



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR STATE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMS

Michigan
May 11, 2017

Community Action and Strategic Planning

Agenda:

- ~ Connection with ROMA and Organizational Standards
- ~ Preparing for Planning
- ~ Gathering Information
- ~ Preparing the Report
- ~ Monitoring and Follow-up

Bridge to Planning

Questions to ask to begin to make recommendations for Strategic Planning :

- What are the areas of greatest community need?
 - What can be done to address the need?
 - Who should address the need?
 - Do we have control, or partial control over the need?
 - Which need are we best positioned to address—either alone or with partners?
 - What capabilities do we have to address the need?
 - What existing programs can address the need?
 - What might we change in our agency that can help address the need?
 - What can we reasonably expect to accomplish in the next few years?
 - What resources will be required?
-

Characteristics of Strategic Planning

- It's board-driven, staff engaged
- It's about making choices based on strategic needs, competing resources, and time
- It's a process designed to support leaders in being intentional about their goals and methods
- Is both a leadership and management tool
- Helps an organization choose specific priorities and set long-term goals that are targeted, specific, and achievable
- Builds commitment
- It's driven by data
- Asks the questions:
 - Based on our current understanding of the environment, are we doing the right thing?
 - How can we best use our resources to achieve our mission?

Keys to Effective Planning

- Focus on the most important issues during planning
- Be willing to question both the status quo and the sacred cows
- Emphasize overall direction of the organization
- Produce a document
- Translate the plan into an annual operating plan for at least the first year

Connections...

Community
Needs
Assessment

Strategic
Plan Analyze
data

Community
Action Plan

WHY? do we do strategic planning?

Sections 676B of the Community Services Block Grant Reauthorization Act of 1998 requires that, as a condition of designation, private nonprofit entities and public organizations administer their CSBG program through tripartite boards that **"fully participate in the development, *planning*, implementation, and evaluation of the program to serve low-income communities."**

Office of Economic Opportunity Instruction (1970):

“CAA(s) must develop both a long-range strategy and specific, short-range plans for using potential resources...In developing its strategy and plans, the CAA shall take into account the areas of greatest community need, the availability of resources, and its own strengths and limitations.”

Organizational Standards 6.1

- Standard 6.1 • private The Organization has an agency-wide Strategic Plan in place that has been approved by the governing board within the past 5 years.
- Standard 6.1 • public The Department has a Strategic Plan, or comparable planning document, in place that has been reviewed and accepted by the tripartite board/advisory body within the past 5 years. If the Department does not have a plan, the tripartite board/advisory body will develop the plan.

Organizational Standard 6.2

- Standard 6.2 • private The approved Strategic Plan addresses reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.
- Standard 6.2 • public The approved Strategic Plan, or comparable planning document, addresses reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.

Organizational Standards 6.3

- Standard 6.3 • private The approved Strategic Plan contains Family, Agency, and/or Community goals.
- Standard 6.3 • public The approved Strategic Plan, or comparable planning document, contains Family, Agency, and/or Community goals.

Organizational Standard 6.4

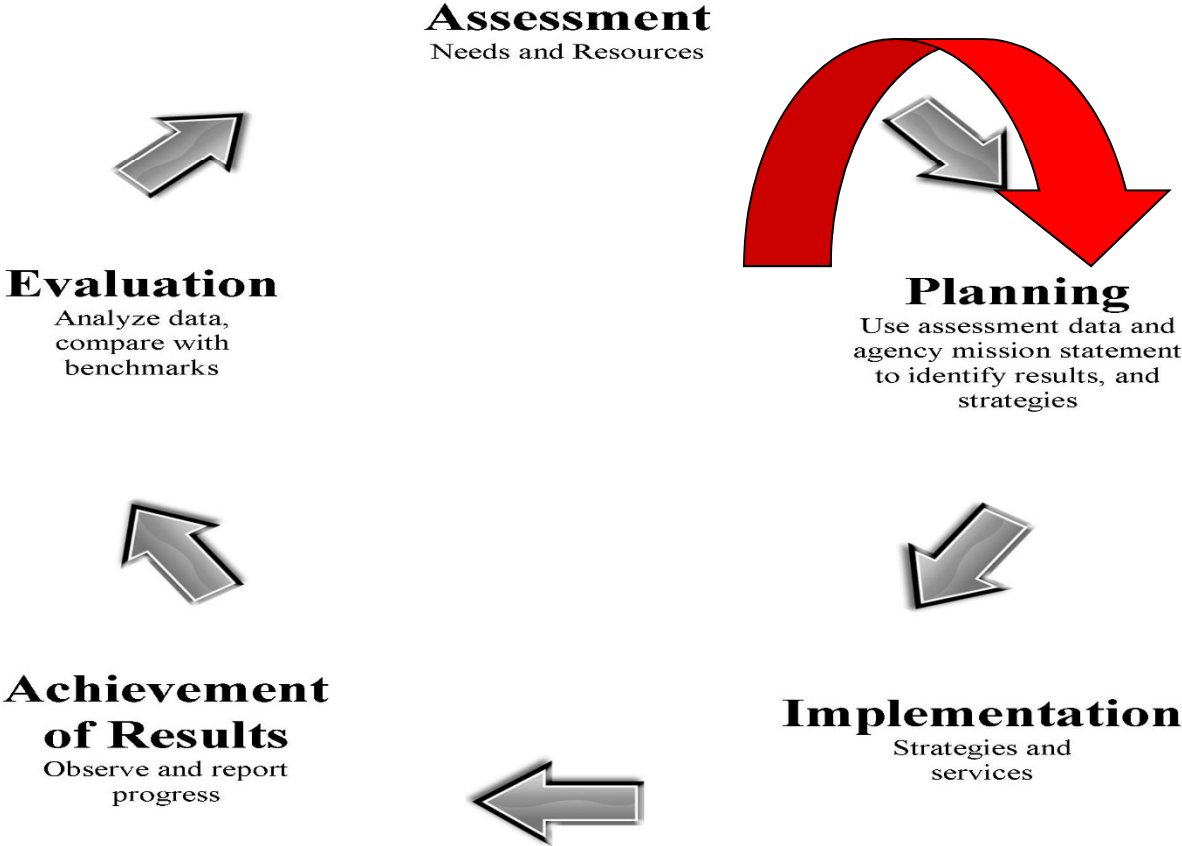
- Standard 6.4 • private Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the Community Assessment, is included in the strategic planning process.
- Standard 6.4 • public Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the Community Assessment, is included in the strategic planning process, or comparable planning process.

