



Coalition Survey

Arizona SPF SIG

**Report of Findings for
TERROS COPE Coalition**

July 2008

**Prepared by
the SPF SIG Evaluation Team**

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Executive Summary

A total of 12 coalition members completed a Coalition Survey adapted from The Partnership Self-Assessment Tool developed by the Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health (CACSH). The survey is designed to elicit information about different aspects of the coalition from its members' perspectives. The survey assesses the following areas:

- Synergy (or how well the collaborative process is working)
- Leadership Effectiveness
- Administration and Management Effectiveness
- Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources
- Overall Satisfaction

Findings

Coalition members rated various aspects of coalition functioning using the following scale: *On Target*, *Almost On Target*, *Needs Work*, *Danger Zone*. Members rated the coalition's Leadership Effectiveness as an area in the *Almost on Target* zone. Members rated the coalition's Synergy, Administration and Management Effectiveness, and Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources as areas in the *Needs Work* zone, albeit it Synergy is close to the *Almost On Target* domain.

Participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with their participation in the coalition. The rating scale for the satisfaction area consists of: completely satisfied, mostly satisfied, somewhat satisfied, a little satisfied, and not at all satisfied. Overall, the majority of respondents indicated they were "completely satisfied" or "mostly satisfied" with their role in the coalition (83.4%) coalition's plans for achieving its goals (91.7%) and with the way the coalition is implementing its plans (83.4%). Additionally, more than 75% of respondents indicated they were "completely satisfied" or "mostly satisfied" with their influence in the coalition, as well as the way the people and organizations in the coalition work together.



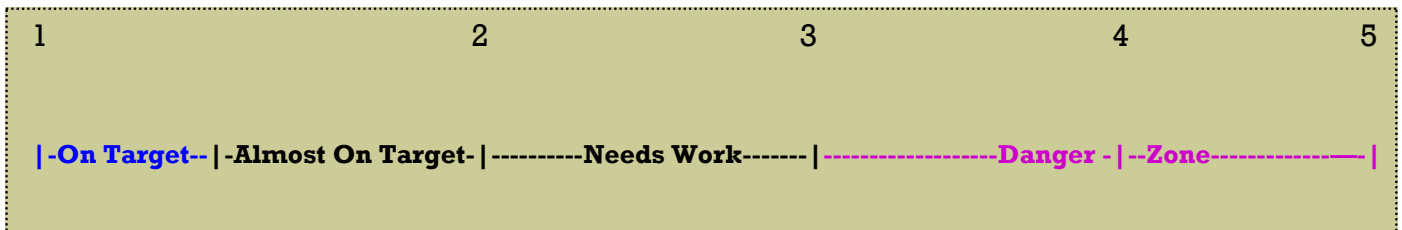
Background

The following report is based on findings from the surveys that your coalition members completed in June 2008. Twelve (12) surveys were completed to provide an assessment of your coalition. The survey, which was adapted from the Partnership Self-Assessment Tool developed by the Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health (CACSH), is designed to elicit information about different aspects of your coalition from its members. The survey is broken into five areas that assess the functioning of the coalition. These areas include: Synergy (or how well the collaborative process is working), Leadership Effectiveness, Administration and Management Effectiveness, Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources, and Overall Satisfaction.

The questionnaire is intended to enable coalition members to express opinions and provide information about their experiences anonymously. By reviewing the results of this survey, coalition members can learn about the coalition's strengths and weaknesses, as well as determine next steps to take to improve the collaborative process.

Section A

In this section of the report, you will find mean (average) scores for four domains of coalition functioning: Synergy, Leadership Effectiveness, Administration and Management Effectiveness, and Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources. The results are based on overall scores in each area and fall into four general areas of measurement or zones: *On Target* (1-1.4), *Almost On Target* (1.5-2.0), *Needs Work* (2.1-3.0), and *Danger Zone* (3.1-5). Scores that are in the *On Target* zone indicate that the coalition is currently excelling in this area. Scores that are in the *Almost on Target* zone indicate that the coalition is doing well but has the opportunity to make progress in this area. Scores that are in the *Needs Work* zone indicate that the coalition would benefit from dedicating more effort to building on its strengths in this area. Scores in the *Danger Zone* area indicate that coalition functioning may be impeded by lack of development in this area. The scale below is a visual reference to help you understand where your overall score falls within these four zones.



