

# Identifying Needs and Opportunities for Collaboration

## Worksheet: Identifying New Partners

Local stakeholders are key to the success of prevention efforts: they bring specialized knowledge, access to critical resources, insight into the priorities and values of priority populations, as well as knowledge of the health challenges these groups may face. When deciding which organizations, agencies, or individuals to cultivate as partners, we tend to weigh most heavily the technical and fiscal resources new partners can bring to the table.

Partnership identification through a health equity “lens” requires us to think more broadly about the knowledge, experiences, and resources we seek in new partners, and focus more intently on those attributes and experiences that will allow us to most effectively meet the needs of populations most at risk. It means re-thinking what we hope to “gain” from our partnerships. It also ensures that the voice of these populations is present in our decision-making, and that our organizations and coalitions reflect the diversity of our communities.

This worksheet is designed to help you identify and recruit new partners through a health equity lens.

### Step 1: Assess Current Needs

Consider these questions:

- **How are you currently defining “capacity”?** Broadening our definition of capacity helps us see and appreciate the contributions of people with skills and experiences that are different from our own. Consider your current definition. What capacities are you prioritizing? Now re-define capacity through a health equity lens. What new capacities are important?
- **Where are you gaps?** Consider your current partnerships. Which of the “new” capacities you’ve identified do they have?
- **What new capacities might new partners bring?** Will he or she provide you with better representation? Could they provide insight into the cultural values or norms related to substance use in a specific population? Do they have lived experience? Can they help you leverage opportunities to engage members of your focus population(s)? Think creatively about how your partnerships can facilitate the meaningful engagement, participation, and leadership of diverse individuals and groups in your community.

- **Are there resources you need to make your efforts more equitable?** For example, would coalition members benefit from a training on addressing health disparities or developing cultural humility? Could a new partner collaborate with you to develop and provide those opportunities?

**Step 2: Use your responses to these to complete the chart below.**

- First, **record** the prevention resource gaps each of you need to fill.
- Next, **list** your potential partners.
- **Describe** additional prevention resources each partner might provide.
- **Outline** the benefits each partner may experience by joining the collaboration to ensure all partners receive some benefit in exchange for their efforts. Work to ensure each partner “gets” as much as they give.

**Step 3:** Once you’ve completed the chart, decide which partners to contact first. This will help to ensure that your time and effort reaching out to them is spent wisely. To prioritize, think about what you know about the partner’s level of readiness to collaborate. If you need to know more, consider asking for a preliminary conversation with potential partners to gauge their readiness and learn about any barriers that might stand in the way of your partnership with them.

Potential Partner	Capacity Gap Filled	Other Value Added (to You)	Value Added (to Partner)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Potential Partner	Capacity Gap Filled	Other Value Added (to You)	Value Added (to Partner)
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			