

# Coalition Assessment Toolkit

## Dimensions of Coalition Effectiveness

The five dimensions below are key factors that influence your coalition's success.

- A. **Coalition Context:** To what extent is the coalition working on a critical issue that affects your community?
- B. **Coalition Structure:** To what extent does the coalition have effective norms, information, support, and representative membership?
- C. **Coalition Membership:** To what extent do members effectively work together and have a strong commitment to the coalition?
- D. **Coalition Process:** To what extent does the coalition value member opinions and make effective decisions?
- E. **Coalition Results:** To what extent has your coalition set specific, measurable goals and achieved them?

# How To Conduct A Coalition Assessment

Conducting a coalition assessment is the key to identifying the strengths of your coalition and areas that can be strengthened to improve overall functioning. This toolkit provides instructions for administration and the scoring of results.

To carry out the assessment, you will first ask individual members to complete the coalition assessment survey. Please follow the steps below when administering and scoring the surveys:

## Administering the Assessment

- 1) The coalition assessment should be administered to all *appropriate* members of your coalition. For example, do not administer this survey to brand new members who can not answer the questions about the coalition. Please consult your RPC to help make determinations about the members most appropriate for the assessment.
- 2) The coalition assessment was not designed for brand new coalitions. It should not be administered to a group that has been working together for fewer than 4-6 months.
- 3) Before you administer the survey, be sure to communicate to members why participating in the assessment is important, when the assessment will take place and what it will entail (i.e., the completion of a confidential survey that will require approximately 15-20 minutes to complete). Think about other strategies that you might put in place to help ensure high participation in the assessment.
- 4) Before you print out the assessment survey, type in the name of the group and the issue(s) that it works on.
- 6) When you administer the assessment, let the members know that there are no wrong answers and that candid feedback from the members will help the strategic planning process, where Coalition Impact goals and strategies will be developed. Also, ask members not to write their names on the assessment and to return it to an envelope (rather than directly to you).

## Scoring the Assessment

- 1) Use the Enter Data tab in the Excel sheet to enter individual survey responses. Each survey will represent one row in the Excel sheet. Each column in the survey represents a question in the assessment tool, and, questions have been grouped by each of the five dimensions that the assessment is measuring: **Context** (questions #1-2), **Structure** (#3-10), **Membership** (#11-15), **Process** (#16-20), and **Results** (#21-25). The survey tool uses a four-point scale, and assessment answers must be converted into scores using the following key:

When someone marks "True": enter a "4" in the spreadsheet

More True Than False: "3"

More False Than True: "2"

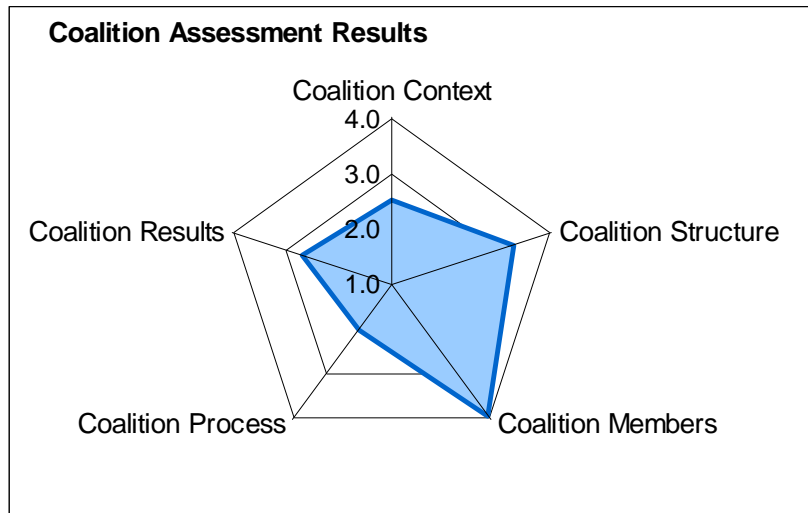
False: "1"

The bottom row in the Excel sheet calculates averages for each item in the assessment tool as information from each survey is entered. This information may be helpful to look at with the overall

dimensions scores to understand whether there is room for important on any items within the broader dimension of coalition functioning.