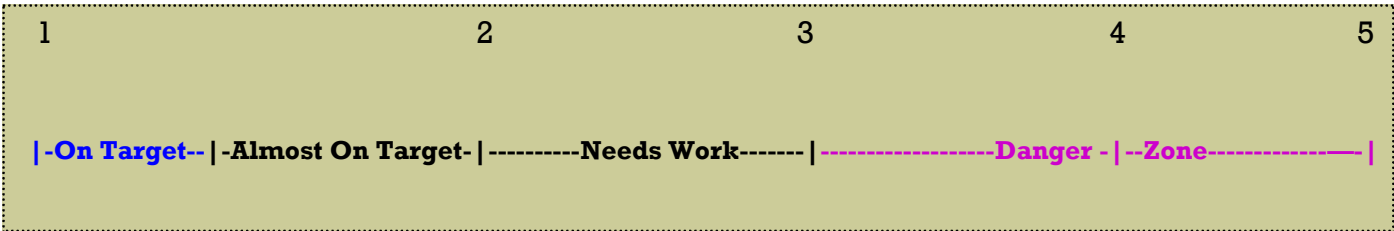
Your coalition scores:

Synergy **2.1**

Leadership Effectiveness **1.7**

Administration and Management Effectiveness **2.3**

Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources **2.3**

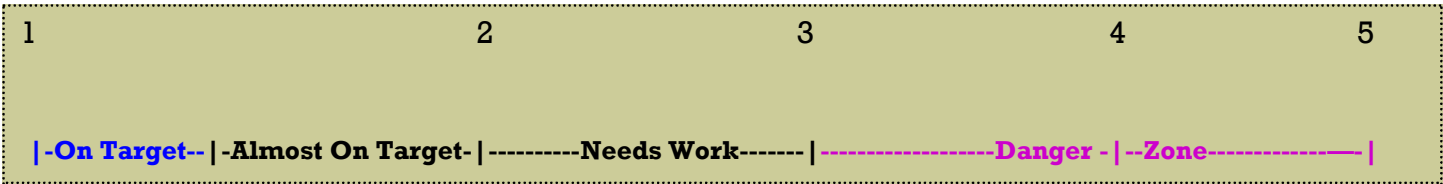


Synergy

In this section of nine questions, coalition members were asked to think about the people and organizations that participate in the coalition and rate how well they could accomplish certain tasks by working together. These tasks can include identifying problems and developing methods of solving them, including the views of those affected by the coalition’s work, developing goals, and responding to the needs and problems of the community. The area your coalition indicated as most needing improvement included: how well your partners are able to obtain support from individuals and organizations in the community that can either block the coalition's plans or help them move forward and how well partners are able to respond to the needs and problems of the community. To view the average scores for each question on the Synergy Scale, see **Appendix B, Table 1. The overall Synergy score is 2.1. This score is in the Needs Work zone.**

Leadership Effectiveness

In this section of 11 questions, coalition members were asked to think about the people who provide either formal or informal leadership in the coalition and to rate the total effectiveness of the coalition’s leadership in various areas. The areas your coalition members identified as most needing improvement include: working to develop a common language within the coalition, communicating the vision of the coalition, and inspiring or motivating people involved in the coalition. To view the average scores for each question on the Leadership Scale, see **Appendix B, Table 2. The overall Leadership Effectiveness score is 1.7. This score is in the Almost on Target zone.**



