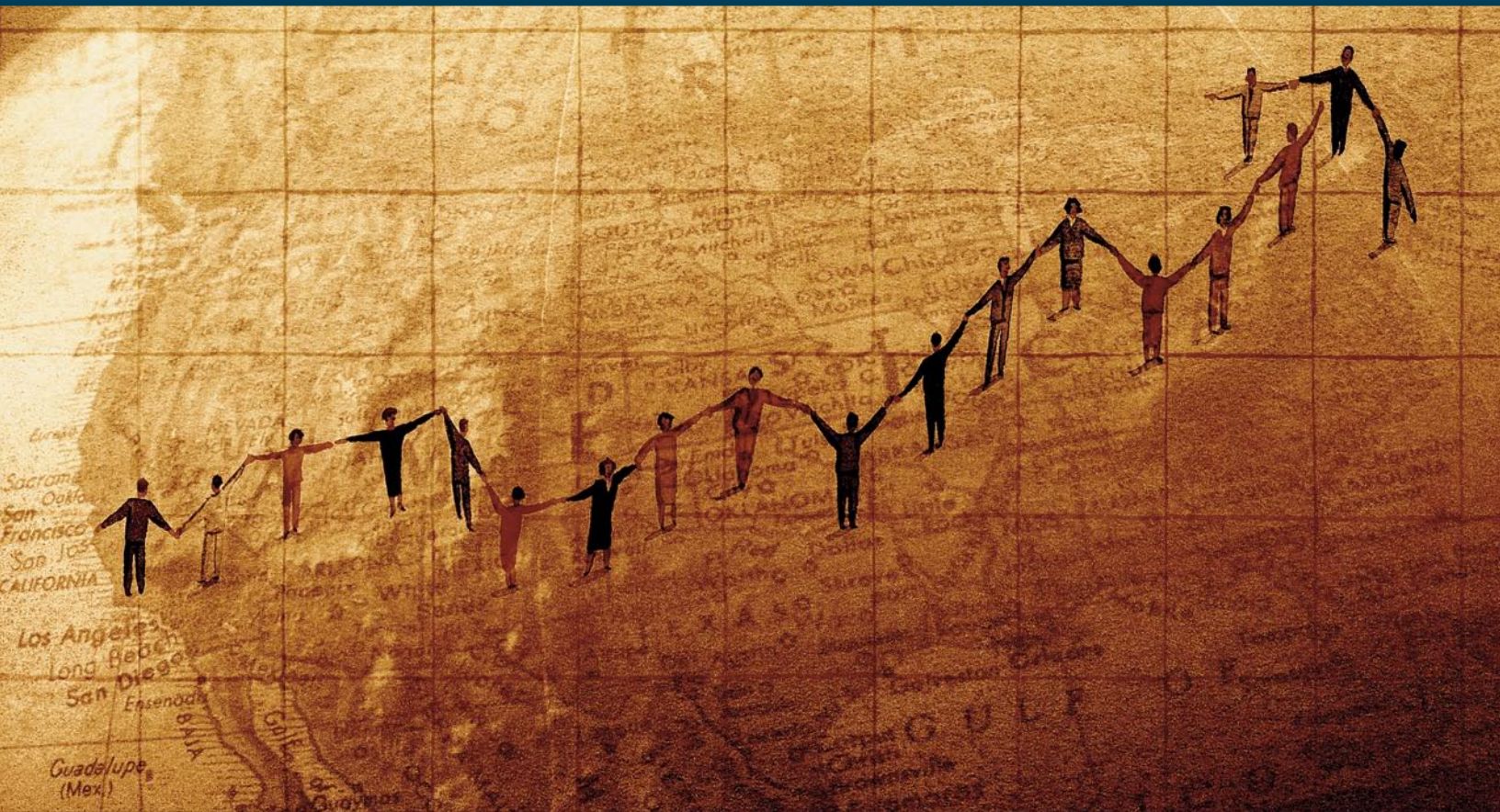


Immunization Coalition Sustainability Project:

Executive Summary

July 2004



Bakalian Consulting Group

Immunization Coalition Sustainability Project: Executive Summary

Vaccines to prevent disease are among the greatest improvement to public health of the 20th century and widespread immunization has made significant contributions to the eradication of disease among children and adults. Despite the availability of vaccines and the known benefits of universal vaccinations, there are still many pockets of need within communities where immunization rates have remained low. Additionally, once attained, high immunization coverage levels are difficult to maintain, especially when disease levels are at all-time lows.

