Stakeholder/Partner Outreach Tool

Developing strong and collegial relationships with local community organizations and key influencers is critical to the success of your outreach efforts. The first step in relationship building is making a list of the various local community stakeholders/partners that you plan to approach. Listing the key stakeholders and partners will ensure that you are identifying a range of stakeholders/partners.

By developing relationships with a range of partners, you will enhance your ability to:

- Spread information throughout the entire community

- Be credible and gain the trust of community members

- Keep apprised of changing or developing situations within the community

- Communicate important information to the community while the assessment is being conducted and you are not physically present in the community

In the pages that follow, you will find blank tracking worksheets for you to fill in as you develop relationships with community stakeholders/partners.

How to Select Community Stakeholders/Partners

When selecting community stakeholders/partners, it is important to keep in mind how information travels within a given community. You should select stakeholders/partners who are prime community disseminators and thought leaders who hold a high level of influence with the community at-large. Make sure to include

stakeholders/partners who have history in the community and/or history around the issue. If possible, you may want to identify a few trusted stakeholders or partners you can go to as issues arise. A few "in the know" stakeholders or partners can serve as valuable resources when questions or issues arise.

Criteria for selecting community stakeholders/partners include:

- Stakeholders/partners who have a wide reach and influence within the community

- Stakeholders/partners who communicate with diverse groups within a community in regard to life stage (e.g., married vs. single; employed vs. unemployed, etc.), age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status

- Stakeholders/partners recommended by other community thought leaders/influencers, such as the local public health department or mayor's office

It is important to keep in mind that partnership building is an ongoing process. You will likely add stakeholders/partners to the inventory as the community and situation at hand evolves. Furthermore, variety and depth of reach of the stakeholders/partners included in the inventory is far more important than the number of stakeholders/partners included.

Types of Organizations to Target

When developing your group of stakeholders and partners, it is important that it includes a broad range of organization types. Although the focus is local, you may want to include wider ranging groups who are involved with this

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community/issue at the State or national levels. The different types of organizations you should capture in your inventory include:

- Chambers of commerce

- Civic or service organizations

- Community-based organizations (CBOs)

- Colleges and universities

- Environmental organizations

- Federal agencies

- Health clinics

- Hospitals

- Libraries

- Local emergency management services

- Mayor's office

- News media (local newspapers, magazines, radio stations, TV news stations, etc.)

- Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs)

- Public health departments

- Religious organizations (churches, mosques, synagogues, etc.)

Next Steps

Once your list is developed, the next step is to start contacting these potential partners and stakeholders to introduce yourself and ATSDR and discuss how you can work together to communicate with the community about the situation at hand, what is being done, and the level of health risk to the community.

If you are new to the community, you may want to conduct the Stakeholder/Partner Survey to collect information. If the partner/stakeholder seems open to providing assistance, you may want to ask them to attend the initial community meetings and/or help with information dissemination activities.

However, depending on the level of concern in the community, you may find that some partners are more interested in venting or advancing their own agendas than helping with the communication effort. Knowing this is important to understanding the community dynamic, as you will become aware of the potential for the focus to shift away from your outreach goal. However, this may change how you approach involving those particular partners in your efforts.

Once you've gathered information about the community from stakeholders/partners, conduct an analysis of the community characteristics to help you gain a sense of demographics and past environmental issues affecting the community. You can do this by:

- Asking partners

- Conducting Internet research

- Talking to staff at local, State, and Federal agencies

Organization	Organization Type[1]	Address	Web Site	Contact Person[2]	Notes

[1] There are a broad range of organization types that are important to capture in your outreach efforts. Please see the section above for suggestions on the different types of organizations you should target in your dissemination efforts.

[2] For this field, when possible include that contact person's name, phone number, and email address.

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