

EVALUATION OF THE COLLABORATION: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

INSTRUCTIONS: This tool focuses on the performance and quality of the collaboration itself. Use the following success factors to design the evaluation. All of these success factors should be present in a strong and healthy collaboration. Identify areas of strength and celebrate them; identify areas that need improvement and develop strategies to address them.

If there is already an evaluation process in place, use this checklist to ensure that all areas are covered.

Direction and Impacts:

- There is a shared understanding about the problems or issues we are trying to address based on clear evidence
- Our vision for what the collaboration can accomplish is realistic and compelling to each of our partners and to the communities they serve
- We can describe the outcomes that we are trying to achieve and they make a unique contribution that no other organization or collaboration could make
- We have developed milestones and indicators that we watch carefully to measure our progress in achieving the outcomes and impacts
- Our collective set of priorities and actions are directly linked to the outcomes we are working to achieve
- We regularly check-in on changes to the environment, each partner's organizational priorities and learning, the views of our combined stakeholders and our collaboration's performance and then make necessary revisions and/or course corrections
- We monitor our results and actions in a way that captures the unintended outcomes of our efforts

Engagement:

- We have the right amount of diversity among our partners, with the right skills, knowledge and perspectives to effectively accomplish our goals and represent the interests of stakeholders in our organizations and the community
- We have considered who is not engaged in our work that should be, why not and how we can involve them
- We can demonstrate a clear interconnectedness between all the partners, while also respecting their autonomy
- Each of our partners has the commitment of their organization to the collaboration as reflected in their willingness to contribute resources, to make and abide by decisions and to be held accountable for results
- Because each partner has a voice in our directions and actions, there is a high degree of ownership for achieving what we say we will do
- Our communications to our partners and to their respective organizations is seen as highly relevant, accurate and timely
- We utilize different types of communication to engage our stakeholders, including the use of technology and face-to-face interaction
- We have formal and informal mechanisms to get feedback from stakeholders and use it to make our collaboration more effective
- We create an environment in our meetings that is conducive to debate, honest dialogue, reflection and creative thinking
- Our meetings are seen as a very productive use of people's time
- We draw effectively on the views, perspectives, experiences and expertise of a wide range of people
- We target certain capacities that are required for our collaboration to succeed and put in place strategies to ensure that they are present (e.g., education, training, knowledge exchange)

Architecture, Processes and Resources

- We can demonstrate why a collaboration is the best approach to accomplishing the outcomes
- We have the right structure (e.g., governance, committees) in place to achieve our outcomes and actions and to ensure the collaboration work effectively
- We have a collectively developed agreement which outlines how we will work together; it is as formal as it needs to be
- The roles and responsibilities of each of our collaboration partners are clearly articulated and linked to tangible outcomes
- The different cultures, values and processes of each partner's organizations have been effectively acknowledged and, as much as possible, integrated into our collective ones
- Our decision-making processes are transparent, fair and promote equality
- We have formal processes in place to address conflict and to resolve it effectively and fairly
- We have systems in place that ensure we are accountable and get the work done effectively, but they also allow us to adapt to changing circumstances and new learning
- Our evaluation uses formal and informal mechanisms and collects both qualitative and quantitative information
- We have the appropriate amount of processes and policies to ensure that we are fiscally and ethically responsible, to safeguard our reputation and to manage risk
- We are realistic about the resources at hand to accomplish our work but are always seeking innovative ways to build our capacity and leverage or expand our resources
- We have a plan in place to sustain our work as long as it is achieving significant impacts and meeting the needs of partners and the people/communities they serve

