue, such as health or community development. An example is the Episcopal Health Foundation, which provides funding for the Smith County Food Security Council.

Other examples of funding sources to consider are:

- Your local United Way
- Prominent local businesses, including banks and grocery stores
- Community foundations

Collecting money from foundations, but also from many other sources, often requires being a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Most coalitions do not have this status and therefore rely on an organization to serve as a fiscal agent (typically the backbone organization) and collect money on behalf of the coalition. If your coalition is not a 501(c)(3) and does not have a backbone organization, consider asking a participating organization to serve as the coalition's fiscal agent.

FUNDRAISING EXAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

The **Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions** initially started with the assistance of an AmeriCorps VISTA. In order to create longer-term sustainability, the Coalition's backbone organization, the THI Dallas Regional Office, applied to the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas for a Community Impact Grant to support the work of the Coalition. Although hunger was not one of the United Way's funded impact areas, the Coalition successfully made the case that increasing access to healthy food was a key element in tackling obesity, one of the United Way's health goals. As a result, the Coalition received a three-year grant, which provided for a part-time Coalition Coordinator, to support the work of the Coalition's Leadership and five Action Teams.

The **Tom Green County Hunger Coalition** has been very successful in securing financial and in-kind support from participating congregations and community organizations, including for their primary project, the Kids Eat Free (KEF) Summer Meals program, which provides thousands of meals to youth each summer. The Coalition received an initial gift from Crockett Bank of $10,000 to use as seed money to start Kids Eat Free in 2010. KEF was also named as the recipient of proceeds from the semi-annual concert of the San Angelo Chamber Singers, with receipts of over $1,000. Other businesses have also donated funding or other types of support. Suddenlink developed a professional PSA for KEF that aired on TV, placed summer meals flyers in their cable/internet bills, and sponsored three electronic billboards. Sonora Bank provided three professionally designed full-sized billboards in strategic locations around San Angelo during the summer months. Sonora Bank and Suddenlink employees are also given time off to come to KEF meal sites and serve one day a week.

STEP 3 PLANNING FOR ACTION

ASSESSING YOUR COMMUNITY'S STRENGTHS, RESOURCES, GAPS AND BARRIERS

Community assessments are a crucial part of organizing communities for change because they help develop a deeper understanding of a community's strengths, needs, culture, relationships, history, assets, social structure and conflicts. THI believes in an asset-based approach to community assessment, which emphasizes the strengths and resources of each community and utilizes those to develop creative solutions to meet local hunger needs. Working as a coalition to assess your community will help you more effectively take action together.

AN ASSET-BASED APPROACH TO COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: AN OVERVIEW

An asset-based approach to community assessment (often referred to as asset mapping) involves talking to community members – leaders, organizations and residents – to understand the existing resources, capacities, gifts and skills that are either already being used or could be used to tackle food insecurity. It often also involves utilizing existing sources of data on community assets, such as government data sets. The most effective and impactful approaches to community assessment engage as many people as possible in the process.

AN ASSET-BASED APPROACH

- ✓ Is proactive
- ✓ Focuses on existing capacity and resources
- ✓ Views community members as assets and contributors
- ✓ Maximizes community resources
- ✓ Involves as many people as possible

WHY DO ASSET MAPPING?

- To identify resources, connections, talents and skills already available in the community to address food insecurity, while also identifying gaps and barriers that limit the full utilization of those resources
- To work together as a coalition to better understand the community in a way that lays the groundwork for developing creative, collaboratively-implemented actions
- To unite those often working in silos around a broader vision for tackling food insecurity that lifts up the work already being done while creating a path to doing more together
- To identify new individuals or organizations to join your coalition

BEST PRACTICE : INCLUDE PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE OF FOOD INSECURITY AS PARTICIPANTS AND LEADERS

The **Working on Wellness (WOW)** coalition currently works in four communities in Hidalgo County, Texas, to increase access to physical activity and increase access to fruits and vegetables. In their early stages, WOW set out to complete a needs assessment with community members. By partnering with local community centers, they were able to recruit residents to conduct neighborhood windshield surveys and lead discussions on community assets and challenges. The engagement of community members from low-income neighborhoods as leaders built rapport between the WOW group and the community, and also jumpstarted WOW's action plans.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION GATHERING

It is important that the whole coalition is engaged in the process of asset mapping and that as many people as possible are involved in the process. Therefore, the first step is to build a diverse asset-mapping team of coalition members.

There are a variety of strategies for doing robust asset-based community assessments. Below are a few options that you can choose from depending on which seems the most appropriate for your community. You can also choose to utilize more than one strategy.

ASSET-BASED ASSESSMENT STRATEGY #1: COMMUNITY FORUM

A community forum that brings together an array of community members can be a great way to identify assets and resources. Think broadly about who to invite, as the more diverse the attendees the more likely you are to get a full picture of community assets. Consider what location will be both convenient and comfortable for attendees. It is very important that the forum be interactive with plenty of opportunities for participants to share their ideas with the group. Often the most effective strategy is to have small group breakout sessions with each group reporting their discussion to the larger group.

*See page 52 for a **sample overview** and **agenda** of a community assessment forum*

ASSET-BASED ASSESSMENT STRATEGY #2: SMALL GROUP LISTENING SESSIONS

When a large community forum is not likely to be effective in bringing together a wide range of individuals, organizing a series of small group listening sessions can be very effective. These can take place in community centers, libraries, churches or even homes – any place that people will feel comfortable attending. Small group listening sessions are particularly effective for engaging community residents, including potentially food insecure residents, as well as in reaching a variety of dispersed towns or neighborhoods. One way to organize these is for each member of your asset mapping team to hold a session in which they invite their friends, neighbors and/or colleagues.

*See page 51 for a **sample agenda** of a small group listening session.*

ASSET-BASED ASSESSMENT STRATEGY #3: ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS

Another great way to learn about assets in the community is to have one-on-one meetings with a variety of community leaders to gather knowledge about their organizations, towns or neighborhoods. The more one-on-ones conducted, the more robust the assessment will be. It is recommended that the asset mapping team create a list of people with whom the team wants to meet and then divide the list among team members. In those meetings, ask the person you are meeting with if they have further contacts to suggest to you. These one-on-one meetings can serve as a great way to spread the word about the coalition and invite new people to join or provide support.

GENERAL TIPS

- Make sure to hold meetings at times that are convenient for those you are trying to reach, including nights and weekends, if possible.
- Utilize mass outreach tactics (i.e. e-mail listservs, flyers, etc.), but do not rely on them; consider taking the time to personally invite people.
- Provide light refreshments and snacks, especially for the listening session, as it can create a more relaxed environment.
- Keep track of all information gathered, including attendance lists, in order to compile it into one assessment document that can be shared with assessment participants.
- Invite all participants to join the coalition by sharing upcoming opportunities for them to get more involved.

*See page 54 for **sample questions** to ask, although make sure to conduct these meetings conversationally so that they are effective in helping you build relationships and gathering information.*

COMPILING AND MAPPING ASSETS

In addition to gathering data through community engagement, utilize publicly available data sets. Creating a visual map with some of the data gathered can help in processing and sharing it.

