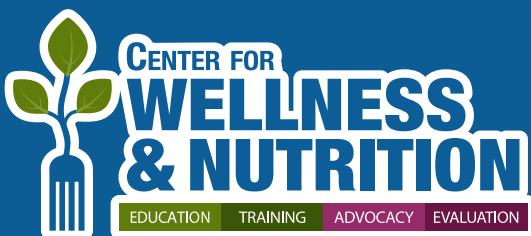
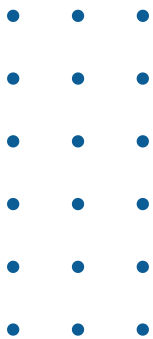




COLORADO SNAC TOOLKIT

A guide for developing state level, cross-program partnerships to reduce diet-related chronic disease



AUTHORS

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This toolkit has been customized for:



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INTRODUCTION

At the time of publication, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed), the primary funding source for State Nutrition Action Councils (SNAC), was omitted from the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2026 federal budget. While this toolkit focuses on SNACs, these tools, resources, and best practices can be used and are appropriate for wide-ranging food and nutrition security-related groups, councils, and coalitions. The toolkit will serve as a valuable resource for restarting SNAC work if funding is restored.

BACKGROUND

The U.S. has some of the highest rates of diet-related chronic diseases in the world. Conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, and certain cancers are among the leading causes of death, costing the country approximately \$1.1 trillion annually in treatment (Klatell, 2023).

To address these issues, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) supported the implementation of state and local initiatives to transform communities to make healthy eating and active living accessible to everyone. Reducing and preventing diet-related chronic disease in the U.S. through partnerships and collaboration are an essential part of the solution. As such, FNS prioritized the formation of SNACs to identify solutions to the most pressing issues in their state. SNACs serve as a model for coalescing state programs around nutrition education and diet-related chronic disease prevention efforts. SNAC partnerships bring together key stakeholders to leverage resources and reduce duplication of efforts. SNAC partnerships also provide space for sharing updates and exchanging knowledge and resources across agencies.





BACKGROUND

In partnership with Colorado Department of Human Services, the Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition developed this toolkit to guide SNAC through the process of establishing partnerships to successfully implement diet-related chronic disease prevention initiatives and improve the health of the most at-risk communities.

The original SNAC Toolkit, which includes examples from multiple states and other materials referenced in this toolkit, can be found on the [Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition website](#).

STEPS TO SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT A SNAC INITIATIVE

This toolkit provides a framework to help state-level organizations collaborate in forming a SNAC, guiding them through the steps of developing and implementing initiatives that address diet-related chronic diseases and improve the health of the most at-risk communities. It contains recommendations, practical activities, and success stories to support lasting change through collaborative efforts with SNAC partners.

THE SNAC TOOLKIT STEPS INCLUDE:

1. Set up the SNAC, including recruiting and engaging partners
2. Select an Initiative
3. Develop a Plan
4. Implement the Initiative
5. Evaluate the Initiative
6. Reassess the SNAC





SECTION ONE

Setting Up Your SNAC





SETTING UP YOUR SNAC

Before beginning your SNAC work, it is important to identify who will be a part of the SNAC and how they can contribute to the work of the group. Here are the five steps for successfully recruiting and retaining partners for your SNAC:

STEPS FOR RECRUITING AND RETAINING PARTNERS:

1. Determine who should be at the table
2. Hold your first SNAC meeting
3. Assess your team
4. Establish group operating principles
5. Retain partners

State-level Collaboration

A key strategy for improving the health of communities is convening state-level agencies working on programs that reduce diet-related chronic diseases to foster collaboration. Various state-level agencies receive funding to carry out similar work, which can lead to duplication of efforts and inefficient use of resources. Collaboration is defined as exchanging information, coordinating activities, sharing resources, and enhancing each other's capacity for mutual benefit to achieve a common purpose. Through collaboration, organizations can work jointly to accomplish a shared vision and mission using pooled resources.





State-level Collaboration

BENEFITS OF STATE-LEVEL COLLABORATION:

- More efficient use of scarce resources
- Opportunities to use shared metrics that demonstrate statewide impact
- Reduced duplication of costs and efforts
- Decreased fragmentation among services, programs, and initiatives
- Ability to create outcomes together that agencies could not achieve individually
- Higher-quality, more integrated results for priority populations
- Integration of diverse perspectives to gain a deeper understanding of challenges
- Improved communication among agencies and between agencies and their constituents
- Increased trust and understanding among individuals and organizations
- Enhanced opportunities for organizational and individual learning
- Greater capacity to achieve key outcomes





The Collaboration Continuum

Not all partnerships are created equally. Just being at the table is not enough to create collaboration among participants. Establishing partnerships that are truly collaborative requires time, effort, and commitment from everyone involved. Below is a visual based on Himmelman's model of partnership outlining the four levels of commitment on the continuum (Mashek & Nanfito, 2015). Collaboration is best achieved when all these characteristics are in place. You can use the continuum to determine what elements are missing from your partnerships and help guide you towards establishing more collaborative meetings and programs.





The Collaboration Continuum

Networking	Coordinating	Cooperating	Collaborating
Exchanging information for mutual benefit	Exchanging information for mutual benefit	Exchanging information for mutual benefit	Exchanging information for mutual benefit
Low or no level of trust required	Some altering of activities to achieve shared purpose	Increase altering of activities	Altering activities- may include modifying and/or adding positions
Limited time commitment	Slight increase in organizational involvement	Additional increase in organizational involvement	Substantial increase in organizational involvement
No sharing of turf	Some degree of trust required	Some sharing of resources	Commitment to sharing resources
		Increasingly formal organizational commitment	Formalized organizational commitment
		Substantial time commitment	Substantial time commitment
		High level of trust	Very high level of trust
			Written agreements
			Sharing of risks, responsibilities, resources, and rewards





DETERMINE WHO SHOULD BE AT THE SNAC “TABLE”

Leading The Group and Facilitating Meetings

Most successful state-level collaboratives have a leader or leadership team that facilitates meetings and keeps the group moving forward collectively. While not always required, hiring an external facilitator can be beneficial to help ensure the SNAC stays on track and makes consistent progress. When selecting a facilitator, consider the following leadership characteristics:

- Can commit 3–5 hours per month in addition to regular meetings
- Respects and values different perspectives within the group
- Acts as a collaborative leader and facilitator, fostering an inclusive culture rather than simply making decisions
- Willing and able to perform key tasks (e.g., facilitating meetings, taking notes, preparing meeting summaries, planning agendas)
- Serves as an active, substantive leader rather than a symbolic figurehead
- Balances both task-oriented and relationship-oriented responsibilities



TIP:

Leverage available funding to contract an external facilitator. This will eliminate bias and assist in ensuring all voices are heard. When funding is limited, forming a leadership committee instead of relying on a single leader can maintain continuity during staffing or funding changes while also minimizing bias.





Identify Potential Partners

An important step in the SNAC process is identifying the right participants. While including individuals from various organizations and perspectives can be valuable, it is important to start small with only those who are most essential.

USDA FNS-Funded Programs:

- Food Distribution Programs
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program

Child Nutrition Programs:

- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- National School Lunch Program
- School Breakfast Program
- Special Milk Program
- Summer Food Service Program

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Programs:

- Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

SNAP Programs:

- SNAP-Ed (federal funding was eliminated on September 30, 2025)
- SNAP Outreach
- Food Incentive Programs
 - Double Up Food Bucks
 - Produce Bonus



Identify Potential Partners

While specific programs vary by state, the following typically receive and administer FNS funds:

- State Department of Education
- Extension Offices
- State Department of Agriculture
- WIC
- State Department of Public Health
- State Department of Health and Human Services

Other programs and partners to consider:

- Farmers markets and farmers market managers (especially those supporting SNAP matching or other similar farmers market programs)
- Grocery associations
- Universities
- Extension offices
- Food hubs
- Farmers
- Nonprofits
- Healthcare organizations
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
- Department of Education
- Department of Higher Education
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program
- State Unit on Aging and other programs providing nutrition services to older adults
- State and Local Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Programs, Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Community Members



Identify Potential Partners

After identifying which agencies and organizations you would like to include in the SNAC, research each entity to determine if they are interested in participating. Consider the following questions:

- What is the philosophy of top-level leaders regarding nutrition education and diet-related chronic disease prevention?
- Does the leadership of the agency support SNAC?
- Is SNAC a priority for the agency?
- What other state-level collaboratives is the agency part of?
- What are the agencies' main priorities?

Select Partners

After identifying the appropriate agencies to include in the SNAC, carefully make your selections. It is essential to choose individuals who are committed to the SNAC's mission, as high turnover can slow progress. When selecting partners, look for those who:

- Have firsthand experience in diet-related chronic disease prevention, food access, or nutrition education
- Are genuinely interested in making an impact on the issue
- Are committed to reducing health inequities in your state
- Demonstrate collaborative behavior
- Can commit to attending meetings, reviewing materials, and supporting SNAC initiative implementation
- Possess the trust and influence needed to represent their organization
- Bring diverse work experiences and perspectives to the SNAC



TIP: Begin with a small group of partners. As the SNAC progresses, build upon your base and invite additional partners to participate.



Invite Partners to Participate

Once you have identified potential SNAC partners, contact each person individually to gauge their interest in participating. This approach helps ensure you are inviting the right people to the table, builds strong relationships with new partners, and allows you to highlight key reasons for their involvement.

Based on the information gathered during discussions with potential partners, draft a personalized invitation to participate in the SNAC. When drafting your invitation, consider the following:

- Explain what the SNAC is
- Provide an overview of the purpose of the SNAC
- Describe what is required or expected if they decide to participate, including attendance and participation at in-person meetings (with estimated monthly time commitment) and support for implementation of the selected initiative
- Make the case for participating in the SNAC by explaining why they should join, highlighting how the SNAC will benefit them and connecting it to their personal and professional interests
- Emphasize what you are offering participants in exchange for their expertise, such as opportunities for professional development, new content knowledge, or connections for their organization
- Use data to illustrate the problem the SNAC will address and reinforce the value of participation



TIP: Standardize your onboarding by creating an onboarding kit. Include a standard welcome message, links to previous meetings, instructions for any group tools, and other relevant information.



HOLD THE FIRST SNAC MEETING

Once your partners have agreed to participate, schedule the first SNAC meeting. Meetings can be in person, virtual, or a combination of both to best meet the group's needs. The first meeting sets the tone for the SNAC, so take the time to make it engaging and meaningful for all members

BEFORE THE MEETING:

- Find a time and location that is convenient for all partners to ensure full attendance
- If the meeting is virtual, use a platform that is accessible and conducive to engagement
- Communicate meeting details in advance and send reminders about when and where it will be held
- For the first meeting, consider sharing a list of invited participants so everyone knows who will be attending and what to expect
- Develop an interactive agenda that encourages participation rather than relying solely on presentations, and clearly outline the objectives for each session
- Assign someone to take notes during the meeting
- Prepare a sign-in sheet and provide name tags and/or name tents for each member



TIP: Include brief icebreakers to build trust within the group and create opportunities for one-on-one or small-group connections, which is especially important for virtual meetings where informal interactions are limited.





