Building Collaborative Capacity in Community Coalitions: A Review and Integrative Framework[1]

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This article presents the results of a qualitative analysis of 80 articles, chapters, and practitioners' guides focused on collaboration and coalition functioning. The purpose of this review was to develop an integrative framework that captures the core competencies and processes needed within collaborative bodies to facilitate their success. The resulting framework for building collaborative capacity is presented. Four critical levels of collaborative capacity—member capacity, relational capacity, organizational capacity, and programmatic capacity—are described and strategies for building each type are provided. The implications of this model for practitioners and scholars are discussed.

The popularity of community coalitions[3] in promoting systems change and enhancing community well-being is well illustrated by the increasing number of articles, books, and practitioner guides that address this topic. Although this abundance has increased our understanding of coalition processes and outcomes, it has also presented researchers and practitioners with a new

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[3] Although the term coalition is used in this paper, our literature review included all forms of collaborative venues including task forces, community coalitions, multiple stakeholder groups, interagency coordinating councils, and coordinating committees.

dilemma: how to integrate and manage the array of findings and recommendations across these publications. Given that science and practice are often advanced when existing literature is integrated into an overarching framework (Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Kuhn, 1964; McLeroy, Kegler, Steckler, Burdine, & Wisotzky, 1994), we conducted an extensive review[4] of the coalition and multiple stakeholder collaboration literature with the goal of developing a framework that captures core competencies and processes.

Based upon this review, we present in this paper our integrated model for building collaborative capacity. Collaborative capacity refers to the conditions needed for coalitions to promote effective collaboration and build sustainable community change (Goodman et al., 1998). While there is no one best way to implement a collaborative partnership (Roussos & Fawcett, 2000), the development of a framework that captures the conditions needed to succeed helps researchers identify the questions to ask and practitioners identify the critical factors to target within their partnership. An emphasis on capacity is helpful because it reminds us that a coalition's ability to affect change is (a) dynamic, changing with shifts in coalition membership, focus, and developmental stage (e.g., Butterfoss, Goodman, & Wandersman, 1993; Chinman, Anderson, Imm, Wandersman, & Goodman, 1996; Florin, Mitchell, & Stevenson, 1993; Florin, Mitchell, Stevenson, & Klein, in press; Wandersman, Goodman, & Butterfoss, 1997); (b) adjustable, enhanced by technical assistance and capacity building efforts (e.g., Florin et al., 1993, in press); and (c) transferable, allowing the capacity developed within one coalition experience to carry over to other community-based efforts (Mulroy & Shay, 1998). A focus on collaborative capacity also reminds practitioners and researchers to simultaneously identify existing coalition strengths as well as areas needing improvement. Our review of the literature suggests that coalitions need collaborative capacity at four critical levels: (a) within their members; (b) within their relationships; (c) within their organizational structure; and (d) within the programs they sponsor. Later we describe the

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[4]We collected the articles, book chapters, and practitioner guides published since 1975 that described community forums where multiple stakeholders gathered to collaborate and resolve community-based problems. To be included in our review, the articles needed to include either (1) detailed qualitative descriptions of the coalition processes and outcomes; (2) a proposed conceptual framework or "wisdom" piece that described effective coalition functioning; (3) empirical results of a study investigating the factors influencing coalition outcomes; or (4) a systematic review of the coalition literature. Eighty articles were reviewed and verbatim summaries of key processes and outcomes discussed in each article were entered into QSR NUD.IST^{TM}. We then content analyzed 15 articles that are highly cited and rich with details, identifying the factors influencing coalition effectiveness. Emerging themes were then organized into more substantive categories and these categories were organized into an overarching metaframework. Using NUD.IST, we then coded the remaining article summaries, using this framework. Adjustments to the framework were made as new themes were identified. All articles were coded by at least two researchers.

critical elements of collaborative capacity. Table I summarizes these findings and Table II provides a list of strategies practitioners and researchers can consider when attempting to assess and increase a coalition's collaborative capacity.

BUILDING MEMBER CAPACITY TO COLLABORATE

A coalition's membership is widely regarded as its primary asset (Butterfoss et al., 1993; Wandersman et al., 1997). As a voluntary organization, coalitions rely extensively on the extent to which their members have the capacity to perform needed tasks and work collaboratively together (Knoke & Wood, 1981). Because collaborative work often places unique demands on participants—requiring some unfamiliar attitudes and behaviors and a wide range of specialized skills—collaborative capacity is greatly influenced by both the existing skills/knowledge and attitudes members bring to the table and efforts taken to build, support, and access this capacity. In fact, member capacity is so critical that many coalitions use technical assistance to enhance member skills and knowledge sets.

