



**RESOURCE GUIDE
FOR BUILDING
EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION
AND INTEGRATED
PROGRAMMING**



RESOURCE GUIDE FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION AND INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

PROJECT CONCERN INTERNATIONAL (PCI)

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We'd like to express our appreciation to the TOPS - Technical and Operational Performance Support program, for the support received for the development of this collaboration guide, which seeks to provide the elements needed for the construction of successful collaboration between organizations implementing projects and interventions in the field.

This guide is a collection of experiences, resources and research developed by known experts in the area of organizational and community development and its preparation is aimed at responding to the needs of an inter-organizational committee that is in the development phase. Thanks to the committee of Huehuetenango, Guatemala, which so openly shared their successes, their needs and their concerns to continue developing an effective model for collaboration in one region.

Thanks to each of the representatives of the participating agencies for offering their feedback during the process of preparing this guide.

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SECTION 1 | Process of forming a committee or coalition for collaboration and integration

INTRODUCTION

Project Concern International (PCI) received funds from the TOPS - Technical and Operational Performance Support program from June 2014 to March 2015 for the development of a Guide for Effective Coordination and Intentional Integration.

The purpose of this exercise is to offer guidelines, recommendations, examples and lessons learned to improve and promote effective coordination and collaboration and thus achieve greater impact in communities and in those organizations currently working in the Western Highlands of Guatemala and which receive funds from the United States government.

During the development of this guide, PCI had the opportunity to facilitate conversations among the members of a committee composed of representatives from US funded organizations implementing projects in the department of Huehuetenango, Guatemala. The goal was to learn about their practical experiences with real situations that come up in the collaboration process. Thanks to a series of group exercises, the committee had the opportunity to share some of its lessons learned, what they considered as best practices, and their experiences with effective collaboration achieved in the nearly two years since this committee was formed.

A combination of participatory methodologies was used by means of a semi-formal process for collecting and documenting the committee's experiences. The exercise gave us the opportunity to: 1) learn about real examples that illustrate best practices, 2) document the challenges and barriers that come up when trying to create effective coordination and collaboration, and 3) identify the elements that facilitate collaboration, based on the experiences of this committee. The methods used also helped the committee members to recognize their strengths as well as identifying areas of opportunity for achieving greater impact in their joint actions. Additionally, a literature review was carried out to identify experiences from other similar collaboration exercises which reflect many of the same challenges and obstacles during their formation and implementation processes.

It is important to mention that this document was designed to respond to the needs of the Huehuetenango committee composed of 13 organizations that work in the same geographic area, based on the findings and needs they expressed. The guide may be useful for other development committees since it includes examples, elements and resources that can be used by other organizations or collaborative networks that want to improve their collaboration or integration. Ideas and recommendations from reports, studies and other documents prepared by experts in the area of organizational and community development were included in this document.

This document may be useful for other USAID partner organizations and thus we encourage the dissemination of this material to facilitate the creation of a greater number of effective collaborations in order to optimize the use of economic and human resources within a specific geographic area.

IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION AMONG CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The world, societies and communities today are faced with complex challenges composed of multiple factors that are often interrelated. In order to effectively address them it is important to coordinate efforts among all stakeholders. One of the purposes of this document is to support food security projects and actions that are presently being carried out in Guatemala through the Feed the Future initiative of the United States government. This strategy provides support to the food security plan created in 2011 by the government of Guatemala.

This important investment by both countries needs to use mechanisms that allow the problems to be addressed in an integrated and inclusive manner which would be multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral. Additionally, this approach should be flexible and help a group of intersectoral organizations to carry out actions in conjunction with the community in order to resolve and address the community's priority needs.

WHY PREPARE A COLLABORATION GUIDE

PCI currently serves as facilitator and secretary within the collaboration committee promoted by the **Feed the Future** program of the United States government, in which 13 organizations participate. These organizations are carrying out projects in 24 municipalities of the department of Huehuetenango, Guatemala with funding from USAID and USDA. From its creation in 2013, this committee has functioned as a place to share achievements and experiences as well as a platform for non-formal collaboration processes.

Nearly two years after its creation, the members have identified the need for improving the processes and promoting a collaboration model that will be more effective and allow the initiatives that are developed on the ground to produce greater positive impact for the target communities.

WHO CAN USE THIS GUIDE

Initially this guide was expected to support USAID's efforts to achieve greater collaboration and integration of the programs that are being implemented in four priority departments of the Western Highlands of Guatemala. To date four departmental committees have been formed to seek greater integration of the projects within the same geographic area. These projects have been designed to reduce poverty and chronic malnutrition as well as to achieve sustainability in their actions by means of joint efforts and collaboration between local governments and civil society organizations.

This guide can also be useful for any person, agency, organization, coalition or networks that are being developed. Additionally it can help committees or already established groups which have identified challenges in their efforts for collaborative actions or which seek to strengthen their collaboration in order to become more efficient and effective.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

We recommend that this guide be used as a menu of instruments that can be extracted and used independently based on the specific needs of the process. In other words, the guide is not meant to give norms or to standardize the process of forming or working in a collaboration committee, but rather to support these efforts in the various stages of the development of activities by these committees or groups.

The guide includes ideas, findings and recommendations based on different studies, experiences or situations that occur regularly when attempting collaboration. At the end of the document you will find a list of references that you can consult for more information on specific topics.

“ Sometimes none of us is where the need is and at times we are all in places where there is no need. ”

Member of the Huehuetenango Committee

SECTION 2 | **Practical recommendations for promoting effective collaboration mechanisms**

DEFINITION OF COLLABORATION

A very basic definition of collaboration can be found in any dictionary, “the union of two or more parts (example: individuals, organizations or networks) that come from different sectors, groups or regions with a common goal”. However, this definition might be too simplistic since collaboration is a very complex process that requires multiple elements in order to be carried out successfully.

Civil society organizations today seek to establish groups, committees, or coalitions as a strategic element for collaboration, many times committing themselves to achieving greater integration of efforts and having greater impact.

This is a process that requires time, resources, commitment and leadership but, above all, should grow from the felt need of the participating organizations. Collaboration goes beyond merely participating with other groups or organizations in a task or activity. It requires planning, coordination of efforts and a specific objective that is common to all participants.

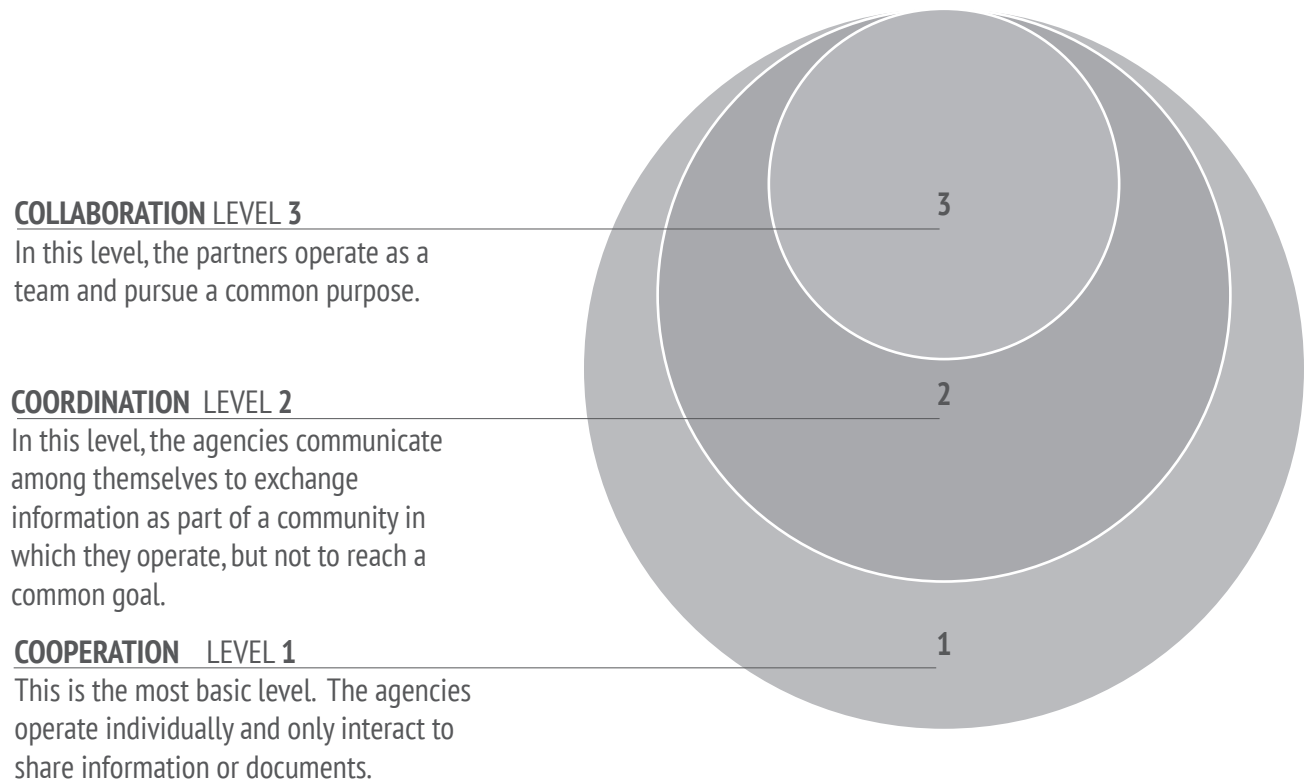
WHEN SHOULD COLLABORATION BE INITIATED?

Even with the many benefits offered by a collaboration exercise, we know that it does not happen automatically. Sometimes it will be complicated and on other occasions it will be inefficient if not structured with detailed planning regarding expected results. For this reason, before initiating any collaboration process it is important to answer the following questions:

- a) **Is my organization ready to collaborate?**
- b) **What is the goal for this collaboration?**
- c) **What level of interaction does my organization require?**

The diagram below graphically presents three possible levels of interaction which can serve as a reference to identify the degree of commitment that the participating organizations are willing to assume in order to work together to achieve their objectives.

LEVELS OF INTERACTION AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS



COOPERATION
This can be short term, informal and established even without a clear mission, structure or plan.

