

Evaluating Multi-Sector Collaborative Empowerment (1)

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It can be difficult to evaluate a process as complex as multi-sector collaboration. However, if the multi-sector collaborative process is designed with clear goals and action plans (which can include specific outcomes and time lines), an evaluation plan can be constructed more easily. An evaluation plan for a multi-sector collaboration empowerment process (contact Arthur T. Himmelman for collaborative empowerment model description) is outlined below. More specifically, the plan is focused on assessing multi-sector collaboration providing affordable housing and community economic development both of which are also considered social determinants of health.

In collaborative empowerment processes, community-based organizations emphasize user-friendly evaluation because it provides for periodic and transparent monitoring of both the processes and products of community-based collaboration.

The following criteria and indicators can be used for evaluating community-based housing and economic development efforts but, with appropriate content modification, can also be used for collaboration addressing many other community priorities. Any standard scaling, such as 5 as the highest/best to 1 as lowest/worst, can be used to survey stakeholders in collaborations with the following processes and products:

CRITERIA

- * Initiation and Design

INDICATORS

- * Clarity of issues stimulating community action
- * Clarity of vision suggesting common agenda/actions
- * Quantity and quality of participants willing to join efforts
- * Quality of selection process of participants
- * Usefulness and effectiveness of model for partnership participation, governance, and accountability
- * Clarity and acceptance of evaluation measures for outcomes or results

(1) From Himmelman, Arthur T. "On The Theory and Practice of Transformational Collaboration: From Service to Justice." Working paper. Minneapolis, 1995. The working paper was edited and published as a chapter in Creating Collaborative Advantage, edited by Chris Huxham. London: Sage Publications, 1996.

CRITERION

- * Empowerment

INDICATORS

- * Degree to which those most affected by the collaboration's mission, goals, and actions shape the mission, goals, and actions
- * Degree to which low-income people, people of color, and women hold leadership positions
- * Degree to which leadership is based on non-financial criteria
- * Quality and quantity of information shared among all members of the collaboration
- * Quality and extent of community organizing and community education encouraged and provided by the collaboration
- * Degree to which language, data, information and other forms of communication encourage grassroots participation
- * Quality and quantity of long-term resources retained by those who were without them at the collaboration's initiation

CRITERION

- * Facilitation

INDICATORS

- * Clarity of partnership processes and organizational structure
- * Quality of data, information, research, and other forms of communication provided
- * Success in achieving the trust of the collaboration's participants
- * Success in serving as a liaison for mediation and negotiation among participants
- * Quantity and quality of internal and external resources identified and provided by collaboration participants
- * Degree to which traditionally underrepresented organizations and individuals play a significant role
- * Timeliness and quality of the partnership members' oral presentations and written communications
- * Degree to which both policy and program goals and objectives are achieved

CRITERION

- * Policy Change

INDICATORS

- * Degree to which public, private, and/or nonprofit policy makers are members
- * Degree to which public, private, and/or nonprofit policy makers are committed to partnership mission and goals

- * Clarity of policy change goals and objectives
- * Quality and quantity of policy changes identified and achieved
- * Quality and effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation of policy changes over short and long-term
- * Correspondence of policy change to programmatic change
- * General community awareness and support of policy change goals, objectives, and achievements by partnership

CRITERION

- * Program Improvements

INDICATORS

- * Significance and clarity of program improvements identified
- * Significance and quantity of program improvements achieved
- * Cost effectiveness of program improvements
- * Level of support, within and outside the partnership, for the program improvements identified and achieved
- * Quality of long-term monitoring and evaluation of program improvements
- * Degree to which program clients are included in decisions about program improvements, monitoring, and evaluation
- * Degree to which program improvements are coordinated with human, financial, and technical resources outside of housing and economic development
- * Degree to which program improvements are linked with policy implications and policy changes where appropriate

CRITERIA

- * Products and Results

INDICATORS

- * Quantity and quality of affordable housing preserved, maintained, and constructed
- * Quantity and quality of affordable housing units provided to (1) very low income; (2) low income; and (3) moderate income individuals and families
- * Quality of the management provided to affordable housing units
- * Amount/ratio of private investments and grants leveraged by public funding
- * Increase of equity and other forms of financial resources available to those without them prior to the collaboration
- * Number and quality of jobs created
- * Number and quality of jobs provided to low-income people, people of color, women, and residents of disadvantaged communities
- * Quality of the coordination of job training, educational opportunities, and human services with affordable housing and economic development
- * Amount and quality of commercial development created

- * Number and significance to the community of small business and services provided
- * Long-term viability of businesses created
- * Degree to which businesses and economic developments are considered community as well as individual resources

CRITERION

- * Quality of Collaborative Participation

INDICATORS

- * Diversity of participation from community, public, private, and nonprofit sectors
- * Level of decision-making authority that members have within their "home" organization that can contribute to the success of the collaboration
- * Quality of power sharing among membership
- * Quantity and quality of public policy changes encouraged and achieved by the collaboration
- * Quantity and quality of financial, human, and technical resources contributed by the collaboration's members
- * Effectiveness of communication among members
- * Quantity and quality of knowledge and skills shared among members and level of new learning gained by members
- * Quantity and quality of members' oral and written presentations by membership for internal and external purposes