Core Skills and Knowledge

What are the essential skill/knowledge sets members need to collaborate effectively? First, coalition members need to skills/knowledge to work collaboratively with others around the table (e.g., how to cooperate with and respect others, resolve conflict, communicate, understand member diversity; Auluck & Lles, 1991; Bitter, 1977; Bond & Keys, 1993; Butterfoss, 1993; Harrison, Lynch, Rosander, & Borton, 1990; Hawe & Stickney, 1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; McLeroy et al., 1994; Means, Harrison, Jeffers, & Smith, 1991; Mintzberg, Dougherty, Jorgenson, & Westley, 1996; O'Donnell, et al., 1998; Orians, Liebow, & Branch, 1995; Rowe, 1997; Wischnowski & McCollum, 1995; Wood, 1989). Second, coalition members need skills/knowledge to create and build effective programs (e.g., program planning, design, and evaluation; knowledge of content, targeted community, and change processes; Elliott, Alberto, Arnold, Taber, & Bryar, 1996; Fawcett et al., 1995; Feighery & Rogers, 1990; Florin et al., 1993, in press; Freudenberg & Golub, 1987; Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998; Goodman, Steckler, Hoover, & Schwartz, 1993; Kegler, Steckler, McLeroy, & Malek, 1998; Mayer, Soweid, Dabney, Brownson, Goodman & Brownson, 1998; Mintzberg et al., 1996; Muscat, 1998; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Plough & Olafson, 1994; Poole & Van Hook, 1997; Rowe, 1997; Sutherland, Cowart, & Harris, 1997–98; Wood,

Table I. Critical Elements of Collaborative Capacity

Member Capacity

Core Skills and Knowledge
  Ability to work collaboratively with others
    Skilled in conflict resolution
    Effective communication
    Knowledgeable about norms and perspectives of other members
    Broad understanding of problem domain
  Ability to create and build effective programs
    Understands targeted problem or intervention
    Understands target community
    Knowledgeable and skilled in policy, politics, and community change
    Grant writing and program planning, design, implementation, and evaluation skills
  Ability to build an effective coalition infrastructure
    Skilled in coalition/group development
    Knowledgeable about coalition member roles/responsibilities, committee work

Core Attitudes Motivation
  Holds positive attitudes about collaboration
    Committed to collaboration as an idea
    Views current systems/efforts as inadequate
    Believes collaboration will be productive, worthwhile, achieve goals
    Believes collaboration will serve own interests
    Believes benefits of collaboration will offset costs
  Committed to target issues or target program
  Holds positive attitudes about other stakeholders
    Views others as legitimate, capable, and experienced
    Respects different perspectives
    Appreciates interdependencies
    Trusts other stakeholders
  Holds positive attitudes about self
    Views self as a legitimate and capable member
    Recognizes innate expertise and knowledge bases

Access to Member Capacity
Coalition supports member involvement
  Logistical supports to assist members in attending meetings
  Social supports to facilitate active involvement
  Organizational support and institutional backing of coalition participation
Coalition builds member capacity
  Provides technical support in needed areas
  Helps members identify innate expertise

Relational Capacity

Develops a positive working climate
  Cohesive
  Cooperative
  Trusting
  Open and honest
  Effectively handles conflict
Develops a shared vision
  Superordinate goals
  Shared solutions
  Common understanding of problems
Promotes power sharing
  Participatory decision-making processes and shared power
  Minimizes member status differences

Table I. (*Continued*)

Values diversity
  Individual and group differences appreciated
  Multiple perspectives, unique interests, and competing desires and goals coexist
    and are incorporated into the work plan as much as possible
Develops positive external relationships
  Links with organizational sectors unrepresented on coalition
  Engages community residents in planning and implementation processes
  Connects with other communities and coalitions targeting similar problems
  Links with key community leaders & policy makers

Organizational Capacity

Effective leadership
  Excellent administrator
  Skilled at conflict resolution and communication
  Develops positive internal & external relations
  Visionary
  Effective at resource development
Task-oriented work environment
Formalized procedures
  Clear staff and member roles, responsibilities
  Well-developed internal operating procedures and guidelines
  Detailed, focused work plan
  Work group/committee structure
Effective communication
  Effective internal communication system
  Timely and frequent information sharing, problem discussion, and resolution
Sufficient resources
  Financial resources to implement/sponsor new programs and operate the coalition
  Skilled staff/convenor
Continuous improvement orientation
  Seeks input, external information/expertise
  Develops monitoring system and adapts to evaluation information
  Responds to feedback and shifting conditions

Programmatic Capacity

Clear, focused programmatic objectives
Realistic goals
  Identifies intermediate goals
  Achieves "quick wins"
Unique and innovative
  Program fills unmet community needs
  Program provides innovative services
Ecologically valid
  Program driven by community needs
  Program culturally competent in design

1989). Third, in conjunction with their leaders, coalition members need the skills/knowledge to build an effective coalition infrastructure (e.g., coalition and organizational development processes, member roles and responsibilities; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Hawe & Stickney, 1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Poole & Van Hook, 1997; Rosenkoetter et al., 1995; Rowe, 1997). Overall, coalitions that have members with the above