COORDINATION
This is more formal in nature with greater clarity about the mission. Participants focus their interaction on a specific program, carry out some planning. There is division of roles and communication channels are established.

COLLABORATION
This is a longer lasting relationship in which the participants bring a new structure to their organizations and are completely committed to the mission. This requires well defined planning and communication channels at all levels. Decision making is determined by the collaboration structure.

WHEN THE NEED FOR INCLUDING MULTI-DISCIPLINARY ORGANIZATIONS IS CONSIDERED, IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALSO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE DYNAMICS AND NATURE OF THE PROBLEMS AND SOCIAL NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED. GENERALLY THESE PROBLEMS REQUIRE A MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH TO COVER THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS THAT AFFECT A SPECIFIC SITUATION SUCH AS EDUCATION, MALNUTRITION AND VIOLENCE, TO NAME A FEW.

In the past many collaboration relationships were created to reduce costs and improve efficiency. The most successful collaborations, however, have been motivated by the desire to achieve greater impact rather than just offering more services for less money. Evidence has shown that collaboration functions best when funding organizations permit organic relationships rather than making them obligatory. When agencies or partners identify themselves according to their common objectives and goals, they will work together more effectively to solve a problem.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN DETERMINING THE INTENSITY OF A NEW COLLABORATION⁽ⁱ⁾

THE TYPE OF PARTICIPATION:

- Number and nature of the tasks to be carried out.
- Degree of participation by the funding agencies
- Level of authority in decision making that the organizations can allow
- Amount of time and coordination required in order to be successful
- The degree of responsibility that each organization is willing to commit to

THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS:

- Share abilities with some degree of specialization
- Create uniform messages and materials
- Share ideas and different perspectives about how to address complex issues
- Coordination of services and initiatives and complementarity of actions towards a common goal in order to avoid duplication of efforts
- Make services available more efficiently
- Donate or share space and equipment
- Finance or collect funds jointly
- Share community support/greater participation

WHO TO COLLABORATE WITH

Based on the above premises, it can be assumed that one of the first and most important steps for establishing collaboration would be identification of potential partners. The selection of possible partners should be strategic. To this end we offer some questions that can help in the selection process. Before approaching a possible collaborator, answer the following questions:

- 1) **Who needs to be included in this collaboration in order for it to be successful?**
- 2) **What organizations have the necessary resources, abilities and reputation?**
- 3) **What are the resources that possible partners will be willing to contribute?**

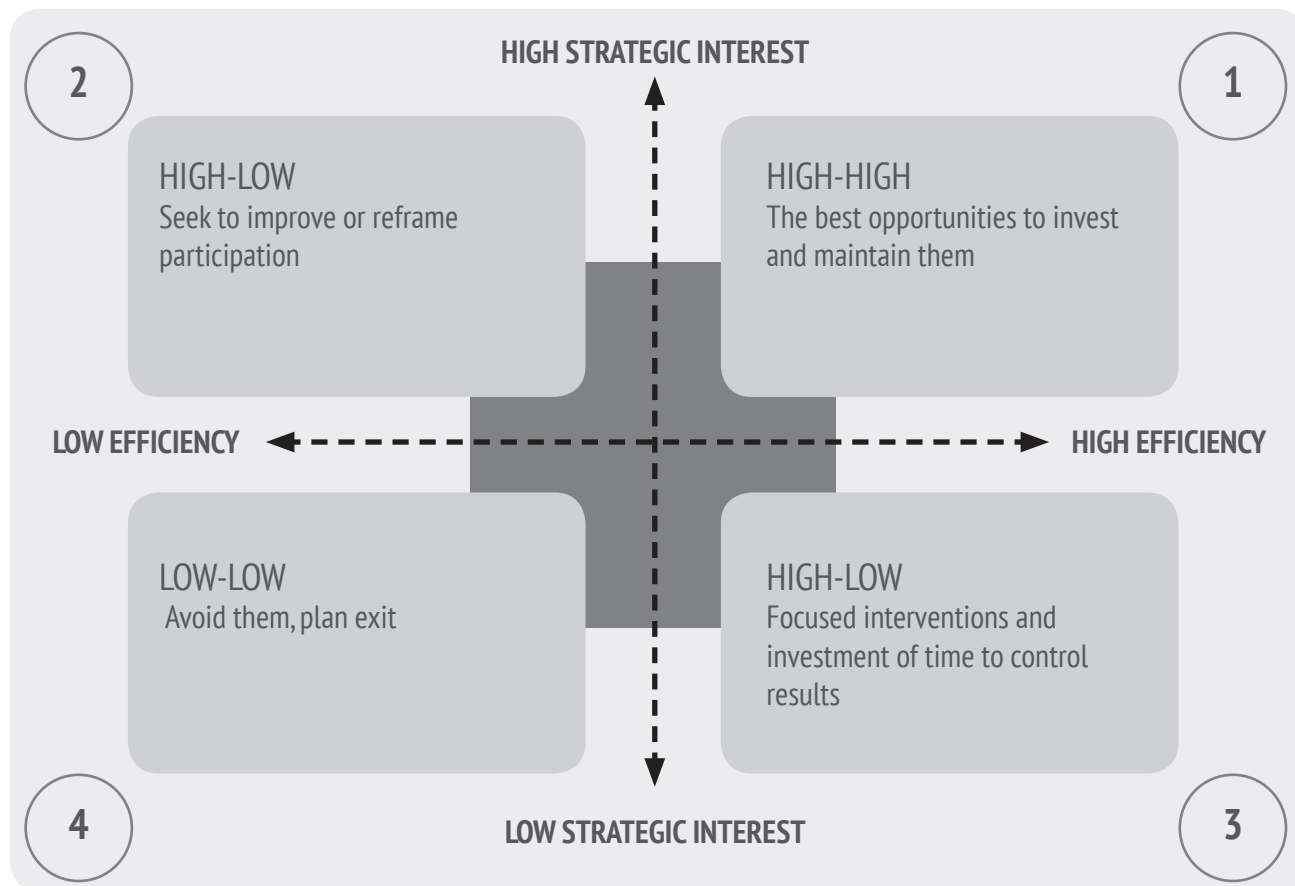
IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER THAT THE BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION WILL NOT APPEAR OVERNIGHT. THERE ARE SOME KEY FACTORS THAT MAKE A COLLABORATION RELATIONSHIP WORK, SUCH AS THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE FOR COLLABORATION, TIME AND TRUST.

To initiate this process, prepare a list of the organizations, agencies and/or groups, with characteristics or similarities that could contribute to accomplishment of the collaboration objectives. This list should be very complete and include organizations with multi-disciplinary approaches who can contribute some benefit for accomplishment of the common goal.

Once the list is prepared, you can analyze it using the four quadrant format for Classification of Alliances which is described below. This process will help determine the organizations with which it would be the most appropriate to work, and in which you should invest effort.

For most effective use of this tool, it is recommended that you define an indicator or objective of high strategic interest and the standards which would be used to measure high efficiency.

FIGURE: CLASSIFY YOUR ALLIANCES



The first quadrant represents the best opportunity to establish an alliance, collaboration and/or joint work, due to the fact that the organization classified within this quadrant shares a level of strategic interest that meshes with the parameters of my organization and its levels of efficiency are high according to prior ranking.

This would be a good place to invest time and resources and create procedures to be able to maintain the relationship.

The organizations identified in the number two quadrant have high strategic interest but their efficiency ranking is low. This type of alliance will require a greater investment of time for establishment of processes and systems that would ensure greater efficiency. In this situation it would be wise to reframe participation.

The number three quadrant includes those organizations that have a low degree of strategic interest but high efficiency. With these organizations you should only focus on very clearly defined interventions and develop concrete objectives with timelines and measurement of results.

Organizations that fall into the number four quadrant definitely do not have much potential for contributing to accomplishment of objectives and goals proposed within a collaboration exercise. Where strategic interest and efficacy are both low, it is not advisable to invest time and resources.

Section 3 | Effective collaboration mechanisms

a) LAY THE FOUNDATION AND ESTABLISH COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS OR CONTRACTS

One of the most effective mechanisms for collaboration is the establishment of agreements and/or contracts. These may take many forms; they can be formal or informal. Either way, we recommend that they be put in writing and the document should reflect all the key aspects of the relationship. The agreements should be inclusive, prepared by the people who will implement them and they should be validated by the decision makers in the organizations involved. Written agreements solidly establish the commitments agreed upon by the partners to carry out their collaboration efforts. It is important to remember that agreements are living documents that can be modified and that can also be used to:

- 1) **Establish a baseline to facilitate follow-up to the collaboration;**
- 2) **Negotiate roles and responsibilities;**
- 3) **Prepare a collaboration plan;** and
- 4) **Develop a results framework.**

b) ELEMENTS TO INCLUDE IN A COLLABORATION AGREEMENT AND/OR CONTRACT

The more details included in the agreement, the more tools that will be available to the participants for reviewing each of the items agreed upon and keeping the objective in focus.

- 1) **Context for collaboration**
- 2) **Membership/Criteria for selection of members (formally assign a member of the organization)**
- 3) **Purpose for the collaboration (collectively elaborate the purpose of the collaboration)**
- 4) **Collaboration activities (what will be done in this collaboration)**
- 5) **What are the projects and products of the collaboration (expected results of the collaboration)**
- 6) **Collaboration process (example: communication, decision making, conflict management)**
- 7) **Roles and responsibilities for each of the partners (mutual agreement on the established commitments)**
- 8) **Time period for evaluation and renegotiation of the process**
- 9) **Credits, recognitions and terms of payment (if relevant)**
- 10) **Commitments and legal requirements**
- 11) **Exclusion clause or finalization of collaboration**

c) ORGANIZATION

When organizations embark on a collaboration exercise, they should consider that especially during the first stages of the process, the participating agencies must dedicate a considerable amount of time to planning. Any action that is not planned could create obstacles for the implementation of joint interventions. It is important to organize the activities and document the processes, in order to create a systematized collaboration culture which will reduce potential obstacles during the life of the project.

