

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR STATE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMS



State Management Work Group Promising Practices – Part 2

20
23

ANNUAL TRAINING
CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 25 - 29



SESSION GOALS

- Each of you walk away today with one or two great ideas for improving the way you administer your CSBG program.
- Everyone understands how to access in-depth information about the promising practices and tools discussed today.

State Management Work Group Purpose

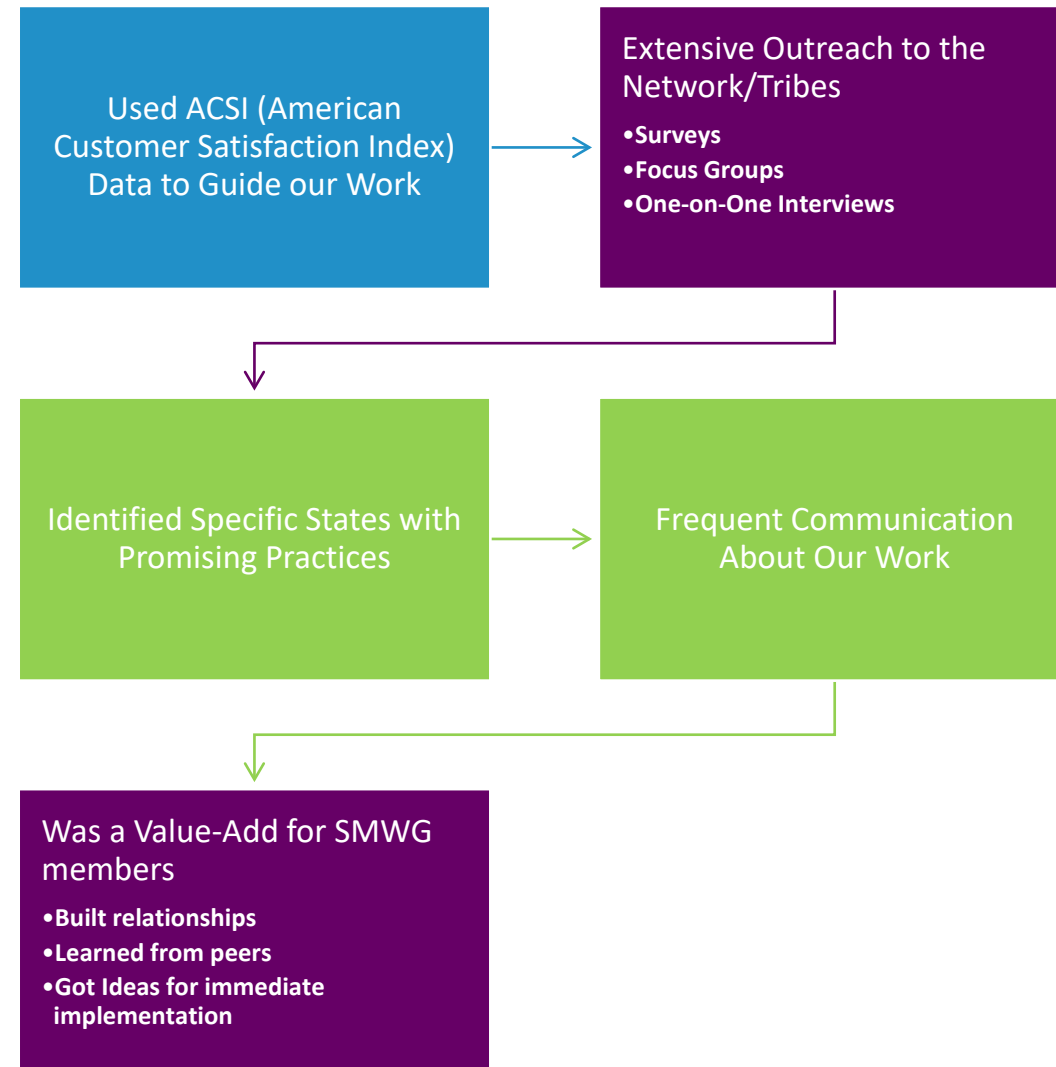
The State Management Work Group serves as a consultative body to NASCSP and OCS ***in conducting research that informs the development of a variety of practices, tools, resources, and training and technical assistance offerings for state administrators.***