HOLD THE FIRST SNAC MEETING

DURING THE MEETING:

- Begin the meeting with introductions and an icebreaker to help members get to know one another and set a tone of engagement
- Keep participants engaged throughout the meeting, allowing ample time for discussion and interaction among members and with the SNAC leader
- Start and end the meeting on time
- Schedule the next meeting before adjourning
- Build flexibility into the agenda to accommodate discussion and emerging priorities

AFTER THE MEETING:

- Promptly share meeting notes so participants are clear on follow-up tasks
- Post meeting information and resources in a location accessible to all
- Provide a feedback survey for participants to complete





SECTION TWO

Foundational Activities





ASSESS YOUR SNAC TEAM

After the first meeting, dedicate time in a subsequent session to assess the SNAC team. A group assessment helps uncover the knowledge, skills, and resources within the team, identify gaps, and strengthen connections among members.

There are several tools available for conducting assessments. For example, the Colorado SNAC used the Network Mapping Activity (see activity below), while other SNACs have used a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) or SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) analysis.

Providing an overview of programs across the state helps members collaborate more effectively and reduce duplication of efforts. The activity below is designed to deepen understanding of the sectors in which SNAC members work and clarify how they connect across Colorado.

The main objectives of the network mapping activity are to:

- Visualize the SNAC and member relationships in one place
- Understand assets and identify overlaps among members
- Identify gaps within the SNAC network
- Explore new ways to combine insights, efforts, resources, and influence





ACTIVITY

SNAC Network Mapping

Estimated Time Needed: ~2 hours



- Flip chart paper
- Scotch tape
- Sticky notes or sticker labels (different colors for each SNAC partner organization)
- Thick markers (thick enough to see at a distance; colors that match the sticky notes)
- Printed questionnaires (Appendix 1) for attending members





SNAC Network Mapping

Activity Overview

A large map on flip chart paper will be set up at the front of the room (see Figure 1). Around the borders, list a set of sectors (with space left for additions during the session). In the center, mark an 'anchor point' for each SNAC organization, using a unique color. During the activity, each organization will identify the sectors they 'touch' and the types of work they do in each. By the end, each anchor point will be connected to the sectors where the organization works, creating a visual representation of connections across the network.

Assign each organization a unique color and provide their representatives with matching markers and sticky notes/labels. Ask participants to draw a line from their organization's anchor point to each relevant sector zone. Use the colored sticky notes/labels to describe the types of projects or work in those sectors. The completed map will show which organizations connect to which sectors, the work being done, where overlaps exist, and which sectors are less represented. This allows SNAC members to clearly see shared areas of work, opportunities for collaboration, and sectors that remain siloed.



SNAC Network Mapping



Step 1:

Each SNAC member will receive a SNAC Network Mapping Questionnaire (see Appendix 1). The SNAC members will then be broken out into pairs. While in pairs, each person will “interview” the other to complete the SNAC Network Mapping Questionnaire. The interviewer will write the interviewee’s name at the top of the questionnaire. At the end of the interview, the partners will swap their questionnaires so that each person holds the sheet with their name at the top. The SNAC members will use the answers in this questionnaire for step 2 of the activity.

Step 2:

SNAC members will be introduced to the activity and shown the pre-set map with sector zones and organization anchor points (see facilitator script below for details). The facilitator will call out each sector, and members who indicated involvement in that sector (similar to a bingo call) will come to the map. Using their organization’s assigned color marker, they will draw a line from their anchor point to the sector zone. They will also use color-coded sticky notes/labels to record the types of work or projects they do in that sector, based on the questionnaire completed in Step 1, and place them in the sector zone. This process will visually map connections across organizations and sectors.

Step 3:

The activity will continue until all sectors (see Table 1) have been discussed. The result will be a web of SNAC member organizations connected to different sectors (see Figure 1).





SNAC Network Mapping

Table 1. Food System Sectors

Sector	Examples
Schools	Early childhood, elementary, middle/high school, college/continuing education
Healthcare	Hospitals, health clinics, senior centers
Food Retail / Food Vendors	Grocery stores, farmers markets, corner stores, restaurants
Public Spaces	Parks, community centers, community gardens, churches, etc.
Emergency Food Access	Food banks, food pantries
Farms / Agriculture	Farmers, processing facilities, extension office
Government	Nutrition Programs
Other	TBD

Figure 1. Example of Network Mapping Activity





Digitize Network Map

After completing the network mapping activity, document the results in a spreadsheet. This will provide a record of the activity, support the findings, and allow for future updates and use of the information. To begin, create a dataset with the top row listing the organization name and each sector. Then, enter each organization's responses from the questionnaire. See Figure 2 below for an example of data entry.

Figure 2. Sample from the Network Mapping Activity Dataset

A	B	C	D	E
Organization	Government	Emergency Food Access	Parks/Public Spaces	Education
CDE	CDHS partner on SEBT; Partner with other state agencies CDPHE CDA	Food pantries; food banks; food access; SWFC	School partner with community center parks and other public spaces for distribute summer food service meals	NSLP; SBP; ASP (after school services); FFVP; SFSP; Farm School (SEBT)
CDPHE	Grant programs via tax dollars; TA provider for HFPK grantees	HER nutrition guidelines		Farm to ECE; ECE licensin professional development
	County Human Service debts; SNAP outreach; Nutrition education promotion; nutrition incentives;			

Consider creating a digital version of the network map to archive the information gathered and provide a clear visual of connections across sectors. For example, Figure 3 shows a digitized network map created in Canva. A digital map also allows you to “zoom in” on specific sectors to view connections and overlaps in greater detail (see Figure 4).



Digitize Network Map

Figure 3. Digitized Network Map (created in Canva)

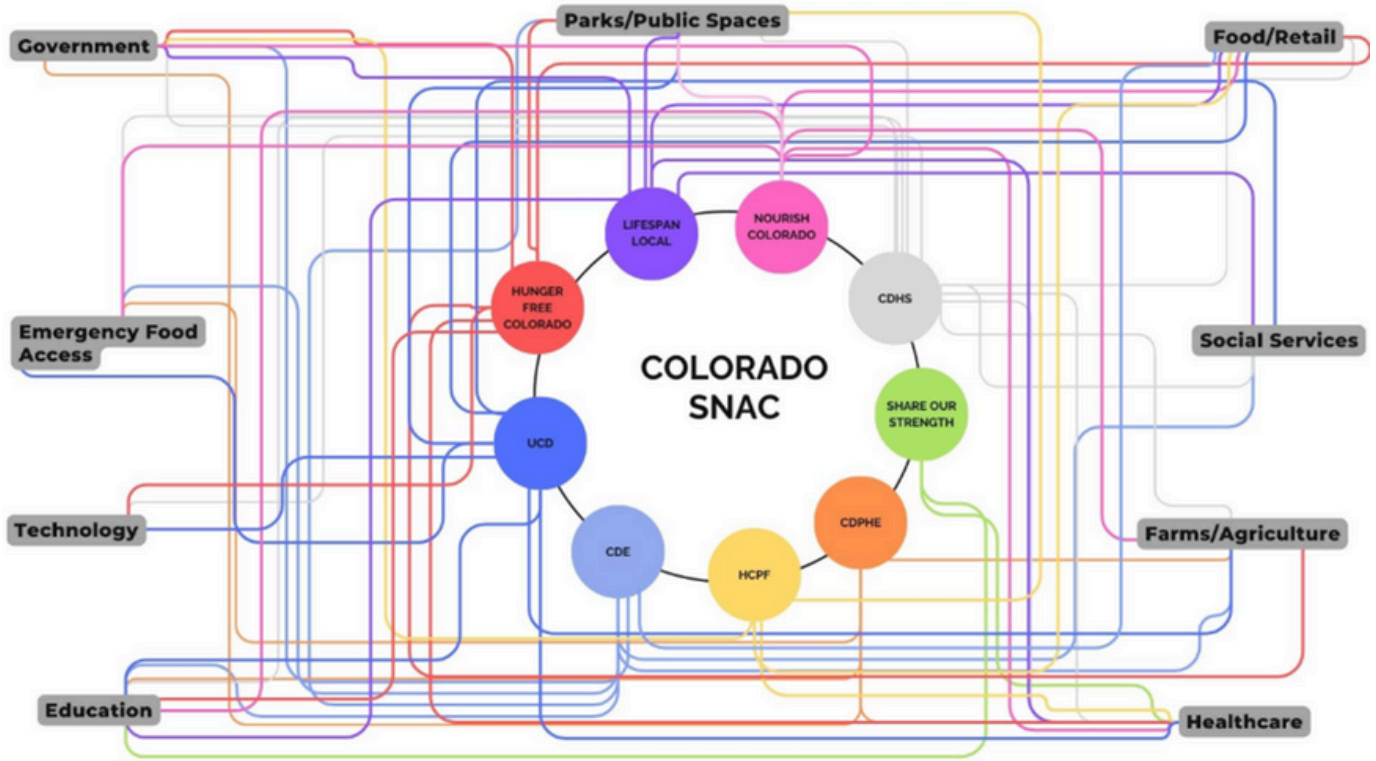
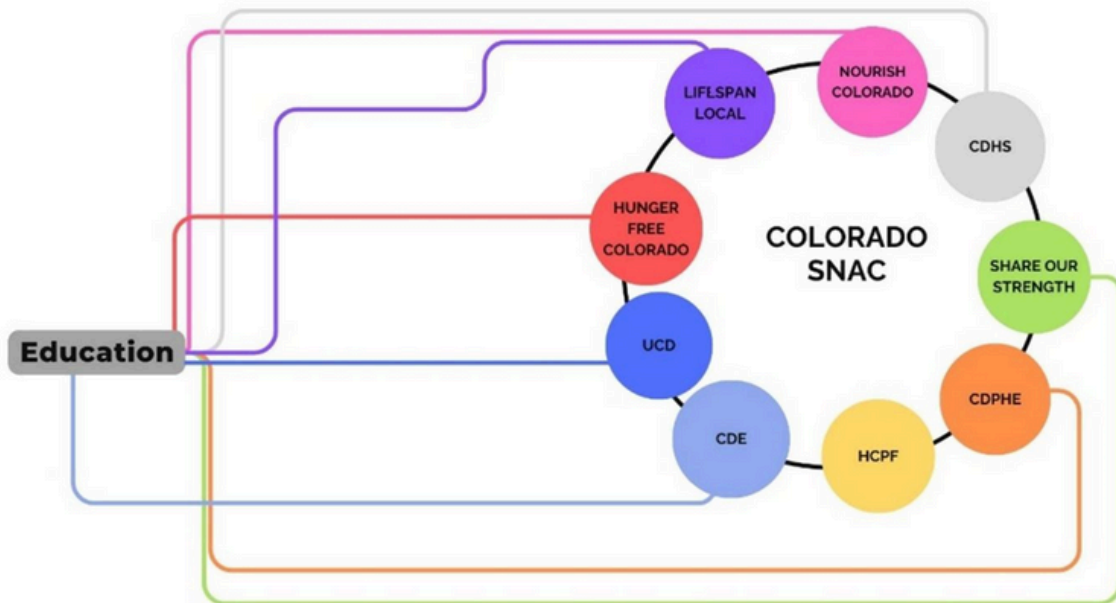


Figure 4. Digitized Network Map - Education Sector "Zoom In"





ESTABLISH GROUP OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Develop Shared Expectations

Establishing universally agreed upon expectations is an important element in working collaboratively and effectively. Often, groups establish ground rules to guide meeting behavior. However, ground rules are often prohibitive (e.g. no phone use during meetings). Instead, try developing shared expectations that hold the group to a higher, more positive standard of engagement. Shared expectations can provide transparency on acceptable behaviors and attitudes during meetings. Some examples of shared expectations include:

- Address un-discussable issues
- Focus on underlying interests rather than fixed positions
- Explain the reasoning and intent behind your statements, questions, and actions
- Balance advocacy with inquiry
- Keep discussion focused and on track
- Strive to make decisions by consensus





ACTIVITY

Developing Shared Expectations

Estimated Time Needed: ~30-45 minutes



- Flip chart paper
- Scotch tape
- Sticky notes
- Thick markers

Activity Overview

Explain what expectations are to the group and provide them with a couple of examples (see above). Develop shared expectations based on the roles of the SNAC members. This is important because the expectations of the group facilitator/leader will be quite different from the expectations of the participating partners.