According to Winer and Ray manual, we should remember⁽ⁱⁱ⁾:

- **Clarify the process and plan.** The process and plan will be the foundation for all the joint actions to be carried out by those involved in the collaboration.
- **Maintain an open and proactive mindset, especially at the beginning.** Remember, ideas are not good or bad. During the initial exploration stage, all contributions from the members should be welcomed. This can create a sense of ownership of the process. It is recommended that decisions not be made during this stage.
- **Recognize that collaboration will not bring about immediate savings in time or resources.** On the contrary, collaboration may take more time to get things done. It is recommended that the participating organizations consider and evaluate how this investment of time can affect their own processes to achieve more in less time when compared to working individually.

d) ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Frequently the collaboration processes are initiated by organizational leaders or decision makers. In some cases, the initiative to promote a collaboration exercise can be a requirement from the donors who are seeking to ensure greater impact within a specific geographic location.

The basic rules for participation should be spelled out within the agreement or collaboration contract. Based on these previously established agreements, decision makers should assign a person from the organization to participate and provide follow up to the collaboration process.

Before this happens, it is important to prepare a letter of organizational commitment which establishes and specifies the support that the organization will offer to the designated representative. The organization's representative should have the power to make decisions relevant to the collaboration whenever necessary. Some of the points that should be included in the letter of commitment include:

- The level of commitment that the participating organizations take on so that their participation will help achieve the mission, objectives and strategies of the collaboration in order to achieve their goals.
- Clear stipulation of what the organization expects as a result of this collaboration.
- The amount of time that the organization's representative can invest in this collaboration.
- The organization should recognize the time spent by the representative in the collaboration process as work time.
- The resources that will be made available so that the representative's participation can be effective.
- The degree of participation and commitment of the representative and his or her decision making power for collaboration activities.

⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Source: <http://www.lcrlandtrustexchange.org/InformationDocuments/collaborationhandbook091609.pdf>

e) ADEQUATE STRUCTURE

collaboration process will help reduce the time needed for resolving conflicts that might arise due to lack of clarity at different levels and stages of the collaboration.

Often when forming a new coalition, alliance or committee, there is a temptation to create a new organization for the collaboration, with an administrative apparatus that would add potentially unnecessary expenses. It is recommended that organization be made so that the participants share information and decision making and that they distribute the tasks and resources.

Successful collaborations are organized efficiently to ensure that the process and the results help to achieve the goals of those who participate. The majority of the time, collaborations function best when the participating organizations create a system within their own organizations for managing the time that will be needed and which is dedicated to complying with the requirements of the collaboration.

Usually collaborations adopt one of two structures either as boards or a round tables. In the board mode, the members of the alliance make decisions jointly based on the needs (this generally happens in small groups). In the round table structure, small working subgroups are formed which carry out independent actions (in this case alliances tend to be larger).

Regardless of which structure is chosen, the collaborations could become:

- **Hierarchical:** This is a pyramid like structure in which one person is in charge of the collaboration and ensures compliance with the agreements.
- **Individual:** Each person is responsible for certain actions, the leadership is more distributed, the members feel involved, valued and useful. To achieve this kind of structure requires a greater time investment and coordination can be more difficult.
- **Group:** The majority of the work is the responsibility of the group and only a few activities will be pertinent to individual members. Leadership is not well defined and responsibilities are not clear. Generally there is no formal follow-up on the agreements.

The importance of having a defined structure in the collaboration process is that it will help to strategically propose and distribute the actions and functions as well as making decision making processes more efficient. We should remember that the structures within the collaborations are temporary (generally they complete a cycle) and thus should remain flexible. Some structures also may disappear or change based on the dynamic of the participating organizations.

f) DEFINITION OF ROLES

In the majority of cases, roles will be determined by the structure that is chosen and functions may change. It is important to ensure that the following functions are distributed equitably and according to the interests and abilities of the participants. It is recommended that the roles be rotated to promote learning and increase the sense of ownership and involvement.

Recommended Functions

- Call meetings: prepare the agenda and send invitations to the participants.
- Plan the meetings: ensure availability of the meeting place and any other inputs needed.
- Direct the meeting: responsible for following the agenda and facilitating the meeting.
- Mediation: work to resolve conflicts among participants or seek means of resolving them (this could be an external function).
- Take notes: prepare minutes of the meetings and distribute them among the representatives of the participating organizations.
- Logistics management: prepare a directory of the members and seek adequate mechanisms to facilitate communication and follow up the processes.
- Activity monitoring: measure progress in achievement of the commitments to achieve the mission and the results.

g) PROTOCOL FOR DECISION MAKING

Decisions made in a collaboration will in some way affect the participating organizations. It is recommended that decisions be documented and this documentation should be accessible for review by all members. Work will flow more efficiently and productively when the collaboration structure contributes to the empowerment of the participants of small groups. That is, by formation of sub-groups that can act independently and make decisions related to their assigned area.

When well defined protocols for decision making are in place it won't be necessary to call full meetings given that the systematization of the processes will guide the members in the way forward. Protocols can be developed for various purposes and the agreements should be documented and shared with regard to how to make decisions as well as to what types of decisions can be made.

The structure of the collaboration to a certain degree will define the process for decision making, and the structure will be defined based on the size, purpose and focus of its members. In order to carry out this task, the types of decisions to be made and the mechanisms to use must be defined.

When preparing the protocols and procedures for decision making, the following information should be included:

- Will each organization have one vote?
- Who will have the right to vote? Will it be the representative or someone else in their organization?
- Do the people who will vote need to be present or can they do it electronically?
- In a large collaboration:
 - Will the votes be proportional?
 - Can anyone who is present vote, even if it is their first time participating or even if they don't represent a specific group?

We also recommend that a rule be created for establishing who does and does not have the right to vote. Additionally it may be stated that before making a decision, the participants who do not have the right to vote can have the right to express their opinions about the issue to be voted on.

Generally groups are more harmonious when there is clarity about the types of decisions that can be made, the specific mechanisms for doing so and who are entitled to make them.

Some group and individual decision making styles include (Winer and Ray):

- **Autonomous:** only those who need to know are informed. The group makes the decision and does not consult others either because the decision is not important because it doesn't impact the others or because only this small group is needed to implement it.
- **Consultative:** others are informed that a decision will be made since their input is needed or because the decision requires the intervention of the entities that are consulted.
- **Consensus:** a common platform is sought where everyone has the opportunity to present their opinion and everyone is in agreement. Consensus should be used when the decision will affect the majority and a group commitment is needed to implement the activities.
- **Democratic:** opinions are discussed exhaustively so that everyone understands the impact and consequences of a majority vote. In democratic processes everyone's opinion is heard but consensus is not needed. Thus, those who are not in agreement may feel that there are winners and losers.
- **Delegation:** the situation is presented and responsibilities and expectations are clarified in order to make and implement the decision. This style is used when the decision has an impact on others' work or when the rest of the group has the knowledge, abilities, experience and resources to implement the idea.

When all members are informed and the majority participate in decision making, participants feel ownership of the collaboration process. The choice of a decision making style will help those who are participating to feel that they are part of the process and they can participate more actively.

h) CREATE A COMMUNICATION PLAN

In order to build effective communication, mechanisms should be established to enable communication to flow formally and informally as well as openly and frequently.

Informal Communication: This type of communication is useful during meetings. Informal communication takes place when sharing information about what is happening in the community. During these moments of informal communication, more personal connections are made which contribute to improving communication and developing an environment of trust. It is important to remember to listen to everyone and also to speak with everyone. When appropriate, humor helps to build camaraderie.

Formal or Interorganizational Communication: This requires time and effort. Minutes, proceedings, agendas or any other documentation should be produced, developed and distributed systematically.

It is also necessary to have a representative who facilitates the conversation at all levels to promote:

- Greater participation in decision making. In this way, the decision makers from the organizations are informed and can participate in decision making.
- Greater understanding of the collaboration structure. The rules, agreements and roles should be shared with the representatives from the agencies and they in turn should share them with the leaders of their agencies.
- Formalization of the collaboration processes and support in the preparation and definition, in writing, of the organizational agreements for participation.

DEFINE FORMAL COMMUNICATION ROUTES

- Create a directory of key people in each participating organization who should receive communication and who will participate in decision making.
- Clearly describe who should receive specific or sensitive communications, as well as the timing and format for distribution, and the person responsible for follow up and receiving feedback.
- Decide which of the participants will be responsible for guaranteeing that two way communication is maintained with the key people in the other participating organizations.
- Design an information system within the collaboration that permits collection of updated, relevant data and makes it available to all members in a timely manner.

It is also advisable to define a communication strategy using technology to facilitate coordination and collaboration processes. In some case, the geographic location may require a long distance communication system. Currently, some collaboration participants communicate by means of: email, memos, minutes or using the internet.

Social networks and other online services are an important means for sharing information. Some organizations have created or have joined online groups to discuss topics of shared interest and to support other groups. It is possible to create internet pages for a relatively low cost and these can be a very useful instrument for sharing information relevant to the collaboration processes.

It is recommended that these communication systems based on technology only be used as a support for communication processes as they cannot take the place of periodic face to face meetings.

Section 4 | Opportunities for success in collaboration processes

The success of any organization depends to a great degree on its people and the way in which they work together as they establish relationships that enable them to exchange information, build trust and influence each other mutually. These relationships are built thanks to the interactions that take place either professionally (such as working on a project together) or socially (for example, eating a meal together).

CONDITIONS FOR COLLECTIVE SUCCESS

- 1.- Develop a shared vision and common objectives: maintain an agenda in common.
- 2.- Each of the participating organizations offers a proposal that adds value to the collaboration.
- 3.- Prepare a system for measurement of results and shared achievements.
- 4.- Define a structure for coordination and follow up.
- 5.- Have a communication strategy that ensures clarity, efficiency and continuity.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

1) ESTABLISH BASIC RULES FOR THE COLLABORATION.

Entre más claro estén definidos los principales protocolos al inicio de la colaboración, menos serán los problemas que. When the principal protocols are clearly defined at the beginning of the collaboration, many problems can be avoided during implementation. It is convenient to take as much time as needed to discuss this section in depth and to define the when, where, who, what and time frames.