Administration and Management Effectiveness

In this section of nine questions, coalition members were asked to think about the administrative and management activities in the coalition and rate the effectiveness of the coalition in carrying out those activities. Activities in this category can consist of applying for and managing grants and funds and minimizing the barriers to participating in the coalition’s activities. The areas your coalition members identified as most needing improvement include: performing secretarial duties, applying for and managing grants and funds, and providing an orientation for new members as they join the coalition. To view the average scores for each question on the Administration and Management Scale, see **Appendix B, Table 3. The overall Administration and Management Effectiveness score is 2.3. This score is in the Needs Work zone.**

Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources

In this section of six questions, coalition members were asked to assess the extent to which the coalition has the non-financial resources to work effectively and achieve its goals. Non-financial resources can include skills and expertise, data and information, as well as connections to target populations, political decision-makers, government agencies, organizations, and other groups. A coalition’s legitimacy, credibility, and influence or convening power can also be considered non-financial resources. The areas your coalition members identified as most needing improvement include: skills and expertise, data and information, and connections to target populations. To view the average scores for each question on the Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources Scale, see **Appendix B, Table 4. The overall Non-Financial Resources score is 2.3. This score is in this Needs Work zone.**

Overall Satisfaction with Participation in the Coalition

In the following area of the coalition survey, coalition members were asked to rate their personal satisfaction with their participation in the coalition.

When coalition members were asked how satisfied they are with the way the people and organizations in the coalition work together:

16.7% reported that they are completely satisfied

58.3% reported that they are mostly satisfied

8.3% reported that they are somewhat satisfied

When coalition members were asked how satisfied they are with their influence in the coalition:

16.7% reported that they are completely satisfied

58.3% reported that they are mostly satisfied

8.3% reported that they are somewhat satisfied

When coalition members were asked how satisfied they are with their role in the coalition:

16.7% reported that they are completely satisfied

66.7% reported that they are mostly satisfied

8.3% reported that they are somewhat satisfied

When coalition members were asked how satisfied they are with the coalition's plans for achieving its goals:

41.7% reported that they are completely satisfied

50.0% reported that they are mostly satisfied

When coalition members were asked how satisfied they are with the way the coalition is implementing its plans:

41.7% reported that they are completely satisfied

41.7% reported that they are mostly satisfied

8.3% reported that they are somewhat satisfied

Conclusions

The findings included in this report represent coalition members' perceptions of how the coalition is functioning. Coalition members rated various aspects of coalition functioning using the following scale: *On Target*, *Almost On Target*, *Needs Work*, *Danger Zone*. Members rated the coalition's Leadership Effectiveness as an area that is *Almost On Target*. Coalition members rated Synergy, Administration and Management Effectiveness, and Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources as areas being in the *Needs Work* zone. However, Synergy was rated close to being *Almost On Target* and, with focused efforts, could move to that domain.

Overall, coalition members reported having high levels of satisfaction with their participation in the coalition. The majority of coalition members reported satisfaction with their influence and role in the coalition, as well as the way coalition members work together, the coalition's plans for achieving its goals, and the way the coalition is implementing its plans.

Information about your strengths and weaknesses can assist the coalition in establishing next steps for improving upon or sustaining various aspects of the coalition's collaborative process. Coalition members identified that more work can be done to strengthen certain areas of the coalition's functioning. You may want to use this document to initiate a discussion to gather member feedback about areas that can be addressed or improved upon. The Next Steps section below discusses how, by improving upon these areas, other aspects of the coalition's functioning may also be impacted, resulting in a more efficient partnership on all levels.

Next Steps

Through completing the survey, coalition members indicated that Leadership Effectiveness was in the *Almost On Target* zone and that Synergy, Administration and Management Effectiveness, and Sufficiency of Non-financial Resources are domains of coalition functioning that are in the *Needs Work* zone. It is important to recognize that focusing efforts to improve upon one

area of the coalition's functioning may also have the impact of raising the level of coalition functioning in other areas.