Table II. Strategies for Building Core Collaborative Capacities

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Building Member Capacity
  Understand current member capacity
    Determine what skill/knowledge sets are necessary for the coalition's efforts, which ones
      members currently possess, and which need to be developed or brought in
  Value the diversity of member competencies
    Reinforce, and maximize use of existing skills/knowledge
    Determine the unique assets (e.g., culture, language, skills, connections) of each member;
      create settings where these talents are used
  Enhance current member capacities
    Provide training in technical, programmatic, and relational areas
    Foster sharing and dissemination of knowledge
    Recruit new members with needed skill sets
  Engage in incentives management
    Understand and build on individual members' motivations for joining the coalition;
      create and enhance incentives to participate; assess and reduce participation "costs"
    Look for and address signs of member dissatisfaction (e.g., missing/coming late to
      meetings) Periodically reassess vision and goals with members; revise action plan if
      necessary
  Foster positive intergroup understanding
    Identify and share positive stakeholder qualities and mutual interests
    Ask stakeholders to share their relevant expertise, experience, and incentives for joining
      Consciously develop meaningful projects that people from different organizational
      and social/cultural backgrounds can plan and implement together
    Discuss differences in language, style, attitudes, and traditions of stakeholders
  Build diverse membership
    Determine critical constituencies given coalition's issue and context
    Include the most diverse and representative array of stakeholders as is feasible
    Target recruitment strategies/frame issues to appeal to a diverse set of stakeholders
    Include different types of people in leadership positions
  Support diversity
    Identify barriers (through surveys or discussions) that may impede participation
    Create supports and strategies for reducing barriers (car pooling, hiring an interpreter)
    Create subcommittees whose members represent stakeholder diversity
    Provide technical assistance to enhance current capacities

Building Relational Capacity
  Build positive intergroup interactions
    Create informal opportunities for members to socialize
    Use informal conversations to build consensus and curtail potential conflict
    Celebrate successes
  Create group norms
    Develop criteria for decision making and conflict resolution
    Deal with conflict as it emerges. Discuss openly, or with interested parties
    Create norms about participation, member involvement, and meeting behavior
  Develop superordinate, shared goals
    Identify common needs and emphasize shared concerns
    Help group move toward consensus by highlighting points of intersection
  Create inclusive decision-making processes
    Ensure that all members have a voice in the decision-making process
    Ask quiet members for their opinions
    Provide members with supports needed to be actively involved in the process

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Table II. *(Continued)*

Value member diversity
  Acknowledge that self-interest is to be expected and should be respected
  Encourage group members to voice their unique concerns in each meeting
  Incorporate diverse goals into the workplan
Build external relationships
  Seek input from sectors not represented in coalition membership
  Share information with external constituencies in a timely manner
  Seek out best practice information
  Involve community residents in program planning, implementation, and evaluation
  Make accomplishments visible to the community at large

Building Organizational Capacity
  Proactively build leadership
    Develop the leadership skills of multiple coalition members
    Train coalition leaders in meeting management, conflict resolution, and communication
    Support leaders to build relationships with outside constituencies
  Develop task focus
    Manage time effectively during meetings, with realistic agendas
    Keep group members on task during meetings
    If necessary, appoint a timekeeper to help members keep to the agenda
    Summarize points during lengthy discussions
  Formalize roles/processes
    Make explicit any interorganizational agreements or partnerships
    Specify and regularly review coalition policies, rules and processes
    Clearly define roles of staff and coalition members
    Gather from each member a formal commitment to the process
  Develop quality plans
    Create work plan articulating strategies and responsibilities for accomplishing
    coalition goals; monitor progress; periodically review and revise
  Create committee infrastructure
    Develop an active subcommittee or workgroup structure.
    Create subcommittees that include diverse representation
    Delegate specific responsibilities to each subcommittee
  Promote active communication
    Disseminate information in multiple ways (e.g., meeting minutes, e-mail, WWW,
      phone tree)
    Provide frequent opportunities for open communication among and between members,
      staff, leaders, and the community
    Train leadership/staff/members to become responsive communicators and listeners
  Build financial resources
    Anticipate the need for and actively seek needed resources
    Seek out technical assistance for grant writing if needed
    Plan for institutionalization of programs
  Develop skilled staff
    Recruit staff trained/experienced in administration, community organization,
      relational skills
  Develop an outcome orientation
    Develop explicit outcomes, measurable outcome indicators, and track progress
    Develop both short term and long term goals
  Develop a monitoring system
    Conduct baseline and periodic assessments of community needs and wants
    Evaluate coalition progress
    Periodically reassess coalition mission, objectives, and strategies

Table II. *(Continued)*

Building Programmatic Capacity
  Seek community input
    Conduct regular needs assessments
    Seek community input in planning processes
  Develop innovative programs
    Use member and community input to identify innovative ways to meet needs
    Identify your niche – avoid duplicating or competing with existing programs/
    strategies

skills/knowledge sets, or develop the above competencies in their members via technical assistance, are more effective at producing desired changes (Balcazar, Seekins, Fawcett, & Hopkins, 1990; Florin et al., in press; Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998; McMillan, Florin, Stevenson, Kerman, & Mitchell, 1995; Rogers, Howard-Pitney, Feighery, Altman, Endres & Roeseler, 1993; Rowe, 1997).