2) WRITE UP AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACTS

Many people feel intimidated by the word “contract” (it is often seen as a very formal or legal process) but in reality it is only a list of rules put into writing and does not need to have legal implications. This can be very useful for providing follow up to agreements, terms of participation, commitments, leadership and logistics.

3) BUILD TRUST

Any collaboration will benefit from an environment of respect that offers a space for organizations to be able to share ideas, innovations, methodologies, strategies and have them taken into account.

4) EVALUATE AND GIVE VALUE FROM AN OBJECTIVE AND RESPECTFUL PERSPECTIVE

Analyze progress and results based on the evaluations that are carried out, share the successes and celebrate them. Identify the areas where the expected results were not reached, analyze the processes and propose changes to the strategy. Beginning with the positive will create an environment of security and appreciation.

“ When a formal representative is not assigned by each organization, it is possible that commitments will not be fulfilled. ”

Member of the Huehuetenango Collaborative Committee

5) ENSURE THAT THE ENVIRONMENT ENABLES OPEN DISCUSSION OF EACH OTHER'S' OPINIONS

If we don't all talk or express our opinions, we may lose the opportunity to implement a good idea or to discover and resolve possible misunderstandings among the participants which could damage relations if not addressed. It is recommended that conversations be encouraged to discuss what is happening – good or bad – in order to then offer recommendations.

MOST COMMON CHALLENGES IN COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION PROCESSES

Frequently the problems in collaboration relationships appear when plans are delayed, when progress is too slow or when commitment begins to wane and situations such as a lack of trust arise. Some conflicts among participants as well as their causes can be difficult to identify at the beginning.

To determine what type of conflict is occurring first we should analyze whether there are underlying problems. A very common one might be a power struggle that goes beyond the collaboration, or that organizations feel like they are losing control or autonomy.

IDENTIFY A PERSON TO FACILITATE OR MODERATE IN ORDER TO KEEP THE DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS UNITED

When a multi-sectoral collaboration is being formed it is necessary to have one person exercise the role of facilitator to keep the group united and focused on their purpose. A good facilitator for this type of job should have authority, reputation, influence and credibility in order to unite the organizations. This person can be someone who represents one of the participating organizations, but it is recommended that this be a neutral person from outside the network.

Some specific actions within this function might be: call meetings, facilitate sessions, send communiqués, agendas and minutes, follow up on agreements, help when the group feels dissatisfied, resolve conflicts. The facilitator will not be the only person who carries out all these tasks but can assign or delegate them to collaboration members ensuring that the tasks are completed and commitments honored.

PROPOSALS FOR PROBLEM SOLVING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Problems and conflicts are inevitable and are to be expected in any type of collaboration. What we need to change is the manner of addressing them: problems and conflicts are not always destructive and conflict may be an indicator of the changes and actions needed to continue the collaboration relationship and achieve the objectives.

COLLABORATIONS REQUIRE A LOT OF PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE. DURING OUR PARTICIPATION IN THESE PROCESSES, WE SHOULD CONSTANTLY REMEMBER THAT THESE ALLIANCES ARE MADE UP OF INDIVIDUALS WHO REPRESENT DISTINCT SECTORS, WITH DIFFERENT CUSTOMS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES.

The three most common sources of conflict are presented below along with some recommendations for addressing them:

SOURCE OF CONFLICT	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Lack of clarity in roles and expectations During formation of a collaboration, the lack of clarity in procedures can lead to a host of problems that will affect its future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To avoid these possible situations, it is suggested that the majority of those involved in the process have very detailed information before embarking on the collaboration project. Organizations generally get involved in a collaboration process with the best of intentions to make it work; however, if there is no defined purpose, rules for participation and clear communication at all levels, problems or conflicts may arise at any time. At any time in the collaboration it would be good to address, clarify and negotiate to reach fair agreements that will benefit the process and the relationship.
<p>No progress Has a detailed chronogram been prepared for activities with specific timeframes? Are there differences among the participating agencies that keep the group from reaching an agreement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind participants that their commitment level should remain constant, regardless of the decisions made by consensus. Constantly review the purpose for the collaboration as well as the agreed upon short, medium and long term goals.
<p>Power Imbalance Power struggles can inhibit progress in achievement of goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be honest and realistic about the possibility that an excess or lack of power may cause conflict in the collaboration relationship. It is better to recognize these issues and address them from the beginning. The causes of a possible power imbalance in decision making can be due to various circumstances such as the participation of funding agencies in the board, as well as agencies with differing influence and leadership levels. The participation of a facilitator can enable all voices to be heard and taken into account.

COLLABORATIONS ARE USUALLY COMPLEX AND REQUIRE AN INVESTMENT OF TIME TO ENSURE THEIR CONSOLIDATION. IT IS THE LEADER'S JOB TO MANAGE AND HELP MAKE THESE OPPORTUNITIES MORE EFFECTIVE BY ESTABLISHING, FROM THE START, CLARITY IN ROLES, PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS DEFINED BASED ON GROUP AGREEMENTS.

Other types or sources of conflict may also be present, such as:

- The processes, systems or structures are not adequate for the tasks and the time frames. A possible solution is to examine the context of the conflict and adjust the structure, processes or time frames so that they contribute to a solution or to prevention of this kind of conflict.
- Conflicts of interest or values. A possible solution would be to emphasize the common points of interest of the different parties. Identify, recognize and respect the differences and if the conflicts cannot be resolved, suggest the separation of the affected parties.

The people and participating organizations in a collaboration will benefit from recognizing that conflicts are common. Successful collaborations have mechanisms for identifying them and resolving them early and transparently. It is advisable that all the participants in a collaboration be made aware of the mechanisms for expressing and resolving conflicts, and that they be included in the operations protocols of the collaboration.

POSSIBLE OBSTACLES TO SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

Obviously collaborating with others brings certain risks and generates fear among the organizations involved. These fears are generally the product of a lack of clarity about the potential risks and benefits of the collaboration. Many preconceived notions exist which can affect the achievements of the collaboration and can cause a negative impact on the results.

Some of these preconceived ideas or fears include ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾:

- Loss of autonomy
- Loss of control of the processes and not being able to direct actions based on the commitments acquired
- The fact that the collaborations are generally guided by democratic processes and decision making where not everyone will agree
- Loss of visibility, which could lead to loss of support from donors
- Put the organization's reputation at risk due to the actions of others
- Loss of time without obtaining results
- High time demands and lack of institutional support, be it local, national or international

As conversations take place about the purposes, and expectations are shared and clarified and objectives for collaboration are jointly defined, these fears can be mitigated or eliminated. If these were identified at the beginning of the process, new members or participants should receive orientation when necessary with access to the corresponding documentation.

The collaboration processes generally require a certain level of patience and understanding among the different parties in order to be successful. As the collaboration progresses and the participants get to know each other, trust is built and will improve understanding and allow early identification and resolution of potential obstacles.

Section 5

Importance of evaluation and tools for monitoring and evaluation of the processes

“Through the committee, we have had the opportunity to complement our services and benefit the community in a more integrated manner”

Participant of the Collaboration Committee of Huehuetenango

EVALUATION OF PROCESSES AND RESULTS

It is challenging to measure the effectiveness of collaborations especially for those organizations whose goal is to achieve social change and obtain results in the short term. Currently there is a great need for more research to identify the most effective way to measure the success of collaboration processes. Methods should be established to evaluate the different types, phases and forms of collaboration, as well as how to document and analyze the unexpected results, the impact and the side effects from these processes.

Throughout history the word “evaluation” has evoked feelings and emotions that are generally negative. Even in cases where it does not produce discomfort, we might think it is a waste of time and adds unnecessarily to our workload.

It is essential to understand the importance of including an evaluation plan from the beginning of any project with the conviction that the evaluation is an opportunity for discovery and should be recognized as a positive experience.

By means of an evaluation we can learn the degree to which we are achieving our goal of benefiting the communities with which we work and of complying with the objectives and interests of each participating entity. The evaluation also shows us what is working and what is not, so that we can avoid investing time in activities that are not effective.

For the evaluation of collaboration processes, the indicators can provide answers in the different areas of the collaboration.

- **Influence and reach:** this reflects the potential impact of the participating agencies which can indicate their strategic position within the collaboration as well as the community. It reflects the change produced by the collaboration work in terms of impact, scope and influence of the member organizations in a community.
- **Contribution to the processes:** this measures the role of the participating organizations in the work process as a generator or receiver of information, content or other materials. It also facilitates identification of groups with significant profiles in the innovation processes.
- **Group relationship dynamic:** This measures the balance of internal and external relations among the members of different groups (by department, by organization, or by geographic situation) in order to

- streamline and optimize efforts. It facilitates identification of the communication flow within a network, besides revealing which teams are carrying out the expected exchanges.
- **Reciprocity in communication:** This indicates the degree of collaboration measured in terms of the reciprocity of the relationship. Among other things it serves to identify organizations that respond quickly to communications and follow up on agreements.

The recommendations in this section point to or suggest the ideal for the processes. This ideal may or may not be reachable due to availability or sufficiency of resources or systems, but what is always advisable for this kind of processes is:

- That the partners or participants jointly define what is understood as quality or as success for the collaboration.
- That they determine how they will identify the success of a result, process or product and how this will be measured.
- That they talk regularly about the progress of the collaboration, identifying 'where we are' in comparison to our own definition of success or quality.
- That the findings, lessons learned and 'promising practices' identified during these analysis or measurement processes are regularly incorporated into activities and strategies.

APPRECIATION OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation should be adjusted or adapted to each unique collaboration process. To do this, the members should think about and discuss what the evaluation will teach the collaboration, what effects it might have among the members and who else might learn from the successes and failures of this experience.