See page 56 for information about and links to various ***data sets*** *and* ***mapping tools****.*

After compiling and mapping the data, ask the following questions about your community to help analyze what you discovered:

- *What existing assets or resources are not being utilized, or are being inadequately utilized? Why?*
- *What programs and services are being duplicated?*
- *Who is not being served or served adequately? Are all the available programs accessible and responsive to the needs of all households in the community? Are there particular geographic regions that are underserved?*
- *Are the community's assets, resources and programs being leveraged to make the greatest impact?*

CREATING A REPORT The next step in the community assessment process is to put the information, mapping and analysis together into a report to be shared within your coalition, with participants in the asset-mapping process and with the broader community. This report will serve as a catalyst for the next step in planning for action: determining key priority areas and action steps.

BEST PRACTICE : IMPLEMENT AN ASSET-BASED APPROACH TO COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND ISSUE DEVELOPMENT

After months of research and collaboration amongst stakeholders, and with the key assistance of an AmeriCorps VISTA, the OST/South Union Health Improvement Partnership (OHIP) in Houston developed an asset map of the OST/South Union community. It provided a comprehensive look at the demographics, SNAP participation, school meal programs, food retail, urban agriculture, summer meals, food pantries and other organizations working in the food space in the neighborhood. During a Health and Wellness work group of OHIP, an initial draft of the map was presented to residents and stakeholders, who then provided experiential knowledge to supplement the data. As a result of the asset map, the coalition was able to identify that in addition to working to expand Summer Meals, areas of focus going forward needed to include bringing better nutrition education to schools and to community members, as well as improving access to healthy food options.

DETERMINING KEY PRIORITY AREAS AND ACTION STEPS

The purpose of creating a Hunger Free Community Coalition is to develop the ability to make an impact on hunger in your community through collective action, but it can be difficult to focus on specific issues and action steps that can make a real difference in reducing food insecurity. There are two keys to identifying good projects to work on:

1. Developing an understanding of current programs that address food insecurity and the gaps in services or barriers to access that need to be addressed in order to increase participation; and
2. Determining projects that galvanize the interest and leadership of coalition members.

The first can be accomplished through any form of an asset-based community assessment, bolstered by learning about impactful activities that other communities are implementing to address similar gaps or barriers. Types of activities could include:

- Coordinating emergency food assistance in your community, including by developing a resource guide or calendar
- Increasing SNAP participation through outreach and education
- Increase WIC participation through outreach and education
- Working with local school districts to increase participation in School Breakfast, Afterschool Meals and Summer Meals programs
- Start or help coordinate weekend backpack programs
- Start, help sustain or increase participation in a local farmer's markets, including assisting your local farmer's market in accepting SNAP and WIC
- Start, help sustain or increase participation in community gardens
- Start, help sustain or increase participation in school gardens
- Start, help sustain or increase participation in nutrition/cooking education programs
- Advocate for the importance of public nutrition programs, including SNAP and school meal programs

Reach out to Texas Hunger Initiative staff for specific ideas about collaborative projects that have worked in other communities. Our contact information can be found at www.texashunger.org.

The second key to identifying projects to work on is to create a space for coalition members and leaders to determine what issue areas and activities they are most passionate about and are best positioned to contribute to. It is particularly important to select issues and activities that resonate with a significant segment of your coalition membership and to make sure there is at least one person willing to step up to play a leadership role in guiding the activity development and implementation process.

In identifying potential issue areas and action steps, you will often need to prioritize amongst multiple options. Some things to consider are:

- Extent of impact on the community
- Likelihood of successful implementation
- Ability to implement and impact in a relatively short timeframe
- Level of interest by coalition members, including whether there is someone willing to lead the effort
- Whether the issue or activity allows for multiple individuals and organizations to be involved
- Likelihood of engaging new members and building support for the coalition

*See page 58 for an example model for **prioritizing activities** and page 60 for a **logic model template** to assist in building out plans for implementing activities.*

ESTABLISHING WORK GROUPS OR ACTION TEAMS

Creating work groups or actions teams focused on different issue areas can be a very effective way to organize the work of the coalition. They allow for leadership roles for coalition members with expertise or special interest in the issue area and for engaging new members who are drawn to that issue. For example, an action team focused on child hunger might specifically interest people who work in school districts or with afterschool programs.

Work groups and action teams bring people together to collaboratively design and implement activities. Individuals and organizations engaged through action teams often contribute their time, expertise and resources to the work.

It can sometimes make sense to create task forces that are time-limited rather than more permanent action teams. Task forces work well for short-term projects. They can also make sense for smaller coalitions, where there may not be enough coalition members to have multiple on-going action teams. Task forces also make it easier for coalition members to participate in more than one project. Some larger coalitions have action teams and then one or more task forces within an action team to work on different projects.

BEST PRACTICE : UTILIZE A MULTI-PRONGED APPROACH TO TACKLING FOOD INSECURITY AND HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

The **Tom Green County Hunger Coalition** is utilizing a multi-pronged approach in addressing food insecurity in their community. Initially, the Coalition began working on a project to provide summer meals to kids but then realized that there were many other components of addressing food insecurity that were going unaddressed. So they expanded to create five task groups—health and wellness, community gardening, faith-based, education/resource, and senior hunger—and now are accomplishing progress on multiple fronts. Through these work groups, they have engaged many new people and empowered community leaders to invest their time and resources in each of these areas.

CREATING A WRITTEN STRATEGIC PLAN

Documenting the coalition's structure, community assessment and action steps in a written strategic plan can be a helpful way of making sure everyone in the coalition is on the same page. A written strategic plan also lays the groundwork of tracking progress and evaluating impact. In addition to serving as an internal document to guide the coalition's work, a written strategic plan can also be a way to share the coalition's plans with the broader community and solicit support through volunteers, in-kind assistance and financial support.

See page 61 of the tools section for a helpful overview of the elements you may want to include in your ***strategic plan****.*

KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN IMPLEMENTING ACTION ITEMS

As you look to implement action plans through work groups, action teams or task forces, think about some of the following elements to maximize your chances of success:

- ***Leadership.*** Clearly define who is responsible for guiding the work for each action item, including engaging others in collaboratively implementing the project. This might be your work group, action team or task force chair or co-chairs. Be clear that you are not looking for one person to do a project by themselves but to lead a team, even if it is a small team.

- ***Logistical Support.*** What types of logistical support will you need to implement activities successfully? Who can provide that type of support?

- ***Training.*** Is training needed for coalition members and volunteers to know how to implement the initiative? (i.e. community organizing training for coalition members interested in building a community garden)

- ***Target Dates.*** When are your target goals for accomplishing each activity? Deciding approximate dates for the completion of each activity creates urgency and accountability.

- ***Participants.*** In addition to the person taking on the leadership role for an activity, who else will participate? Who currently involved in the coalition might be interested in joining? Which new people can you recruit because they care about the action team's focus area? The more people that you can recruit to participate, the more energy there will be to ensure successful implementation.

- ***Collaborative Decision-Making.*** Engage all members of the action team in learning, sharing and making decisions together. This is key to ensuring that you are drawing on the expertise and creativity of your whole group and developing the buy-in needed for people to continue to contribute their time and resources.