Building the Attitudes/Motivations For Collaborative Capacity

Access to member skills and resources and the construction of a collaborative environment are fostered when members are committed to the collaborative enterprise and hold the following positive attitudes (e.g., Butterfoss et al., 1993; Wandersman et al., 1997): First, members need to hold positive attitudes about the need for and value of collaboration (e.g., Allen et al., 1994; Aronson, Aronson, & LaVanway, 1980; Auluck & Lles, 1991; Barton, Watkins, & Jarjoura, 1997; Bitter, 1977; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Byles, 1985; Coe, 1988; Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Gottlieb, Brink, & Gingiss, 1993; Gray, 1985; Harrison et al., 1990; Hawe & Stickney, 1993; Herman, Wolfson, & Forster, 1993; Logsdon, 1991; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; McCann & Gray, 1986; Means, Harrison, Jeffers & Smith, 1991; Mintzberg et al., 1996; Mulroy & Shay, 1998; Orians et al., 1995; Pasquero, 1991; Peck Sheinberg & Akamatsu, 1995; Roberts-DeGennaro, 1997; Rogers et al., 1993; Sink, 1991; Wandersman et al., 1997; Wood & Gray, 1991; Zapka et al., 1992) and perceive that participation benefits outweigh participation costs (Aronson et al., 1980; Auluck & Lles, 1991; Bitter, 1977; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Chinman et al., 1996; Foster-Fishman, Shpungin, Bergeron, & Allen, 2000; Gray, 1985; Hawe & Stickney, 1993; Herman et al., 1993; Kegler et al., 1998; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; McCann & Gray, 1986; McLeroy et al., 1994; Mulroy & Shay, 1998; Roberts-DeGennaro, 1997; Rogers, Howard-Pitney et al., 1993; Sink, 1991; Wandersman, Goodman, & Butterfoss, 1997; Zapka et al., 1992). Members are also more willing to participate when they hold positive attitudes

about the proposed project or have a strong commitment to the targeted problem (Aronson et al., 1980; Auluck & Lles, 1991; Feighery & Rogers, 1990; Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998; Goodman et al., 1993; Mintzberg et al., 1996; Mulroy & Shay, 1998; Peck et al., 1995; Rogers et al., 1993; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Wandersman et al., 1997; Zapka et al., 1992). Members also need to hold positive attitudes about the other stakeholders, (e.g., viewing them as capable, experienced, legitimate, needed, and valuing their diversity) because such attitudes increase their willingness and ability to engage in collaborative work with those around the table (e.g., Auluck & Lles, 1991; Bartunek, Foster-Fishman, & Keys, 1996; Bitter, 1977; Bond & Keys, 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Coe, 1988; Gray, 1985; Harbert, Finnegan, & Tyler, 1997; Harrison et al., 1990; Logsdon, 1991; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; McCann & Gray, 1986; Mintzberg et al., 1996; Mulroy, 1997; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Orians et al., 1995; Peck et al., 1995; Ring & Van De Ven, 1994; Rogers et al., 1993; Sheldon-Keller, Lloyd-McGarvey, & Canterbury, 1995; Sink, 1991; Wischnowski & McCollum, 1995; Zapka et al., 1992). Finally, coalition members must hold a positive view of themselves and their role in the coalition. When they perceive their own legitimacy in the collaborative effort (e.g., Herman et al., 1993; McCann & Gray, 1986; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Zapka et al., 1992) and recognize their own participation competence (Herman et al., 1993; McMillan et al., 1995), members are more likely to actively participate and contribute their knowledge and skills to the group (Kegler, 1998; McMillan, Florin, Stevenson, Kerman, & Mitchell, 1995; O'Donnell et al., 1998).

Building Access to Member Capacity

Because different stakeholders bring different skills and resources to the table (Allen et al., 1994; Bartunek et al., 1996; Bond & Keys, 1993; Butterfoss, Goodman, & Wandersman, 1996; Herman et al., 1993; Wandersman, Goodman, & Butterfoss, 1994; Wandersman et al., 1997), coalitions with a diverse membership[5] are more likely to have access to the range of skills/knowledge needed for collaborative capacity to occur. Coalitions need to not only

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[5]In general, diverse coalition membership refers to (1) having the range of stakeholders invested in or affected by the coalition's focal point included as members and (2) having a membership that is representative of the local community. This typically includes recruiting members from a variety of societal roles (e.g., business owner, community leader, faith-based leader, human service provider, consumer) and ethnic, racial, age, and economic groups. In addition, coalitions often need to develop a membership base that also reflects the specific diversity needs and issues relevant to their particular focus. For example, a coalition targeting disability issues would want to ensure that its membership base also represented the range of disabilities (e.g., physical, cognitive, and mental disabilities) within its community.