Developing Shared Expectations

Activity Overview

Expectations of the SNAC Leader(s):

- Ask the SNAC members to take a few minutes to silently think about what they want from the facilitator. Ask them to write down their expectations on Post-it notes.
- When they are finished, post their ideas on a flipchart paper or whiteboard, and organize them into "themes" based on areas of overlap
- Read the expectations aloud and determine if the group and the leader agree with them.
- Write a list of expectations for the SNAC leader.
- After the meeting, type the list and share it with the entire SNAC group.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE SNAC MEMBERS:

- Ask the group to take a few minutes to silently think about what they want from the rest of the SNAC members.
- When they are finished, post their ideas on a flipchart paper or white board, and organize them into "themes" based on areas of overlap.
- Read the expectations aloud and determine if the group agrees with them.
- Write the list of expectations for the SNAC members.
- After the meeting, type up the list and share it with the entire SNAC group.



CO SNAC SHARED EXPECTATIONS

SNAC Leadership

In 2023, CO SNAC members agreed upon the following shared expectations for SNAC Leadership:

- Help the SNAC avoid duplication of efforts and discover ways to piggyback off what others are doing in the space.
- Provide creative, networking opportunities inside and outside of the meetings!
- Provide clear direction for group including a clear agenda and objectives
- Guide the direction and momentum.
- Provide follow up and resources to what was shared.

SNAC Members

In 2023, CO SNAC members agreed upon the following shared expectations for SNAC Members:

- Be aware of what other (organizations) are doing by sharing updates to avoid duplication.
- Share the workload and contribute across the group if there is project happening.
- Move towards a shared objective/initiative.
- Be responsive to communication.
- Share resources.





DETERMINE THE SNAC DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

As a group, it's important to discuss who will make decisions and how those decisions will be made. SNAC may face several important and at times, difficult choices. Establishing a clear, agreed-upon decision-making process early on is essential to ensure the group moves forward together and that all members feel included and heard. Make time during one of your initial meetings to define this process and gain consensus from the group.



There are several approaches to consider when making decisions. The following page presents four types of decision-making processes, summarizing their strengths and weaknesses. The table is adapted from University of Minnesota Extension (University of Minnesota Extension. (n.d.).





DETERMINE THE SNAC DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Type	Strengths	Weaknesses
Decision by Authority: One person (usually the group leader/facilitator) decides based on group feedback.	Useful when group lacks knowledge or skills. Works well when decisions are routine or when commitment to implementation is not a concern.	Doesn't work well with more complex decisions Group might not support the final decision.
Minority Control: Small group made up of experts on the issue or a delegated subgroup that has the necessary information to make a decision.	Useful if whole group cannot meet. Appropriate when overall commitment to the decision is not necessary.	Doesn't use the resources of the whole group. Doesn't build group support for the decision.
Majority Control: Decisions are made by voting which are mandated by rules or by-laws. Group adopts the idea that wins the majority of the votes.	Includes all group members in the process. Most democratic method. Effective when there is no time to build consensus.	Someone wins and someone loses in the voting process. Could result in a disgruntled minority. Can cut out the option of finding a compromise.
Consensus: All group members come together and reach an agreement. Everyone is involved, understands the decision, and is prepared to support it.	Can produce a high-quality decision with a strong commitment to implementation. Problem solving is enhanced. Useful for important, complex decisions that affect a lot of people.	Takes a lot of time and energy. Difficult to achieve in a large group. Requires rich exchange of ideas and information.



ACTIVITY

Establish Decision-Making Process

Estimated Time Needed: ~15-30 minutes



- Notetaker

Review the different decision-making methods table with the group. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each method and determine which method will work best for your SNAC. After you decide which decision-making method you will use, establish the criteria you will use to reach your decision. Consider the following: effectiveness, feasibility, capability, cost, time required, support or enthusiasm (of team and of others).

The Colorado SNAC agreed to the Consensus Method in 2023.



DEVELOP SNAC VISION AND MISSION

Develop SNAC Vision

Developing a vision for the SNAC is the first step in establishing your plan. Coming up with a concise vision is essential to creating a strong plan with clear direction. As you likely already know, a vision is a clear and inspirational hope for the future. When developing the vision for your SNAC, think about it as your big picture goal. Your SNAC vision should be short, direct, and memorable. It is your way of communicating your long-term goal to yourselves, other organizations, and the public. In 2023, Colorado SNAC developed their vision statement.



Colorado SNAC Vision Statement

Increase access to affordable, nutritious, sustainable, and culturally-appropriate foods.





ACTIVITY

Developing the SNAC Vision

Estimated Time Needed: ~30 minutes



- Flip chart paper
- Scotch tape
- Sticky notes
- Thick markers

Step 1: Brainstorm.

To develop your vision, guide the group through a collaborative brainstorming activity. Ask them to imagine that the initiative has been successfully implemented - what positive changes or impact do they see in the community as a result? Give participants a few moments to reflect and consider how these outcomes align with what the SNAC vision could be. Encourage them to write down their thoughts freely, reminding everyone that the goal is to generate ideas without judgment or criticism.

To help focus the discussion, prepare questions that are specific to your chosen initiative. Use open-ended prompts that explore potential educational and Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) changes within the priority population that could inspire meaningful action.



Developing the SNAC Vision

Overarching questions can include:

- What do we value as a group?
- What is the long-term change that you are hoping will happen because of your SNAC work?
- If your SNAC initiative is implemented exactly as you envision it, what will the result be?
- How will we measure progress?

Step 2: Clarify.

Once the group has written down all of their ideas, sift through them, and determine which are most important to the group. Think about the following:

- What are some general statements that express your most important ideas?
- Are there powerful or compelling phrases or words that emulate your vision?

Step 3: Select.

Group the phrases and words together to form your vision. Make sure to keep your vision concise. Remember to utilize your group decision-making process to finalize the vision.



TIP: Get feedback on your vision. Share your vision with people within your priority population to determine if it resonates with them. Listen to their feedback and make changes to your vision, as needed.





DEVELOP SNAC VISION AND MISSION

Develop SNAC Mission

After you have developed your vision, it is time to create your mission statement. A mission statement describes what the SNAC is going to do and why you are going to do it. The SNAC mission statement will be similar to your vision, but it is a more concrete, action-oriented goal. Generally, mission statements are:

- **Concise.** While not as short as vision statements, mission statements generally still get their point across in one sentence.
- **Outcome-oriented.** Mission statements explain the fundamental outcomes your SNAC is working to achieve.
- **Inclusive.** While mission statements convey your SNAC key goals, it's important that they do so very broadly. Good mission statements are not limiting in the strategies or sectors of the community that may become involved in the project.





ACTIVITY

Develop SNAC Mission

Step 1: Brainstorm.

Utilize the same brainstorming process you used for your vision to develop the mission statement.

Step 2: Clarify.

Unlike the vision, the mission statement is more specific. Having brainstormed potential statements, ask the following questions:

- Does it describe what the SNAC will do and why it will do it?
- Is it concise?
- Is it outcome-oriented?
- Is it inclusive of the goals and people the initiative will address?

Step 3: Select.

Choose the mission statement that meets the criteria outlined above. Again, ensure you are using your group decision-making process to select your mission statement.



ENGAGE COMMUNITY

Each state faces its own unique set of challenges, and the most effective way to address them is by engaging community input to develop solutions that are both sustainable and impactful.

Community Engagement Definition: a strategic approach that actively involves community members in planning, implementation, assessment, and evaluation of programs and initiatives.

This process helps organizations build trust by making the community's voice and needs central to decision-making and action. Engaging with the community not only increases the chances that projects or solutions will be well-received but also taps into local knowledge from a diverse range of perspectives - resulting in solutions that are practical, effective, and grounded in the community's lived experience.

BEST PRACTICES:

- Leverage member roles: SNAC members can champion engagement with their own networks and ensure local challenges inform statewide strategies.
- Utilize diverse outreach methods: Include surveys, focus groups, community meetings or invite community members to join SNAC meetings to capture a range of perspectives.
- Close the loop: Sharing decisions back with communities and showing how their input influenced the process helps maintain transparency and trust.





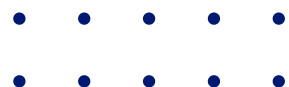
ENGAGE COMMUNITY

By embedding the community's engagement into the SNAC's process, organizations can develop solutions that reflect the community's priorities and are rooted in lived experiences. This approach not only benefits the SNAC but also strengthens relationships and ensures that efforts are genuinely community-driven.

EXAMPLE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN ACTION:

- Invite community leaders or representatives to attend SNAC meetings and share firsthand insights about challenges and priorities of the populations they serve. Inviting leaders can provide authentic perspectives that can guide the SNAC's goals and ensure solutions are responsive to community needs.

By incorporating these practices into regular meetings, the SNAC can serve as a two-way exchange: members learn directly from community voices and members gain a deeper understanding of how the SNAC initiatives can support and amplify their work.





SECTION THREE

Selecting an Initiative





SELECTING AN INITIATIVE

SNACs are tasked with identifying a state initiative to combat food insecurity and diet-related chronic disease. While the task can sound daunting, selecting an initiative can be simplified by breaking it down into steps and remembering that selecting an initiative is about working towards a common goal. The approach outlined below is a “roadmap” building exercise where the group uses backwards mapping to move from a shared impact to what activities (initiatives) will help achieve that impact. There are several ways to choose an initiative that reflects the shared objectives of the group - what's outlined below is just one possible approach. For an alternative approach, see Appendix 2 for a four-step process that is illustrated in the original SNAC Toolkit. Each approach supports the group with focusing on an issue that can be addressed through collective action.





ACTIVITY

Building Our Roadmap

Estimated Time Needed: ~5 hours

This can be completed over multiple sessions. Breaks should be provided if completing during one meeting.



- Flip chart paper
- Scotch tape
- Sticky notes
- Thick markers

Activity Overview

The SNAC will follow eight steps to develop the roadmap. Each step is outlined below, along with an estimated time for completion. This activity can be spread across multiple SNAC meetings to accommodate schedules. Additionally, portions of the work can be completed between meetings through email assignments or other forms of follow-up, as needed.