- ***Distribution of Tasks.*** Make sure that as many team members as possible are given a role to play or task to implement, even if small. Coalition members will gain more ownership and feel more invested if they are part of doing the work.

- ***Resources.*** What resources are needed for this activity? Do you need funding or in-kind support for this activity? If so, who could potentially provide it? Ask the organizations involved in the coalition what they are able to contribute.

- ***Location.*** Depending on the activity, you might need to identify a location where the activity will take place.

- ***Tracking.*** How will you track the impact or results of the activity? How will you gather the data you need? How will you plan to compile and share the data with the broader coalition?

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE OF COALITION WORK

- ***Distribute a written Strategic Action Plan*** including commitments of who has agreed to lead and participate in implementing each action item to promote clearer communication and accountability from all involved.

- ***Provide opportunities for action teams to report back*** to the leadership (such as through regular updates at meetings), the coalition as a whole (through updates at general meetings or via e-mail updates to the whole coalition e-mail list), or to the community as a whole (through annual summits, presentations to community leaders or a website) in order to celebrate progress, get assistance overcoming challenges and encourage accountability.

- ***Continually work to engage existing coalition members and recruit new ones.*** Do not assume that if someone has not yet become involved that they will not in the future – find out what their interests are and plug them into the activity that most appeals to them. And if not, see if there is some type of logistical support task they would like to help with (such as making reminder calls about upcoming meetings or helping design event flyers).

- ***Be open to making adjustments or changes to action plans.*** Adjustments to action plans are often required in order to overcome unforeseen challenges or to achieve stronger results. Keep in mind that some planned actions will prove to be unworkable, so make sure not to get bogged down by pushing an action plan that has hit a brick wall and is draining energy rather than building it. Instead, reevaluate as a group and identify another action item to take on instead.

- ***Celebrate accomplishments together!*** Make sure to celebrate small victories and accomplishments along the way. It is often assumed that coalition success means a major victory, such as substantial improvement in Summer Meals outreach, the passage of a significant piece of legislation, or the completion of a comprehensive, rigorous needs assessment, but this assumption can lead to your group feeling like it is not making much progress. Food insecurity is a complex challenge to address, so take time to celebrate incremental steps.

STEP 5 ASSESS PROGRESS

UTILIZING DATA TO DETERMINE PROGRESS AND IMPACT

Data collection and analysis is an important component of measuring your coalition's progress towards meeting its goals and determining the impact of its efforts. Depending upon the project, the data you collect will vary. Here are some tips on setting up a process to collect, track and analyze your data:

IDENTIFY DATA:

- Identify the goal the coalition or workgroup would like to reach.
- Determine what information will be needed in order show progress and/or to know if the goal has been met.

COLLECT & TRACK:

- Develop a process for collecting and tracking your data.
    - How: survey's, interviews, program data, reporting, data requests from organizations, etc.
    - When: end of project, monthly, quarterly, etc.
- Identify who will be in charge of collecting and tracking the data

ANALYSIS:

- Identify who will be involved in different stages of reviewing and analyzing the data
- Identify at what points in time the analysis will take place (end of project, monthly, quarterly, etc.)

SHARING DATA:

- Identify who the data will be shared with
- Determine how and when you will share the data collected

USE THE DATA TO MAKE NEEDED ADJUSTMENTS:

- Use the information collected to determine how the project is coming along, if changes need to be made, or if the project is on track to meet the goal
- Take action by modifying the project or adjusting future projects

COALITION DEVELOPMENT AND STRATEGIC SELF-EVALUATIONS

This toolkit has reviewed five steps in the process of building a coalition. However, it is very important to keep in mind that the process of developing a coalition involves doing each of the steps repeatedly and in various orders depending on the coalition's needs at any given moment. To know what kinds of changes or development steps might be appropriate to improve the functioning and impact of the coalition, it is very helpful to conduct regular strategic self-evaluations. Consider doing a collaborative self-evaluation at least every two years.

See page 62 for an example of a coalition ***strategic re-assessment process****.*

USE THE FOLLOWING COALITION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND LIST OF BEST PRACTICES TO ASSIST YOU IN CONDUCTING A SELF-EVALUATION FOR YOUR COALITION.

Are you following these steps and implementing these best practices?

COALITION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Recruiting Participants

- Engage stakeholders to identify interests and invite to participate
- Organize call to action meetings or summits to galvanize community support and provide a space for new people to get connected to the coalition
- Build and grow your core group or leadership team

Establishing a Coalition Structure

- Determine or adjust the leadership structure
- Develop or revise your coalition's name, mission statement and geographic scope
- Ensure that your coalition has the administrative and logistical support needed
- Solicit funds and in-kind support to sustain and strengthen your coalition

Planning for Action

- Assess specific segments (i.e. seniors, children) or the community as a whole for strengths, resources, gaps and barriers
- Determine key priority areas and action steps
- Establish work groups or action teams
- Create a written strategic plan to guide follow-through

Taking Action

- Implement identified actions through work groups, action team or task forces
- Manage engagement of coalition members to ensure that as many as possible are active in helping collaboratively implement action items
- Make sure to track progress and provide opportunities for sharing updates widely to promote accountability

Assessing Progress

- Keep track of small victories
- Conduct regular self-evaluations of the coalition
- Make adjustments to sustain and strengthen the coalition as needed

COALITION BEST PRACTICES

Be action and results-oriented

- Make sure that the intent of the coalition is to implement action items with concrete results that can be quantified

Multi-sector organizational involvement

- Ensure that there are multiple organizations involved and that they feel ownership of the coalition and its work

- Ensure that organizations involved are from diverse sectors in order to provide diversity of resources, expertise and whole community ownership

Establish a clear coalition structure that promotes multiple leadership roles, dispersed responsibility and mutual accountability

- Ensure that leadership is comprised of multiple people and organizations that have significant responsibilities and long-term tasks to implement coalition goals

- Make sure there are mechanisms for mutual accountability, such as regular progress reporting from those who have taken on tasks or responsibility

Include people with lived experience of food insecurity as participants and leaders

- Encourage opportunities to engage people in leadership roles in the coalition who have experience being food insecure

- Make sure to engage people who may be experiencing food insecurity as part of any community assessments

Use an open, consensus-based approach to group decision-making

- Determine if there is a set process for decision-making. If not, observe whether the de facto culture is to have an open, consensus-based approach to group decision-making

- Ensure that one or two people are not overly dominating decision-making or that some members are not consistently having their voices shut down

Implement an asset-based approach to community assessment and issue development

- Ensure that the coalition's community assessment does not only look at needs of the community but also resources and assets that already exist

- Make sure that issue development focuses on how to better utilize or build off of existing resources and assets in the community

- Assist in ensuring that the identification of action issues involves engaging community leaders/members in determining what issues are of most interest and whether there is potential leadership around those issues

Utilize a multi-pronged approach to tackling food insecurity and healthy food access

- Encourage the coalition to take on more than one issue at a time in order to diversify focus to better address food insecurity

- This approach also increases the chances that diverse organizations and individuals will be involved