Synergy reflects the coalition's ability to accomplish greater tasks, when pooling the skills and resources of all members combined, than it would have accomplished if the members had acted independently of one another. To improve upon the coalition's Synergy, you may want to examine ways to improve the coalition members' problem-solving and communication skills. Annual retreats to build closer relationships among coalition members and team-building activities are some things that may be productive in this domain.

Similarly, Synergy may be improved by taking other courses of action, such as assuring that the coalition includes the views and priorities of people affected by the coalition's work or developing goals that are widely understood and supported by coalition members. The coalition may also want to address how well members are able to implement strategies that are most likely to work in the community in order to enhance overall coalition Synergy.

Coalition members found that in the area of Leadership Effectiveness the coalition is in the *Almost On Target* zone. By assessing the elements of leadership that are working for the coalition and encouraging members who demonstrate capacity for leadership, you may work towards bringing your Leadership Effectiveness to being *On Target*.

Administration and Management reflects the support structures and logistical activities that enable the coalition to carry-out activities effectively. Ways to strengthen this area of the coalition might include providing an orientation for new members, exercising timely communication within and outside the coalition, minimizing obstacles coalition members may encounter when participating in various activities, and coordinating coalition-related events, meetings and projects. You may also want to address ways to strengthen support staff through obtaining

adequate funding and training in order to combat turnover which can interfere with Administration and Management effectiveness. It is crucial that coalitions do not underestimate the importance of well-trained coordinators and support staff. High turn-over and under-funded staff positions can compromise a coalition's ability to function effectively.

Conducting an assessment to examine whether the coalition has connections to people affected by the problem(s) as well as political decision makers and government agencies is an important factor when addressing the Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources. When recruiting political decision-makers and government representatives, try to identify individuals who have influence and/or direct decision-making power, but are not too busy to actively participate on a coalition. Sometimes agency directors, for instance, are not the best choice because they are overextended.

In the pages that follow, you will find additional information to assist the coalition with taking the next steps needed to address its level of functioning. Appendix A includes a list of helpful coalition resources. Appendix B includes the mean score for each question in each of the domains reported on in Section A of the survey report.

Appendix A: Helpful Coalition Resources

- *Broadening Participation in Community Problem Solving: a Multidisciplinary Model to Support Collaborative Practice and Research.* Lasker Roz D.; Weiss, Elisa S. *Journal of Urban Health*, March 2003 (volume 80; pages 14-47). The abstract of the article and titles/authors of the four accompanying commentaries are presented below.

This paper is available as a downloadable PDF file at <http://www.cacsh.org/pdf/modelpaper.pdf>

Abstract

Over the last 40 years, thousands of communities – in the United States and internationally – have been working to broaden the involvement of people and organizations in addressing community-level problems related to health and other areas. Yet, in spite of this experience, many communities are having substantial difficulty achieving their collaborative objective, and many funders of community partnerships and participation initiatives are looking for ways to get more out of their investment. One of the reasons we are in this predicament is that the practitioners and researchers who are interested in community collaboration come from a variety of contexts, initiatives, and academic disciplines, and few of them have integrated their work with experiences or literatures beyond their own domain. In this article, we seek to overcome some of this fragmentation of effort by presenting a multidisciplinary model that lays out the pathways by which broadly participatory processes lead to more effective community problem solving and to improvements in community health. The model, which builds on a broad array of practical experience, as well as conceptual and empirical work in multiple fields, is an outgrowth of a joint-learning workgroup that was organized to support nine communities in the Turning Point initiative. Following a detailed explication of the model, the article focuses on the implications of the model for research, practice and policy. It describes how the model can help researchers answer the fundamental effectiveness and "how to" questions related to community collaboration. In addition, the article explores differences between the model and current practice, suggesting strategies that can help the participants in, and funders of, community collaborations strengthen their efforts.

- *CADCA National Coalition Institute: Coalition Resources Website* <http://www.coalitioninstitute.org/CoalitionResources/CoalitionResourcesHome.asp>

The National Coalition Institute has compiled the following resources to help your coalition achieve its goals. Resources include information on: Assessment, Capacity, Planning, Evaluation, Cultural Competency, Sustainability, Marketing, and Funding.