Step 1: Identify a Shared Impact (estimated time ~45 minutes)

Step 2: Identify Outcomes (estimated time ~30 minutes)

Step 3: Identify Outputs (estimated time ~30 minutes)

Step 4: Prioritize Most Needed and Realistic Activities (estimated time ~45 minutes)

Step 5: Identify Activities (estimated time ~30 minutes)

Step 6: Prioritize Most Needed and Realistic Activities (estimated time ~30 minutes)

Step 7: List Necessary Inputs (estimated time ~30 minutes)

Step 8: Select the Initiative (estimated time ~30 minutes)





Developing the SNAC Vision

Activity Overview

Before you begin this activity, prepare by lining up five pieces of flipchart paper (or draw five columns on a whiteboard). Starting with the far right, write the word "Impact" at the top. Then move to the left and write "Outcome", then "Activities", and then "Inputs" (see Image 1). If you are doing this activity in a virtual space, you can similarly set up five columns with these labels using a virtual whiteboard, or other supportive platform (e.g. Microsoft PowerPoint, Padlet, Google Slides).

Many of the components of this activity will involve being in breakout groups. Consider how you will sort people into groups. You can use a color-coded sticker on nametags, if in person or assign randomly if virtual.

Image 1. CO SNAC Roadmap developed in 2023





Developing the SNAC Vision

Step 1: Identify a Shared Impact (estimated time ~ 45 minutes)

Open this activity with a broad discussion about the mission of the group. Why was this group initially formed? What do members hope to work towards impacting? The answer may already exist in a mission or vision statement or perhaps the group was formed in response to a specific need. Work towards constructing a sentence that describes the desired impact or vision of the group.

- Think about the primary issue/concern in Colorado you are hoping to affect through this group and turn it into an impact statement. *Example: Improve the health of communities by making healthy eating and active living accessible to everyone.*

You may have multiple impact statements develop out of this activity. Aim to reach a consensus; however, if the activity is taking too long, you may have the group select one of the statements and save the others for future discussion. Write down your final impact statement in the far-right column under the word "Impact".

Step 2: Identify Outcomes (estimated time ~ 30 minutes)

Next, have everyone break up into smaller groups to brainstorm the necessary preconditions for reaching the desired impact. What **MUST** exist or occur to achieve the desired impact? Have the breakout groups consider the questions below and instruct them to write their ideas on sticky notes. Have each group come up with 2-3 preconditions. The groups should add their sticky notes to the column that says "Outcomes".



Developing the SNAC Vision

Breakout Group Brainstorm: Identify 2-3 Preconditions

- In order to reach the desired impact, what conditions must exist?
- Before we can achieve the desired impact, there needs to be...
- What conditions must exist but currently do not exist in Colorado?

Step 3: Identify Outputs (estimated time ~ 30 minutes)

Next, have the groups consider what preconditions are necessary to reach the conditions they just wrote on their sticky notes. In order to have [...], there must first be [...]. Have the breakout group consider the questions below to help them brainstorm.

Breakout Group Brainstorm: Identify 2-3 Preconditions

- What needs to be established before we can achieve the outcome?
- Before we can achieve the outcome, there needs to be...
- What support, resources, or circumstances do people need in order to accomplish X?

The groups should add their sticky notes to the column labeled "Outputs."

Step 4: Prioritize Most Needed and Realistic (estimated time ~ 45 minutes)

Bring the group together to review the sticky notes placed in the columns.

Now that the group has identified a shared impact, and the preconditions necessary to achieve the impact, the group should consider which areas of focus are the most needed in Colorado and which areas of focus are the most realistic for this group to influence.



Developing the SNAC Vision

Have the group use color dot stickers - two different colors to represent “most needed” and “most realistic” – to identify which “Outputs” are the most needed in Colorado and which “Outputs” are the most realistic. Use the instructions below.

Give each participant six dot stickers - three of each color. Participants will use these dots to vote on the ideas or actions they believe are most important and feasible to do.

- Color 1 = “most needed”
- Color 2 = “most realistic”

Tell the SNAC partners to come up to the flip chart/whiteboard to:

- Place a [color 1] sticker on the sticky notes in the “Outputs” column that they think are the most needed in Colorado.
- Place a [color 2] on the sticky notes in the “Outputs” column that are the most realistic or feasible to address within this group.

Step 5: Identify Activities (estimated time ~ 30 minutes)

Next, have the group identify the activities that influence the outputs and outcomes. These are the activities or programs that influence the prioritized issues of focus, or the sticky notes with the most dot stickers. Have everyone return to their breakout groups and instruct them to consider the questions below and to write their ideas on sticky notes. Instruct each group to add their sticky notes to the column that says “Activities”.



Developing the SNAC Vision

Breakout Group Brainstorm: Activities

- What projects or activities will lead to or address the selected output?
- What ideas do you have about how to address the selected output(s)?
- What projects/activities does your organization do that already address the selected output(s)?
- What projects/activities are missing in Colorado? What are the gaps?

Step 6: Prioritize Most Needed and Realistic Activities (estimated time ~ 30 minutes)

Bring the group together to review the sticky notes in the “Activities” column. Next, have the group consider which activities are the most needed in Colorado and which activities are the most realistic for this group to possibly select as an initiative.

Have the group again use the color dot stickers to identify which “Activities” are the most needed in Colorado and which “Activities” are the most realistic. Use the instructions below.

Give each participant six dot stickers - three of each color. Participants will use these dots to vote on the ideas or actions they believe are most important and feasible to do.

- Color 1 = “most needed”
- Color 2 = “most realistic”

Tell the SNAC partners to come up to the flip chart to:

- Place a [color 1] sticker on the sticky notes in the “Activities” column that they think are the most needed in Colorado.
- Place a [color 2] on the sticky notes in the “Activities” column that are the most realistic or feasible to address within this group.





Developing the SNAC Vision



Step 7: List Necessary Inputs (e.g., partners, resources) (estimated time ~ 30 minutes)

- Have the group reflect on the prioritized activities and consider necessary inputs. Have everyone return into breakout groups to begin brainstorming.
- Use the questions below to contribute to the “Inputs” column.

BREAKOUT GROUP BRAINSTORM: INPUTS

- What inputs (e.g., partners, resources, funding) are necessary for these activities/projects to exist?
- What inputs are missing in Colorado? What inputs are missing from this group?

Once groups have added their sticky notes to the “Inputs” column, begin discussing opportunities from within this group. What necessary inputs already exist in the group? Which ones could the group access through other partners? Does the group need to consider external funding through grants? Discuss whether this changes the “Activities” that were prioritized as realistic/feasible.

Step 8: Select the Initiative (estimated time ~ 30 minutes)

Have the group reflect on the complete diagram that has been developed. Consider digitizing the roadmap (see Figure 5) to create a reference document the group can easily access and revisit as needed.





Developing the SNAC Vision

In reflecting on your complete roadmap, assess which activities received the most dots. Are any of these activities similar to one another? If yes, group them together. Are any of these activities identified as “most needed” but not identified as feasible or realistic for this group? If yes, move those to the side. Discuss the activities that are rising to the top as both needed and feasible for the group. Once again, discuss the input needed for these activities. Once the activities have been narrowed to 2-3 options, have the group “vote” on the initiative. Ensure you are using the decision-making process you established to make the final decision (see Section 2).

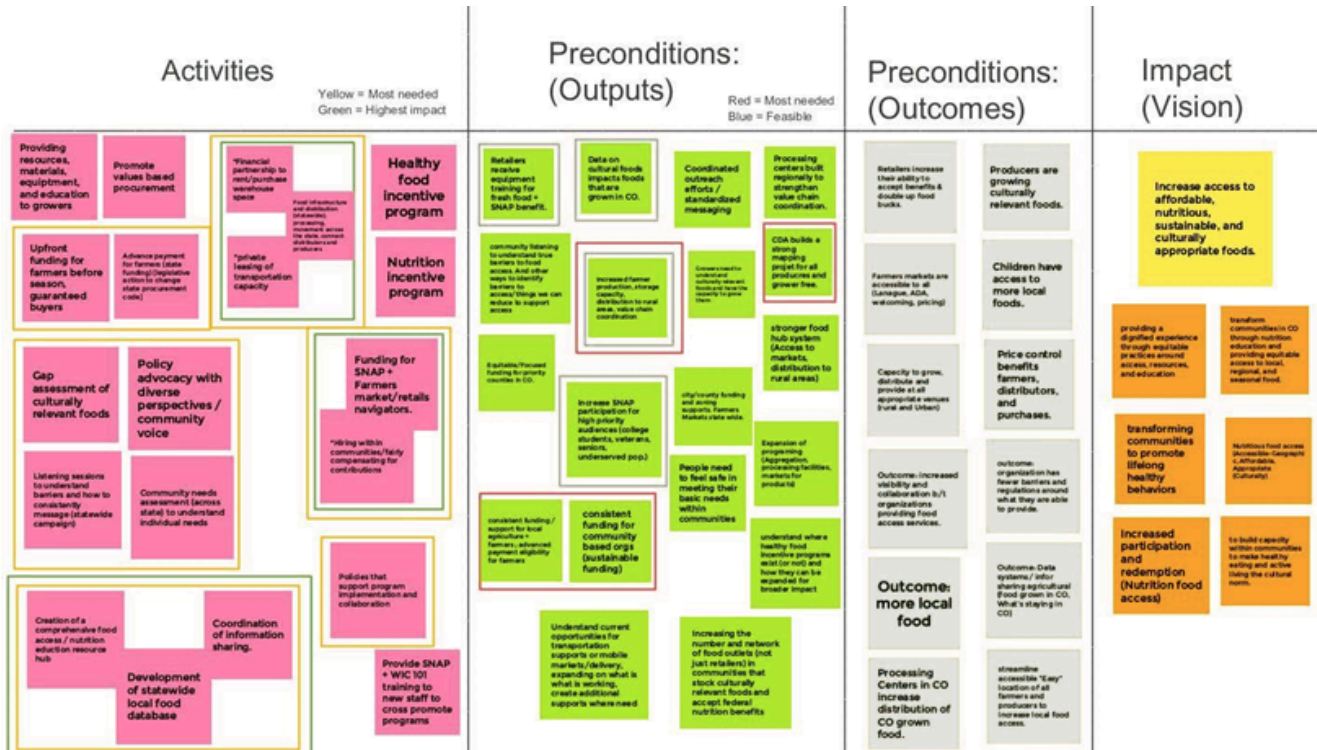


TIP: When selecting the initiative, choose something relatively simple and easily achievable. After successfully implementing the first initiative, build upon that momentum and select something more challenging.



Developing the SNAC Vision

Figure 5. Digitized Colorado SNAC Roadmap developed in 2023





SECTION FOUR

Developing a Plan and Implementing Your Initiative





DEVELOPING A PLAN

Once you've selected your SNAC initiative, the next step is to create a detailed implementation plan. While planning may require significant time and effort, a well-developed plan is essential for the successful execution of your initiative. Think of your plan as the blueprint for your initiative—it should be clear, practical, and actionable. Take the time to carefully design a plan that will effectively guide you through each phase of the process, including communication, implementation, and evaluation.

ESTABLISH YOUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Developing goals and objectives enables your SNAC to establish clear criteria for measuring the success of your initiative. While both goals and objectives serve to guide the implementation process, it's important to understand the distinction between them:

- **Goals.** A goal is a broad statement about the long-term expectation of what should happen as a result of your initiative. The goal serves as the foundation for developing your objectives.
- **Objectives.** Statements that describe how the results will be achieved. Usually, multiple objectives are needed to address a single goal.