- Working on more than one issue at a time keeps the focus on food insecurity general rather than on one specific activity, which promotes long-term coalition sustainability beyond the life of any particular activity

Regular self-evaluation for improvement

- Promote the importance of the coalition regularly by engaging in self-evaluation of progress

Long-term sustainability through staff support and financial resources

- Ensure that the coalition has plans to develop backbone support and/or the financial resources necessary for sustainability

BEST PRACTICE : REGULAR SELF-EVALUATION FOR IMPROVEMENT

The **Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions** launched in February of 2012 and after an intensive planning process developed four action teams focused on different aspects of the food system – production, distribution, public sector and private sector. The coalition had some initial success, mostly as the result of the work of one of the action teams but was overall declining in participation and energy. In the spring of 2014, the Coalition Leadership Team conducted a self-evaluation and re-assessment process to figure out what was working and what needed to be improved. The result was a re-alignment that led to the creation of five reconfigured action teams focused on specific focus areas with concrete initial action plans: child hunger, senior hunger, faith community engagement, urban agriculture and neighborhood organizing. This re-energized the coalition, engaged new leaders and participants in the coalition and led to successes in each area.

TOOLS

FOR *DEVELOPING* AND *STRENGTHENING* HUNGER FREE COMMUNITY COALITIONS

IDENTIFYING *STAKEHOLDERS* CHECKLIST

This checklist serves as a starting point for *identifying* stakeholders. This list does not fully represent all of the possible partners that exist in a community. No coalition has all of the stakeholders below involved. Hunger Free Community Coalitions have to identify key individuals that make the most sense for their communities.

FOOD & HUNGER RELATED

- ☐ Food bank
- ☐ Food pantries
- ☐ Food recovery groups
- ☐ Child feeding programs:
    - ☐ Summer and after-school meal providers and sponsors
    - ☐ Food distribution programs in schools
- ☐ Adult feeding programs
- ☐ Meal delivery services
- ☐ Women Infants & Children (WIC) offices
- ☐ SNAP enrollment agencies
- ☐ Food system (distributors, retailers, restaurateurs, processors, producers, etc.)
- ☐ Farmers, farmers markets, cooperatives, hubs
- ☐ Anti-hunger or anti-poverty coalitions/collaborative/networking groups
- ☐ Community members currently (or formerly) experiencing food insecurity

NON-PROFITS

- ☐ Child/youth & family services
- ☐ Community development corporations
- ☐ Foundations
- ☐ Community organizations
    - ☐ After-school enrichment programs
    - ☐ Community centers
    - ☐ Neighborhood associations
    - ☐ United Way
    - ☐ YMCA
- ☐ Colonia programs
- ☐ Faith-based organizations
    - ☐ Congregations
    - ☐ Ministries
- ☐ Financial assistance programs
- ☐ Legal assistance services
- ☐ Disability, homeless, immigration/refugee, senior, veteran services

EDUCATION

- ☐ After-school programs
- ☐ Communities in Schools (CIS)
- ☐ Education Service Centers
- ☐ Head Start/Early Head Start
- ☐ Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs/PTOs)
- ☐ School district personnel
  - ☐ Administrators
  - ☐ Food Service Director(s)/Nutrition Director
  - ☐ Homeless coordinator/liaisons
  - ☐ Social workers
  - ☐ Teachers
- ☐ School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)
- ☐ Universities/community colleges
  - ☐ Student-led service groups

GOVERNMENT (Local, State, Federal)

- ☐ City and county government
- ☐ Council of governments
- ☐ Elected officials
  - ☐ City Council Members
  - ☐ Commissioners
  - ☐ Judges
  - ☐ Mayor
  - ☐ State Representatives
  - ☐ State Senators
- ☐ Health departments
- ☐ Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) offices
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Law enforcement
- ☐ Libraries
- ☐ Local Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) representative
- ☐ Texas A&M AgriLife Extension staff

BUSINESSES

- ☐ Grocery stores
- ☐ Restaurants
- ☐ Banks
- ☐ Other local business owners
- ☐ Chambers of Commerce
- ☐ Management districts
- ☐ Locally-based corporations

HEALTH

- ☐ Health clinics
- ☐ Hospitals
- ☐ Nutritionists/dieticians
  - ☐ Nutrition education organizations
- ☐ Doctors/doctors associations
- ☐ Health collaborative/coalitions
- ☐ Other health and nutrition based services

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS *WORKSHEET*

Understanding stakeholder interest and power is key to effective coalition building.

When recruiting a stakeholder to participate in a coalition, it is important to match the interests of the stakeholder with the aim of the coalition and a specific need. The more an organization or individual can see how their interests align with the effort, the more likely they will be to invest their time and resources in the coalition. On the other hand, if an organization does not see how participating in the coalition will help accomplish their organizational mission, they will not become or remain involved.

Different organizations and individuals will vary in what they can contribute to the success of a coalition – both in the development and impact the coalition can have on reducing food insecurity. One way of describing this is the level of "power" the stakeholder brings to the table. That power can be manifested in a variety of ways, including resources (both financial and in-kind), expertise, skills, personal storytelling, connections, influence on other key players (e.g. elected officials), extensive engagement with target populations (e.g. school districts), and as implementers of existing food access programs.

In analyzing stakeholders as part of the recruitment process, it is important to look at both interest levels and types of power to create change in order to build a coalition that is made up of stakeholders who are invested and collectively have the capacity to make a significant impact on reducing food insecurity.

In thinking about stakeholder interests, it is also helpful to think about what potential objections or obstacles an organization or individual might have to becoming involved in a coalition that you could help them overcome. A stakeholder might see the value of being a part of the coalition but may have other constraints holding them back – sometimes these are insurmountable, but in many cases they can be addressed by thinking strategically.

Once you have identified potentially strong stakeholders to engage, it is important to think about how to most effectively engage them, including discovering who has an existing relationship with them and can reach out to them or make introductions for you to do so. As part of this strategy for engagement, also think about what your first ask of them will be once you have determined their interest and possible contributions. This could be to attend a meeting or to participate in some other way.

Use the following worksheet to think about likely interests, possible contributions, potential objections and strategies for engaging each targeted stakeholder. You might also want to revise the chart over time as you gain a better understanding of stakeholder interests and types of power through engagement.

Stakeholder	**Stakeholder Interests***	**Interest Level** (Low, Med, High)	**Types of Power** Potential Contributions	**Potential Objections**	**Strategy for Engagement**

* Stakeholder interests—What is important to the stakeholder? What is the stakeholder's organizational or personal goals?

INFORMATION *GATHERING* QUESTIONS

What does your organization do?

[Follow-up questions as needed]

What is your organizational mission and goals?

What communities or neighborhoods do you serve?

What projects do you work on?

Are there any projects or areas you are looking to develop more in the future?

What are some of your organization's strongest resources or assets that you bring to the table to help your community?

How long have you worked here?

What interested you in working here?

Do you see food insecurity or access to healthy food as a major challenge affecting the communities or neighborhoods you work with? How so?

Would you like to be able to do more to address this problem?

If yes, do you have ideas of what (else) you or your organization might be able to do in this area?