- *Creating Partnership Synergy: The Critical Role of Community Stakeholders.* Lasker, Roz D.; Weiss, Elisa S. *Journal of Health & Human Services Administration*, Summer 2003 (Vol. 26 Issue 1, p119-139).

While there are compelling reasons for professionals in health and human services administration to collaborate with other stakeholders in the community, the experience with such partnerships thus far has generated more frustration than results. Recent research on partnership synergy--a key indicator of a successful collaboration process--suggests that many of these partnerships are inadvertently compromising their own success by the way they involve community stakeholders. Applying research findings to current practice, this article shows how the ability of a partnership to understand and address complex problems--and sustain interventions over time--is related to who is involved in the partnership, how community stakeholders are involved, and the leadership and management of the partnership. The article addresses key challenges that health and human services administrators face when they seek to optimize the role of community stakeholders in partnership.

- *Handbook for Community Anti-Drug Coalitions.* CADCA National Coalition Institute, 2004. http://www.coalitioninstitute.org/Coalition_Resources/CoalitionHandbook.pdf

This handbook was designed to help your coalition effectively work to create a solution to your community's unique substance abuse problem. The handbook includes a brief history on anti-drug coalitions, information about CADCA and the National Coalition Institute, as well as Collaborative Leadership Principles, General Resources, Funding Links and Useful Definitions.

- *Making the Most of Collaboration: Exploring the Relationship Between Partnership Synergy and Partnership Functioning.* Weiss, Elisa; Anderson Miller, Rebecca; Lasker, Roz. *Health Education & Behavior*, December 2002 (volume 29; pages 683-698).

This paper is available as a downloadable PDF file on the Sage Publications website at: <http://heb.sagepub.com/content/vol29/issue6/>.

Considering the challenges inherent to collaboration and the time it takes to achieve measurable outcomes, partnerships need a way to determine, at an early stage, whether or not they are making the most of collaboration. The authors have developed a new measure, partnership synergy, which assesses the degree to which a partnership's collaborative process successfully combines its participants' perspectives, knowledge, and skills. This article reports the results of a national study designed to examine the relationship between partnership synergy and six dimensions of partnership functioning: leadership, administration and management, partnership efficiency, non-financial resources, partner involvement challenges, and community-related challenges. Data were collected from 815 key informants in 63 partnerships. Results of regression analysis conducted with partnership-level data indicated that partnership synergy was most closely related to leadership effectiveness and partnership efficiency. Implications of these findings for research and practice are discussed.

- *Partnership Synergy: A Practical Framework for Studying and Strengthening the Collaborative Advantage*. Lasker, Roz D.; Weiss, Elisa S.; Miller, Rebecca. *Milbank Quarterly*, May 2001 (Vol. 79 Issue 2, p179).

Abstract

The substantial interest and investment in health partnerships in the United States is based on the assumption that collaboration is more effective in achieving health and health system goals than efforts carried out by single agents. A clear conceptualization of the mechanism that accounts for the collaborative advantage, and a way to measure it are needed to test this assumption and to strengthen the capacity of partnerships to realize the full potential of collaboration. The mechanism that gives collaboration its unique advantage is synergy. A framework for operationalizing and assessing partnership synergy, and for identifying its likely determinants, can be used to address critical policy, evaluation, and management issues related to collaboration.

- *Strengthening Partnerships Toolkit* <http://www.coalitioninstitute.org/StrengtheningPartnerships/TableOfContents-02-09-2007.htm>

One sign of a successful coalition is that it develops strategic partnerships with local organizations to accomplish its mission. These partner organizations usually represent a broad base of community sectors and they recognize a connection between substance abuse prevention and their mission. When properly cultivated, these win/win relationships can be a powerful force for change in the community. This toolkit is designed as a guide to assist your coalition in securing the commitment of these important local partners.