Establish SNAC Goals

When determining your SNAC goals, you should clarify the intentions and scope of your initiative. To determine your goals, consider the following:

- Focus on the priority population and services to be provided
- Base the goals on prioritized needs and available resources
- Differentiate between short-term and long-term goals



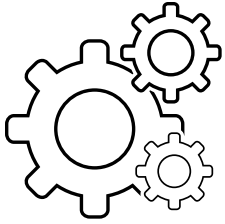


Establish SNAC Objectives

To develop SNAC objectives, follow the SMART or SMARTIE objective development technique (Arkansas Department of Health, n.d.):

- **Specific.** Use specific language. Clearly state the issue, priority population, time, and place of your initiative. Use only one action verb to avoid issues with measuring success.
- **Measurable.** Focuses on “how much” change is expected.
- **Achievable.** Realistic given SNAC resources and planned implementation.
- **Relevant.** Relates directly to SNAC goals.
- **Time-bound.** Focuses on “when” the objective will be achieved.
- **Inclusive.** Is “an opportunity to bring traditionally excluded individuals and groups into processes, activities, decisions and policy making in a way that shares power.”
- **Equitable.** Means “including an element of fairness or justice to address systemic injustice, inequity or oppression.”





TOOL: SMARTIE OBJECTIVE TEMPLATE

Goal 1:	
Key Component	Answer
Specific: What is the specific task?	
Measurable: What are the standards or parameters?	
Achievable: Is the task feasible?	
Relevant: Does the task relate to your SNAC goal?	
Time-bound: What are the start and end dates?	
Inclusive: What voices are missing from the group?	
Equitable: How does the task reduce disparities/support under-resourced communities?	
SMARTIE Objective 1:	



CREATE YOUR TIMELINE AND ACTION PLAN

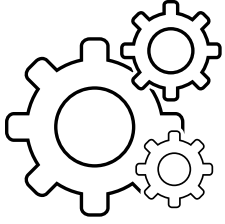
Create an Action Plan

Once you've defined your goals and SMARTIE objectives, the next step is to create a detailed action plan. This plan builds on the foundation of your vision, mission, goals, and objectives, and outlines the specific tasks required to achieve them. A strong action plan serves as a practical roadmap to ensure that each objective is met.

The action plan should clearly specify what needs to be done, who is responsible for each task, and when each task should be completed. In addition to assigning responsibilities and deadlines, the action plan establishes a timeline that helps you monitor progress and stay on track throughout implementation.

Various action plan templates exist, and it is important to find one that works for your group, and makes it clear who is responsible for what. Below is an example of a template you can use, but if it does not meet your needs, a simple internet search can help you find something more appropriate for your SNAC.





TOOL: ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Goal 1:			
Objective 1:			
Activity	Person Responsible	Date to Begin	Date Due





Create a Timeline

Utilize the action plan you developed to establish a timeline for implementing your SNAC initiative. Identifying when you will implement your initiative will help you identify when you need to complete your other tasks. It also provides a visual map which shows you when each task will be accomplished.



TIP: When developing your timeline, be realistic! Generally, SNAC initiatives take a long period of time to implement.

IMPLEMENTING YOUR PLAN

Because you developed a detailed plan with clear goals and objectives, specific actions to complete, and evaluation methods for measuring success, you have ensured your SNAC can successfully implement your selected initiative. Now is the time to finally put your extensive planning into action! Here are the steps you will take to implement your SNAC initiative:

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING YOUR PLAN

1. Engage key stakeholders in implementation
2. Implement your initiative



TIP: If your stakeholders are the primary implementers, share your action plan with them and ask for feedback. This is important to help you determine if your plan is realistic. Make edits to the plan to meet the needs of your key stakeholders.





ENGAGE KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN IMPLEMENTATION

SNAC initiatives are rarely carried out by SNAC members alone. Local stakeholders and community champions are often the true “boots on the ground,” leading the day-to-day implementation of identified initiatives. As such, it is essential to actively engage key stakeholders throughout the implementation process.

Prepare your Stakeholders

Ensuring that your key stakeholders are adequately prepared to implement the initiative is one of the most important steps in the implementation process. Take the time to assess the knowledge and skills of your key stakeholders and identify resources to support them. To build capacity at the local level, consider providing the following:

- Training to successfully implement the initiative
- Technical assistance
- Unified branding of materials
- Additional funding, if needed

IMPLEMENT YOUR INITIATIVE

It's time to put your initiative into action! Use your action plan and timeline as a guide, and assign clear responsibilities to each SNAC team member. Track progress and challenges during meetings, and provide ongoing technical assistance and support to implementers throughout the process.





SECTION FIVE

Evaluation





EVALUATING YOUR INITIATIVE

Developing an evaluation plan is the final step in your SNAC initiative planning process. Its purpose is to determine whether the goals and objectives in your action plan were achieved. An evaluation plan is helpful because it:

- Guides each step of the planning process
- Clarifies what information to gather
- Identifies the best methods and strategies for data collection
- Establishes a realistic timeline
- Supports ongoing improvement of your initiative
- Examines the SNAC partnership to identify strengths and opportunities

Your evaluation plan should address two overarching questions:

1. How successful was the initiative?
2. How effective is the SNAC partnership?

CREATE AN EVALUATION PLAN

Generally, there are four types of evaluation to consider when building an evaluation plan.

1. **Formative:** Ensures program activities are feasible. Helps develop programs and initiatives.
2. **Process & Implementation:** Determines whether program activities have been implemented as intended.
3. **Outcome:** Determines whether outcomes or project objectives were achieved
4. **Impact:** Assesses program effectiveness and if the program achieves its goals.





CREATE AN EVALUATION PLAN

When designing your evaluation, it is important to identify key evaluation questions. Clear questions ensure you gather the information you need. As you develop them, keep in mind that they should be:

- **Relevant** – Reflect key goals, objectives, and outcomes of the initiative
- **Reasonable** – Be logical and practical
- **Answerable** – Fit within available resources
- **Balanced** – Provide insights to guide decisions and improvements

The table below outlines each evaluation type along with sample questions you can ask.

Table 2. Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Type	Possible Questions
Formative	What is feasible? What is needed?
Process & Implementation	How well was the initiative planned? How well was the plan put into practice? What occurred during implementation? What were the barriers and facilitators to implementation?
Outcome	How well has the initiative met the objectives? How many people were reached?
Impact	What has changed as a result of the initiative? Are participants satisfied with the experience? Are the results sustainable?





EVALUATION METHODS AND DESIGN

Once you have identified your evaluation questions, the next step is to determine which methods best address them. Refer to the [SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework](#) or another relevant framework to guide this process. The framework provides specific indicators for each level of the Socio-Ecological Model, along with background, research, and measurement instructions.

Your evaluation design will shape the timing of data collection, how you analyze results, and the conclusions you can draw. It should describe the methods and data sources you plan to use, including:

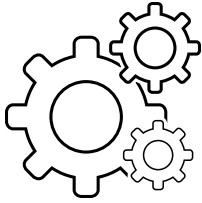
- **Evaluation approaches** – What methods will you use (e.g., community discussions, interviews, surveys)?
- **Tool development** – Who will create the evaluation tools (e.g., interview guides, surveys)?
- **Data types** – What types of data will you collect (qualitative, quantitative, or both)?
- **Sample size** – How many surveys, interviews, or group discussions will you conduct?
- **Data collection** – How and when will the data be gathered?
- **Participants** – From whom will you collect data, and how might this introduce bias?
- **Evaluators** – Who will conduct the data collection, and how might this introduce bias?
- **Feedback** – How will findings be shared back with participants?



TIP:

If collecting data from community members, compensating them for their time and effort is a best practice.





TOOL: EVALUATION PLAN TEMPLATE

Activity:
Stakeholders:

TOOL: EVALUATION PLAN TEMPLATE

Use the table below to outline the key details of your evaluation. Identify:

- **Evaluation Questions** – What you want to know at the end of your project
- **Data Source** – How you will answer those questions
- **Timeframe** – When you will collect your data
- **Results Communication** – How you plan to share your findings
- **Lead** – Who will be responsible

Evaluation Questions	Data Source	Time Frame	Results Communication	Lead





MONITOR AND EVALUATE PROGRESS

To ensure successful implementation, it is important to continually monitor and evaluate your progress. Using your evaluation plan to assess effectiveness allows you to adapt the initiative to meet the needs of your priority population. Monitoring should be an ongoing process throughout implementation to achieve the best outcomes. There are two main types of monitoring and evaluation:



- **Self-monitoring and evaluation** involves reflection by the SNAC to assess progress and identify areas for improvement. Success requires honesty and self-awareness.
- **Participatory monitoring and evaluation** engages stakeholders directly, drawing on their experience and input. The goal is to involve as many people with a stake in the initiative as possible.

Using both strategies together is the most effective way to ensure your initiative is implemented correctly and achieves the desired outcomes.





SHARE YOUR SUCCESS

In addition to evaluating your initiative, make sure to tell the story of your initiative success. After the initiative and accompanying evaluation have been implemented, take the time to celebrate your success. Ensure you acknowledge everyone involved in the implementation process. Work with your key stakeholders and SNAC members to share the story. Sharing your story will help other state-level agencies and similar groups learn from you and provide inspiration.

Tips for Writing Your Success Story

- **Keep it simple:** Aim for a reading level between 6th–8th grade
- **Check your writing:** Use grammar and spell-check to avoid errors
- **Structure:** Write short paragraphs and use bulleted lists whenever possible
- **Be concise:** Keep stories under 350 words

Include Images

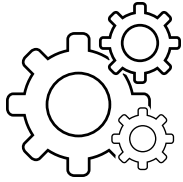
Images make an excellent story! When possible, include:

- 3–5 images of programming (ensure photo releases are on file)
- Program logo
- Agency logo

Write for Someone Who Has Never Heard of SNAP-Ed or SNAC

- Tell people how your program changes the lives of participants in the first 1–2 sentences
- Follow with an anecdote to draw readers in with a moving story
- Communicate success in simple terms
- Use short sentences
- Avoid jargon and acronyms
- Use asset framing – focus on strengths rather than problems
- Connect disparities and community-wide challenges to systemic causes





TOOL: SUCCESS STORY TEMPLATE

Title

Title of Success Story	
-------------------------------	--

Initiative Identification

Name of the Organization	
Name of the Initiative	
Location of the Initiative	

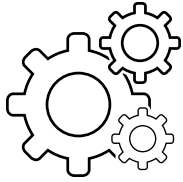
Population Served	
--------------------------	--

Context

Description of the community context and challenges faced: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What prompted the initiative?• What gaps are the initiative addressing?	
--	--

Initiative Summary

Intended Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you expect to achieve through this project?	
--	--



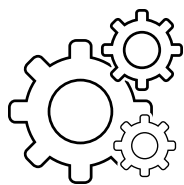
TOOL: SUCCESS STORY TEMPLATE

Initiative Summary

<p>Description of Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you do?• What individuals/organizations collaborated on the initiative?• How did you reach your target audience?• How long did it take?	
--	--

Results

<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you achieve?• How many people were reached?• Tip: Include quotes and pictures!	
<p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How did you assess the effectiveness of your initiative?	
<p>Success Factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What were the critical components that contributed to your success?	



TOOL: SUCCESS STORY TEMPLATE

Contact Information

Name	
Organization	
Email	
Telephone	
Address	

Adapted from the **SNAP-Ed Connection Success Stories Tip Sheet**
(Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition, n.d.).





EVALUATING PARTNERSHIPS

Most collaboratives focus on evaluating the effectiveness of their initiatives but often overlook the importance of evaluating the partnership itself.