Do you foresee any barriers or challenges that could hinder you from being able to implement these ideas (or expand existing projects)?

What kinds of partnerships or collaboration would allow you to turn these goals into reality?

Do you already collaborate with other organizations?

If yes, with whom and in what ways?

If no, could you see yourself collaborating with other groups to tackle food insecurity together?

Would you be interested in being part of a hunger coalition with various community leaders to tackle this issue collaboratively and holistically?

If yes, would you be willing to *[insert your ask of the person and/or organization – i.e. attend a coalition meeting]?*

Do you know of others who might be interested in being part of this coalition?

If yes, would you be willing to introduce me to them?

Can you think of any other specific ways you or your organization might be able to contribute to the launch and/or strengthening of our hunger coalition?

Concluding the meeting:

Provide details on any next steps for follow up and most importantly, thank them for taking the time to meet with you!

INFORMATIONAL MEETING *FOR RECRUITING* COALITION PARTICIPANTS

SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA*

Goal: To bring stakeholders together to discuss and share concerns about food insecurity in the community, brainstorm ideas for making an impact together and present the idea of creating a Hunger Free Community Coalition.

1. Welcome and Overview

a. Share who you, as the convener, are and why you brought people together for this meeting
b. Describe the goal for this meeting and the hoped-for outcome

2. Introductions

a. Ask everyone to introduce themselves
b. Ask people to share why they care about hunger in the community

3. What Does Hunger Look Like in Our Community?

a. Provide a statistical overview of hunger and food insecurity in your county or region

4. What is Food Insecurity?

a. "Food Security" refers to a household's ability to meet its food needs without resorting to coping strategies like skipping meals, buying less or choosing between food and other necessities.

b. 2 questions for screening: 1. Within the past 12 months, we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more, 2. Within the past 12 months, the food we bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more. Answer: 1. Often true, 2. Sometimes true, 3. Never true, 4. Don't know or refused to answer.

5. Why Build a Hunger Free Community Coalition?

a. Creating a hunger free community exceeds capacities of any one organization
b. Collaboration:
- Saves cost
- Improves services
- Addresses community needs
- Enhances trust between participating entities
- Increases citizen support

6. Components of a Hunger Free Community Coalition

a. Multi-organization, capacity-building coalition focused on organizing anti-hunger efforts together

b. Engages many different sectors of the community, including non-profits, food pantries, the faith community, local government and school districts

c. Collaboratively led with consensus-based decision-making

d. Encourages and solicits participation from those with lived experience of food insecurity

e. Conducts a community assessment to determine what are the gaps in services and healthy food access in the community

f. Based on the community assessment, develops a strategic plan for tackling food insecurity

g. As part of the strategic plan, works to address food insecurity in multiple ways – some possibilities include:

   i. Enhancing participation in child nutrition programs during the school year and the summer

   ii. Supporting the development of more opportunities for the community to grow their own food, such as through community gardens

   iii. Increasing the number of places low-income community members can access fresh fruits and vegetables, such by working with farmer's markets to access WIC and SNAP

   iv. Ensuring seniors can afford and access nutritious foods, such as by helping them apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

7. Small Group Discussion Questions:

a. What does our community do well?
   What are its biggest assets?

b. What are the three biggest hunger-related barriers in our community?
   What makes it difficult for you to serve the community?

c. Please share one example from the group of when agencies worked together to meet a community need – does not have to be hunger specific.

d. What makes collaborations work?
   What does a good collaboration look like?
   Please describe.

8. Report Back from the Small Groups

a. Each group, one at a time, shares their answers with the whole group

b. All the answers are compiled on a board for all to see, with a focus on the barriers and challenges

9. Identifying Top Barriers and Challenges

a. Have each participant write on a provided index card the top three barriers/challenges they think the coalition should address in order to tackle hunger

b. Ask them to turn the cards in to the facilitator(s)

c. Note: Ideally, folks are writing down the barriers/challenges they would be most likely to work on as the coalition gets underway

10. Share Next Steps

a. Make sure everyone knows what the next steps are in the development of this coalition

b. Specific next steps could be a next coalition meeting or a commitment to type up and send the results of this conversation to everyone who attended

c. Make sure everyone signed-in so you have everyone's contact information

Sub-bullets are private notes for the facilitator(s)
#This information meeting is not about officially launching the coalition, but rather about spurring interest, recruiting participants and laying the groundwork for a coalition by modeling how it would work (collaborative discussion -> community assessment -> identifying potential areas of action -> prioritizing action areas -> empowering community members to take action together)

HUNGER SUMMIT *AGENDA—EXAMPLE*

I. **Welcome and Overview (5 minutes)**

- Thank everyone for attending
- Introduce the organizations involved in organizing or co-sponsoring the Summit

II. **Goals for the Summit (5 minutes)**

- Inform and educate about the problem of hunger and food insecurity in our community and why it is so important for us to address it
- Learn about some of the many local initiatives working hard to combat this problem
- Explore some ideas for what more could we be doing through working together as a community

III. **Speaker – The Challenge of Hunger in Our Community (25 minutes)**

- Tell stories and share statistics to illustrate the reality of hunger in the community
- Share some of the reasons why hunger and food insecurity exists to lay out the nature of the challenge

IV. **Panel – Local Solutions to Hunger (50 minutes)**

- The panel consists of several local non-profits and perhaps school districts or businesses who are doing especially good work to address hunger locally
- Each panelist has time to share about their organization's work and then there is time for moderated audience Q and A to learn more about each project

V. **Speaker – Opportunities for Impact (25 minutes)**

- A local leader or expert from another community that can share about gaps that are not being fully met but could be (e.g. increasing participation in school breakfast or Summer Meals)
- Shares possible solutions to these gaps

VI. **Call to Action and Conclusion (10 minutes)**

- Motivational final remarks that include a pitch for the community to come together to collaborate around doing more to address hunger
- Provide opportunity for people to sign up to express their interest in getting more involved

SAMPLE *STEPS* **FOR DEVELOPING A COALITION** *MISSION STATEMENT*

STEP 1:

Go around the group and have each person share their vision for what they hope the coalition will be able to achieve for the community?

- Mark down what each person says (ideally where everyone can see it)
- Do not have conversation or feedback until each person has had a chance to share their vision

STEP 2:

Do a popcorn-style brainstorm of values that are important to the group in doing this work

- Mark down the values people mention where everyone can see it

STEP 3:

Work to collaboratively combine or prioritize values until you have 4-5 core values that group members can agree on

- Suggest consolidations or prioritizations and ask the group if they agree or not

STEP 4:

Have a conversation about the geographic scope your group wants to cover to determine a set geographic scope for the coalition

- The following are some of the criteria to consider:
    - What are accepted boundaries in the community that are easy to delineate (city, county, etc.)?
    - What are the organizational focus boundaries of the organizations represented in the group?
    - What are key areas that people in the group are passionate about working in?
    - *How far will people realistically go to come to a meeting on a regular basis?*

STEP 5:

Revisit what the group shared regarding long-term goals and work to combine or consolidate until you have a vision that has between one and three elements

- If this proves challenging because the group is too large, after conversation suggest that the drafting committee continue working on this

STEP 6:

Discuss the general approach or approaches the coalition hopes to pursue to achieve the coalition's long-term goal.

