Intermediate Stage Partnerships: Effective Decision Making and Communication & Managing Conflicts

Give careful consideration to decision-making processes very early on in the development stages of your partnership

*Does everyone always need to be at the table?
* Who gets the final say? On which issues? (e.g., budget, staff, dissemination, etc)
*Are there differing levels of responsibility? (e.g., among funders, institutions, community members)
*How will we balance process and action?
*Consensus? Democratic? Autocratic?
*Will decision-making responsibilities be rotated over time? How?
*How long should it take to make a decision that affects the whole partnership?
Collaborative Approaches to Decision-Making

- Consensus (including the “70% Rule” & “Consensus Plus”)

- Democratic

- Straw polling

- Voting

- Delegation

Source: Center for Collaborative Planning, www.connectccp.org
Exercise #1:

Navigating through Difficult Decisions:
Maintaining Transparency and Communication
Resolving Conflicts

- Discriminatory “isms” such as racism, sexism, ageism, etc.
- *Contrasting goals, values, or priorities
- *Conflicts between different members of the partnership
- *Communication break-downs
- *Power imbalances
- *Commitment imbalances or unequal work loads
- *Clashing organizational cultures
- *Financial or budgetary losses or conflict about resource allocation
When conflict arises, consider the following:

• Assume there is a legitimate reason

• Ask other thoughtful group members outside of the group setting

• Conflict evokes emotion

• Open, clear communication is the best prevention
Steps for Resolving Conflict

• Be aware of differences between and among members of the partnership

• Discuss and resolve differences as they arise

• everyone has the right to bring up their feelings and get them resolved to their satisfaction

• Identify the probable cause of the conflict

• Negotiate solutions using a problem-solving approach

• Develop a written or verbal agreement and a process for checking progress

Adapted from the Center for Collaborative Planning, www.connectccp.org
Exercise #2: Anticipating and Resolving Conflicts Related to Roles, Responsibilities and Maintaining Accountability