However, assessing the effectiveness of the partnership is equally critical.

Benefits of partnership evaluation include:

- Ensuring partnership activities and processes are functioning effectively
- Identifying successes and areas for improvement
- Exploring perceptions of group effectiveness and progress toward goals
- Assessing the “health” of the group (e.g., power dynamics, shared decision-making)
- Measuring group empowerment (partners' perceived ability to influence change)
- Building internal capacity for evaluation
- Providing accountability to partners and funders

Within the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, a SNAC represents a **multi-sector partnership or coalition (ST8)** planning for community-level change in policies or practices related to nutrition, physical activity, food security, and diet-related chronic disease prevention (USDA, n.d.). Key measures for evaluating a multi-sector partnership include:

- Number and types of sectors represented in the partnership or coalition
- Number of partner organizations in each sector, including their roles and resources
- Level of active engagement of the partnership
- Level of influence of SNAP-Ed within the partnership

Partnership evaluation can be conducted using multiple methods, including surveys, partner interviews, and focus group discussions. Each approach has its benefits and drawbacks. After reviewing these (see Table 3), the group should decide together on the preferred evaluation method.





EVALUATING PARTNERSHIPS

Table 3. Coalition Evaluation Methods

Method	Description	Pros	Cons
Survey	Standardized tools with questions and pre-defined, often closed-ended response options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be anonymous/may garner more honest feedback• Quick and efficient way to gain information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easier to misunderstand questions• Limited ability to gain in-depth information
Partner Interviews	Guided discussion to better understand individual experiences in more detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can provide detailed data to help raise awareness around an issue• Allows flexibility to clarify questions• Provides more personalized feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social desirability bias• Less respondent anonymity• May be time consuming
Focus Group Discussions	Guided small group discussions that collect narrative information from a group. Participants may share their own perspectives while listening to other viewpoints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hearing others' perspectives can allow for more insight about topics discussed• Allows for collection of multiple perspectives at one time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group setting may make it difficult to hear all opinions• May be time consuming





EVALUATING PARTNERSHIPS

Partners should decide how often to gather feedback. This could occur after each meeting or on an annual basis, using a combination of methods. For example:

- Conduct partner interviews annually
- Administer short surveys at the end of each meeting

If the group wants to track changes over time, a pre/post method can also be used.

Examples of a partner evaluation survey can be found in Appendix 3.





SECTION SIX

Communication





GROUP COMMUNICATION

To strengthen day-to-day communication among SNAC members, having a platform that allows members to connect directly between meetings, share updates in real time, and access resources in one place is essential.

The CO SNAC selected the creation of a Resource Hub as their initiative in 2024. Google Groups and Google Drive were used in the lead up to the creation of the Resource Hub. They were used to test out Resource Hub components and to offer a place for SNAC members to communicate in the meantime. Google Groups was selected because it is widely accessible, free, and user-friendly. It allows members to exchange messages, share files, and organize events in a single platform.

Steps to Set Up the Platform:

1. Collect SNAC member information using a survey tool such as SurveyMonkey, Google Forms, or similar.
2. Administrator(s) add each member to Google Groups.
3. Administrator shares a Google Group guide with new members and follows up to ensure they successfully access the platform.
4. Ensure an administrator monitors the platform, manages survey forms, organizes content, and troubleshoots issues for members.
5. For Google Drive, the administrator should create organized folders for resource sharing, such as Meeting Notes and Slides.
6. If members leave the group, administrators should remove them from Google Groups.





GROUP COMMUNICATION

TIPS FOR ENGAGEMENT:

- **Create Initial Posts:** Share information with members to kickstart engagement.
- **Acknowledge Contributions:** Have an administrator respond to and highlight member contributions to reinforce participation.
- **Integrate into Meetings:** Incorporate the platform into SNAC meetings to encourage regular use.
- **Solicit Feedback:** Ask members about barriers or challenges to using the platform.
- **Provide Orientation:** Create a user manual for new members (the Google Group user manual can be found in Appendix 4).

RETAIN PARTNERS

One of the biggest challenges collaboratives face is maintaining partner engagement, and SNACs are no different. To ensure active participation in the group and in meetings, consider the following strategies:

- **Make the Work Meaningful:** Identify group priorities and align meeting agendas with work that the group is passionate about.
- **Ensure Meetings are Action-Oriented:** Avoid meetings that feel like they exist for the sake of meeting. Assign specific roles and action items to partners, and hold them accountable for completing their tasks.
- **Celebrate Successes, Even the Small Ones:** Don't wait until an initiative is finished to celebrate. Acknowledge successes throughout the SNAC process, express appreciation to members, and ensure everyone feels valued for their participation.





RETAIN PARTNERS

- **Make the Meetings Convenient for Everyone:** Work with SNAC members to identify a consistent time that works for everyone. Try to keep the meetings "short and sweet" while ensuring you have enough time to get through the agenda. Host the meetings at a convenient location or host them virtually using a familiar platform. Hybrid meetings can also be an option to allow for flexibility.
- **Build on Existing Relationships:** Given how important trust is to successful collaboration, forming teams that capitalize on preexisting relationships increases the chances of a project's success. Research shows that new teams, particularly those with a high proportion of members who were strangers at the time of formation, find it more difficult to collaborate than those with established relationships
- **Utilize Committees or Workgroups:** This allows for space to expand and honor different interests or ideas members want to work on.



TIP: For continuity, encourage partners to avoid sending substitutes to meetings.





BEST PRACTICES

Over the years, the Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition has identified and tested several best practices while working with the Colorado SNAC. Details and instructions for these activities are outlined below:

SNAC Organization Spotlights

Regular organization spotlights provide individual member organizations with the opportunity to share information about their work with the group. During meeting planning, the Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition reached out to organizations that had either previously expressed interest in presenting or had not presented before. Each organization was offered 10–15 minutes to present. Interest in presenting was gathered through post-meeting surveys, where members could indicate if their organization wanted to present at a future meeting.

Project Spotlights

Project spotlights, presented by SNAC members or non-members, highlight a timely, specific project and typically include a call to action. These spotlights were highly popular and generated strong engagement. While presentations were usually allocated 15–20 minutes, we recommend allowing 30 minutes to accommodate questions. Due to the technical or logistical nature of many projects, SNAC members often needed additional time to fully understand implementation or introduction strategies for their clients.





ACTIVITY

SNAC Member Updates

Activity Overview

One of the main goals of the SNAC was to avoid duplication, making it important for members to share updates with the group. However, with meetings lasting only 1.5 hours, updates—even when limited to two minutes—can take up significant time. To address this, we created an activity to help keep updates brief, which received excellent feedback from SNAC members.

We found that having members share someone else's update increased the likelihood of staying within the time limit. This approach not only helped meetings stay on track but also made the activity more engaging. Feedback from members was very positive, with some noting that they had adopted the activity for use in other groups.

Estimated Time Needed: ~30 minutes



- Timer (if hosting in person)
- Enough tables for 1-2 pairs per table
- Breakout rooms (if hosting virtually)



SNAC Member Updates

Step 1: Pair SNAC Members

- Put members into pairs. When possible, pair individuals who are less familiar with each other to encourage new connections.
- If there's an odd number of participants, create one group of three or include a staff/facilitator to complete a pair.

Step 2: Meet and Share

- Give pairs about 10 minutes to meet (four minutes per person plus a two-minute buffer).
- Instructions for each person:
 - Introduce yourself: name, organization, role, and a current project or activity you'd like to share.
 - Take notes on your partner's update.
 - Switch roles so both partners have a chance to share.

Step 3: Provide Time Reminders

- Virtual meetings: Use breakout room reminders—4 minute warning to switch, 8 minute warning that the room will close in 2 minutes. Bring everyone back at 10 minutes.
- In-person meetings: Provide verbal reminders so participants are aware of the time.

Step 4: Share with the Group

- Return to the main room and have each participant take one minute to introduce their partner and share their update with the group.





SECTION SEVEN

Ongoing Maintenance





REVISIT FOUNDATIONAL EXERCISES

After a SNAC has been running for a year or two, it's important to review initial decisions to ensure they reflect current members and goals. This can be done by revisiting foundational activities such as the decision-making process and shared expectations exercises.

- **Share Results:** Present the outcomes of the decision-making process and shared expectations exercises with all SNAC members.
- **Gauge Interest in Changes:** Begin with a simple vote—using the previously agreed-upon method—to see if members want to explore updates. An anonymous vote is recommended to prevent pressure to maintain the status quo.
- **Update Activities as Needed:** If changes are desired, follow the original instructions to revisit these activities. Reassess these foundational exercises every few years or whenever there is a significant change in SNAC membership.





ACTIVITY

Expanded Network Mapping

Estimated Time Needed: ~1.5 hours

This can be conducted virtually or in-person.



- Network Map Dataset
- Original Network Map developed by the SNAC (paper or digital)

Activity Overview

To further define SNAC organizations' relationships with different sectors and the work being done in each sector, the SNAC can complete the following activity. This activity builds off of the Network Mapping Activity (Section 2).

To get started, the SNAC partners will prepare a spreadsheet using the Network Map data (see Section 2). A shared spreadsheet, such as a Google Sheet should be used to allow for multiple partners to edit at once. Prepare the spreadsheet by adding a tab/page for each of the SNAC partner organizations. SNAC partners should reference the example spreadsheet below.





Expanded Network Mapping

Figure 6. Example: Expanded Network Map Spreadsheet

The screenshot shows a spreadsheet titled "Network Mapping Follow-up Activity" with a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Data, Tools, Extensions, Help) and a toolbar. The spreadsheet has the following columns:

- A: Sectors**
- B: Connected**
- C: Relationship level**
- D: Geographic area**
- E: Programs Identified**
- F: Notes/Comments**

The data rows are as follows:

Sectors	Connected	Relationship level	Geographic area	Programs Identified	Notes/Comments
Government	x	Collaboration	Northwest North Ci...	County Human Service debts; SNAP outreach; Nutrition education promotion; nutrition incentives; processing SNAP applications issuing benefits	
Emergency Food Access	x	Collaboration	Northwest North Ci...	SNAP outreach, nutrition education	the CDHS programs
Parks/Public Spaces	x	Cooperator	Northwest North Ci...	SNAP outreach, nutrition education	
Education	x	Coalition	Northwest North Ci...	Nutrition education; PSE's SNAP Outreach	
Food Retail	x	Coordination	Northwest North Ci...	nutrition incentive programs; PSEs	
Social Services	x	Coalition	Northwest North Ci...	SNAP outreach; shelters; nutrition education	
Farms Agriculture	x	Network	Northwest North Ci...	nutrition incentive programs; PSEs	
Healthcare	x	Network	Northwest North Ci...	nutrition education for older adults, SNAP outreach	
Technology	x	Coordination	Northwest North Ci...	EBT vendor programming; POS programming; social marketing; texting	



Expanded Network Mapping

Activity Overview

Network, *Cooperator*, and *Coordination* will be represented by a dotted line on the network map, signifying a more **indirect relationship**, while *Coalition* and *Collaboration* will be represented by a solid line on the network map, signifying a more **direct relationship** to that sector. Definitions for each level are shared below.