- As a coalition, one common element is having multiple organizations and community members working together
- Avoid being too specific so that you do not overly constrain what the coalition might do in the future

STEP 7:

Establish a drafting committee to work together to craft specific language to bring back to the group for approval or adjustment at the next meeting

- Give everyone in the group an opportunity to volunteer to be on the drafting committee
- Keep the size of the drafting committee small to make it easier for them to work (3-5 is ideal)
- Can skip Steps 7 and 8 if the group is small and can successfully craft language together

STEP 8:

Drafting committee meets to craft a mission statement

- The committee could decide to create a separate values statement to keep the mission statement simpler
- Should craft specific language to show to the larger group
- If the committee has not come up with clear-cut consensus language then it could present more than one option to the larger group

STEP 9:

Review, make adjustments if needed and approve the drafts developed by the committee

- Make sure there is group consensus on the approved draft

STEPS FOR *EFFECTIVE* MEETINGS

Start by asking: Is this meeting necessary?

- Why are you having the meeting?
- What is the goal?
  - General goals for meetings:
    - To make decisions
    - To brainstorm ideas about where the group should go
    - To celebrate a success and build morale
    - To provide opportunities for training or learning
  - Know the specific goal or goals for each meeting before setting the agenda
    - Where do you want your organization to be at the end of the meeting that is different from where it was before the meeting?

Set meeting time

- Have a clear start and ending time, and stick to it
- Set the meeting as far in advance as possible so that attendees can plan accordingly
- If it is a group that meets often, it is best to set a regular meeting time and location

Meet in a comfortable environment

- Make sure there are no distractions or loud noise
- Arrange seating so that everyone can see each other (Make sure there are not too many empty seats – that can depress the energy of the group)
- Consider providing refreshments, at minimum have water available

Getting people there

- Ask people to RSVP to the meeting (knowing who will be there will make it easier to prepare for the meeting)
- Send the group a reminder a couple days before the meeting and the day of the meeting
- Provide directions to the meeting place so that attendees can easily find the meeting once they arrive

Setting the agenda

- Have the agenda set in advance and make sure the agenda achieves the goals you have for the meeting
- In setting the agenda, if the group is large (over 25) consider small group discussion as part of the agenda (small groups discuss then present back to the large group)
- Make sure the agenda is achievable in the time allotted for the meeting (it is helpful to have your own version of the agenda that has times associated with each item on the agenda and then also use that version to keep the meeting on schedule)
- If it is a group that meets regularly, send group members the agenda before the meeting (at least a day before) so they can prepare
- If you are asking people to do something at a meeting, make sure to ask them if they are willing to do it in advance (and before sending out the agenda if it has their name on it)

Preparing for the meeting

- If there is an important decision to be made, it is often helpful to talk to people about the question in advance so that you know what they are thinking and what their concerns are, and also so they start thinking about it before the meeting – doing this will help you facilitate the discussion and move the group to a decision more easily
- Arrive early so you can do any required set up and so someone is there when the first person arrives
- Provide a sign-in sheet to track attendee contact information
- Consider providing visuals (people like visuals, but make sure they support the agenda and don't distract from moving through the agenda on schedule)

Meeting facilitation prep

- Designate one meeting facilitator and ensure that person is prepared for the meeting
- Ask an attendee to take minutes or notes so that there is a record of the discussion and any decisions made at the meeting (it is hard for the person facilitating to also take minutes as it distracts them from keeping the meeting on track) For a large group, prepare some proposed ground rules for any discussion so that the meeting can stay on track – this is particularly important for a group that meets regularly (for large groups that are making decisions, one of those ground rules should also be how decisions are made)

Starting a Meeting

- Start by introducing yourself, welcoming everyone, and if there are new people who have not previously attended the group meetings make sure to introduce the group and what it's about
- Ask everyone to introduce themselves (this is important, but do not do this if the group is very large – more than 30 or 40) – if they represent organizations, make sure they share what organization they are with (it's often helpful to have name tents/tags)
- Discuss any proposed ground rules and get agreement from the group
- Review the agenda and the goals of the meeting as a group, and make clear the ending time of the meeting

Meeting facilitation

- Keep people on track with the agenda and help the group achieve the meeting goal(s)
- Bring the conversation back on topic if it strays
- Move the conversation on to next agenda item once the previous item is concluded

Making a decision

- Facilitating discussion towards a decision should include:
    - Clearly present the proposal(s)
    - Check for understanding that people are clear about what the proposal(s) are
    - Check for agreement to confirm that a decision has been made and everyone is on the same page

Facilitation tips

- Consider using an easel pad (or something similar) to track the group discussion
- If the group is brainstorming, make sure people can share ideas without those ideas getting dissected (it is helpful to set the ground rule of sharing without critiques before beginning the brainstorm)
- Do not interrupt or dominate a conversation and work to keep others from doing so as well (this is also a good ground rule to set)
- Offer everyone a chance to speak on each agenda item
- If there are tasks to be accomplished before the next meeting, make sure it is clear what the tasks are, who has agreed to do them, and when they are supposed to be completed
- Remain positive towards people even if they are making things difficult (if they are making things difficult in an unconstructive way, talk to them privately after the meeting)

SOME POSSIBLE GROUND RULES TO CONSIDER:

- Follow the approved agenda
- Start and end on time
- No sidebar conversations
- Make sure everyone has a chance to share
- Be open to hearing other people's perspectives
- Do not interrupt others while they are speaking
- Focus on solutions rather than problems
- Make sure there is agreement on next steps before the end of the meeting

Ending meetings

- Review what was decided and accomplished
- Set the time and place for the next meeting
- If possible, set the goal or general agenda items that the group wants to cover at the next meeting
- Close the meeting on a positive, uplifting note – including thanking people for coming
- End the meeting on time

After the meeting

- Collect and review meeting minutes/notes
- If decisions were made or tasks were determined and delegated, send out a follow-up e-mail thanking everyone for attending and relaying the decisions and/or tasks with who agreed to do them and by when (important for accountability and making sure everyone is on the same page – it is also helpful for filling in folks who missed the meeting)
- Keep track of who attended the meeting

SMALL GROUP *LISTENING SESSION* SAMPLE AGENDA AND QUESTIONS

I. Welcome and Overview

a. Share about the coalition.

b. Share about the community asset mapping process and why the coalition is doing it.

c. Share why you invited them to attend this gathering and what you hope to accomplish.

II. Introductions

a. Have everyone introduce themselves.
   i. It can often help to also ask people to answer a fun, icebreaker question as a way of creating a relational atmosphere (i.e. what's your favorite type of animal and why?)