2) After entering the converted scores for each question, hit the Results tab of the Excel spreadsheet. You will see that the average score for each dimension has been automatically calculated. Also, the coalition assessment graph will be populated automatically. The table of dimension averages and the coalition assessment graph will provide you with information about coalition strengths and the dimensions on which coalition effectiveness can be improved (see below).

Dimension	Survey Score
Coalition Context	2.5
Coalition Structure	3.3
Coalition Members	3.9
Coalition Process	2.0
Coalition Results	2.7
<b>Total Average</b>	<b>2.9</b>



*Please note:* The formulas to calculate averages in the Results worksheet are currently set up to calculate average scores for up to 50 surveys. If more than 50 surveys are administered, you will have to change the formulas in Column B of the Results tab, or you can calculate scores manually. If you are unsure about how to do this, please consult your Evaluation Contact for information about how to do this.

4) The coalition members' answers to the four questions at the end of the survey assessment should be used to supplement the quantitative information. When reviewing the responses, see if any consistent themes emerge.

5) The dimension scores, the matrix on the following page (which summarizes what scores mean) and the qualitative themes should be shared with the coalition for discussion and to see how the coalition can best use the assessment feedback to become more effective. You also can share average scores for individual items (please see end row in Excel under Enter Data tab).

6) This assessment can be repeated annually or every 2-3 years to assess how the coalition may change with new members and as it faces new issues.

## Coalition Assessment Matrix

**Instructions:** Please review your coalition’s score in each column to determine what the score indicates about coalition strengths and weaknesses.

<b>Score</b>	<b>Coalition Context</b>	<b>Coalition Structure</b>	<b>Coalition Membership</b>	<b>Coalition Process</b>	<b>Coalition Results</b>
<b>4</b>	Coalition was formed to have a positive impact on an important issue facing the community	Coalition includes stakeholders and members support the agreed upon structure and communication methods	Coalition is cohesive, active, and consistently works toward improving group communication	Members have trust and confidence in leaders, other members, and the decision making process	Coalition has used its resources to achieve goals and measure outcomes
<b>3</b>	Coalition is working collaboratively to determine which issue to address	Coalition includes key stakeholders and has agreed upon a structure and begun to implement it	Coalition is cohesive and members are learning to communicate effectively with each other	Leaders have earned preliminary trust from members and the decision making process continues to be refined	Coalition is building resources and determining outcome measures; goals have been set but not achieved
<b>2</b>	Coalition is working on an issue that may not have a positive impact on the community	Coalition may be missing some key stakeholders and is only beginning to think about structure	Coalition is fragmented and effective communication has not been established	Leadership has not yet earned trust and decision-making process has not been defined	Coalition does not yet have adequate resources or outcome measures; goals are still being set by the group
<b>1</b>	Coalition is addressing an unimportant issue or has not decided what issues it will focus on	Coalition does not include all key stakeholders and does not have a clear structure for operations and communication	Coalition members are focused on the needs of their individual agencies and group communication is ineffective	No legitimate leaders exist; coalition members are fragmented; and there is no decision-making structure	Coalition does not have adequate resources and has not formed any measurable goals

## Suggested Readings

Ansari, W. E., & Phillips, C. J. (2001). Interprofessional collaboration: a stakeholder approach to evaluation of voluntary participation in community partnerships. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 15, 4, 351-368.

Bright, R. D. (1998). *Community Organization Assessment Tool*. University of Wisconsin-Extension, Family Living Programs.

Bush, R., Dower, J., & Mutch, A. (2002). *Community Capacity Index Manual Version Two*. The University of Queensland, Centre for Primary Health Care.

Chinman, M., Imm, P., & Wandersman, A. (2004). *Getting To Outcomes 2004: Promoting Accountability Through Methods and Tools for Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation*. RAND Corporation.

Chrislip, D. D., & Larson, C.E. (1994). *Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Can Make a Difference*. Jossey-Bass.

Liebman, J., & Thomas, B. (2003). *Community Mobilization for Prevention (CMP)*. CSAP's Southwest Center For The Application of Prevention Technologies. Southwest Prevention Center, University of Oklahoma - College of Continuing Education.

Mattessich, P. W., Murray-Close, M., & Monsey, B. R. (2001). *Collaboration—What makes it work*. Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, NHTSA (2001). Adapted from "Coalition membership Checklist," by National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives, 2001, *Community how to guide on . . . coalition building* (DOT HS 809 209, Appendix 1).