recruit[6] a diverse membership (Allen et al., 1994; Bartunek et al., 1996; Bond & Keys, 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Coe, 1988; de Jong, 1996; Elliott et al., 1996; Florin et al., 1993; Freudenberg & Golub, 1987; Gray, 1985; Harrison et al., 1990; Herman et al., 1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; McLeroy et al., 1997; Nelson, 1994; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Orians et al., 1995; Peck et al., 1995; Penner, 1995; Rosenkoetter et al., 1995; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Sutherland et al., 1997–98), but also effectively support the member diversity around the table. In general, two types of support are needed. First, coalitions need to promote their members' ability to participate, by fostering the above core competencies through technical assistance, training, or orientation (e.g., Balcazar et al., 1990; Bartunek et al., 1996; Bitter, 1977; Elliott et al., 1996; Florin et al., 1993, in press; Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998; Gottlieb et al., 1993; Kegler et al., 1998; McMillan et al., 1995; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Plough & Olafson, 1994; Rosenkoetter et al., 1995; Rowe, 1997; Wandersman et al., 1997; Wood, 1989) or helping members identify their innate knowledge and expertise (Kegler et al., 1998). Technical assistance can be a useful venue for helping members—particularly nontraditional participants—become valued, knowledgeable participants and for increasing their own sense of participatory competence (e.g., Kegler, Steckler, McLeroy et al., 1998; O'Donnell et al, 1998; Wood, 1989). Importantly, such an emphasis on member capacity building has been shown to increase coalition effectiveness (Balcazar et al., 1990; Florin et al., in press; McMillan et al., 1995; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Rowe, 1997).

Second, given the divergent skills and resources of different groups, incorporation of structures that facilitate the inclusion of all participants is critical to maintaining effective diversity (Kelly, Azelton, Burzette, & Mock, 1994). Supports vary and can include (a) logistical supports to attend meetings (e.g., transportation, child care, financial reimbursement, Bartunek et al., 1996; Foster-Fishman et al., 2000; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Plough & Olafson, 1994; Rosenkoetter et al., 1995); (b) social support during meetings to facilitate active involvement (e.g., personal assistance, translation services; Bartunek et al., 1996; Foster-Fishman et al., 2000; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Plough & Olafson, 1994); and (c) contextual supports (e.g., organizational supports and institutional backing of participation; Herman et al., 1993; Means et al., 1991; Mintzberg et al., 1996; Muscat, 1998; Nelson, 1994; Roberts & Bradley, 1991). Provision of these supports is critical, given that coalitions often struggle to recruit and maintain active member, particularly

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[6]The recruitment of coalition members is perhaps one of the most critical components of coalition formation. Because coalitions rely on the capacity of their members, coalitions need to ensure that their membership base is reflective of the needed member capacity and of the diversity within its community. Attention to these needs during the recruitment process can significantly foster coalition development and success.

nontraditional member, involvement (Allen et al., 1994; Foster-Fishman et al., 2000; Hawe & Stickney, 1993; Herman et al., 1993; Rosenkoetter et al., 1995). Providing members with needed supports not only enhances participation rates, but can also reduce token involvement of critical constituencies and increase access to essential member resources (e.g., Foster-Fishman, Shpungin, Bergeron & Allen, 2000).

CREATING RELATIONAL CAPACITY

While capable members are needed to build collaborative capacity, collaboration is ultimately about developing the social relationships needed to achieve desired goals. Because collaboration often requires both broader relational networks and new ways of interacting with current contacts, most coalitions are faced with the task of needing to build both positive internal (i.e., relationships across participating members and organizations) and external relationships (i.e., connections between the coalition and external entities). These stakeholder relationships provide the medium for collaborative work, and when they evolve in a positive manner, they facilitate access to needed resources (Lin, 1999), promote the stakeholder commitment, satisfaction, and involvement needed to successfully pursue collaborative endeavors (Butterfoss et al., 1996; Sheldon-Keller et al., 1995), foster coalition viability (Gottlieb et al., 1993) and increase the likelihood that coalition efforts will be sustained long-term (Chavis, 1995).

Creating Positive Internal Relationships

Critical to the work of a coalition is the creation of a new relational community where members interact in expanded and improved ways. Attention to internal group dynamics is critical given that coalitions often involve members who share a history of conflict, misunderstandings, benign neglect, or have little experience working collaboratively with others (e.g., Bartunek et al., 1996; Wischnowski & McCollum, 1995). Positive internal relationships are fostered on three key levels. First, coalitions need to create a positive internal working climate (e.g., Butterfoss et al., 1993; Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Harrison et al., 1990; wandersman, 1994) that is cohesive, trusting, and capable of resolving conflict (Allen et al., 1994; Aronson et al., 1980; Bartunek et al., 1996; Bitter, 1977; Bond & Keys, 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1996; Chavis, 1995; Coe, 1988; Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Gottlieb et al., 1993; Kegler et al., 1998; Kegler et al., 1998; Plough & Olafson, 1994; Rowe, 1997; Sheldon-Keller et al., 1995; Wood, 1989). Second, coalitions need to help

