Sustainability Through Adaptability: Building Strong Foundations for the Future by Cementing Partnerships Now

Aligning Forces for Quality

Adaptability Handouts

Step One: Assess Your Alliance's Overall Readiness to Sustain

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Leadership Readiness Checklist

All key leaders meet or exceed expectations when it comes to:

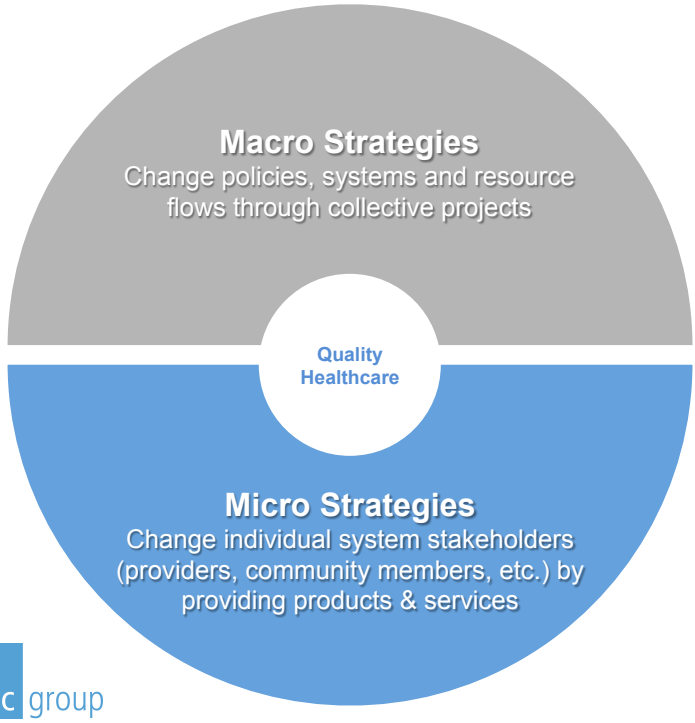
- ❑ Effectively communicating mission and vision to internal and external stakeholders
- ❑ Effectively engaging internal (Alliance) and external stakeholders in planning
- ❑ Prioritizing cost-effectiveness (cost-per-outcome/impact) over productivity/cost-per-output/level of effort
- ❑ Quickly making decisions and taking immediate action to adapt to when things are working
- ❑ Holding all leaders accountable for achieving community outcomes

Learning Readiness Checklist

All Alliance leaders and key stakeholders meet or exceed expectations when it comes to:

- ❑ Gathering sophisticated project, service, product and other business-related data, including cost (time and money)
- ❑ Analyzing data to determine what works, for whom, with what resources
- ❑ Engaging all key stakeholders in data-driven community, strategic and business planning
- ❑ Measuring and managing project, service, and/or product delivery/ implementation performance

Step Two: What Does Your Alliance Want to Sustain?



- ❑ *Macro* Strategies – Policy/Advocacy, System Change Projects
- ❑ *Micro* Strategies – Products & Services
- ❑ *Both*

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Step Three: Assess Who Will Provide Resources, Moving Forward

Resources for policy, advocacy and system reform projects
Does your Alliance (partners, leaders and stakeholders) have access to:

- ❑ At least 2-3 private foundations that will fund policy, advocacy, systems change work?
- ❑ At least 1-2 private foundations that will fund multi-year general operations?
- ❑ Many individual donors with deeper pockets (i.e., larger check writers) who are interested in funding policy, advocacy and system reform work for the long haul? (not your typical charitable donor)
- ❑ Individuals willing to pay membership dues to have their voices heard, be advocated for, be part of a movement and/or stay on top of current and game changing policy news and issues relevant to what they do
- ❑ Community leaders, stakeholders and residents who can and will provide in-kind and pro bono support for the long haul

If the answer is “yes” to at least two of these, then sustainability is more likely. Significant growth will require three or more of these.

Step Three: Assess Who Will Provide Resources (Cont.)

Resources for programs, products and/or services
Does your Alliance (partners, leaders and stakeholders) have access to:

- ❑ At least 3-4 institutional grantmakers (e.g., government agencies, corporations private foundations, community foundations, etc.) that fund and/or "proxy" pay for your types of programs, products, services?
- ❑ Many small-check-writing Individual donors – providing at least 20% of the costs of service provision – who can see how their check buys them one or more individual outcomes for persons in the community with whom they can connect/understand/relate to their story?
- ❑ Consumers who will pay for the program, product and/or service, either through cash or a third-party payer, such that at least 20% of revenues derives from this "fee-for-service"?
- ❑ Community leaders, stakeholders and residents who can and will provide in-kind and pro bono support for the long haul

If the answer is "yes" to at least two of these, then sustainability is more likely. Growth will require long-term (multi-year) relationships with institutional grantmakers, or a business revenue model that can count on a large majority of dollars coming from fee-for-service and/or individual donors.

Step Four: Decide Upon the Right Business Model for Sustainability and Growth

If it is feasible to sustain and/or grow your products, programs and/or services (refer to previous checklist), then…

Next Steps Checklist:

- ❑Finish designing (R&D'ing) products, programs and/or services
- ❑Codify the performance measurement and management process
- ❑Conduct market research
- ❑Sell to early or stage two adopters
- ❑Determine partnership model, if needed
  - ❑Joint venture
  - ❑Business line w/in an existing business (nonprofit or for-profit)
  - ❑No partnership; independent business (nonprofit or for-profit)
- ❑Determine most realistic revenue model
- ❑Develop business plan

Step Four: Decide Upon the Right Business Model for Sustainability and Growth (Cont.)

If it is feasible to sustain and/or grow your products, programs and/or services (refer to previous checklist), then…

Next Steps Checklist:

- ❑Develop formal environmental, policy, population, epidemiological and other community needs data gathering processes that can be replicated, as needed, to serve leaders in the design of continuing and new projects, moving forward
- ❑Codify partner engagement processes, decision-making structures and communication tools
- ❑Codify project implementation management processes and tools
- ❑Determine most realistic revenue model (refer to previous checklist)
- ❑Develop strategic plan