GARNERING COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT
A Microenterprise Development Organization Can:

- Raise funds for its own operations and programs
- Compete with other nonprofits in the community for scarce resources
- Try to convince the general public that small businesses are important
- Angle for media attention, volunteers, and a place at the “table.”
- Partner with another agency
- Convene those who work with target population and keep each other informed
- Form a community collaborative focused on growing small business
A Microenterprise Collaborative Could

a) Coordinate public awareness of the need for microenterprise programs and greater access to capital

b) Affect local public policy and garner support for state and national advocacy efforts

c) Expand information on best practices of microenterprise development among practitioners, city and county agencies

d) Coordinate a more effective referral network

e) Help attract funding to the region for programs and microloans

f) What else?
Who cares about successful small businesses?

- Cities and counties that need tax revenue
- Banks and other business services that want business customers
- Real estate agents who have space to lease
- Job developers and the unemployed
- Nonprofits who are looking for economic opportunities for their clients
- Chambers of Commerce
If you plan to build a ship, do not gather everyone in order to find wood and prepare tools; do not distribute responsibilities and try to make work more pleasant; rather teach them all to have a longing for the wide, endless sea.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery
Essential Elements of Building a Community Collaborative

- Create Collaboration
- Build Capacity
- Develop Support
- Be Accountable
Create Collaboration

- Who is included?
- How do we work together?
- What structure do we need to do the work?
- What change do we agree needs to happen?
- How do we communicate with each other?
Build Capacity

- What products or programs will be offered?
- How do we strengthen service providers so they can meet demand and provide with quality?
Develop Support

- Raise public awareness
- Change public policy
- Communicate effectively
- Make the case for support
- Engage funders
Be Accountable

- Prove the products and services work
- Demonstrate the process is worthy of support
- Capture feedback and adapt
Purpose: Create and Sustain Businesses and Jobs through Micro-Business Development

- Increase the number of small businesses accessing services and loans with effective referrals.
- Raise public awareness of the importance of Micro-Business Development
- Increase the capacity of small business service providers and microlenders.
- Grow the collaborative to support this work
Microlending is Growing in Inland Southern California
Typical Activities of an Emerging Collaborative

- Convene a conference of stakeholders
- Create a case statement
- Form a steering committee
- Secure an administrator/fiscal sponsor
- Raise funds for staff and infrastructure
- Explore policy opportunities
- Develop a strategic plan
- Develop a website
- Circulate an e-newsletter
How the Work Gets Done

- Steering committee guides the collaborative’s agreements and consensus building and oversees the work of effort.

- Administrative entity (backbone) provides infrastructure for the day to day operations, communications, and convening.

- Working groups or task force groups engage the network to accomplish specific tasks such as policy efforts.
Where Coalitions Make Leadership Mistakes

- Same agency acts as the administrative entity and leads the steering committee—dominating leadership
- Steering committee produces plan of action without community input and then asks for endorsement
- Membership to the coalition or collaborative appears to be “by invitation only” or is otherwise restricted.
- Communications are tightly controlled.
- Lots of activity with no theory of change
- No feedback loops
- No assessment, reflection, or adaptation
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“Field Building: Your Blueprint for Creating an Effective and Powerful Social Movement”