members identify and unite around a shared vision, (Auluck & Lles, 1991; Bartunek et al., 1996; Bolland & Wilson, 1994; Bond & Keys, 1993; Coe, 1988; de Jong, 1996; Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Gray, 1996; Harbert et al., 1997; Katz et al., 1990; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; McCann & Gray, 1986; Means et al., 1991; Mulroy, 1997; O'Looney, 1994; Peck et al., 1995; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Sink, 1991; Skaff, 1988), a process that builds a solid foundation for working together and is widely considered one of the most critical components of coalition success (e.g., Bartunek et al., 1996; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). Third, coalitions need to create an inclusive culture where decision-making power is shared by group members and member diversity of desires is attended to and incorporated into the coalition's plans (Armbruster, Gale, Brady & Thompson, 1999; Bartunek et al., 1996; Bond & Keys, 1993; Coe, 1988; McCann & Gray, 1986; Pasquero, 1991; Wandersman et al., 1997). Although such power sharing is difficult and time consuming, (Sink, 1991; Wischnowski & McCollum, 1995; Wood, 1989) particularly when significant status differences or priorities exist between members (Allen et al., 1994; Bartunek et al., 1996; Bitter, 1977; Herman et al., 1993; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Orians et al., 1995; Wandersman et al., 1997; Wood, 1989), the creation of an empowering, cohesive environment is a critical component of collaborative capacity, fostering member commitment (Butterfoss et al., 1996; Coe, 1988; Gottlieb et al., 1993; Herman et al., 1993; Mulroy, 1997; O'Donnell et al., 1998), member satisfaction and retention (Bond & Keys, 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1996; Goodman et al., 1993; Hawe & Stickney, 1993; Kegler et al., 1998; Mulroy, 1997; Sheldon-Keller et al., 1995), implementation effectiveness (Bartunek et al., 1996; Bond & Keys, 1993; Coe, 1988; de Jong, 1996; Kegler et al., 1998; Mulroy, 1997; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Skaff, 1988), and the long term viability of the project (Gottlieb et al., 1993; Mulroy, 1997).

Creating Positive External Relationships

In recognition of their interdependence with other community sectors, successful coalitions also cultivate relationships with a wide range of external stakeholders (Butterfoss et al., 1993, 1996; Florin et al., 1993, in press; Gray, 1985; Harrison et al., 1990; Means et al., 1991; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Orians et al., 1995; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Selsky, 1991; Sink, 1991; Sutherland et al., 1997–98). This relationship building expands the coalition's network structure (Coe, 1988), producing access to a broad array of resources (e.g., money, people, information), and facilitating community support of programming efforts (Lin, 1999). Overall, coalitions need to build these relationships with four external constituencies.

First, to increase coalition visibility, resource access, adoption of proposed policies, and current and future program implementation, coalitions need to develop relationships with organizational sectors (e.g., neighborhood groups, other service delivery domains, faith based organizations, government entities) unrepresented on the coalition (Barton et al., 1997; Bradford, 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1996; Coe, 1988; Elliott et al., 1996; Florin et al., 1993; Florin et al., in press; Gray, 1985; Harrison et al., 1990; Means et al., 1991; Mulroy, 1997; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Orians et al., 1995; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Selsky, 1991; Sink, 1991; Sutherland et al., 1997–98; Wischnowski & McCollum, 1995). Second, to facilitate community support of programming efforts, and to ensure the cultural competence and relevance of designed programs, coalitions need to involve community residents in program planning, implementation, and evaluation efforts (Barton et al., 1997; Coe, 1988; Elliott et al., 1996; Florin, Mitchell & Stevenson, 1993; Freudenberg & Golub, 1987; Goodman et al., 1993; Mulroy, 1997; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Plough & Olafson, 1994; Poole & Van Hook, 1997; Wandersman et al., 1997). Third, to increase the likelihood that coalition efforts will inform policy making and lead to long term systems change, coalitions need to develop relationships with key community leaders and policy makers (Barton et al., 1997; Coe, 1988; Freudenberg & Golub, 1987). Finally, to build their own internal capacity, coalitions need to interact with other communities and coalitions addressing similar issues, to identify new innovations and best practice solutions (Florin et al., 1993; Gottlieb et al., 1993). Coalitions need these strong external relationships throughout their lifespan, with different stages dictating different relational needs.

BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Ultimately, if a coalition is to survive, it must have the organizational capacity to engage members in needed work tasks to produce desired products (Wandersman et al., 1997). The ability to organize members in a productive manner emerges when coalitions have the following characteristics. First, organizational capacity requires a strong leadership base, with current and emerging coalition leaders who have the skills (e.g., communication, conflict resolution, resource development, and administration), relationships (e.g., internal and external), and vision to transform individual interests into a dynamic collective force that achieves targeted outcomes (Allen et al., 1994; Barton et al., 1997; Bitter, 1977; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1996; Coe, 1988; Muscat, 1998; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Wandersman et al., 1997). Effective leaders create an internal work environment that is

simultaneously empowering, efficient, and task oriented (Butterfoss et al., 1996; Coe, 1988; Florin et al., in press; Peck et al., 1995), fostering member satisfaction and commitment (Butterfoss et al., 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1996; Kegler et al., 1998; Kumpfer, Turner, Hopkins & Librett, 1993; Mulroy & Shay, 1998; Rogers et al., 1993) and coalition effectiveness (Butterfoss et al., 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1996; Coe, 1988; Florin et al., in press; Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Goodman et al., 1993; Kumpfer et al., 1993; Rogers et al., 1993; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). Because leadership is so critical to coalition success, and the tenure of many coalition leaders is relatively short, coalitions need to continually foster and build a cadre of emerging leaders.

