Bridging Systems Sustainability Checklist

The Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network's Bridging Systems for Kinship Families initiative strengthens collaboration across government systems and nonprofit service providers to better serve all kinship families.

At some point during the implementation of your action plan, your team will want to begin thinking about how you will sustain, expand, or replicate the gains you are making throughout the Bridging Systems process. This checklist can guide you in your thinking and be used at regular intervals, such as annually, to ensure your action plan remains relevant and achievable while planning for long term sustainability of your work and impact.

Build on the site action plan

- Are the goals in the action plan still relevant and responsive to the current needs of the site?
    - Are there adjustments needed to the action plan?
    - Does it make more sense to develop a new action plan, if the prior one is completed?
- What activities from the plan have been successful so far?
- What is needed to maintain, expand, and/or replicate those activities?

Decide on staff roles and responsibilities

- Who will be the lead organizer/convener/facilitator?
- Will funding be needed for someone to continue or take over the organizer/convener/facilitator role?
    - If yes, have funds been secured? Or do funds still need to be secured?
    - If no funds are needed, is someone taking on the role, either as part of their existing workload, or as a volunteer?
- Who will be responsible for implementing each activity of the plan?
    - Who can take on the existing tasks from the action plan?

    - What new tasks are people able to take on?
- Will there be smaller work groups responsible for certain activities of the plan?
    - If so, who will lead them?
    - Who will be in each workgroup?

Identify/confirm the agencies and people critical to sustaining the work

- Who from the current group should/can continue?
    - Is there continued support from leadership?
- Which organizations will serve as the lead agencies?
- What gaps are there in the membership?
    - This includes both staff and people with lived kinship care experience.
- How will those members be engaged in the work?
- How will new members be onboarded so they understand the project, feel welcome, and know how they can contribute?

Review funding needs for activities and funding sources

- What activities from the action plan need funding?
- How will participating lived experts be compensated for their time and expertise?
- What funding is available already?
- What avenues for new funding can be explored?
    - Who will be responsible for exploring those funding opportunities?

Consider data needs

- What data is already available and how can this be used track outcomes
    - How about data for continuous quality improvement?
- What data is missing and needed?
- What plans are needed to collect additional data?
- How will the data be analyzed and outcomes reported?
    - How is the data used to show the quality of work being done?

- Who are the audiences for the data (funders, local/state/federal government, other)?

Possible activities to sustain/expand/replicate

- What opportunities exist at the state and local level to advocate for services for kinship caregivers?
    - Who will be responsible for tracking these opportunities?
    - Who will be responsible for following up on these opportunities?
- What outreach materials about kinship caregiver services already exist?
    - Do they need updating or are they "evergreen"?
- What other outreach materials are needed?
    - Who will create these and how will they be disseminated?
- What avenues and channels exist for outreach?
- What additional outreach activities are needed?
    - Who will be responsible for planning and executing these activities?

The Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center (Network) helps government agencies and nonprofits in states, Tribes, and territories work across jurisdictional and systemic boundaries to improve supports and services for families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children whose parents are unable to do so. The Network is a project of Generations United. For more information, please visit www.GKSNetwork.org.

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