Organizational Standard 6.5

- Standard 6.5 • private The governing board has received an update(s) on meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan within the past 12 months.
- Standard 6.5 • public The tripartite board/advisory body has received an update(s) on meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan/Comparable Planning Document within the past 12 months.

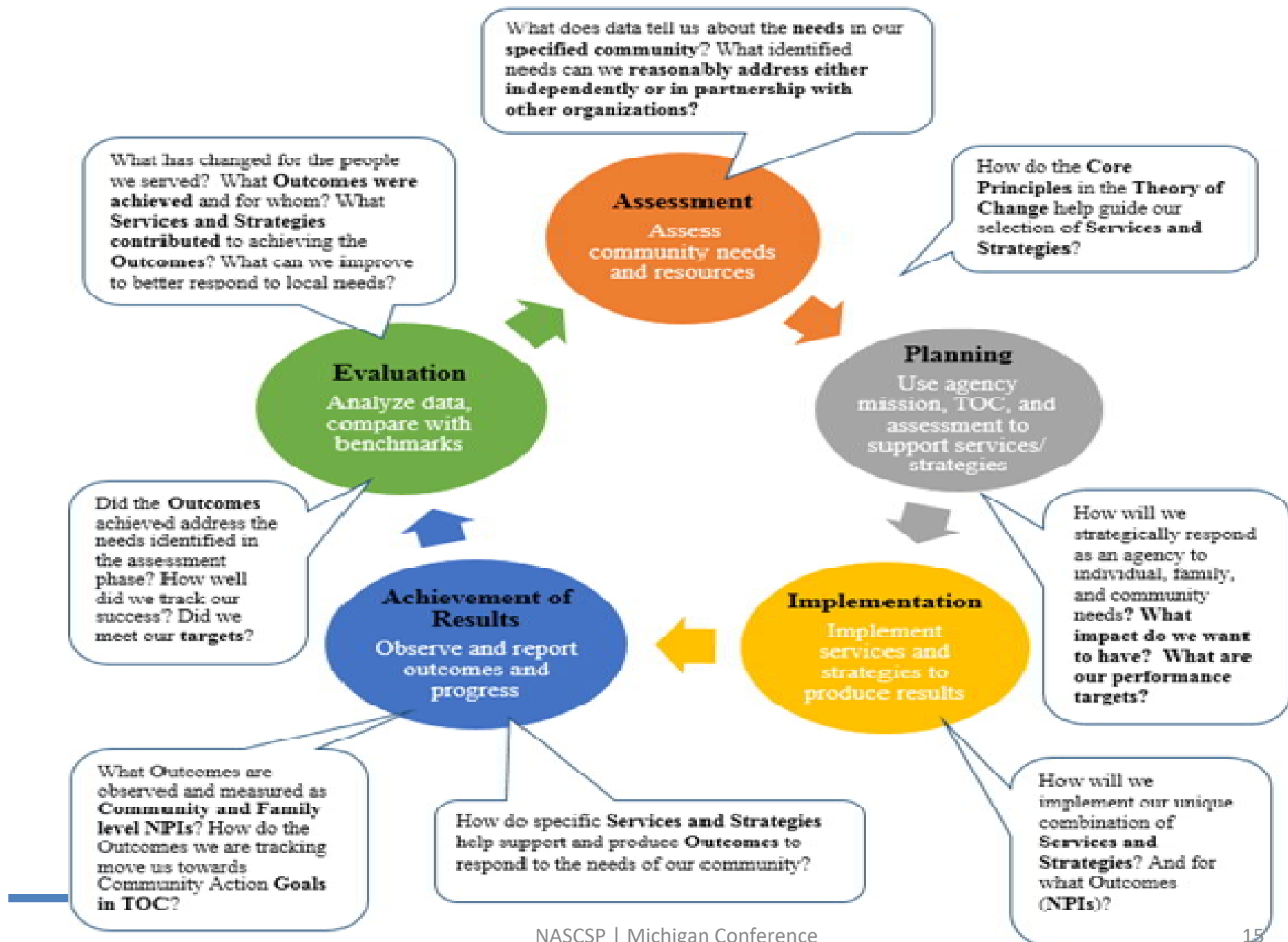
ROMA and Strategic Planning

The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle



ROMA as a framework for Strategic Planning

- The CNA Assessment provides the foundation by identifying needs and strengths.
- During the Planning phase, the assessment data and mission statement are tools to identify the desired results and develop strategies to achieve those results.
- Implementation , Achievement of Results and Evaluation complete the ROMA Cycle and strategic planning process.



Planning and the ROMA CYCLE

Planning

Use agency mission, TOC, and assessment to support services/ initiatives

How do the **Core Principles** in the **Theory of Change** help guide our agency strategic plan and community action plan?

How will we strategically respond as an agency to individual, family, and community needs? What **impact** do we want to have? What are our **performance targets**? What **services and initiatives** do we select?

What is the Community Action Theory of Change?

- The National Community Action TOC is the articulation of the underlying beliefs and assumptions that guide a service delivery strategy.
- It identifies the “why” and the “how” of the activities undertaken and it identifies the “what” of change and improvement produced.
- This national statement can be adapted for specific local needs and approaches by local CAAs.

The National Community Action Network Theory of Change

Community Action Goals

Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

Services and Strategies

(some examples from the network)



Community Action Core Principles

- Recognize the complexity of the issues of poverty
- Build local solutions specific to local needs
- Support family stability as a foundation for economic security
- Pursue positive individual, family and community level change
- Maximize involvement of people with low incomes
- Engage local community partners and citizens in solutions
- Leverage state, federal and community resources
- Advocate for systemic change

Performance Management

How Well Does the Network Operate?

What Difference Does the Network Make?

Network Excellence

- Local Organizational Standards
- State and Federal Accountability Measures
- Results Oriented Management and Accountability System

Robust Results

- National Performance Indicators for Individuals and Families
- National Performance Indicators for Communities

A national network of over 1,000 high-performing Community Action Agencies, State Associations, State offices, and Federal partners supported by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to mobilize communities to fight poverty.