Second, coalitions need formalized processes and procedures that clarify staff and member roles and responsibilities and provide clear guidelines for all of the processes involved in collaborative work (e.g., decision-making, conflict resolution, interagency agreements). (Alter, 1990; Aronson et al., 1980; Auluck & Lles, 1991; Bond & Keys, 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1993; de Jong, 1996; Elliott et al., 1996; Feighery & Rogers, 1990; Florin et al., 1993; Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Gottlieb et al., 1993; Harrison et al., 1990; Hawe & Stickney, 1993; Herman et al., 1993; Kegler et al., 1998; Means et al., 1991; O'Looney, 1994; Rogers et al., 1993; Rosenkoetter et al., 1995; Selsky, 1991; Sutherland et al., 1997–98; Wandersman et al., 1994; Wandersman et al., 1997; Wischnowski & McCollum, 1995; Wood, 1989; Wood & Gray, 1991). Critical to the development of this clarity are the creation of a detailed work plan (Barton et al., 1997; Bartunek et al., 1996; Elliott et al., 1996; Fawcett et al., 1997; Florin et al., 1993; Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Harbert, Finnegan & Tyler, 1997; Kegler et al., 1998; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000) and a work group or task force structure (Bond & Keys, 1993; Harrison et al., 1990; Hawe & Stickney, 1993; Herman et al., 1993; Kegler et al., 1998; Kegler et al., 1998; Mulroy, 1997; Penner, 1995; Rosenkoetter et al., 1995; Sink, 1991; Sutherland et al., 1997–98), both of which serve to organize collaborative work, clarify member responsibilities, and create the task focus needed to achieve targeted goals (Butterfoss et al., 1996; Florin et al., 1993, in press; Kegler et al., 1998; Kegler et al., 1998; McMillan et al., 1995; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). Such clarity and formality helps to create a stable, predictable coalition structure and operating procedure (Rogers et al., 1993), reduce conflicts and competition (Bond & Keys, 1993; Florin et al., 1993; Harrison et al., 1990), and promote member satisfaction and commitment (Rogers et al., 1993; Wandersman et al., 1997). Ultimately, the creation of a routine, consistent internal environment promotes task accomplishment (Wood, 1989), resource mobilization (Kegler et al., 1998), and program implementation (Bond & Keys, 1993; Gottlieb et al., 1993; Kegler et al., 1998; Wandersman et al., 1997).

Third, because collaboration is in essence a communicative enterprise (Harrison et al., 1990; Mintzberg et al., 1996), coalitions must have a well-developed internal communication system that promotes information sharing and problem discussion and resolution (Aronson et al., 1980; Bond & Keys, 1993; Elliott et al., 1996; Harrison et al., 1990; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Wandersman et al., 1997; Zapka et al., 1992) on a frequent basis between and among staff and members. An open communication process fosters member satisfaction and commitment (Kegler et al., 1998; Mulroy & Shay, 1998; Rogers et al., 1993), builds a cohesive group environment (Bond & Keys, 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Coe, 1988; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Muscat, 1998; Peck et al., 1995; Wandersman et al., 1997), improves coalition effectiveness (Bond & Keys, 1993; Coe, 1988; Feighery & Rogers, 1990; Wischnowski & McCollum, 1995) and fosters implementation (Kegler et al., 1998; Kegler et al., 1998).

Fourth, the coalition must either have or acquire the human and financial resources to perform collaborative work. Collaborative efforts require significant resources (McCann & Gray, 1986; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Wandersman, 1994), including having the financial resources to implement new programs and operate the coalition (Barton et al., 1997; Bradford, 1993; Feighery & Rogers, 1990; Flynn & Harbin, 1987; Gottlieb et al., 1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Means et al., 1991; Muscat, 1998; Penner, 1995; Rosenkoetter et al., 1995; Wischnowski & McCollum, 1995; Zapka et al., 1992) and having adequate access to skilled staff (Allen et al., 1980; Byles, 1985; de Jong, 1996; Fawcett et al., 1997; Feighery & Rogers, 1990; Freudenberg & Golub, 1987; Gottlieb et al., 1993; Gray, 1985; Harrison et al., 1990; Herman et al., 1993; Kegler et al., 1998; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Means et al., 1991; Mulroy, 1997; Orians et al., 1995; Rogers et al., 1993; Rosenkoetter et al., 1995; Rowe, 1997; Wandersman et al., 1997; Wischnowski & McCollum, 1995). Overall, by having or proactively seeking an array of resources (Mayer et al., 1998; Nelson, 1994), coalitions are better able to recruit members, retain member commitment to the effort, successfully sponsor or implement programs (Kegler et al., 1998; Means et al., 1991; Muscat, 1998), and be sustained long term (Wandersman et al., 1997).