INDIRECT:

- **Network:** Loose and flexible link, roles are loosely defined. Ongoing dialogue and some information exchange. Decisions are made independently. Infrequent and informal communication.
- **Cooperator:** Provide information to each other such as referrals, providing space, distributing marketing and client education materials, and hosting events open to the clients and community members. Decisions are made independently. Formal communication within the central group (e.g. meetings).
- **Coordination:** Emphasizes sharing information and resources for implementation. Group develops new resources. Some shared decision-making; frequent and formal communication (e.g. regular meetings).



Expanded Network Mapping

DIRECT

- **Coalition:** Share ideas and resources. Decision making is formal, and communication is prioritized and frequent. Longer-term commitment (minimum of 3-year implementation). Key characteristics include: shared leadership, definition of roles, and generation of new resources.
- **Collaboration:** Contributed to joint activities and has identified personnel who help advise and make decisions about effective strategies and interventions. Key characteristics include: a system with shared impacts, a consensus-decision making process, and formal role assignments.

Steps to Complete the Activity

Step 1: Locate Your Organization Tab

Find your organization's tab in the shared spreadsheet. Note: if your organization did not participate in the original Network Mapping Activity, complete Part I of that activity first (see Section 2).

Step 2: Review Sector Connections

Examine the sectors listed in the first column (Column A) of the spreadsheet. Place an "X" in Column B for each sector your organization identified as connected to during the Network Mapping Activity.

Step 3: Identify the Relationship Level

Determine the level at which your organization relates to each sector. Use the descriptions of the five relationship categories—Network, Cooperator, Coordination, Coalition, and Collaboration—to guide your identification.





Expanded Network Mapping

It may be that you are active at several levels within that sector. However, default to the “highest,” and most representative level at which your organization interacts within each sector.

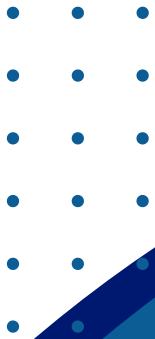
For example, your team co-implements Program A in the education sector (*Collaboration*), but your organization also promotes and provides resources to Program B in that same sector (*Cooperator*). In this scenario, you would select Collaboration for the relationship level, as your organization has a direct relationship with the education sector through Program A.

Step 4: Identify Geographic Region

Now that your organization has identified at which level you are related to each sector, please identify in which geographic regions the programs of that sector are active. Below is an example of how regions could be broken up. In Colorado programs are usually divided by county. Refer to the [Colorado County Map](#) (Colorado Secretary of State, n.d.).



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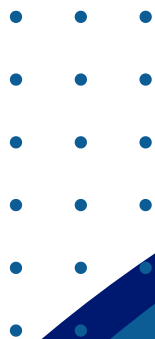
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APPENDIX





APPENDIX 1. SNAC NETWORK MAPPING QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of Respondent: _____

Organization: _____

Instructions: Ask your partner the questions below. When answering the below set of questions, have your partner think about the organization and/or program that they are here representing as a part of the SNAC. What sectors does their organization and/or program touch? How are they connected to these sectors and what is the nature of the relationship?

Sector 1. SCHOOLS (early care centers, elementary, middle, or high school, college or university, continuing education)

1. Does your organization, program, or project work with or in schools?
(check one)

Yes

No

2. In which kinds of schools does your organization work?
(check all that apply)

Early childhood education

Elementary


Middle or high school

College/university

Continuing education

Other (please share)





3. What sorts of projects or programs do you work on with or in schools?
(list as many examples as you like)

Sector 2. HEALTHCARE (hospitals, health clinics, senior centers)

1. Does your organization, program, or project work with or in healthcare?
(check one)

- Yes
- No

2. In which kinds of healthcare does your organization work?
(check all that apply)

- Hospitals
- Health clinics
- Senior centers
- Other (please share)





3. What sorts of projects or programs do you work on with or in healthcare? (list as many examples as you like)

Sector 3. FOOD RETAIL/FOOD VENDORS (grocery stores, farmers markets, corner stores, restaurants)

1. Does your organization, program, or project work with or in food retail/food vendors? (check one)

- Yes
- No

2. In which kinds of food retail/food vendors does your organization work? (check all that apply)

- Grocery stores
- Farmers markets
- Corner stores
- Restaurants
- Other (please share)

3. What sorts of projects or programs do you work on with or in food retail/food vendors? (list as many examples as you like)





Sector 4. PUBLIC SPACES (parks, community centers)

1. Does your organization, program, or project work with or in public spaces?
(check one)

- Yes
- No

2. In which kinds of public spaces does your organization work?
(check all that apply)

- Parks
- Community centers
- Other (please share)

3. What sorts of projects or programs do you work on with or in public spaces? (list as many examples as you like)

Sector 5. FARMS/AGRICULTURE (farmers, processing facilities, extension office)

1. Does your organization, program, or project work with or in farms/agriculture? (check one)

- Yes
- No





2. In which kinds of farms/agriculture does your organization work?
(check all that apply)

- Farms/farmers
- Processing facilities
- Organizations that support farmers
- Other (please share)

3. What sorts of projects or programs do you work on with or in farms/agriculture? (list as many examples as you like)

Additional Sectors

Please list any addition sectors with which or in which your organizations work. These additional sectors should not be able to fit into any of the previously identified sectors.

Additional Sector 1. _____

What sorts of projects or programs do you work on with or in _____?
(list as many examples as you like)





Additional Sector 2. _____

What sorts of projects or programs do you work on with or in _____?
(list as many examples as you like)

Additional Sector 3. _____

What sorts of projects or programs do you work on with or in _____?
(list as many examples as you like)





APPENDIX 2.

STEPS IN SELECTING AN INITIATIVE

SNACs are tasked with identifying state initiatives to combat food insecurity and diet-related diseases. While the task can sound daunting, selecting an initiative can be simplified by breaking it down into smaller steps. Here are the four steps to successfully select your SNAC initiative:

1. Define the Problem
2. Explore and Identify Solutions
3. Identify Resources to Support Your Work
4. Select Your Initiative

1. Define the Problem

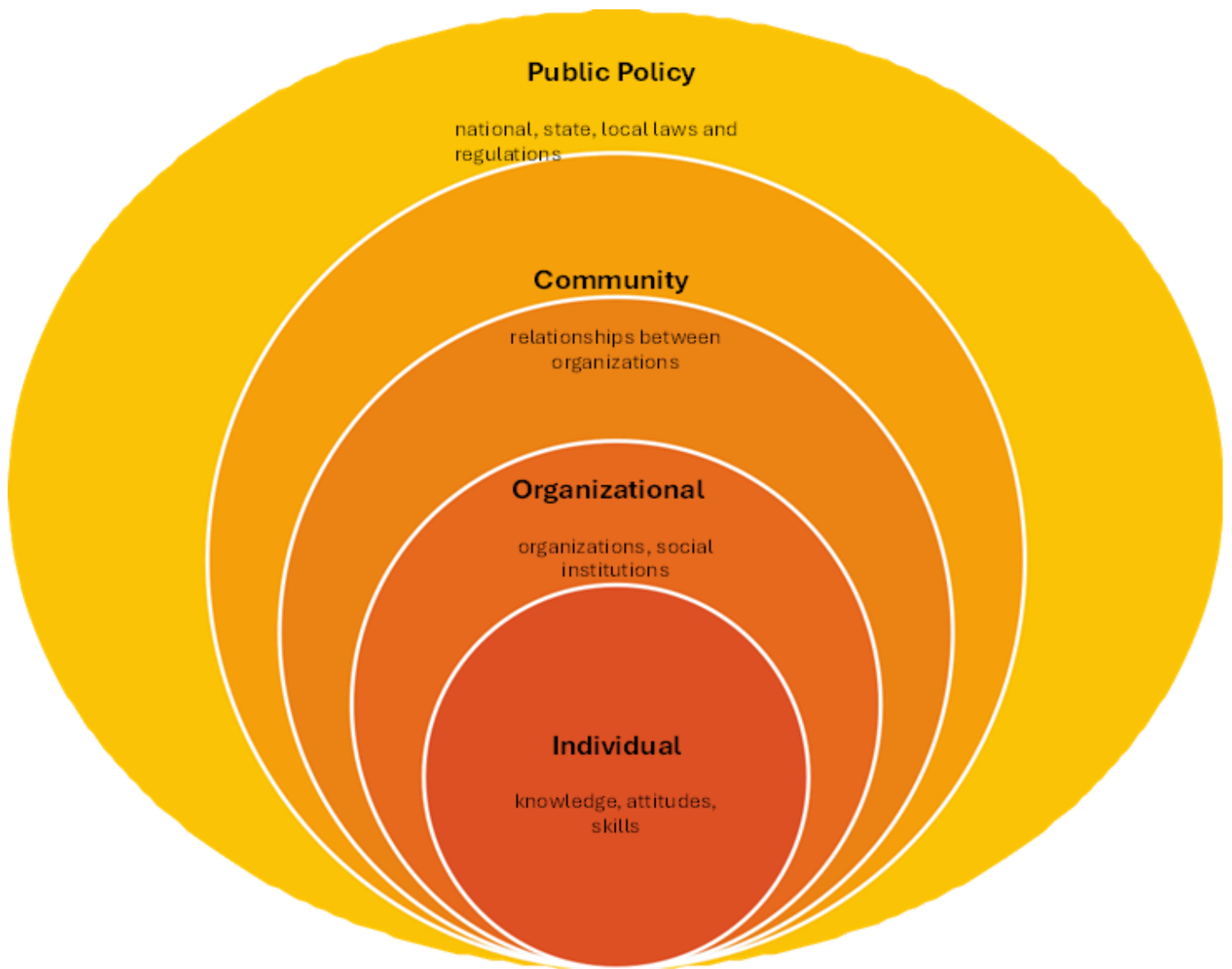
EXPLORE AND IDENTIFY THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO FOOD INSECURITY AND DIET-RELATED CHRONIC DISEASE IN YOUR STATE

- **Define the Problem:** Begin by examining the factors that contribute to obesity in your state. Use the socio-ecologic model (SEM) to identify the educational, policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) influences at each level. While agencies may already have strong individual knowledge, it's critical for all SNAC members to align on the contributing factors before identifying strategies.
- **Support with Data:** Once you've identified the factors driving food insecurity and diet-related chronic disease, gather data to validate them. Leverage data already collected by partner agencies to reinforce findings, bring in diverse perspectives, and make efficient use of existing resources.
- **Identify Priority Populations:** Consider which groups are most affected by these issues. Defining your priority population will help focus your approach and ensure efforts reach the most vulnerable communities in your state.



ACTIVITY: MAP THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO FOOD INSECURITY AND DIET-RELATED CHRONIC DISEASE

- Create a flip chart with the SEM. Ask members to identify contributing factors at each level and write them on Post-it notes. Begin at the individual level and work upward, grouping common factors under shared themes.





2. Explore and Identify Solutions

EXPLORE AND IDENTIFY EVIDENCE-BASED INITIATIVES TO REDUCE DIET-RELATED CHRONIC DISEASE AND INCREASE FOOD SECURITY

- **Identify Solutions:** After defining the factors contributing to food insecurity and diet-related chronic disease, the SNAC should explore evidence-based programs and initiatives to address them. Use the SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance and other research-based resources to find effective strategies at each level of the SEM. Focus on initiatives proven to work and tailored to the needs of your priority population.
- **Map Current Efforts:** In addition to exploring external strategies, review the work SNAC agencies are already doing to address these issues. Map existing initiatives and programs to identify overlaps, uncover mutually reinforcing strategies, and highlight impactful efforts that may not be widely known among members.