Appendix B

Table 1— Synergy Scale by Question

Question	Total Number Of Responses	Average Score
By Working Together...		
How well are the partners able to identify new and creative ways to solve problems?	12	1.75
How well are these partners able to include the views and priorities of the people affected by the coalition's work?	12	2.00
How well are these partners able to develop goals that are widely understood and supported among partners?	12	1.92
How well are these partners able to identify how different services and programs in the community relate to the problems the coalition is trying to address?	12	1.92
How well are these partners able to respond to the needs and problems of the community?	12	2.25
How well are your partners able to implement strategies that are most likely to work in the community?	12	2.00
How well are these partners able to obtain support from individuals and organizations in the community that can either block the coalition's plans or help them move forward?	12	2.42
How well are these partners able to carry out comprehensive activities that connect multiple services, programs or systems?	12	2.08
How well are these partners able to clearly communicate to people in the community how the coalition's actions will address problems that are important to them?	12	2.17

Averages are based on the following scale from the coalition survey:

- 1 = Extremely well
- 2 = Very well
- 3 = Somewhat well
- 4 = Not so well
- 5 = Not well at all

Table 2 - Leadership Scale by Question

Question	Total Number of Responses	Average Score
Please rate the total effectiveness of your coalition’s leadership in the following areas:		
Taking responsibility for the coalition	12	1.92
Inspiring or motivating people involved in the coalition	12	2.00
Empowering people involved in the coalition	12	1.83
Communicating the vision of the coalition	12	2.00
Working to develop a common language within the coalition	12	2.08
Fostering respect, trust, inclusiveness, and openness in the coalition	12	1.75
Creating an environment where differences of opinion can be voiced	12	1.50
Resolving conflict among partners	12	1.67
Combining the perspectives, resources, and skills of	12	1.83
Helping the coalition be creative and look at things differently	12	1.83
Recruiting diverse people and organizations into the coalition	12	1.83

Averages are based on the following scale from the coalition survey:

- 1 = Excellent
- 2 = Very good
- 3 = Good
- 4 = Fair
- 5 = Poor
- 6 = Don't know

Table 3 - Administration and Management Scale by Question

Question	Total Number of Responses	Average Score
Please rate the effectiveness of your coalition in:		
Coordinating communication among partners	12	2.25
Coordinating communication with people and organizations outside the coalition	12	2.25
Organizing coalition activities, including meetings and projects	12	1.92
Applying for and managing grants and funds	12	2.58
Preparing materials that inform partners and help them make timely decisions	12	2.25
Performing secretarial duties	12	2.67
Providing orientation to new partners as they join the coalition	12	2.42
Evaluating the progress and impact of the coalition	12	2.17
Minimizing the barriers to participation in the coalition's meetings and activities	12	2.08

Averages are based on the following scale from the coalition survey:

1 = Excellent

2 = Very good

3 = Good

4 = Fair

5 = Poor

6 = Don't know (for Administration and Management Scale only)

Table 4 - Sufficiency of Non-Financial Resources Scale by Question

Question	Total Number of Responses	Average Score
<p>To what extent does your coalition have what it needs?</p>		
<p>Skills and expertise (e.g., leadership, administration, evaluation, law, public policy, cultural competency, training, and community organizing)</p>	12	2.00
<p>Data and information (e.g., statistical data, information about community perceptions, values, resources, and politics)</p>	12	2.33
<p>Connections to target populations</p>	12	2.33
<p>Connections to political decision-makers, government agencies, other organizations/groups</p>	12	2.58
<p>Legitimacy and credibility</p>	11	2.18
<p>Influence and ability to bring people together for meetings and activities</p>	12	2.08

Averages are based on the following scale from the coalition survey:

- 1 = All of what it needs
- 2 = Most of what it needs
- 3 = Some of what it needs
- 4 = Almost none of what it needs
- 5 = None of what it needs
- 6 = Don't know