To learn more, check out the Community Action Theory of Change Report. www.nascsp.org



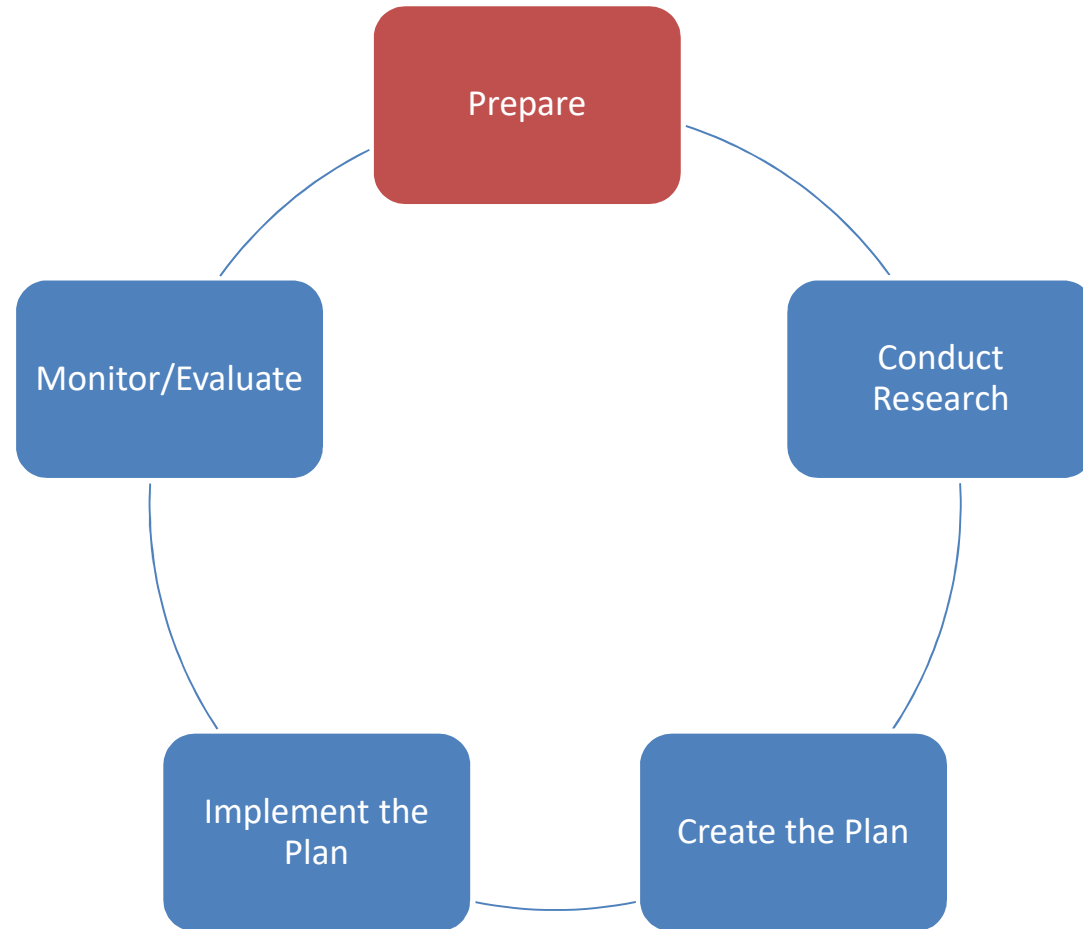
Local Theory of Change

- A process of thinking about how the agency is **supposed to work and what is supposed to change** because of their work.
- The TOC thinking process essentially answers the questions
 - “How will this agency affect the movement of people with low-incomes to stability and economic security?”
 - “How will it affect the well-being of the community?”
- What are your assumptions that drive the agency?

Local Theory of Change

- Identify assumptions (both generally about poverty and the causes and conditions that effect the local community, and about the agency's role as an anti-poverty agent).
- Think about the connections between identified needs, population served, outcomes that are realistic and possible for the population and the community, and finally about how the services and strategies provided will do what they are supposed to do.

Steps



Preparing/Timing

- Why are we planning and what do we hope to achieve?
- Does the agency face any strategic choices?
- Is the agency financially sound and sustainable?
- Timing of last needs assessment
- Fiscal year or other financial schedules
- Leadership transitions
- Organizational events (e.g. conferences)
- Availability of time and resources
- Monitoring schedule

Create Planning Committee/Roles

Board	Executive Director	Staff
Provide Input on strategic direction	Start conversation on purpose and timing	Manage Planning committee
Assist with plan design and process	Ensure adequate resources	Develop plan and process
Identify resources to support process	Oversee process	Manage communications and logistics
	Engage Stakeholders	

Questions for the Committee

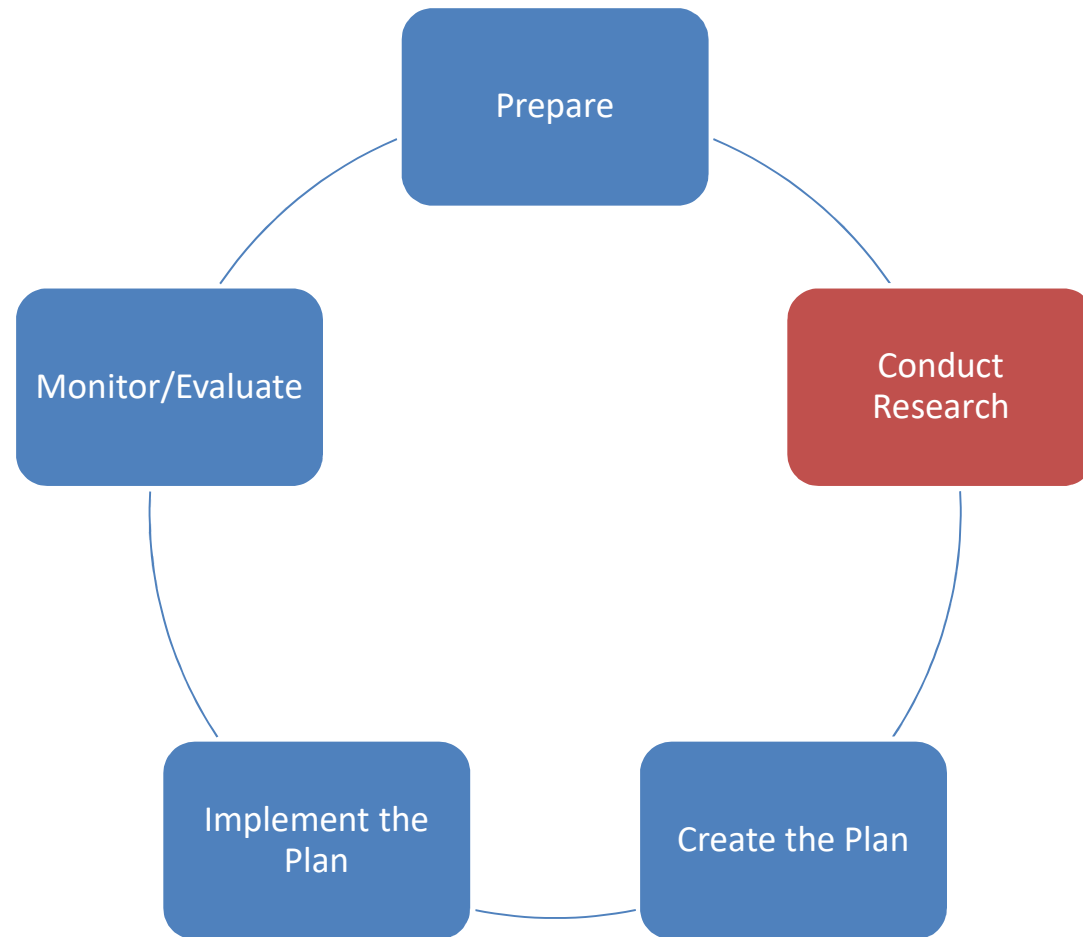
- Why are we engaging in the strategic planning process? What are its benefits?
- Who should participate?
- How will we conduct the process?
- What is the timeframe for finishing the plan?
- What are the results of the strategic planning process? What are the deliverables for each stage of the process?