Some considerations that help to appreciate the evaluation include:

- See the evaluation as a reflection process. Avoid assuming that the actions that have been chosen are the best or only way to achieve goals. Successful collaborations change, evolve, and are open to necessary modifications and improvements.
- Incorporate the evaluation into the work. The evaluation should be an integrated part of the collaboration effort. It should not be seen as an external imposition or as a requirement from the donors. Those who participate in the collaboration must be involved and decide how to design and implement the evaluation.
- Evaluate the distinct stages of collaboration as the evaluation needs will be different. At the beginning, for example, progress in organization will be measured; later the joint interventions will be measured and then the results that are obtained.
- Use various methods. The evaluation needs to capture both qualitative and quantitative results.
- Evaluate results and processes. Definition of the expected achievements can help to compare and concretely measure the results at the beginning, middle and end of the collaboration.
- Systematically document what has been done well and how these results were obtained.

- Appreciate failures. It is important to recognize that failures are valuable and provide an opportunity for learning.
- Regularly visit the group's achievements by means of quarterly auto-evaluation meetings.
- Expect enriching information. There are many variables that can affect the results of any intervention, thus it is important to recognize and/or expect multiple results.

DEVELOP AN EVALUATION PLAN

To know how the group dynamic works or what results have been achieved, it is necessary to measure performance in relation to expectations (how we define success or quality).

Once the intervention objective is defined and there is a clear idea of how the results will be used, the evaluation plan can be designed.

Evaluation questions should guide the process. These should reflect those things we want to know and this serves to focus the evaluation, measure impact, and evaluate processes. The evaluation questions should be focused on what was done, how it was done, what happened to carry it out and what the results were.

Before initiating an evaluation plan, identify resources and the individuals who will be responsible for implementation and data collection. For a collaboration process, the estimated cost of the evaluation can be shared among the various participants. In some cases, collaboration groups seek specific funding for this task. Others include universities among their participants or they seek resources from the community, such as grad students to facilitate development of the evaluation plan.

COLLABORATION INDICATORS

Collaboration indicators could reflect the degree of success regarding these questions suggested by Winer and Ray:

- Is this effort effective? Are we complying with our objectives to benefit the community and achieving our own interests at the same time?
- Is the effort adequate? Are we using sufficient resources to achieve the results?
- Is the effort efficient? Are we using our time, money and energy in the best way possible within the collaboration and in the community?
- What lessons have we learned? What have we learned about the relationships that we have built and the work we have done, and what still needs to be done?

During the collaboration itself, documenting the processes and the answers to the questions will facilitate the task of the final evaluation:

TO EVALUATE PROCESSES	TO EVALUATE RESULTS
<p>1. Establish the interests and results that each participating organization hopes to obtain.</p>	<p>1. Establish the desired benefit for the community where you will be working and determine how the collaboration can measure the success of the intervention.</p>
<p>2. Document when achievements are accomplished and identify the factors that made it possible.</p>	<p>2. Define the methods used, services offered, preparation of information, etc.</p>
<p>3. Describe the communication processes among the members of the collaboration.</p>	<p>3. Make a list of the circumstances that were not able to be tested, situations such as eradicating malnutrition, but also list the achievements that helped to reduce this condition.</p>
<p>4. Systematically document the impact of the collaboration on its members. This could be done by means of success stories and lessons learned which should include: What has each one contributed? How has the collaboration fostered change in the way they offer services?</p>	<p>4. Describe how the different characteristics of the community have changed since the beginning of the intervention, the number of people reached, the community's reaction to the methods as well as the dynamic of the collaborating organizations, and the changes observed in the community that could be attributed to the collaboration effort.</p>
<p>5. Document the unanticipated results, such as, the involvement of other stakeholders motivated by the collaboration process. And how their participation helped the process.</p>	<p>5. Document unexpected results such as, for example, greater interest in the health departments for increasing monitoring coverage for a specific health problem.</p>

LEARNING FROM THE EVALUATION TO IMPROVE WORK

The members of the collaboration should seek ongoing feedback as well as continuously evaluating their efforts based on the development of each of the stages of the project. The main purpose for the evaluation is continuing improvement.

Once an evaluation or measurement activity has been completed, the results should be incorporated into future processes. When the results are presented the group should discuss:

1. Do these results reflect what we were expecting? Why? How are they different?
2. Were the evaluation questions answered? Can we say that our processes and results contributed to improve what we hoped to improve in the community? Why did they, or didn't they? and What can we do to make this happen?
3. How has the collaborative process supported the goals or objectives of each participating organization? What can or should we do more of or better? What can or should we do differently?
4. What should we do to make the necessary changes in our processes or objectives? And who should provide follow up to ensure that these changes come about?

NO MATTER WHAT DESIGN IS USED FOR THE EVALUATION, THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO FOLLOW UP AND TO SELECT A REALISTIC NUMBER OF INDICATORS THAT CAN BE MONITORED DURING THE LIFE OF THE COLLABORATION AND THAT WILL ENSURE THAT THE OBJECTIVES ARE BEING ACHIEVED. SOME OF THESE COULD BE:

- DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS
- ASSIGNED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WERE COVERED
- THE PROPORTION OF MEMBERS WHO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES
- ADEQUATE USE OF RESOURCES ENSURED
- ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES AND FINALIZATION OF THE PROJECT

Section 6 | Case study the Huehuetenango experience

As part of a new vision which has been incorporated across the board in the Feed the Future (FTF) program and more specifically in the Western Highlands Integrated Program in Guatemala (WHIP), the government of the United States is seeking to combine efforts among many agencies and stakeholders to define joint strategies and provide integrated and focused attention to the most felt needs of the population in priority areas.

Within this context, at the beginning of 2013, USAID encouraged its implementing partners in the Western Highlands of Guatemala to begin processes and create opportunities for coordination and establishment of alliances.

Thus, in the department of Huehuetenango, as well as in Quiché, Quetzaltenango and San Marcos, local coordination committees were formed composed of those organizations implementing projects funded by USAID. These local committees formed part of a national committee made up of national leaders of the participating organizations along with representatives from the government of Guatemala and from USAID.

While this national structure has an important role in the development of national strategies, pursuit of resources and impact with government institutions, the collaborative approach in Huehuetenango is aimed at the work that is being carried out on the ground given that this is the environment with the most significant challenges for joint efforts among partners and where their impact on the beneficiary populations will be felt.

PROCESS OF FORMING A LOCAL COLLABORATION COMMITTEE

The committee in Huehuetenango began with five organizations which are implementing projects and programs with funds from USAID and slowly they were joined by other partners who receive funds from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). It is now comprised of 13 member organizations that carry out projects in 24 municipalities of the department of Huehuetenango. These cover areas of health and nutrition, economic production, natural resources, environment, resiliency, education and technical assistance.

The members of the committee agree with USAID regarding the importance of coordinating and creating alliances to reduce time, improve resource utilization and offer greater benefits to communities, especially in the context of



a complex multi-sectorial initiative. Nevertheless, to achieve the greatest impact for the communities and greater efficiency in the use of resources, the committee has identified the need for establishing a more effective level of collaboration and coordination among the partner organizations, which will permit joint labors in the shared geographic areas with similar or complementary interventions.

With this general idea, the Huehuetenango committee is trying to develop and put into practice an effective operational model for coordination and collaboration among implementing organizations, which will permit the development of joint field actions without duplicating efforts and overtaxing the support of the community and which facilitate optimization of resources and utilization of the strengths of each member.

To develop this model, PCI, as the leader of the Huehuetenango collaboration committee, and with the support of TOPS, facilitated a process of reflection and self-evaluation. This contributed to strengthening the organizational capacity of the committee members in order to compile significant experiences and findings, as well as identifying the joint vision that the committee has for the model they want to develop.

SELECTION OF INSTRUMENTS AND METHODOLOGIES TO FACILITATE COLLECTION OF EXPERIENCES AND SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY INTO THE COLLABORATIVE FUNCTIONING OF THE HUEHUETENANGO, GUATEMALA COMMITTEE

In an attempt to understand and learn from the successful experiences of the Huehuetenango departmental committee, we chose to use the appreciative inquiry method which PCI has used in its organizational development processes and which has had positive results. Appreciative Inquiry is based on the simple idea that we humans move in the direction of the questions that we ask. The methodology helps to facilitate any process by providing open and constructive dialogue with positive questions that will inspire and lead to action as well as seeking the common good. Some of the benefits of this method include:

- It focuses on what works.
- It abandons the framework of criticism, mistrust and competition.
- It brings about integration among different areas.
- It generates shared visions and aligns people behind these.
- It plans strategically.
- It builds an appreciative culture and one of mutual learning.
-

Thus we asked the group questions that invite reflection seeking a deeper understanding of the purpose of the committee. Some of the questions used in the appreciative inquiry process were:

1. Tell me a story about a successful collaboration process within this committee that you participated in. What happened? What was the process like? Who participated? What were the main achievements/results?

2. What tools for measurement and/or systematization have been developed for the benefit of this collaboration in the community? What tools are needed?
3. As a Committee, What would be the best way to share information and what type of information should be shared?
4. What might be some obstacles for carrying out effective collaboration?
5. Up until now, what has been your greatest learning or discovery about the benefits, for the community, from the coordination within this committee?

This activity at the beginning of the exploration process, helped the participants to have a more cordial and satisfying attitude by recognizing the achievements of the committee in the two years since its formation. The following were some of the principal achievements mentioned:

- Greater knowledge of the projects supported by USAID
- Formation of the board of directors of the committee
- Formation of the commissions for each core topic
- Informal coordination with other members of the collaboration
- Creation of a map of departmental coverage
- Internal regulations for the departmental coordination committee
- Signing the collaboration agreements with the participating organizations and with other sectors
- Being able to observe that the community is beginning to benefit from the establishment of some of the coordination processes of the committee members

During the exploratory interventions, we also used a Round Table session with the I-STAR methodology (Integrated System for Transformational Assessment and Results) created by PCI and EDC (Educational Development Center). The purpose of the round table was to promote group learning based on directed dialogue on topics that affect the development of the committee.



SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

During this session beside collecting valuable information for the development of this guide, the process was useful for the growth of the committee. By means of this process, the members of the committee could identify areas in which their performance is satisfactory as well as opportunity areas where interventions are needed to strengthen the processes to improve collaboration functioning.