III. Conversational Questions

(ensure someone is taking detailed notes, perhaps utilizing a white board or easel pad)

- What do you love most about this community?
- What institutions are the most vital in this community?
- Who are the individuals and local community leaders you most respect?
- How have you been able to contribute to the community?
- How would you like to be able to contribute to the community in the future?
- What else would you say are the community's strengths?
- What resources currently exist to help people access food in the community (supermarkets, food pantries, etc.)?
- In general, what are the biggest challenges that you see the community facing?
- How do you think hunger or food insecurity might be a challenge?
- What are the challenges you have observed that keep people from getting enough healthy food to eat?
- In what ways might you or an organization you are involved with be able to contribute to addressing hunger? What resources do you have that could be helpful?
- What other resources exist in the community that could be utilized to reduce hunger but are not currently being used?
- When you imagine a bright future for your community, what do you see? What's the same? What's different?

IV. Review and Conclusion

a. Do a quick review of some of the highlights from the meeting and thank everyone for sharing.

b. Review how this session fits into the overall community asset process and share what the next steps are.

c. Let people know how they can get more involved in the coalition if they would like.

d. Make sure people have signed in with their contact information.

SAMPLE COMMUNITY *ASSESSMENT FORUM* OVERVIEW AND *AGENDA*

Below is one example of a community forum conducted as part of an asset-based community assessment process. When you develop your own agenda, think carefully about goals, audience, expected attendance, room set up, timing and refreshments. In particular, make sure the agenda will work well for the audience you are expecting.

OVERVIEW

Forum Goals:

- Learn about the existing assets and resources in the neighborhood related to food
- Learn about the barriers and challenges to accessing or fully benefiting from those resources
- Identify gaps and opportunities for enhancing access to healthy food
- Identify new people with a passion for this issue who would like to get more involved

Audience:

- Community members
- Neighborhood leaders
- Locally-based and locally-focused organizations
- Local business leaders
- Local school leaders
- Local elected officials

Expected Attendance: 40

Room Setup: Seated around 5 round tables of 8 with a podium up front for the facilitator

Time: 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., Saturday morning

Healthy snacks and refreshments provided

AGENDA

Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes)

Overview (10 minutes)

- Describe the Coalition and its goals
- Explain the asset-based community development process and how the forum fits in
- Share the goals and expected outcomes of the forum

Small Group Discussions on Assets and Barriers (20 min)

- Make sure to have a facilitator assigned at each table to guide the conversation
- Brainstorm lists of existing places and opportunities to access healthy food in the community
- Discuss and mark down barriers community members face in accessing those sites

Report Back to the Larger Group (15 minutes)

- Have someone from each small group share what their group came up with
- List or place all entries in a central location where everyone can see them

Break (10 minutes)

Small Group Discussions on Gaps and Unused Resources (30 minutes)

- Share what additional gaps and unmet challenges exist in the community in accessing healthy food (think about children, families and seniors)
- Discuss and mark down what unused or underutilized resources in the community or externally could help improve access
- Share any additional ideas people have for ways to combat food insecurity and increase access to healthy food

Report Back to the Larger Group (15 minutes)

- Have someone from each small group share what their group came up with
- List or place all entries in a central location where everyone can see them

Next Steps and Closing (10 minutes)

- Pass around interest cards and invite everyone to fill out the two sections
    - the first asking folks what resources they or their organizations would be willing to contribute to support coalition efforts to tackle the issues raised and
    - the second asking folks if they would personally want to be involved in shaping solutions and, if so, what challenges or ideas they are most interested in working on
- Review again the next steps in the community assessment process
- Thank everyone for participating
- Invite everyone to an upcoming general meeting of the coalition if they would like to get more involved

ASSET MAP INTERVIEW *QUESTIONS*

Conducting one-on-one interviews can be an extremely powerful way of better understanding communities and the assets and barriers around healthy food access. Below are two sets of sample questions – one geared towards interviews with community members/leaders and the other geared towards interviews with leaders of community organizations. Make sure to adjust for your goals, the nature of your community and the specific people you will be interviewing. In setting up these meetings with individuals, explain the information gathering purpose of the interview and how your coalition expects to use the insights collected to guide the work of the coalition.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS/LEADERS:

What types of healthy foods are readily available in your community?

Where do you and members of your community go to buy or get healthy food? Fruits and vegetables, in particular?

Besides stores, where else do you get healthy food in your neighborhood? Fruits and vegetables? (if needed, ask about congregations, schools, community centers, food pantries)

How often can, or do you, get them from these places? (ask about each of the places mentioned in the answers to the previous two questions)

How difficult is it for you to access these places? What things make it difficult for you to access them? (e.g. lack of transportation, hours)

How easy or difficult is it to get fruits and vegetables at these places?

Are there any current efforts taking place in your community to make it easier to access healthy foods? To access fruits and vegetables in particular?

If so, who/what organizations are making these changes?

How do you and others in your community learn about/know about new opportunities to get or buy healthy food, including fruits and vegetables?

What are the most important things that could happen in your community to make it easier for you and other community members to get healthy food, especially fruits and vegetables?

Would you be willing to join with others to increase access to healthy food for yourself and other members of the community?

What other community leaders, institutions or organizations could help increase access to healthy food?

Who else do you know that you think we should be talking to about this issue?

WITH ORGANIZATIONS:

What is your organizational mission and goals?

How many staff and/or volunteers are part of your organization?

What communities or neighborhoods do you serve?

Where is your organization located?

What, if any, projects do you work on that relate to food security or access to healthy food?

Please share more about each of these projects:

- How do they work?
- How do you outreach to and engage the community around the project?
- How many people are assisted through each of these projects?
- What challenges exist to making the projects work as effectively as possible?

What barriers do you see that are keeping community members from being food secure and having access to healthy food?

What other ways do you think your organization could assist in increasing access to healthy food for children, families or seniors?

What other organizations, businesses or community leaders in the community do you all partner with?

What other organizations, businesses or community leaders do you know of in the community that work to address food insecurity or provide access to healthy food?

Who do you have relationships with that you could introduce us to?

Would you be interested in joining our coalition to help us increase access to healthy food?

Sources: Listening Session Guidelines developed for the Working on Wellness Coalition by the Texas A&M School of Public Health and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension; University of Kansas Community Toolbox

FOOD INSECURITY *DATA* AND MAPPING RESOURCES

Collecting and analyzing data on your community is essential to the community assessment process. Data sources are useful for gaining a better understanding of the need and service provision in your community. The sources listed below will give you the tools you need to begin the process of planning for strategic action.

The following data sources are useful for gaining a better understanding of the need in your community and give you the tools to begin the process of planning for strategic action.

ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

http://factfinder.census.gov/

Find facts about your community (age, poverty, business and industry, education, etc.). Click on the subjects listed on the left side of the page to see other interesting information about your geography. Click the links under "Popular tables for this Geography" to see tables containing other data for your community.

THE MEAL GAP

http://map.feedingamerica.org

Food insecurity statistics for the United States, your state and even your county.

SNAPSHOT

http://www.feedingtexas.org/learn/communities/snapshot-texas/

SNAPshot Texas provides a county by county breakdown by zip code of SNAP eligibility, actual participation and the number of eligible households who are not participating in SNAP.

SNAP RETAIL DATA (Participation, Retailers, etc.)

www.data.gov

- What stores (retailers) accept SNAP in your area?
- Search "SNAP retailers" to get the details of all the SNAP retailers in an area.