What information do you need?

- Previous strategic plan
- Needs assessment summary and findings
- Agency-wide budget
- Output and outcome data from programs and services
- Demographic data on agency customers
- Customer satisfaction data
- Key studies and reports

Steps



Who will you need to involve?

- Both internal:
 - Board
 - Staff (different positions/levels)
 - Volunteers
 - Customers
- And external
 - Community Partners (both private and public)
 - Funders

Revisiting Mission and Vision

Usually conducted with key leadership and board, but can involve other stakeholders

- Mission key elements:
 - Population
 - Services
 - Outcomes
 - Relationship
- Vision:
 - Optimal goal; reason for being
 - Challenges and inspires the organization to stretch its capabilities and achieve its purpose
 - Brief and easy to communicate

Assessing Current Programs

- Which of our programs/services make the most difference to the community?
- Which are responding to growing needs?
- Which are the most cost-effective?
- Which will face funding cutbacks in the future?
- Which will face increase in funding in the future?

Questions when reviewing Mission Statement/Programs

- What are the primary needs of the families, organizations, and communities we serve?
- What goals do we want to achieve for the families, organizations, and community in our service area?
- What is our core business and primary services?
- What are our service delivery strategies?
- Who are our primary customers?
- Who are our primary partners?
- Are our services, programs, and other activities aligned with our mission?

