

## 01-23-2014 PRI Strategy Discussion

### Potential Operating Models

A. **Incubation model:** take in program ideas, develop, spin out. Identify sustainability factors. Decide what resources to allocate and have a clear exit strategy from the start, whether or not another group takes on the program as a spin-off.

#### 1. Pros:

- Enhanced opportunity to attract startup grants as a collaborative group
- Consider sustainability when evaluating whether or not to incubate program, but no need to deal with sustainability long-term
- Fewer things to manage
- Development phase is exciting, while operations and evaluation can be tedious.
- Opportunity to take risks, “pilot”
- Handing off projects creates opportunity to take on new projects
- Creates opportunities for those impacted by programs to take on leadership roles in sustaining the program
- Have we actually incubated and spun off programs we think of ourselves as operating (Saturday Specials, etc.).
- Progress Village – merge with PRI?
- Provides an opportunity for community champions to emerge, be recognized, and succeed.
- Opportunity to advocate and provide opportunity for authentic voices to be included as decision-makers at agencies and programs that affect them (“nothing about us without us.”) to increase likelihood that programs, services and approaches will be on-point.
- Funding can be attracted and managed through a key agency.

#### 2. Concerns:

- We are 10 years in to running programs. Who will take them over if we don’t?
- How long do we incubate a program before we hand it off, and how do we hand it off?
- Need branding, “signature” that is recognizable in the community. If we don’t run the programs, how will we have that?
- Will we miss the relationships built through running the programs ourselves?

- Do we tend to incubate and not exit?
- What happens when the champions who assume the projects change, leave, or otherwise have to discontinue managing the project?

**B. Programming model:** Build and sustain events and programs for the community

**1. Pros:**

- Programs are a recognizable “signature” for PRI in the community
- The relationships we build through running the programs are valuable
- Agencies and organizations are sharing resources to make it work
- If programs are assigned to individual agencies, they tend to lose their separate identities.
- Programs can grow stale and die off after a while.
- Organizational structure does not lend itself to program management

**2. Concerns:**

- Losing energy and creativity over long term
- Funding, particularly as PRI has historically chosen not to compete with other group or agencies for funding
- Who speaks for PRI?
- Tends to be just one or two people who run a particular effort.
- Need for staff/backbone infrastructure to implement.
- Need to seek funding as the PRI (possibly in competition to participating agencies)?
- Lack of shared impact measurement
- If key people running programs are at member agencies, and if those agencies need to change resource allocation or cut back on that person’s time to run the program, what happens?

**C. Convener/Policy Influence model:** convene discussions, influence attitudes and policies around poverty. Build awareness of poverty issues in the larger community and develop possible solutions.

**1. Pros:**

- Opportunity to advocate for authentic voices to be included as decision-makers at agencies and programs that affect them (“nothing about us without us.”) to increase likelihood that programs, services and approaches will be on-point.
- Need to address community decision makers, such as elected officials

- Need to impact systems to achieve long-term change
- Getting groups in the same room helps everyone identify where there are gaps and challenges in each entity/program, and where others can help step in and fill those gaps and needs.
- Need to broaden the discussion/definition of poverty (currently middle class people edging downwards on economic scale)
- By getting the discussion going on a broader level, those in the community who have positions and/or potential solutions can be brought forth and brought together for implementation.
- Need authentic voices to tell us what the needs and challenges really are, as compared to what we guess or assume them to be.
- Move from intervention to prevention through policy and systems change.
- Promote the message of how everyone benefits from poverty reduction, not just those currently in poverty.

#### **D. One-on-one Advocacy**

#### **E. Hybrid model: a combination of some or all of the above.**

1. At outset, review each potential project and decide whether to incubate and exit, or develop and run long-term each.
  - Need to evaluate current programs as if we were starting them new for the first time before starting/taking on new programs
  - This evaluation process could help develop/refine the evaluation matrix

#### **General Ideas:**

- Historically, we have helped on the individual level, helped to shape the environment to support what we do on the individual level, and built one-on-one relationships.
- Prior strategic plan was based on option 1. That doesn't seem to have worked. Funds are running short. Can we spin off current programs so they have resources to continue? Can we still build one-on-one relationship programs to spread expertise into other communities? Are there ways we can connect more communities to one another in the poverty reduction effort.
- SUSTAINABILITY is a key factor.
- Is PRI a backbone agency? Is it a collection of backbone agencies? Or a collection of backbone people who happen to work at involved agencies?
- Need to keep being the community motivator and cheerleader for poverty reduction.

- PRI's monthly meetings are great for sharing and brainstorming, but when there are no activities and outcomes, busy members find attending less valuable or critical compared to other things needing their attention. Need to focus on activities and measurable outcomes.
- Sometimes the theoretical and advocacy discussion is a valuable activity. When is it valuable, and when is it just contrived or seemingly pointless?
- Value of identifying objectives, goals, and issues for the group to work on each year; a theme.
- Need to not just help the impoverished...need to address poverty itself. Need to not just deal with the symptoms, need to work on strategies to combat the disease. Has there been mission drift from poverty reduction to poverty assistance?
- Need shorter, more efficient meetings – 1 hour. Ensure structure is user-friendly.
- Need to identify new chair and co-chair to take the lead.
- February meeting: review of proposal from today's conversation, structural recommendations.
- What conversations have you been wanting to have with whom for years? If you want to convene conversations, don't expect people to come to your meeting. You will need to go to the people you want to hear from.