Finally, coalitions that have a continuous learning orientation, consistently seeking and responding to feedback and evaluation data, adapting to shifting contextual conditions, dialoguing about problems, and seeking external information and expertise are more successful in their endeavors (Armbruster et al., 1999; Barton et al., 1997; Bitter, 1977; Coe, 1988; Gray, 1985; Harbert et al., 1997; Harrison et al., 1990; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Mulroy & Shay, 1998; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Orians et al., 1995; Roberts & Bradley, 1991; Roberts-DeGennaro, 1997; Roussos & Fawcett,

2000; Sink, 1991; Sutherland et al., 1997–98; Wood, 1989). Such an orienta-
tion helps coalitions overcome barriers as they arise, promote accountability,
and achieve targeted goals (e.g., Mulroy & Shay, 1998; Roussos & Fawcett,
2000).

PROGRAMMATIC CAPACITY

Finally, coalitions need the capacity to guide the design and implementa-
tion of programs that have real, meaningful impact within their communities.
The actual role coalitions play in implementing new programs varies con-
siderably, with some coalitions actually implementing the programs them-
selves, and others playing more of a catalyst role, initiating other existing
organizations to implement these initiatives. In both situations, however,
coalitions play a critical catalyst role in identifying community needs, de-
signing innovative solutions, and mobilizing community support for these
efforts. Coalition sponsored programs are most effective when they have
clear, focused programmatic objectives (Barton et al., 1997; Butterfoss et al.,
1993; Coe, 1988; Florin et al., 1993; Gottlieb et al., 1993; Herman et al.,
1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Nelson, 1994; Penner, 1995; Roussos &
Fawcett, 2000; Sink, 1991) that are designed to achieve realistic goals (Bond
& Keys, 1993; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Chavis, 1995; Coe, 1988; Goodman
et al., 1993; Harbert et al., 1997; Harrison et al., 1990; Hawe & Stickney,
1993; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Mulroy, 1997; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000;
Selsky, 1991; Sink, 1991; Wandersman et al., 1997; Wischnowski &
McCollum, 1995) and address community needs in a unique, innovative
way (Butterfoss et al., 1996; Coe, 1988; Florin et al., 1993; Freudenberg &
Golub, 1987; Harrison et al., 1990; Means et al., 1991; Sheldon-Keller et al.,
1995). Programs that emerge from such an orientation are better equipped to
achieve targeted outcomes and sustain community support because they use
limited resources in an efficient manner, provide focus for coalition mem-
ber work efforts, complement existing community programs, and promote
coalition credibility through the achievement and documentation of "quick
wins" or intermediate goals (e.g., Butterfoss et al., 1993; Butterfoss et al.,
1996; Chavis, 1995; Roussos & Fawcett., 2000; Wandersman et al., 1997; Wis-
chnowski & McCollum, 1995). Coalition sponsored programs are also more
likely to make an impact and generate needed community support and own-
ership when they are ecologically valid (Armbruster et al., 1999; Barton et al.,
1997; Coe, 1988; Fawcett et al., 1995; Florin et al., 1993; Goodman et al., 1993;
Harrison et al., 1990; Kegler et al., 1998; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Mayer
et al., 1998; Means et al., 1991; Mulroy, 1997; Mulroy & Shay, 1998; Orians
et al., 1995; Penner, 1995; Plough & Olafson, 1994; Poole & Van Hook, 1997;

Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Rowe, 1997; Sutherland et al., 1997–98). an ecologically valid program fits the community context because its design is driven by community needs (through comprehensive needs assessments and community planning efforts) and its implementation process complements existing community strengths and resources. Coalition sponsored programs that are culturally competent in design (e.g., Barton et al., 1997; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Harrison et al., 1990; Mulroy, 1997; O'Donnell et al., 1998; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Sutherland et al., 1997–98) are also more effective because their programmatic components and implementation are aligned with the unique cultural values, attitudes, language, and behaviors of the targeted population.

CONCLUSION

By enhancing community member competencies, building new relationships, strengthening intracoalition operations, and promoting the design and implementation of effective community-based programs, coalitions can develop the collaborative capacity needed to succeed. In attempting to build collaborative capacity, researchers and practitioners need to be mindful that this capacity is greatly influenced by the larger community context (e.g., Wandersman, 1996) and that the four capacity types are highly interdependent with each other, with shifts in one greatly affecting the others. Therefore, the type of capacity needed is likely to shift with changes in coalition goals, membership, or context. For these reasons, practitioners and researchers should continually assess and build collaborative capacity, empowering communities to respond to new challenges by developing new competencies, new relationships, and new solutions. Our proposed framework provides focus for this capacity building work.

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