Challenges and Lessons Learned
Effective Strategies for Building and Maintaining Successful Collaborations and Partnerships
Our Mission...

To eliminate health disparities and to promote health equity, using shared leadership approaches to link organizations, efforts and resources that increase academic, community, and other partnerships that work to fulfill our mission, in South Carolina and beyond.
Our Story...

The Institute has been in existence since 2003. Over the last ten years, we have focused on four main areas that include research, faculty development, student development and community engagement. These main areas seek to achieve four outcomes:

1. Research: Increase statewide research on health disparities.

2. Faculty Development: Increase the number of minority professors who are knowledgeable in the field of public health and engaged in health disparities research.

3. Student Development: Develop and encourage minority students to consider careers in public health and public health research.

Our Commitment...

We are committed to fostering and maintaining partnerships that consistently:

• Involve the community.

• Brings together diverse groups of people and organizations.

• Recognize the importance of two-way relationships.

• Increase communication between organizations and the community.

• Create opportunities to provide realistic solutions to a problem too big for any one entity to handle.

• Recognize that building relationships and trust among partners takes time and will be an ongoing process.
Some Essentials For Building Successful Collaborations And Partnerships

Get The Right People To The Table

Ways to Get Results from Collaborations and Partnerships

*Note: This is a partial list of what has been done by the Institute unit. This list may vary depending on the organizations and partners involved, along with their project goals and plans.
Get The Right People To The Table.

- Enables you to learn the right steps that must be taken to approach the work you want to accomplish.
- Helps you to find out what resources might be available to assist.
- Helps you to learn what person, organization, policy, or activity might help or hinder your progress.
- Equips your organization to enter each situation/relationship with the attitude that challenges have approaches which can result in answers or solutions.
- Provides examples of how people can assist your organization, depending on the situation you are attempting to address.
- Provides input to your staff when working with any organization or group.
- Helps to insure that you have the leadership’s “buy-in” and support for what you are attempting to accomplish.
- Can enable your organization to establish advisory councils and advisory committees.
- Assist you with understanding that the “right people” may change over time.
Make Sure That The Mission, Vision, And Activities Of Partners Are Complementary

- Make sure that the mission, vision, and activities of your partners match your mission, vision, and activities. If you are generally “on the same page” with partners, it is easier for the partnerships to work and for progress to be made.
Be Concerned About The Needs Of Your Partners And Respect Them

- Show your partners that they are valuable! Ask them about their organization’s goals and what support is needed to reach their goals. Provide the requested support.
SUPPORT THE ACTIVITIES OF EACH OF YOUR PARTNERS, TO INCLUDE UNRELATED PROJECTS.

- Your support reflects your level of commitment to your partners.
- Your support build trusts and strengthens other partnerships.
- Continuous support enhances all relationships.
BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION’S GOALS AND HOW EACH PARTNER CAN ACHIEVE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL GOALS.

- Everyone should get something out of the partnership.
BRING SOMETHING TO THE TABLE

- Provide resources and support that can help enhance or sustain the work of your partners. Support might include human resources, technical assistance, advice, training opportunities, financial support and educational materials.
BE FLEXIBLE

• Being flexible involves being willing to change and modify your approach, and in some cases, your deliverables.

• Being flexible involves an awareness of circumstances, organizational dynamics, financial commitments, and changes in human resources and priorities. Changes may temporarily delay or hinder planned activities and the progress that a project can make.
Building And Maintaining Partnerships Is A Journey, Not A Destination!

Challenges and Some Solutions regarding Collaborations and Partnerships

Challenges may include the following:

- Workloads and competing priorities of partners can sometimes present barriers to accomplishing a project’s goals and hinder the completion of planned activities.

- Partners may sometimes have limited financial and human resources, which can present barriers to accomplishing project goals and completing planned activities.

- Sometimes partners may have limited knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to achieve project goals and complete planned activities.

- Sometimes agency funding levels require the realignment of the funding award, especially when unforeseen reduced budgets occur.
Building And Maintaining Partnerships Is A Journey, Not A Destination!

SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

Solutions to address challenges should focus on identifying the priorities of your partners, which in turn, should lead to improved organizational capacity and successful project implementation. When working with partners, consider:

• Developing and revising a Scope of Work (SOW) or Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with partners. The SOW or MOA describes the roles and responsibilities of all partners involved in each project. This could involve revisiting and modifying your plan of the work and each partner’s participation and involvement in the project.

• Providing funding to support part-time staff for partners when needed.

• Providing professional staff and graduate students to assist partners with tasks when needed.
Building And Maintaining Partnerships Is A Journey, Not A Destination!

SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Provide training in areas of challenge identified by the partners, to increase their organizational capacity to get the job done.
- Identify new partners for current and future projects.
- Improve the capacity of partners to ensure that projects are not delayed.
- Assist partners and stakeholders with realizing that sometimes things may not get done.
- Sometimes it is best to dissolve the partnership.
Our Partners

Over the years, our partnerships have included....

- Several units within the University of South Carolina
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU’s)
- 1890 Land Grant Network
- Hispanic-Serving and Minority-Serving Institutions
- State government organizations including public health agencies
- Faith-based organizations
- Health Care Providers
- Other community based organizations at the local, state, regional, and national levels

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