- Complementarity in the use of tools and methodologies
- Reinforcement of the structure of the committee
- Identification of the strengths of the participating organizations
- Establishment of a joint work plan

- Development of an instrument to measure the effectiveness of the coordination and activities
- Creation of an information system to improve communication
- Sharing community needs with the committee
- Creation of collective learning programs including specialized technical assistance
- Decreased individualism and competition
- Achievement of better communication and coordination with the central committee

Tasks identified by the Huehuetenango committee to improve collaboration

- Restructure the committee, define participation, roles and responsibilities
- Develop an activity plan
- Position the partners' committee within the community in Huehuetenango
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan
- Develop a communication strategy or plan



EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE COLLABORATION

Through the committee, we have had the opportunity to complement our services and benefit the community in a more integrated manner. It is important to establish agreements with the health departments to achieve greater recognition of the work of the non-governmental organizations.

If each organization doesn't formally assign a representative we may fail to achieve our commitments. We have learned that the collaboration agreements support the representatives of the organizations so that their commitment can be validated by the decision makers.

SUCCESS STORY

GROUP UNITY

By: COUNTERPART INTERNATIONAL

Interviewer: **Fabián Pérez**. Promotor Agrícola.

Relator: **Luis Martínez**.

FOOD FOR PROGRESS GUATEMALA

September, 2014. Chiaque, Community, Malacatancito, Huehuetenango, Guatemala.

One of the great strengths of this group are the alliances that were made with support from Counterpart International (equipment and inputs), MAGA (equipment and inputs), the University of San Carlos of Guatemala through the North-Western Center -CUNOROC- (technical assistance through the internship of an Agronomy student), and ANACAFE (technical assistance and follow up for coffee growing activities), which made a difference and strengthened the sustainability processes of the community of Chiaque, Malacatancito.

“ If it weren't for the integration of the group, we would not have achieved interventions from the institutions that currently support us. With the active participation of all the members we have established agricultural parcels that will help us learn new techniques. I think that by working together we will see our village improve every day ”

said **Blanca López**, a project participant.



Section 7 | Recommendations for Donors

The impact that the civil society organizations will have by participating in collaboration exercises is immense and measurable. Thanks to the vision and support of donors who appreciate and value collaboration and integration of services, more and more organizations will seek to establish alliances, networks and/or committees to share social responsibility and offer intentionally coordinated services.

IF YOU ARE A DONOR:

- Continue supporting this type of initiative
- Celebrate the first achievements such as building new relationships and the establishing mutual trust
- Be patient and wait for results which will not come about immediately, but will in the end be worth the wait
- Have faith and let the organizations define their common purpose
- Strengthen government-organization links so that the voice of the civil society organizations can be heard, valued and considered



INVENTORY OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM USAID AND OTHER AGENCIES OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN HUEHUETENANGO, GUATEMALA

No.	NOMBRE DEL PROYECTO	EJECUTADO POR	REPRESENTANTE	CARGO	TELÉFONOS	CORREO ELECTRÓNICO
1	CADENAS DE VALOR RURAL	ANACAFE FFC	Beliza Mendoza	Supervisora SAN	4220 - 8491	belizamendoza@gmail.com
2	POLITICAS EN SALUD Y EDUCACION	REDHOSEN HEPP	Apolonia Pascual	Facilitadora de Dpto.	4688 - 184	redmisharhuetenango@gmail.com
3	POLITICAS EN SALUD Y EDUCACION	REDMISAR HEPP	Marco Gálvez	Facilitador técnico	5734 - 2564	redhosenhuehue@gmail.com
4	LEER Y APRENDER	JUAREZ Y ASOCIADOS	Ventura Solanic	Coordinador regional	5233 - 8269	ventura.Solanic@usaidlea.org
5	AGUA EN LOS CUCHUMATANES	FUNDAECO	Rolando Gómez	Director Regional	5059 - 5739	r.gomez@fundaeco.org.gt
6	CLIMA, NATURALEZA Y COMUNIDADES	TNC/CNG	Sebastián Charchalac	Gerente Regional	7767 - 7579	scharchalac@tnc.org
7	GOBERNABILIDAD LOCAL	NEXOS LOCALES	Magda Tello	Especialista municipal	3029 - 6410	magdalena_Tello@dai.com
8	PLANIFICACION FAMILIAR	PASMO/Plan Fam	Susana Antón	Médico Gerente	5050 - 5420	santon@pasmo-ca.org
9	ALIMENTOS PARA EL PROGRESO	COUNTERPART (USDA)	Elmer Barillas	Especialista de extensión agrícola	5993 - 3317	eklee@counterpart.org
10	ALIMENTOS PARA EL PROGRESO	COUNTERPART (USDA)	Luis Martínez	Técnico de campo	5777 - 4256	gmartinez789@hotmail.com
11		PROJECT CONCERN INTERNATIONAL -PCI-	Bal María Gutiérrez	Directora Regional	3044 - 5558	bgutierrez@pciguate.org
12	PROGR. ACCIONES INTEGRADAS PARA LA SEGURIDAD ALIMENTARIA PAISANO.	PCI (USAID)	Felipe Hernández	Coord. programa Paisano	3002 - 8227	fhernandez@pciguate.org
13	PROGRAMA ALIMENTOS PARA LA EDUCACION	PCI (USDA)	José Luis Argüello	Coord. programa FFE II	3038 - 4658	jarguello@pciguate.org
14	NUTRISALUD	UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CORPORATION	Mélida Chaguaceda	Gerente	4043 - 5640	mchaguaceda@nutri-salud.urc-chs.com
15	PLANIFICACION FAMILIAR	APROFAM	Irma Méndez	Administradora	7764 - 9018	imendez@aprofam.org.gt
16	MASFRIJOL	Michigan State University/Legume Innovation Lab (MSU) y PROG CADENAS DE VALOR RURAL	Luis Santos	Técnico responsable de región	5516 - 7779	luisimasfrijol@gmail.com
17	CADENAS DE VALOR RURAL	ANACAFÉ	Rony Castillo	Asesor Técnico en café	5966 - 5935	ronymcm@anacafe.org
18	LEER Y APRENDER	JUAREZ Y ASOCIADOS	Norma Itzep	Coordinadora de Región	4214 - 8135	norma.itzep@usaidlea.org
19	LEER Y APRENDER	JUAREZ Y ASOCIADOS	Maricela Hernández	Técnico de campo	4612 - 3271	maryhernan1903@hotmail.com
20	CADENAS DE VALOR RURAL	FEDECOAG, SOCIO ANACAFE	Mario Rodas	Especialista y extensionista	037 - 3626	ingmarro@hotmail.com
21	SOBREVIVENCIA NEONATAL	CURAMERICAS	Mario Valdéz	Coordinador	5306 - 3324	mariovaldez@hotmail.com

TOOL 1

THREE STEPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

PREPARATION

- 1
 - Define the objective for the meeting
 - Prepare a schedule for the meeting in advance (include the times)
 - Prepare the meeting agenda and distribute it
 - Designate someone to take notes

DURING THE MEETING

- 2
 - Respect the time
 - Clarify the objective of the meeting
 - Follow the points on the agenda
 - Define tasks, with deadlines and who is responsible
 - Summarize the decisions that were made

FOLLOW UP

- 3
 - Distribute the minutes of the meeting as soon as possible
 - Follow up with the agreed upon tasks
 - Keep the minutes and other documents in an accessible place

MEETING AGENDA (SUMMARY)

This is a summary of the agreements from the session which should be sent to the members before the next meeting.

Decision/ Action	Responsibility	Deadline

TOOL 2

QUESTIONS FOR THE EVALUATION OF A COLLABORATION PROCESS

QUESTIONS FOR THE EVALUATION	EVALUATION ACTIVITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there at least 10 organizations representing different sectors? • Are the members of the collaboration actively participating? During the planning and implementation phase? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of the number of organizations and note which sector they represent • Keep a list of the organizations that have signed a memorandum of understanding • Keep a registry of the events or activities, products and participating members

OBJECTIVE:

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Source of information	Collection of information	Timeline (When)	Analysis of information. Interpretation of data collected.	When and with whom will results be shared?	Persons responsible for this task

TOOL 3

Collaboration agreement (sample)

(Name of the Collaborative)

And

(Name of the NGO partner)

The (Name of the collaborative) and (Name of the NGO Partner) enter into an agreement for the purpose of advancing the work of (theme of sector), in (region or location), through (key strategies of the collaborative). Either party to this agreement may terminate this agreement by giving the other party (number) days notice in advance in writing.

Description of the Collaborative:

- (what is it, mission and the collaborative process for decision-making)
- (key performance indicators)
- (key strategies)

Shared Responsibilities of all Partners: (List responsibilities such as the following)

- Participate in (specify if monthly) meetings
- Share their perspective and participate in a collaborative decision making process
- Continue to build community-wide consensus and ownership to Collaborative's work
- Jointly advance the goals of individual partners and the Collaborative
- Contribute information that is relevant to the activities and strategies of the Collaborative

Specific Responsibilities of NGO partners: (identify key actions that partners can expect from the collaborative)

- Regular meetings according to schedule
- Invitations and minutes
- Information sharing and effective and timely communication through (email, regular mail, webpage or other means)

The NGO partner commits to: (list all responsibilities from the NGO partner)

- ()
- ()

Process to Review Progress:

Describe how the partners will jointly review the agreement expectations and the frequency of this review process.

Financial Considerations:

If there is any exchange of funds between the parties it should be specified. If not, including a clause that clarifies the financial considerations may be important. Examples:

Nothing in this MOU shall be deemed to be a commitment or obligation of funds from the Collaborative or the NGO partner (name). The entities acknowledge that all or any financial arrangements must be negotiated and will depend upon the availability of funds.

Signatures: Once the MOU is negotiated and agreed upon by parties involved, it should be signed and dated by the authorized individuals representing each partner or organization.

Name of Collaborative _____

Name of Partner _____

Signature _____

Signature _____

Collaborative Chair Name _____

Partner Name and title _____

Agreement Date: _____

TOOL 4

Partnership baseline tool

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Partnership Baseline Tool is to provide a framework for developing a more systematic understanding of the nature of the partnership between organisations. It comprises a series of characteristics that can be used to describe, analyse and differentiate between different types of partnerships.