SOCIAL SERVICES SEARCH ENGINE

www.auntbertha.com

Aunt Bertha helps users find food, health, housing and employment programs based on their postal code. Aunt Bertha simplifies the search and application process for social services. The app collects information on federal, state, county, city, neighborhood and nonprofit programs and puts it all in one place.

TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS EXPLORER

http://schools.texastribune.org/

This resource provides school level data in a user-friendly way, allowing users to gain insight into some of the community's challenges. Key data includes the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price lunch.

KIDSCOUNT DATA

http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#USA/1/0

As a one-stop-shop, Kids Count Data center gathers data from several sources all with the purpose of tracking children's well-being. They track several indicators including demographics, economic wellbeing, education, family and community, health, and safety.

COMMUNITY MAPPING TOOLS

Mapping can be a capacity-building tool for your Hunger Free Community Coalition by allowing you to create a visual for your targeted work or identified resources and needs. Learning to leverage publicly available data and online mapping resources helps to strategically identify areas of importance. In order to create a map tailored to the needs of your community, please refer to the resources below.

CAPACITY BUILDER

http://www.fns.usda.gov/capacitybuilder

This tool maps key landmarks in a community and overlays them with measures of food insecurity.

DESERT LOCATOR

http://bit.ly/fooddesertlocator

- Create maps showing food access indicators by census tract using different measures and indicators of supermarket accessibility;
- View indicators of food access for selected subpopulations; and
- Download census-tract-level data on food access measures.

COMMUNITY WALK

http://www.communitywalk.com

- Create personal, community and professional maps.
- Show the map on a website or blog.
- Add photos, videos, comments and more.

POLICY MAP

www.policymap.com

PolicyMap is a web-based Geographic Information System (GIS) program. It captures data about geographic regions through custom demographic maps, tables, reports. Available data includes demographics, home sale statistics, health data, mortgage trends, school performance scores and labor data such as unemployment, crime statistics, etc.

- Most features are available with the public (non-subscription based) and login information is not required. Add photos, videos, comments and more.
- Generate detailed demographic reports of specific cities, zip codes, counties, and census tracts.

EXAMPLE *ACTIVITY PRIORITIZATION* **MODEL**

There are many ways to prioritize activities to take on and processes for getting there. Below is an example of one approach. If you have an action team model, this could be implemented by an action team to identify activities within their issue area, or it could be implemented coalition-wide.

1. Develop a list of potential activities that the coalition could take on

- Before doing this, review a community assessment or issue-specific assessment to make sure everyone is on the same page about the problems, assets, resources barriers and gaps

- A couple different strategies to consider depending on the size of the group:
    - i. Group brainstorm, popcorn-style (where anyone can share an idea as it comes to them)
    - ii. Break up into small groups and brainstorm in small groups before having each group report back to the larger group

2. For each activity idea mentioned, discuss the following questions:

- How much of an impact would this activity have on helping the community? What would the metrics of impact be?

- Is this an activity that would benefit from a collaborative approach by multiple organizations or individuals or could one organization or individual do it by themselves?

- What is the likelihood of successful implementation? Do we currently have the resources among the group to implement or would it require bringing in new resources?

- How long will it take to implement this activity successfully?

- Will this activity help the coalition engage new members and build support for the coalition?

3. Give each person in the group three stickers and instruct them to place them by the activities they think the coalition should take on and that they would be interested in working on

- Small colored dot stickers work well for this purpose

- People can put more than one sticker on an activity if they are especially interested in working on that activity

4. Starting with the activity that has the most dots, ask people to raise their hands if they are interested in working on the activity; then ask who would be willing to initially take the lead on pulling folks together to discuss further

- If no one is willing to take the lead, put the activity on hold and move on to the next one and revisit later – you do not want to pick an activity if there is no leadership behind it

- Stop once you have gotten to activities that do not have a sufficient number of people interested in working on it or that no one is interested in taking the lead on

- Depending on the size of the group (especially if it is an action team) you may want to just choose the one or two activities that get the highest number of dots and have one or more people willing to take the lead

5. Ask each activity group to meet with instructions to develop a logic model for their activity that includes steps to implement, who will take on which tasks and overall success metrics

- Encourage the groups to make sure as they develop their logic model that the activity still seems feasible – if it is not, then it is ok to not pursue it or to shift to a different activity that might work better

- Once a plan is developed, formalize the activity group into a work group or action team to implement the activity, with designated chair or co-chairs to lead

ACTIVITY LOGIC MODEL

ASSUMPTIONS :

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES :

GENERAL INPUTS :

Strategy	Activities	Assignment	Timeframe	Output Metrics	Mid-Term Outcomes
What do we do?	*How will we do it?*	*Who will be responsible?*	*When will we implement?*	*How can we track the success of our work?*	*How will we know we are moving toward our long-term outcomes?*

STRATEGIC **PLAN ELEMENTS**

Below are the key elements that you might include in your coalition's strategic plan. The strategic plan can serve as guide to your coalition's work, a way to make sure all coalition members are on the same page about the coalition's goals and plans, and as a tool for sharing about your coalition with the broader community, including potential funders.

Mission Statement

Other Statements

- Possibilities include a values statement, vision statement or statement of principles

Organizational Rules or By-Laws

- Can include leadership structure and processes, decision-making guidelines, ground rules for meetings, etc.

Community Assessment

- Either one overall asset-based community assessment or a compilation of issue-focused assessments

Goals

- Can include both long-term and mid-term goals

Action Plans

- Specific plans, ideally using a logic model

Measures and Metrics

- These might already be included in the action plans

Communication Plan

- How are coalition members being kept informed about coalition activities?
- How are you sharing the work of the coalition with the broader coalition?

Funding and Fundraising Plan

- If your coalition is looking to raise money, include a plan for how you plan to do that
- Can include mention of a coalition coordinator or other staff your coalition may be looking to support

Roles and Responsibilities

- Description of who has responsibility for different areas
- Includes, potentially, leadership team members and chairs of action teams or work groups

COALITION *STRATEGIC RE-ASSESSMENT* **PROCESS**

The following is an example of a strategic re-assessment process that a coalition might look to undertake on a regular basis, such as every couple of years. The goal of the process is to make sure to address any challenges or barriers the coalition might be facing and to take advantage of new ideas and opportunities for coalition growth.

1. Distribute a questionnaire to leadership team members or all coalition members, with the following questions:
    a. What have we done well/accomplishments?
    b. What has not worked?
    c. What needs to be changed or improved?

2. If you have action teams or work groups, have them answer the same questions for their action team

3. Have a strategic re-assessment retreat with the following agenda:
    a. Compile, review and discuss results of questionnaires
    b. Break out into small groups to brainstorm on the topic of "What Could Be", looking at where you would like the coalition to be in two years
    c. Report back from small groups, consolidate answers and discuss
    d. Identify a few areas of focus for coalition development based on the previous discussion
    e. Break into small groups around each of area of focus and map out a plan for accomplishing the suggested change
    f. Report back to the group, get feedback and finalize plans, including who will do what, when

4. Make revisions in the coalition's strategic plan based on changes determined at the retreat

Source: Drawn from the strategic re-assessment process conducted by the Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions and facilitated by Dabney Dwyer

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