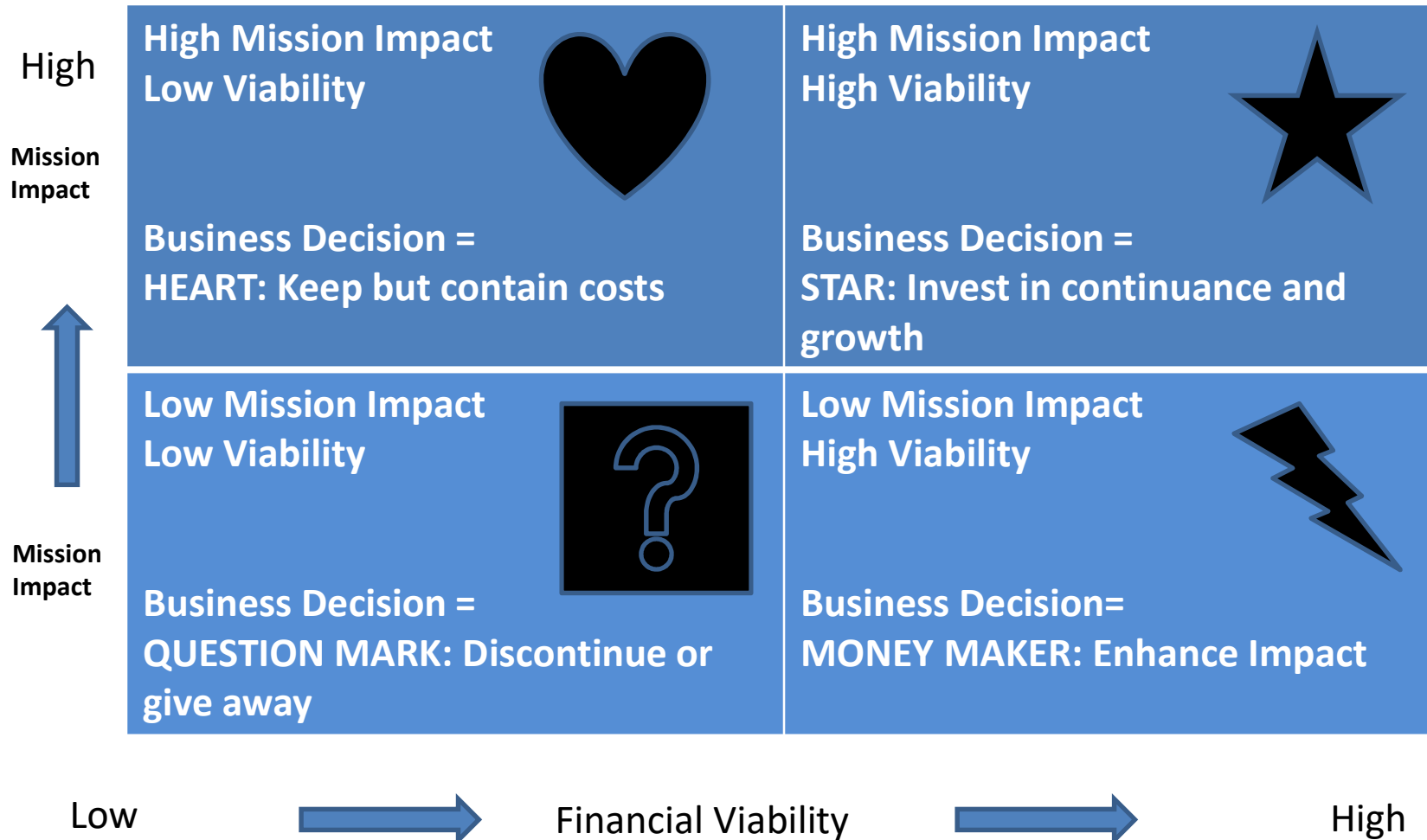
Source: Community Action Partnership

Questions to Connect Mission to Programs

- Where are we providing services but not achieving good outcomes? (Where do we need to do better?)
- Where are we providing services but not meeting family and community needs? (Where do we need to do more?)
- Where are there gaps in services and/or needs for different types of services? (Where do we need new services?)
- On a scale of “completely disconnected” to “highly integrated”, where are our services? (Where do we need to align services?)
- How effective is our overall anti-poverty agenda?
 - Network of stakeholder relationships
 - Awareness of poverty-related issues by the broader community
 - Strength of a policy/systems change agenda

Source: Community Action Partnership

Sustainability



SWOT

- **Strengths and Weaknesses:**

It isn't just about fixing the things that are wrong, but also nurturing what goes right.

What are our internal strengths?

What do we do well?

What are our internal weaknesses?

Where can we improve?

- **Opportunities and Threats:**

- Political
- Economic
- Social
- Technological
- Demographic
- Legal



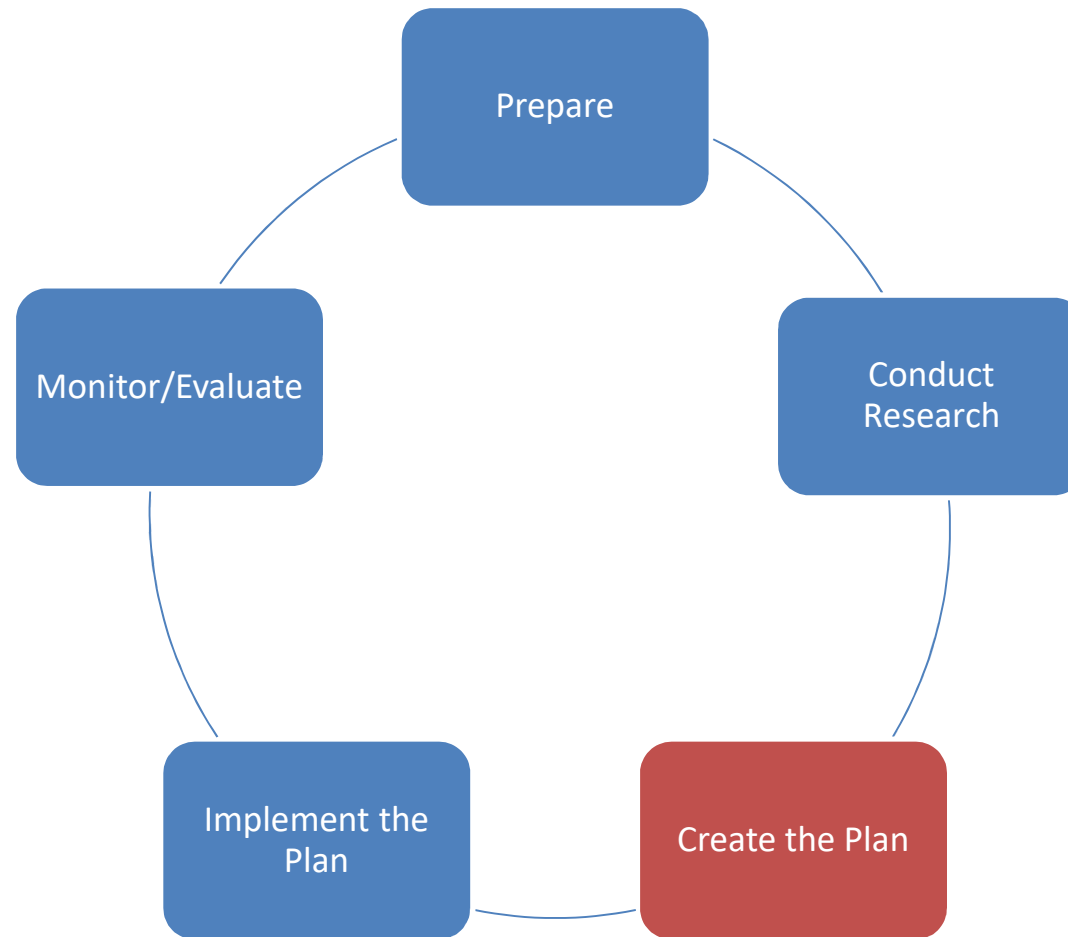
SWOT Analysis Grid

SWOT Analysis Grid		
	Opportunities	Threats
Strengths	<p>INVEST Clear matches of strengths & opportunities lead to competitive advantage</p>	<p>DEFEND Areas of threat matched by areas of strength indicate a need to mobilize resources either alone or with others</p>
Weaknesses	<p>DECIDE Areas of opportunity matched by areas of weakness require a judgment call: invest or divest; collaborate</p>	<p>DAMAGE CONTROL/DIVEST Areas of threat matched by areas of weakness indicate need for damage control</p>

Conducting the SWOT

- Who will be involved?
- Who are your stakeholders who can help you assess your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?
 - Consider both internal and external stakeholders
- How will you gather information from the stakeholders?
- Direct analysis of the issues towards how the agency can capitalize on strengths and opportunities and respond to weaknesses and challenges

Steps

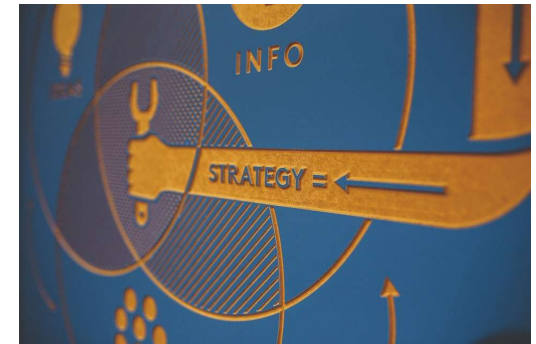


Identify, Discuss, and Prioritize Strategic Issues

1. Review the summary of your needs assessment
2. Review the prioritized list of your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
3. Review the discussion of your vision, mission, and values
4. Review any additional key data – budget, program outcomes, customer satisfaction data, reports
5. Identify, discuss, and prioritize the key strategic issues that face the organization
6. Develop and prioritize outcomes

Priorities/Strategic Issues

- Three to five core strategic issues that will serve as the primary focus of your agency resources for the next five years.
- Fundamental, directional and overarching.
- Are there things that Sojourner House should consider doing differently, more of, less of, the same?
- Are there things that Sojourner House should consider starting or stopping?
- Does the program make sense from a mission point of view (meeting needs in the community?)
- Does the program make sense financially? (how much do we have to invest for effective/efficient service delivery?)