IDENTIFY CURRENT STRATEGIES IN YOUR STATE

- **Identify the Initiative:** Successful SNACs often select their initiative at this stage, as it highlights practical solutions that build on existing momentum and reveal where the group can have the greatest impact.
- **Brainstorm Solutions:** Write the categories identified in Step One on flip-chart paper. Ask members to brainstorm solutions for each category using the SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance and other evidence-based resources. Members should write their solutions on Post-it notes and place them under the relevant category.

ACTIVITY: MAP THE STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS DIET-RELATED CHRONIC DISEASE

- Have the group list solutions already being implemented by each agency, then add them to the flip chart under the appropriate category
- Note areas of overlap, mutually reinforcing activities, and solutions identified by multiple agencies



3. Identify Resources to Support Your Work

IDENTIFY AND LEVERAGE EXISTING RESOURCES

- **Leveraging Internal Assets:** While FNS does not directly fund SNAC work, FNS-funded agencies have resources at their disposal that they can leverage to support the initiative. Identifying internal funding and human resources will help the SNAC determine where to focus their efforts.
- **Key Questions to Ask:** To successfully identify existing resources, ask the following questions:
 - What knowledge, skills, and materials do SNAC members bring?
 - Is funding available within the current agencies' budget(s) to allocate to a SNAC initiative? If so, how much funding is available?
 - Are SNAC members willing to donate their time to support the initiative?
- **Purpose:** Answering these questions will help the SNAC narrow down their initiative options and assist in determining whether seeking additional funding is necessary.

SEEK FUNDING

- **FNS Discretionary Grants:** FNS awards both competitive and noncompetitive discretionary grants, which allow an agency to select recipients through a competitive process. Some of the discretionary grants available through FNS can be used to support SNAC work. You can find an up-to-date listing of FNS grant opportunities by visiting [the official FNS website](#).
- **Examples of SNAC Support Grants:** While many FNS grants can be utilized to support SNAC, specific grants including Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grants and School Breakfast Program Expansion grants have been used by states like California and Utah to implement SNAC initiatives.



ESTABLISH CRITERIA AND SELECT YOUR INITIATIVE

- **Select an Initiative:** Defining the problem, identifying solutions, and securing funding resources are important steps before officially selecting a SNAC initiative. Once potential initiatives are outlined, the group must choose one to implement. Many states report that this step takes the most time and can be the most challenging.
- **Establish Selection Criteria:** Setting clear criteria helps make the decision more efficient while ensuring everyone's voice is heard. There is no single "right" set of criteria; the group should identify what works best to narrow the options. Examples of criteria used by other states include:
 - Draws on collective strengths of all partners
 - Actionable and realistic
 - Invites participation by all partners
 - Positively impact the priority population
 - Responsive to emerging threats and opportunities
 - Measurable and evaluable
 - Achievable within available timeframe
 - Achievable with the budget and resources at hand

4. Select Your Initiative

- **Make the Final Choice:** After prioritizing initiatives based on your criteria, it is finally time to select your initiative. Ensure you are using the decision-making process you established to make the final decision.
- **Resources:** This section is adapted from the original SNAC Toolkit, which can be found on the [Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition website](#).





APPENDIX 3. SNAC STATE PARTNERSHIP SURVEY

Thank you for taking the time to complete the SNAC State Partnership Survey. This survey should take between 5-10 minutes to complete. Your feedback is valuable and will help to strengthen this project in the future.

Name of Respondent: _____

Organization: _____

General SNAC

Instructions: Please share how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1. SNAC provided our organization with an opportunity to develop and further expand partnerships with other Food and Nutrition Service programs.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. I am satisfied with the overall outcome of SNAC relative to my time and resource commitment.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree





3. I was satisfied with the effectiveness of virtual/online SNAC meetings and activities.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

4. I was satisfied with the effectiveness of in-person SNAC meetings and activities.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. SNAC has helped my organization remain informed and current on important Food and Nutrition Service issues.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

6. I am comfortable sharing my thoughts, ideas, and opinions during SNAC meetings.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree





SNAC Initiative

Instructions: Please share how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

7. I feel that our organization played an important role in the execution of the SNAC Initiative.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

8. The SNAC Initiative was supportive of my organization's work.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

9. My organization will be/has been a strong contributor to implementing the SNAC Initiative.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree





10. My organization can commit to supporting the SNAC Initiative.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Additional Feedback

11. What additional partners should SNAC connect with to make the SNAC Initiative a success?

(Open-ended)

12. Are there additional topics you would like to learn about at the SNAC?

(Open-Ended)

13. Are there additional activities you would like the SNAC to work on?

(Open-Ended)

14. Do you have anything else to share about your experience as a SNAC member or about your organization's involvement in SNAC?

(Open-Ended)





APPENDIX 4. GUIDE TO THE COLORADO SNAC GOOGLE GROUP

Thanks for being part of the Colorado SNAC! We've decided to use Google Groups as the primary tool for the SNAC to contribute resources for the Resource Hub and to communicate with the rest of the SNAC. The Group can be as much as you make it. While the simple goal is to have a place for all members to contribute, it can be so much more. Other programs have used this as a tool to share updates with fellow members. They have asked questions when they needed support. They have shared job postings and grant opportunities.

We have heard over and over from the Colorado SNAC the desire to network, learn more about what other organizations are doing, avoid duplication of efforts, and to break down the silos we often find ourselves working in. This group can be the start of addressing those goals! But everyone needs to contribute to make that happen. We'll be sending out prompts in the coming weeks and months to help get some of those conversations started. But please don't be shy! Feel free to introduce yourself on the platform, start sharing updates and asking questions. We're so excited to see how the SNAC uses this platform and to hear your feedback along the way.





Getting Started

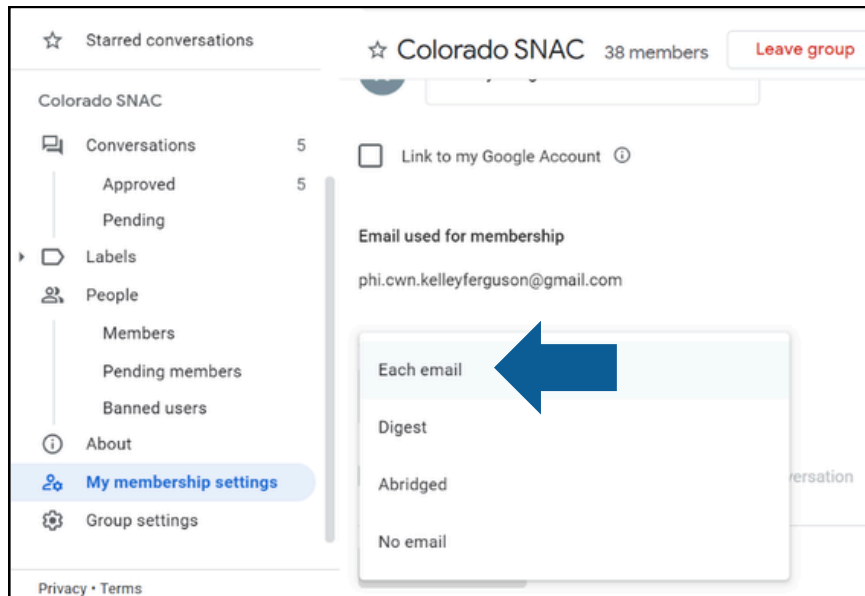
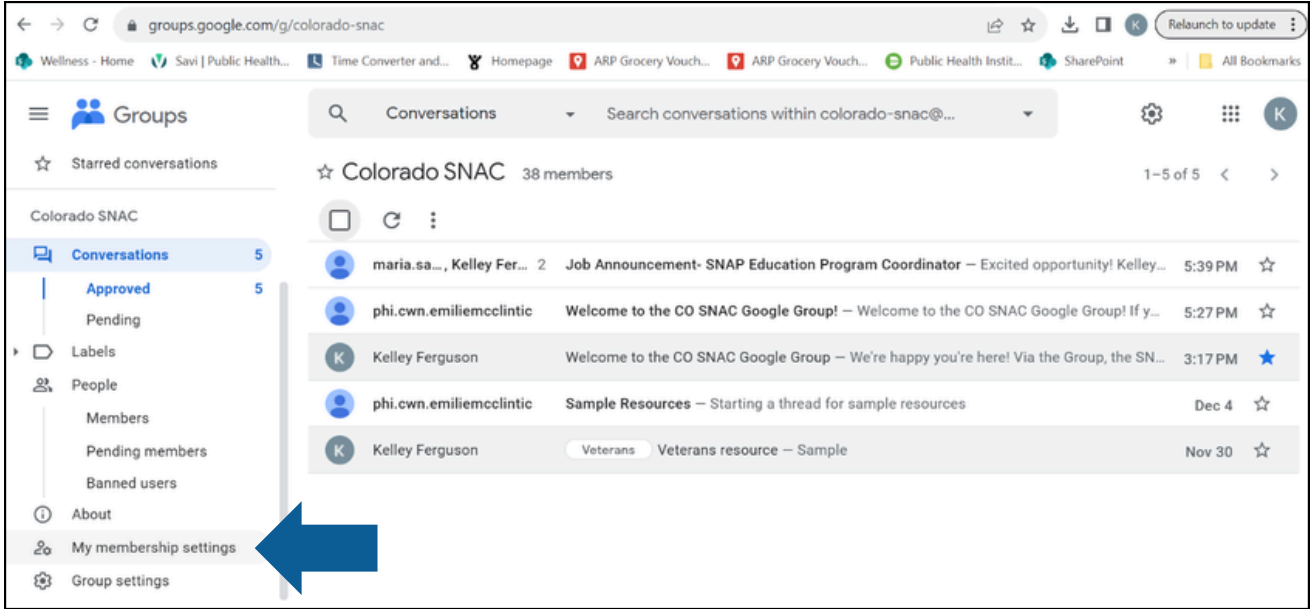
As a Colorado SNAC member, we've already added you to the Google Group with the email address you receive SNAC updates at. If you would like to add an additional or alternate email address, please email diana.pena@wellness.phi.org. Please check your junk or SPAM folders as the notification may have ended up there. Also, please be sure to mark the notification as safe so future notifications don't end up back there. All communications will show "CO SNAC" so you know it is from the group.

To contribute to the Google Group from within the group, you will need to have an email address that is associated with a Google account. This could be a Gmail address or if your organization uses Google suite. You can still receive notifications to that non-Google email address and you can reply directly to that notification from that email. However, if you click on the links to access the group or a specific thread, it will show an error message. If you would add an additional email address, please let us know.

Managing Your Messages and Group Access

You have control over the frequency of the messages you receive. To adjust your message frequency, simply go to your profile in Google Groups and update your communication preferences (as shown in the picture below). We can also edit this for you. Please email [email address] your preferred email frequency and the update will be made. You can leave the group at any time (though we hope you will find this helpful for interacting with fellow SNAC members and for contributing resources for the Resource Hub).







Communicating Within the Group

The Group communicates via “conversations” in the Google Group. You can “start a new conversation” to begin a new thread or post. You can also reply to an existing post while within Google groups. Along the way, we will label the conversations to correspond with different categories for the resource hub or other themes that come up. You can click on the labels to see all conversations under that label. If you receive emails about new posts, you can also reply to the post directly from email by replying to the email. This works regardless of whether it is a Google account or not.