1. The Partnership Baseline Tool can be used internally by an organisation to establish a baseline for understanding existing partnerships.
2. It can also be used collaboratively by members of both organisations for the same purpose.

DESCRIPTION

Successful partnerships between organisations unlock, combine and leverage the creativity, insight, energy and resources of their participants. It is the quality of the dynamic interplay between a partnership's context, purpose, participants, organisation and outcomes that makes the difference between success and failure. The success or failure of a partnership is not pre-determined simply by the context; the strengths and weaknesses of the participants or their similarities or differences, nor by the enormity or complexity of the shared task or even the resource constraints.

The success or failure is determined by how the challenges and opportunities are handled. This depends on the insight and leadership of the individuals involved and their ability to help navigate their respective organisations through complex and often unfamiliar terrain.

A partnership is fundamentally a process and not a thing. It is far more useful to conceive of partnerships as organic systems rather than mechanical constructions. From this perspective, understanding arises by looking at their dynamic rather than their static characteristics.

The Partnerships Baseline Tool provides a framework to examine these characteristics in a systematic way.

PROCESS

1. Clarify the partnership under discussion.
2. Clarify the purpose of the exercise.
3. Use some or all of the 16 characteristics described in the Partnership Baseline Matrix overleaf (or add your own in the boxes provided) to establish an agreed baseline understanding of the partnership your organisation has with another organisation.
4. The baseline can be referred back to in order to measure progress using the Partnership Monitoring Tool, pp. 21-24.

Partnership baseline matrix

1. Parties involved	Who are the participating organisations in the partnership and their sectors (private/business; public or civil society)?
2. When established	When the partnership was established together with some brief notes on its history.
3. Planned timescale	Partnerships may be time-bound or open-ended. Some partnerships may begin as time-bound and limited in ambition but evolve over time.
4. Drivers	Drivers create the conditions for the partnership to occur. They are part of the broader context for the partnership. For example, the decline in a particular species or habitat.
5. Triggers	Triggers are the specific conditions that stimulated the individuals and organisations together to address an issue or set of issues. For example, the introduction of a new EU directive.
6. Purpose	<p>Apart from their individual goals and expectations, participants in a partnership must be able to establish a common agenda that addresses mutually agreed problems or challenges. The degree of difficulty and risk of failure will usually be greater, the greater the differences between participants' individual agendas and the common agenda.</p> <p>Even when participants join forces to promote what is a common goal from the outset, problems can arise if there is insufficient knowledge or understanding of individual expectations and agendas.</p> <p>The scope of the purpose refers to whether the intended action will be carried out locally, nationally, or internationally.</p> <p>The complexity of the purpose refers to whether the intended action is Situational – a specific, well-defined goal that is tangible and usually one-off. The situational level is more often at a local level and time-bounded.</p>

	<p>Attitudinal – one step more complex. For example, raising the awareness of the business sector in dealing with disability in the workplace.</p> <p>Institutional – attempting to change existing policies or legislation or to create new bodies for the long term to deal with the particular issues in question.</p> <p>Values – attempting to bring about deeper level changes in people’s beliefs and aspirations. It is normally the most difficult and lengthy type of action to undertake.</p> <p>As the partnership develops so do individual and collective insights into what is possible and desirable. Early successes may lead to more ambitious aims being set.</p> <p>In other cases, ambitions may have to be scaled-down in the face of unexpected problems.</p>
<p>7. Transactions</p>	<p>What is being transacted in each direction between organisations? For example: money, information, access, equipment, training, people.</p>
<p>8. Form of Agreement</p>	<p>Partnerships may be established with minimal organisational and legal infrastructure, focusing on the pragmatic needs associated with addressing shared goals. Other partnerships may be more formalised through the development of a joint mission statement and objectives; memoranda of understanding, legal contracts or, in the case of joint legally constituted bodies, articles of association.</p> <p>Agreements between participants may include statements about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights and responsibilities • Decision-making mechanisms • Involvement of intended beneficiaries • Accountability • Conflict resolution <p>See the Partnership Agreement Tool, pp. 12-15, for further headings.</p>
<p>9. Focus</p>	<p>The relative emphasis within the partnership on the “What we do”, “How we work” and “Who we work with”</p>

<p>10. Developmental stage of the partnership</p>	<p>Las alianzas entre organizaciones pueden pasar por una serie de etapas. Las etapas comunes son</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and mutual ‘sounding out’ • Negotiation and formalisation • Maintenance • Development and strengthening • (Review and re-negotiation) • Phasing out / ending • (Possible re-generation)
<p>11. Characteristics</p>	<p>One way of gaining an overall sense of a partnership is to brainstorm a list of adjectives or phrases to describe it. For example: ‘frustrating, worthwhile, ground-breaking, strategic, valuable, frightening, respectful’.</p>
<p>12. Accountability - mutual rights and obligations</p>	<p>One way of establishing mutual accountability is to negotiate mutual rights and obligations between participants. When these are agreed they represent an important mechanism for ensuring mutual accountability.</p>
<p>13. Problems and challenges encountered</p>	<p>All partnerships will encounter problems and challenges. Establishing and maintaining a mutually beneficial partnership is rarely simple, especially with non-traditional allies. How these are negotiated and resolved provides an indication of the maturity and resilience of the partnership as well as the commitment each party has to the success of the partnership.</p> <p>Common challenges that may be encountered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridging diversity – overcoming the differences that may occur when participating organisations have different cultures, characteristics, structures, methodologies, time-scales, expectations or languages. • Sustaining participant involvement – managing expectations is an important element of this. Most partnerships require more management time (for building trust, overcoming culture clashes, undertaking consultations etc.) and take longer to show results than expected at the outset.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building new competencies – new skills, attitudes and capacities are needed by all participants in order to meet the aims of the partnership. • Addressing the power dimension – many partnerships have an inherent power imbalance. This may be due to some elements of the transaction being given inadequate recognition. Often, greater authority is given to (or assumed by) participants that bring the most financial resources to the partnership, despite the fact that money is only one of the elements of the transaction.
14. Benefits for your own organisation	Potential benefits may include achieving organisational goals; development of 'human capital'; improved operational efficiency; organisational innovation; increased access to resources; better access to information; more effective services; enhanced reputation and credibility; legitimacy; enhanced reputation and credibility; access to communities; access to decision-makers.
15. Benefits for other organisation(s)	Potential benefits may include achieving organisational goals; development of 'human capital'; improved operational efficiency; organisational innovation; increased access to resources; better access to information; more effective services; enhanced reputation and credibility; legitimacy; enhanced reputation and credibility; access to communities; access to decision-makers.
16. Measurement and evaluation	Participants in a partnership need to work together to develop indicators for measuring the achievements and success of the partnership. The process of establishing a common approach to assessing performance can also help to grow mutual understanding, trust and shared work experience.

Sources: Nelson, Jane and Simon Zadek (2000) Partnership Alchemy, Copenhagen, Denmark: The Copenhagen Centre
 Fowler, Alan (2000) Partnerships: Negotiating Relationships, Occasional Papers Series No 32, Oxford: INTRAC.

TOOL 5

Collaborative performance monitoring tool and change plans

Note: This tool has been translated and adapted from the Partnership Monitoring Tool that is part of WWF's The Partnership Toolbox¹. To review the original tool, please visit the link that is provided in the foot note.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this adapted tool is to:

- a)- Document the perceived quality of the collaborative work within the partnership
- b)- Identify priority areas for change in order to strengthen the collaborative.
- c)- Determine concrete steps for a change plan.

PARTICIPANTS:

It is recommended that:

- Each partner organization should participate through at least one representative. If there are two or more people representing one organization, they should reach a consensus on a graphical response per organization (see below).
- Participating person or persons be familiarized with the collaborative (i.e. they should have participated regularly in the collaborative sessions during at least the last 6 months)
- The participating person or persons have the sufficient powers to represent their organizations within the partnership and make decisions on behalf of their organization.

PROCESS DESCRIPTION:

This analysis process includes a dialogue and measurement tool, a process to identify necessary changes, and a basic template to identify next steps.

MEASUREMENT

For the initial assessment, the perceptions of process participants relating to eight performance criteria are documented. The degree to which the partnership meets these criteria is plotted using a 'spider diagram' with eight axes. The diagram gives a very visual representation of the "status of the partnership" and allows for easy comparisons between the perceptions from different people involved in the assessment.

SUGGESTED STEPS AND TIMELINES

INTRODUCTION:

1. At the beginning, clarify the purpose of the exercise. What is this performance measurement meeting for; who will participate and how; and what will be done with the results. (10 minutes)
2. Before starting the assessment, discuss the eight measurement criteria by answering the guiding questions below for each criterion. (30 minutes)

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

The partnership goals are clearly articulated and agreed

There is transparency in the decision making within the partnership

There is mutual respect between the participants in the partnership

There is clarity in the roles of participants, and they are clearly described in the relevant documents

There is mutual trust between the different partnership members (at the individual and organizational levels)

There is willingness and commitment among members to work to a set of shared values

In the last 6-12 months there are examples of collaborative work conducted to a set of shared values

There are performance indicators that have been agreed and are known by different members of the partnership

Distribute a list with the eight performance criteria to each participant (one per participant)

For each criterion, ask someone to “Please read the criterion aloud”

Now ask someone to “Please interpret what this criterion means.” “Say what it means in your own words”

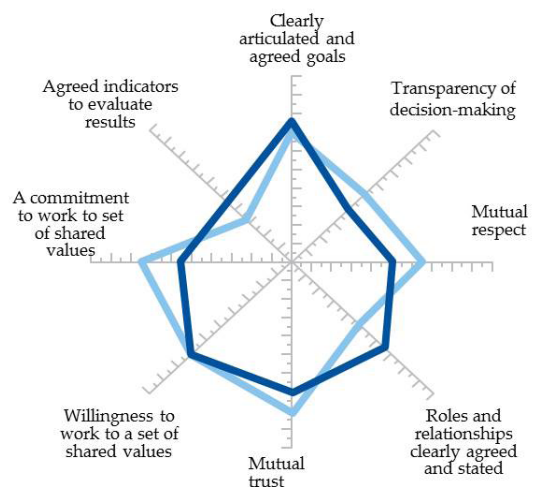
Ask only one or two opinions

Before advancing to the next, ask if everyone agrees with the meaning

Once this conversation is completed, the next step is to carry out the assessment based on the perception of each participating organization.