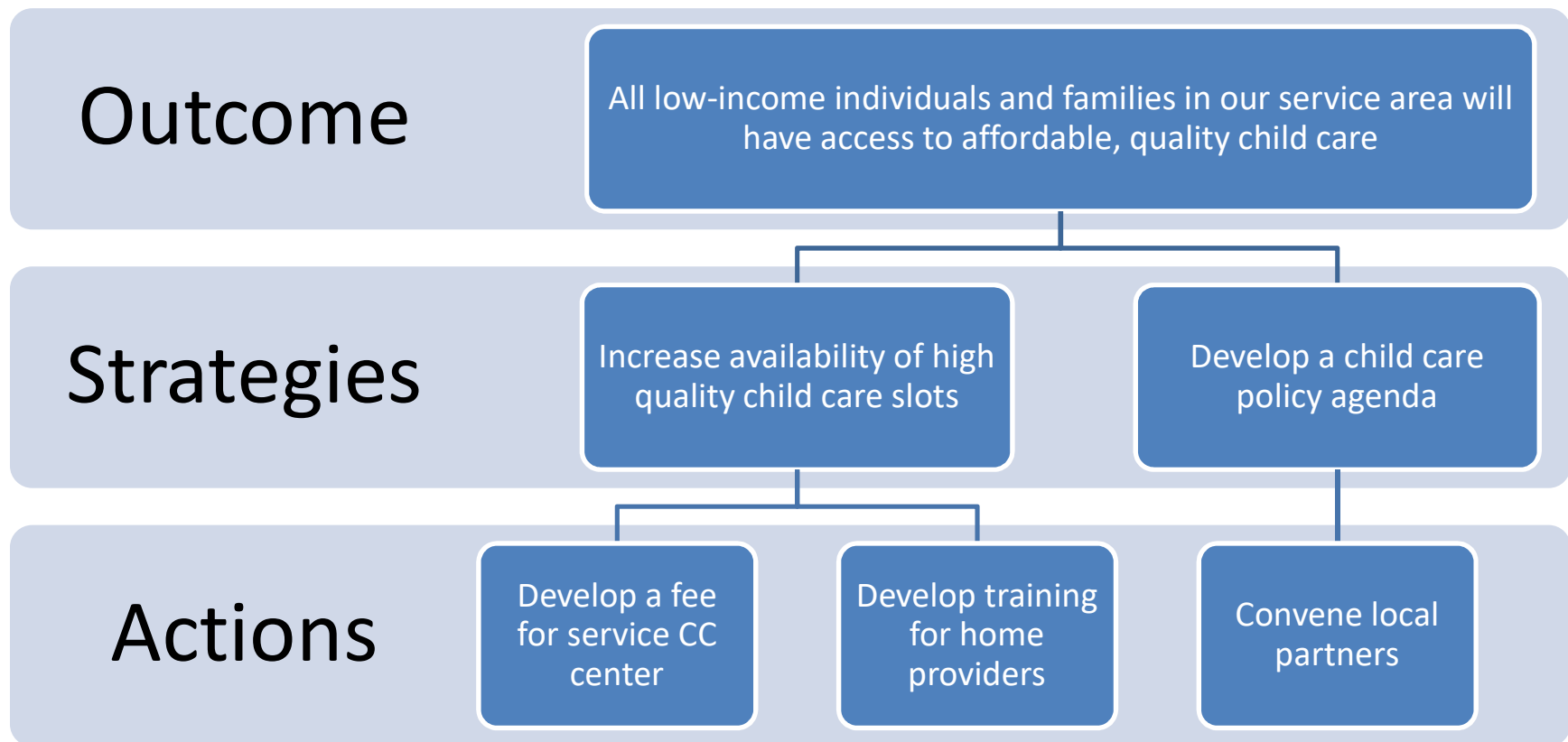
- How would the world be improved if we were successful in achieving our purpose?
- What are the most important services that we should continue to provide, change or begin to offer in the next three years?
- What staffing and benefit changes do we need to implement to better achieve our purpose?
- How can we, as the board of directors, increase our value to Sojourner House?
- What changes in resource development (fundraising) do we need to make to better achieve our purpose?
- What facilities and technology changes do we need to implement to better achieve our purpose?
- What infrastructure, systems, or communication changes do we need to implement to better achieve our purpose?
- How could we more effectively or efficiently provide our services? If we could only make three changes to increase our ability to serve our residents, what would those changes be?
- What makes us unique (distinguishes us from the competition)?
- What do our residents consider most important in our provision of services? What do our residents need from us?

Outcomes, Strategies, Actions

- Outcomes address strategic issues, are aligned with the mission, and meet needs
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Attainable
 - Realistic
 - Timely
- Strategies are ways to achieve your outcomes.
- Actions are the steps to implement your strategies.

