

Southern and Central Alberta Food Bank Federation

Strategic Planning Guide
January 27-28, 2006

Developed by: Duna Bayley
Alberta Community Development
Duna.bayley@gov.ab.ca
(403)932-2970

Steps in Planning

STEP ONE: Find out what's going on...and coming down the pipes

Environmental Scan Exercise

1. Past, Current and Emerging Realities for Food Banks

- What has the history behind food banks?
- What has the relationship been between the community and the food banks?
- What are the perceptions in the community about us?
- Who is involved in the food banks? (Who are the stakeholders? Who uses them? Funders? Volunteers? Schools?)
- What are the people who use the food banks saying?
- What are the greatest challenges for food banks?
- What are the greatest strengths?
- What is changing in the community that might impact food banks?
- What other factors might impact food banks in the future?

2. Past, Current and Emerging Realities for SCAFBF

- What is the history of the Federation?
- Who are the members? Other Stakeholders?
- What are the emerging needs of food banks?
- What services do you provide to members?
- What is working well? Why?
- Where are there challenges? Why?

Internal Audit

Assessing strengths/assets and challenges related to the capacity to achieve your goals

- What assets support our work?
- Where are we short resources to do our work?
- What is preventing us from achieving everything we want?
 - In the areas of finance? (funding, financial management)
 - In the areas of human resources? (volunteers, leadership, structure)
 - In the infrastructure area? (building, equipment, etc)
 - In the planning and policy area?
- What is our greatest risk? What have we done or are we currently doing to reduce the impact of this risk?

STEP TWO: Develop a foundation to work from...

Mission: Role and Purpose of the Organization

What is a mission statement?

- Defines your unique purpose in the community
- Simple statement to explain what you do for whom
- Sets parameters for your work so you don't get side tracked (i.e. chasing grant money or change in board)
- Some mission statements put values or vision in their statements but in a nutshell it defines your purpose and role

Exercise to develop a mission statement

If you don't have a statement...

- Ask each person to identify and write down on a flipchart what they think the purpose of the organization is.
- Post them on the wall
- Ask where they see common words and ideas? (underline these)
- Develop a couple draft statements that combine the ideas.
- Using the one or two drafts, ask what kind of things do we do to achieve this mission?
- What is it that makes us unique in the community?
- What do we do that doesn't fit? Why are we doing them?
- Revise as needed...(additions, changes) to make it clear and easily understood.

If you have a mission statement...

- What is your mission currently?
- What are the key words?
- What kinds of work do you do within these parameters?
- What does it say you don't do?
- Does this mission cover the roles you play now?
- What would you add? Change?

Vision: What is the impact you desire to make?

- Describes the desired or preferred future
- Describes the impact or results of your efforts on your community, members or clients
- Inspiring, a stretch yet realistic and within your influence or control
- Provides a shared image of what you are trying to achieve so people understand why and what they are doing there

If you don't have a vision statement...

- This is like creating a photo album where the title of the album will be the vision statement and the pages of the album represent different aspects of the vision.
- Ask people to individually think about the difference the food bank does or could make and for whom (community, clients, partners)
- Then in groups of 3 - share the ideas and print (in marker) the ideas in the desired "images" on large recipe cards to post on the wall
 - If there are cards that appear to be talking about the same thing - cluster them together on the wall
 - When different clusters begin to emerge and all cards are up (some might be by themselves) craft a title for each cluster that captures the main theme in all the cards.
 - These titles should help to define a certain result, benefit or impact you will have as an organization
 - Use the combination of titles to discuss what your vision statement might be. Develop a couple drafts to start with.

If you have a vision statement...

- What are the key ideas in this vision?
- What specific changes(outcomes) would you see in our community/society look like if this vision was achieved?
- What have you done to support this vision?
- How do you use this vision statement?
- What questions do people have of you when you tell them your vision?

Values and Principles

- Values are defined as a "belief, standard or quality considered inherently worthwhile or desirable"
- They describe "who you are" and "why you engage" in a certain activity or cause
- Our behaviours, decisions and actions are based upon what we believe to be important
- As we learn and grow, our values can become more refined and we are better able to live by them

To develop your principles...

First identify core Values

- Give an example of a value you feel is important to you and how you demonstrate this value?
- What can a clear understanding of values do for group?
- What would their function be? Why identify the core values?

In groups of 3 identify 5-6 core values that you feel are important to the organization? On cards write your top 5.

As the cards are posted, clarify what each means and why it is relevant to the organization. Group in common themes and name the grouping.

- Guiding Principles (operationalizing these values)

Take these core values and write a statement that captures how you will make the value relevant or use this value in the work you do. This makes the value specific to the context you work in.

Examples:

Value: Humour

Principle: We believe humour is part of human vitality and resiliency and will take opportunities to use humour in appropriate ways to alleviate stress and tension.

NEXT, ask what might we do to use this principle as a guide? What kinds of things would happen in the organization and what wouldn't we see happening?

Goal Areas

- There are generally three goal areas organizations work in
 - Programs and Services
 - Community Relations and Awareness
 - Organizational Capacity

Once your strategic directions have been developed , they can be aligned with each of these goal areas to ensure you are covering all the bases.

Outcomes and Measures

Outcomes

- Describe what benefits or changes you want to achieve in several areas
 - Knowledge
 - Understanding
 - Attitude
 - Behaviour
 - Condition
 - Status

- **Initial:** Describe result of a change in knowledge, skill or attitude
- **Intermediate:** Describe a change in behaviour because of new knowledge, skill, attitude
- **Long Term:** Describe a change in status due to change in behaviour

Measuring results

- Pick a couple results to measure to show impact
- Identify what would indicate those results best
- Develop a way to measure change - surveys or interviews could work
- Easier to set short term outcomes and then assess success at measuring those and opportunities to evaluate longer term

Step Three: Develop Strategic Directions

Setting your direction for the next 2-3 years requires you examine all the information from the environmental scan and internal audit and answering the question: "What specific actions could we take to address the challenges, build on our strengths to achieve our vision and mission?"

You can use the cardstorming process to gather ideas described earlier (in developing your vision), cluster them and develop statements that describes the strategic direction of each cluster.

STEP FOUR: Setting Priorities or Objectives

- Objectives are defined as specific targets/priorities that you would like to achieve within a given time period (usually one year).
- For each strategy (strategic direction statement) you may choose to set 2-4 objectives you would like to accomplish.
- Objectives are written in the present tense similar to goals...“We have”, “There are”
- Examples:
 - We will have increased our membership by 10%.
 - A fund development plan will be developed and a committee in place to implement the plan.

Action Plan Template

Strategy: _____

Objective: _____

Tasks/Steps	Who is responsible?	When will it be done?	What resources do we need?

Template Option for Board Meetings

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Approval of Agenda/Additions
3. Business
 - 3.1 Goal One, Strategy One, Objective One Report
 - Update on Progress
 - Challenges and Concerns
 - Resources needed (advice, information, funding, expertise?)
 - 3.1 Goal One, Strategy Two, Objective Two Report
 - Update on Progress
 - Challenges and Concerns
 - Resources needed (advice, information, funding, expertise?)

ETC...

4. New Business/Opportunities/Issues
5. Financial Report
6. Next Meeting
7. Adjournment

