



# Solidarity Grant Program

## Design & Due Diligence Meeting

### Introductions

#### Review Purpose of Meeting

Help us understand the relationship between the problems we're addressing and the strategies we're using to get the work done. Help to clarify and simplify everyone's thinking.

**How this process will flow:** We will work backward from the long-term impact we're seeking to achieve through specific goals, strategies, and milestones. At each step, we'll carefully probe the assumptions that underpin our beliefs about what will work and why and how it is likely to have the effect we anticipate. We'll consider:

1. Assumptions about the environment in which we are doing our work
2. Different ways to frame the problem
3. Basic set of principles or values about the way we do our work

#### Outcomes of the Meeting

1. Agreement of the goal of the project
2. Determine and/or clarify the areas of work
3. Establish and/or clarify key leaders, partners, and roles within the project
4. Analysis of project strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

By the end of the due diligence phase, grant seekers should have a full proposal that outlines:

1. Proposed Concept (more detailed concept paper)
2. Implementation Strategy (laid out clearly for years 1-5, as applicable)
3. Performance Measurement Framework (set of indicators)
4. Program/Project Budget
5. Organization Budget

#### Problem Analysis

- a. Simply put, what is the problem you want to address?
- b. What do you see as the underlying causes of the issue or problem?
- c. What are the demographics and historical context of the population as it relates to the identified problem?
- d. How would you reach/influence/impact the identified groups/structures?
- e. At what depth or level do you want to work?

#### Goal Definition

- a. What changes would the partner(s) like to see as a result of the proposed initiative?
- b. How does your vision for change align with the expressed desires of the community?

## Theory of Change

*A theory of change is not a program plan, but it establishes habits of the mind that let you create a good program plan. – From “Mapping Change: Using Theory of Change to Guide Planning and Evaluation”*

Broadly speaking, how will change happen? What are the underlying assumptions about change and what are they based on? What measurable change do you hope to achieve with the available resources, and how will outcomes continue beyond the life of the grant?

1. Thinking through all the steps along a path toward a desired change.
2. Identifying the preconditions that will enable (and possibly inhibit) each step.
3. Listing the activities that will produce those conditions.
4. Explaining why those activities are likely to work.

According to Jim Connell and Adema Klem you should ask yourself whether your Theory of Change is:

1. **Plausible** (stakeholders believe the logic of the model is correct: if we do these things, we will get the results we want and expect)
2. **Doable** (human, political and economic resources are seen as sufficient to implement the action strategies in the theory)
3. **Testable** (stakeholders believe there are credible ways to discover whether the results are as predicted)
4. **Meaningful** (stakeholders see the outcomes as important and the magnitude of change in these outcomes being pursued as worth the effort) - *From Kris Putnam Walkerly*

## SWOT Analysis

1. **Strengths:** What is going well? What is unique about this project? Is this community driven?
2. **Weaknesses:** What can be improved? What resources are missing or needed to be successful?
3. **Opportunities:** Are there broader implications for this work? Can new partnerships strengthen your position?
4. **Threats:** What external issues have the potential to cause problems? What trends or changes are cause for concern?

## Other Best Practice Reminders:

1. Include an equity lens in evaluation (disaggregated data, data biography).
2. Consider paying people for their time as you “engage” with them. Whether that be organizations or individuals, they should be paid appropriately for their time.
3. Acknowledging credit where credit is due.