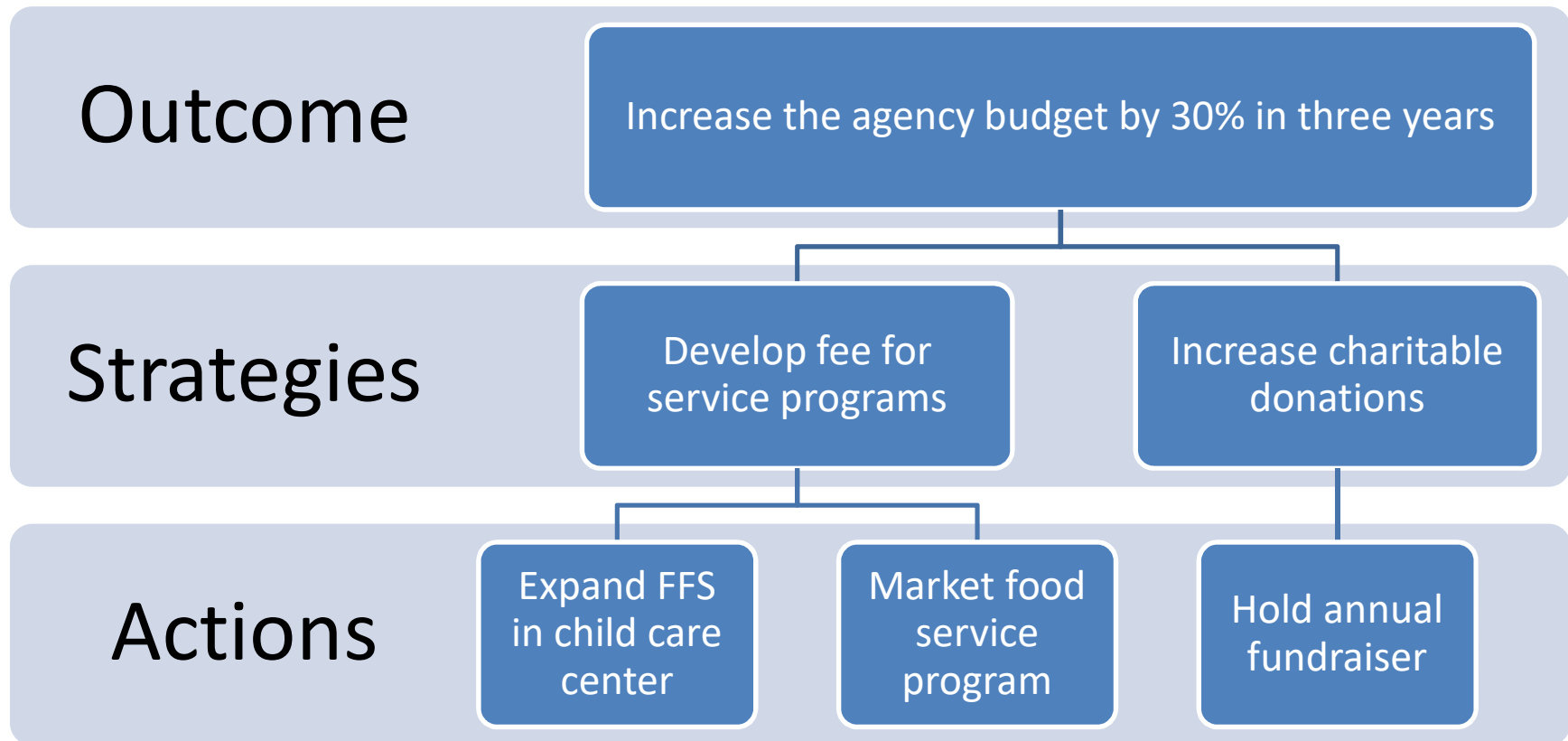
Source: Community Action Partnership

Outcomes, Strategies, Actions Ex. 1



Source: Community Action Partnership

Outcomes, Strategies, Actions Ex. 2



Source: Community Action Partnership

Consider Organizational Standards

- 6.2 The approved Strategic Plan addresses reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.
- 6.3 The approved Strategic Plan contains Family, Agency, and/or Community goals.

National Community Action Goals

- Goal 1: Individuals and Families with low-income are stable and achieve economic security.
- Goal 2: Communities where people with low-income live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.
- Goal 3: People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.



Organizing the Plan's Structure

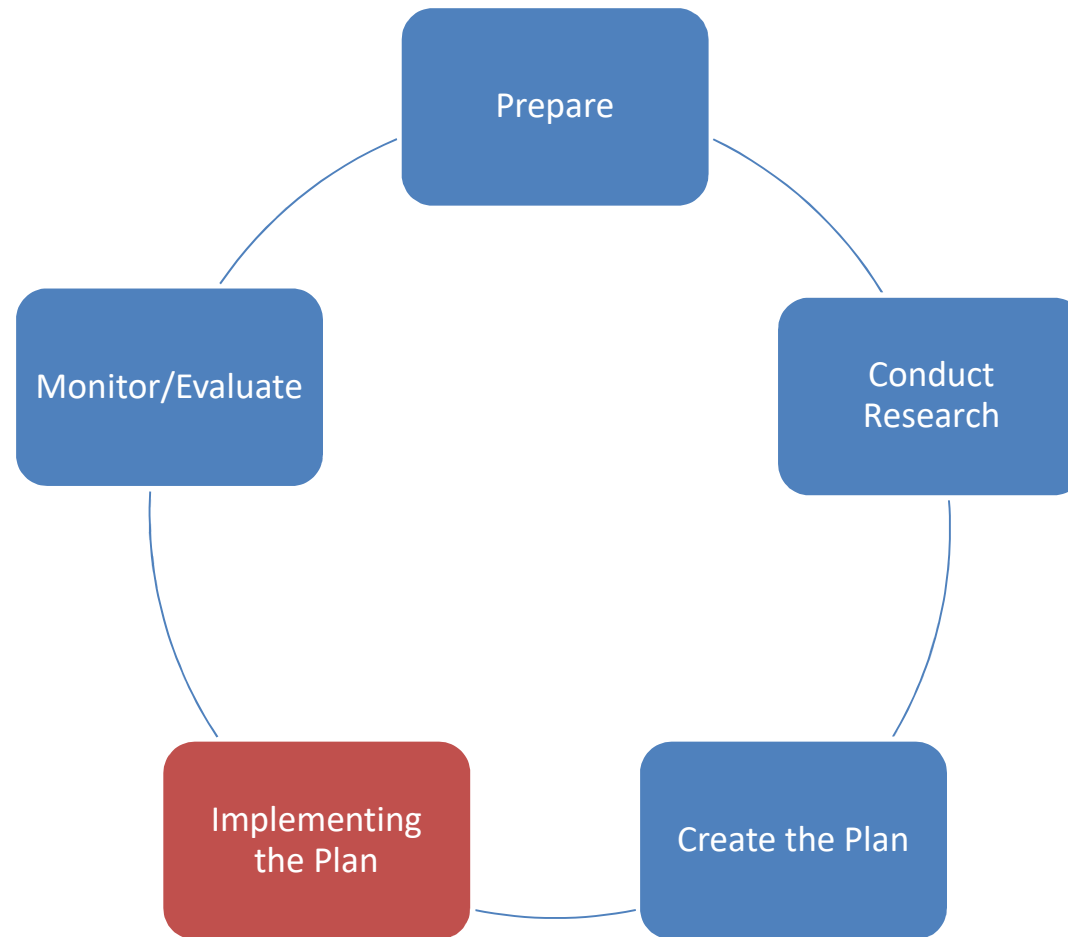
- I. Executive Summary
- II. Introduction: Purpose, Process, and Stakeholders
- III. Mission, Vision, Values
- IV. Summary of Assessments:
 - I. Mission, Vision, Values
 - II. SWOT Analysis
 - III. Review/Evaluation of Current Programs
 - IV. Other Reports (agency reports, customer satisfaction)
- V. Strategic Issues
- VI. Outcomes, Strategies, Actions
- VII. Next Steps/Monitoring/Follow-up