One method employed to educate communities about the importance of immunizations and to augment strategies for the delivery of vaccines, has been the use of immunization coalitions. In January 2003, Aventis Pasteur, Inc. contracted with Bakalian Consulting Group (BCG) to create and conduct a survey of immunization coalitions across the United States. This project collected and documented demographic, contact, organizational and project information from 114 coalitions. The demographics of the respondents included coalitions that focused on childhood immunizations (29%), adult immunizations (12%) and immunizations across the lifespan (59%).

Findings

Findings from the survey showed that immunization coalitions are providing education and outreach activities at the local or community level, within multi-county or region levels, and at statewide levels. The coalitions that are creating sustainable organizations have:

- Solid financial resources which combine public and private funds.
- Well-developed strategic planning processes that identify goals and activities.
- Clear organizational structures that include strong, collaborative leadership.
- A consistent membership base which encompasses partners from the community who bring a wide range of skills, resources and commitment to the coalition.
- Dedicated staff and volunteers with a shared vision.

Activities

Descriptions from a sampling of activities and projects that are being implemented by coalitions, were collected and it was found that coalitions demonstrate not only wide variability in the types of activities and projects that they undertake, but also emphasize the

vast creativity and innovative ways that coalitions have been able to use those activities to build partnerships and maximize resources to improve immunization education within the community.

The activities generally fall within four broad categories **1.** Immunization Registry, **2.** Provider Quality Assurance, **3.** Service Delivery, and **4.** Consumer Information. These categories reflect the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) *Immunization Program Operations Manual* (IPOM). Coalition activities and projects can be further defined by breaking them down into more specific categories.

Some examples of activities include projects that reach out to underserved populations, market and populate immunization registries, recognize providers who have high immunization rates, advocacy efforts that promote the creation and implementation of registries, media campaigns that use both traditional and non-traditional methods for communication, educational resources and training for providers, and public immunization education and outreach activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to maximize the benefits of collaboration, the following recommendations emerged from this study;

Collective Action

- Maintain and update a comprehensive coalition contact database.
- Collect and promote “promising practice” activities.
- Create a balance of types of coalitions:
 1. State coalitions, which provide advocacy, support, leadership and networking opportunities for local (community) coalitions,
 2. Local coalitions, which develop grassroots partnerships and strategies.
- Advocate to increase the political will and support for available, accessible and safe immunizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COALITIONS

Resource Development

- Leverage funding to maximize the benefits of public and private resources.
- Apply for nonprofit 501 (c) (3) status or partner with another nonprofit 501 (c) (3) agency as a fiscal agent.

The impetus for the creation of immunization coalitions remains strong and the values embodied within the theory of collaboration continue to be a driving force in the elimination of vaccine-preventable diseases, and the overall improvement in the health and well-being of citizens. Effective immunization coalitions are one strategy to improve and maintain immunization rates. The strength of the partnerships within the coalition and the organizational structures which are in place, create sustainability for immunization coalitions and provide a catalyst for carrying out effective projects and activities, thereby playing a role in raising immunization rates and improving health. The full report can be accessed by going to www.bakalianconsulting.com.

- Include in the coalition budget, funding for staff support, and staff training and professional development.
- Look for resources in non-traditional partnerships.

Partnerships

- Strengthen the organizational capacity and collaborative process within the coalition and outreach to non-traditional partners.
- Increase targeted coalition membership and build new partnerships including those as suggested by the IPOM - (i.e. WIC, schools, other health coalitions etc.).

Strategic Planning

- Include resource development (fundraising plan) in the strategic planning process.
- Capitalize on strategic planning that is based on immunization and community data and include results-based accountability in planning.
- Review and update the strategic plan on a regular and consistent basis.

Activities

- Plan and develop activities and programs that are based on the (CDC) IPOM recommendations.
- Evaluate activities, measure the outcomes and share the results with coalition members, decision makers, potential funders, providers, and the public.



BAKALIAN
consulting group

info@bakalianconsulting.com
www.bakalianconsulting.com



Aventis Pasteur

Brought to you as a public health service by Aventis Pasteur, Inc.