RATING:

- Clarify that each organization (if there are two or more people per organization they must reach a consensus on their rating) is then asked to plot their assessments in the large-scale diagram by marking their scores on each axis and joining the dots. If possible, each person should use a different colored marker.
- The rating is given on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 representing the highest possible partnership performance. Scoring a 10 means that we absolutely agree that the partnership has accomplished a level of excellence in that respective criterion. Conversely, a rating of zero indicates that in our perception we absolutely disagree with the corresponding statement. If possible, provide a copy of this scale to each participant, to provide a clearer understanding of what a score of 10 represents.
- Allow 10-15 minutes to the group to decide what score to give under each criterion. (15 minutes)
- Each person is asked to plot their assessment in the large-scale diagram by marking their score and then connecting the dots. If possible, each person should use a different colored marker. The result will be something like the diagram on the right. This represents the scoring from two members of a partnership. (15 minutes)



DISCUSSION: (20 minutes)

Once all participant organizations have plotted their scores, open up a discussion with the following guiding questions.

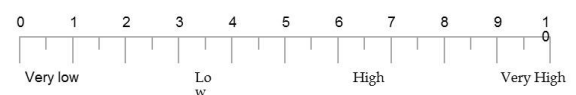
- What do we see in this diagram? What do these results indicate?
- What are the areas of greatest strength of the partnership?
- What are the areas of greatest consensus? (Where there is more overlap between the scores).
- What are the areas where we see less consensus? (Where there is more separation between scores).
- What recent (last 12 months) experiences of our partnership explain these results?
- Which parts of the partnership's history (how it was formed; the work conducted during the last 3-5 years, etc.) of our partnership may explain these results?

IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES: (30 minutes)

Based on the results of the final diagram-

- Given our current status and immediate and long-term plans, what are the three or four key areas that are important for us to be able to successfully carry out our plans?

Scale



- Of the eight areas, which are the weaker or less consensus areas that we can work to improve in the next 6-12 months? We can expect to achieve - greater consensus? Greater strength?
- What are the areas of greatest strength or greater consensus that can be instrumental in improving other areas? How can we use these strengths?

IDENTIFICATION OF NECESSARY CHANGES: (Total 30-40 min)

Once the 3 or 4 priority areas have been identified, write each of them on a card and tape the cards on the wall. Then give each participant 6-8 cards (or sheets of paper half-letter size) and markers, and ask them to write two specific recommendation per priority, intended to improve or strengthen the priority areas.

- They must write one recommendation per card
- Each recommendation should be specific (not general), and described in terms of the change we want to achieve.
- They must place their recommendations (using tape) under the corresponding priority area (of the 3-4 selected).

Once the recommendations have been posted, ask participants to select the 5 most important, using the following criteria: those most feasible to be achieved in the next 6-12 months; and those most important for strengthening the partnership.

The five actions or recommendations that receive the most votes will be selected for implementation. Participants can select less than 5, but selecting more than 5 is not recommended.

For each of these actions or recommendations, participants should jointly identify the following:

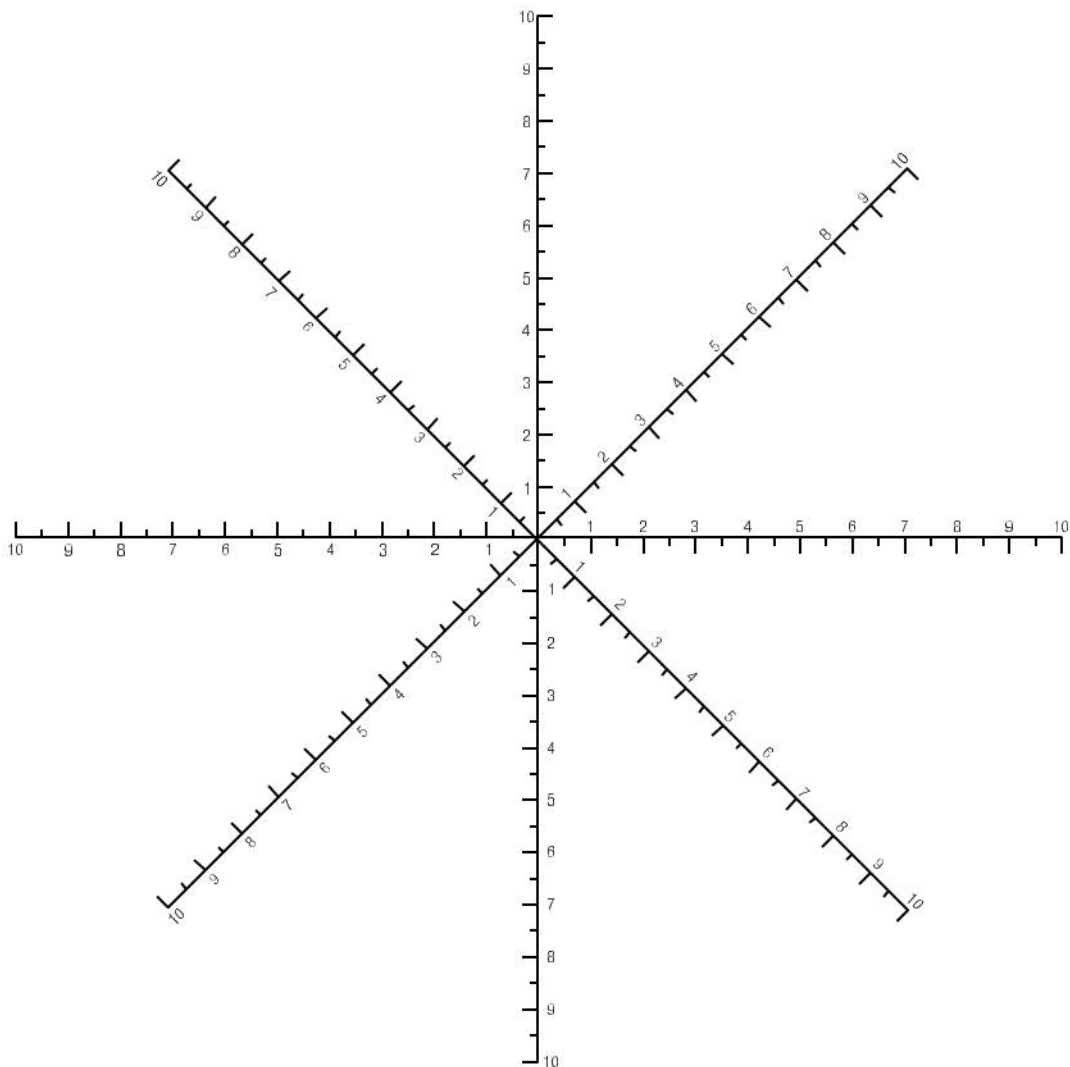
- -Person, team or organization responsible
- -Expected results
- -Needed (or existing) inputs for completing this action
- -Expected time for completion

The person or team who will facilitate this process should prepare a report containing the results, including a copy (or photograph) of the completed spider diagram, and the five priority actions from the step above.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

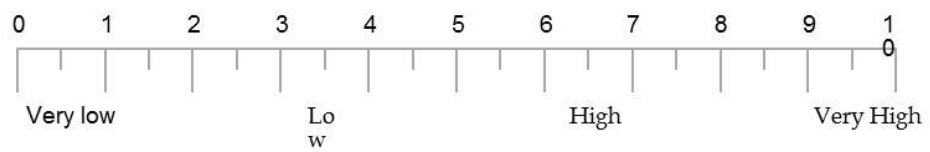
1. Amplified copy of the spider diagram (one); See next page.
2. Scaled copy (one per person) the measurement scale
3. Colored markers (at least one different color for each organization).
4. 3x5 inch cards (or halved letter-size sheets).
5. Tape.
6. A copy of this guide for the facilitator team or person.

PARTNERSHIP MONITORING SPIDER DIAGRAM



KEY

Scale



RESOURCES

U.S. Agency for International Development Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, Office of Food for Peace (FFP) Office of Food for Peace (FFP). Technical References for FFP Development Food Assistance Projects. Contains a collection of resources and guidance to assist potential partners access technical information and emerging best practice relevant to the sectors and activities USAID addresses with its Food for Peace non-emergency resources and Feed the Future (FTF) Community Development Funds.

<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/Draft%20Technical%20Reference%20Chapters%20for%20Development%20Food%20Assistance%20Programs.pdf>

Technical and Operational Performance Support Program. 2013. Designing Participatory Meetings and Brownbags: A TOPS Quick Guide to Linking Development Practitioners Washington, DC.

http://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/designingparticipatorymeetingsfinal_0.pdf

The Participatory Methods website:

<http://www.participatorymethods.org/task/facilitate>

A website that contains tips, tools and papers on the subject.

The Partnership Toolbox

http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/wwf_partnershiptoolboxartweb.pdf

Tools for Knowledge and Learning

<http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/188.pdf>

Toolbox Overview for Building Needle-Moving Community Collaborations

http://www.serve.gov/sites/default/files/ctools/CommunityCollaborativeToolkit_all%20materials.pdf

Insitute for Social Innovation (Spanish) Instituto de Innovacion Social (2013). La colaboración efectiva en las ONG. Alianzas estratégicas y redes.

http://itemsweb.esade.es/wi/research/iis/publicacions/2013_ColaboracionEfectivaONG.pdf

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https://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/4achange.pdf

<http://alliancefornevadanonprofits.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Research-Brief-Building-and-Sustaining-Collaborations.pdf>

http://www.serve.gov/sites/default/files/ctools/CommunityCollaborativeToolkit_all%20materials.pdf

http://ericmaisel.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2011/07/ten_tips_for_successful_collaboration.pdf

<http://www.lcrclandtrustexchange.org/InformationDocuments/collaborationhandbook091609.pdf>

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED390758.pdf>