Finalizing the Plan

- Ensure all strategies have timelines, resource requirements, and assigned responsibilities
- Planning Committee gathers any additional information and feedback
- Initial draft is completed and circulated for review
- Final draft is completed and submitted to board for approval
- Implementation committee (or similar structure) is created



Steps



Options for Implementation

- Leadership team
- Have one committee responsible
- Integrate into department/division work plans
- Organize by strategic plan goals
- Have regular review meetings
- Report to leadership team and board
- Integrate into job descriptions
- **Communicate the plan**

Developing Action Plans

- Each Strategy will typically have its own Action Plan
- Action plans are developed by the staff responsible for implementing the plan
- Action plans should include:
 - List of action steps
 - Resources required
 - Staff responsible
 - Timeline
 - Outcomes
 - Method of tracking

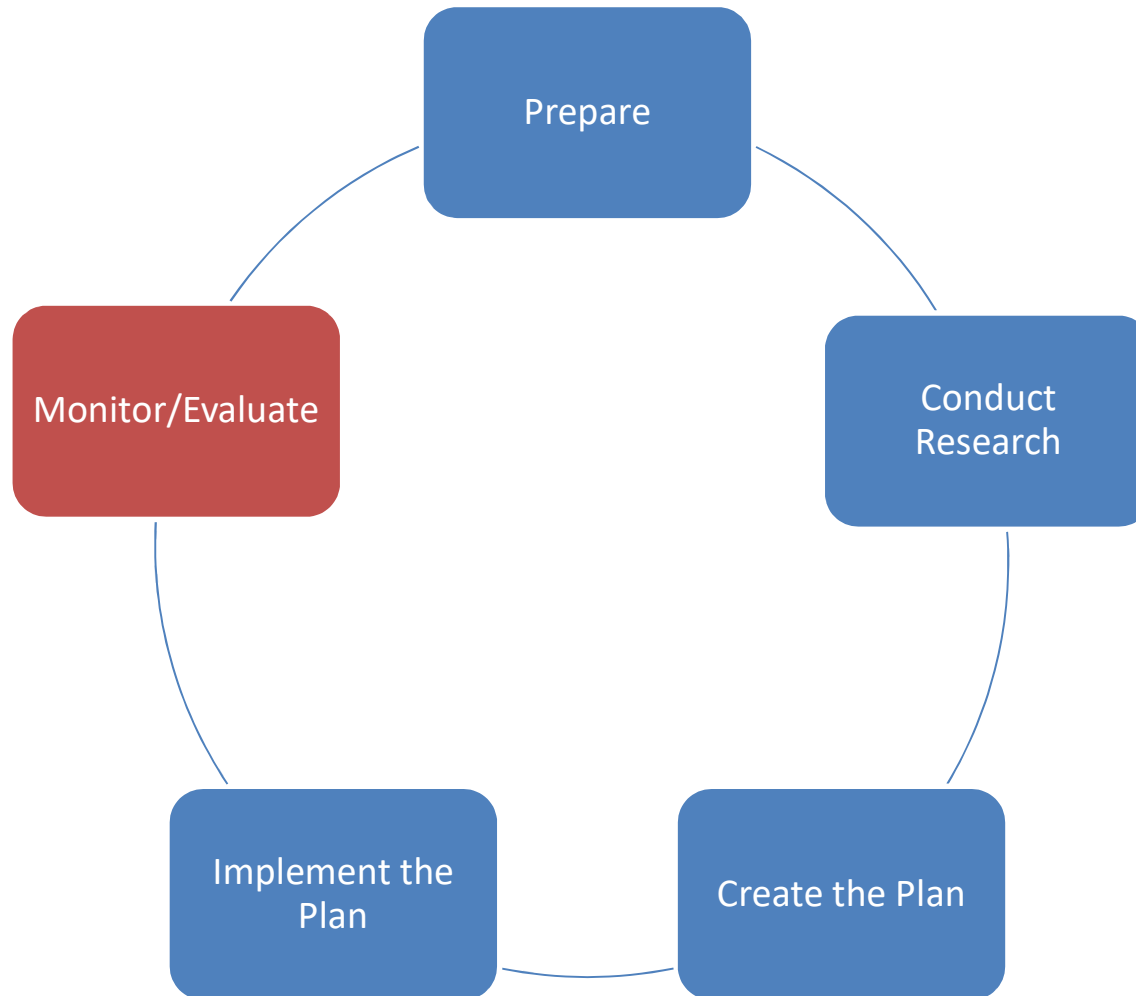


Source: Community Action Partnership

Integrating the Strategic Plan into Management and Operations

- Quarterly or Annual report to the board
- Monthly or quarterly updates to the leadership team
- Monthly meetings by the implementation team to oversee progress on individual action plans
- Creation of task committees to manage individual goals
- Integration into or development of an agency-wide or balanced scorecard to track progress
- Make strategic plan outcomes part of formal job descriptions
- Updates on strategic plan progress at staff meetings

Steps



Monitoring the Strategic Plan

- Have monthly or quarterly reporting of plan outcomes through the implementation committee, or similar structure and process
- Convene six month or annual review of strategic plan goals; provide time for board discussion and feedback
- Be sure to pay attention to the outcomes and results and be prepared to take action in response to the data and information gathered about the plan and services provided.



Monitor

- Most importantly, take action to make clear that the strategic plan is not an academic resource that will sit on the shelf but instead is a living and evolving framework for managing the agency's performance.
- Focus on outcomes; not just implementation progress

Evaluate

- Once the plan is completed, a review of the process can help identify ways to improve it and provides an opportunity for input from the people who participated in the development of the plan.