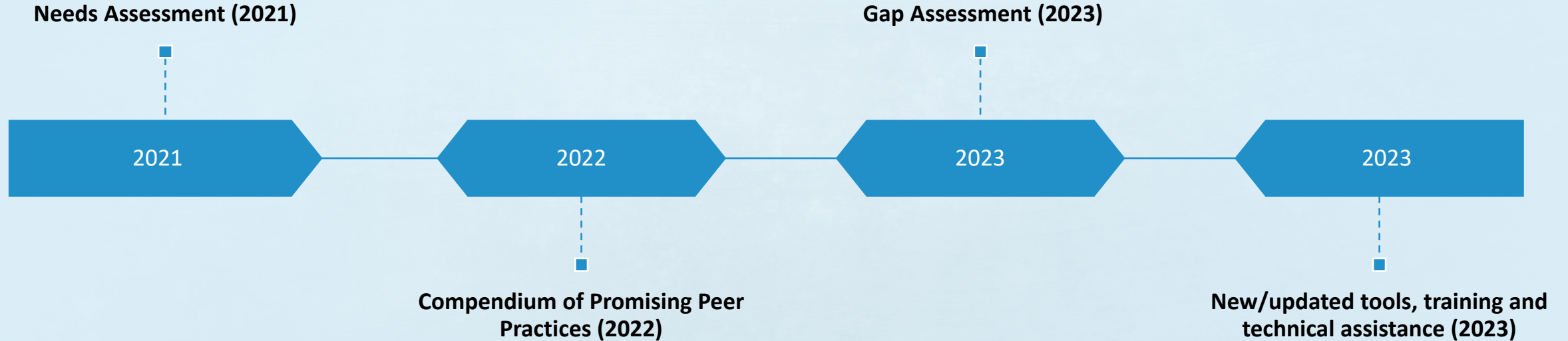
State Management Work Group Membership

Member	State	Region
<u>Jaimi Clifford</u>	Maine	I
<u>Manny Rosa</u>	New York	II
<u>Abby Hanks</u>	Virginia	III
<u>Nancy Rowland</u> / <u>Kris Wilson</u>	Kentucky	IV
<u>Anna Sainsbury</u>	Wisconsin	V
<u>Karen Keith</u>	Texas	VI
<u>Johna Trapani</u>	Missouri	VII
<u>Alex Diaz</u>	Colorado	VIII
<u>Leslie Taylor</u>	California	IX
<u>Leeann Marx</u>	Oregon	X
<u>Beverly Buchanan</u>	Arkansas	NASCSP Board President

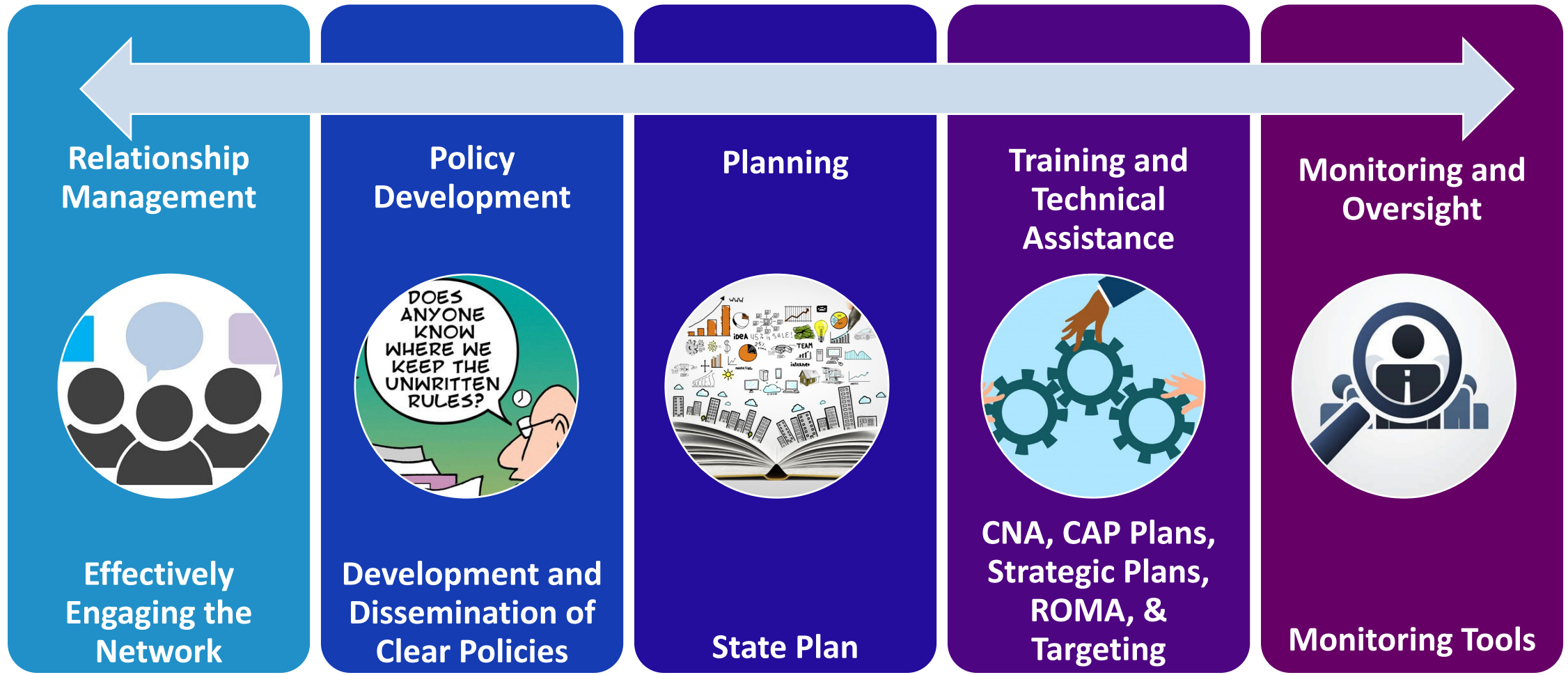
SMWG: How It Worked



SMWG Deliverables



SMWG Prioritized Practices



What is a Promising Peer Practice?

A Promising Peer Practice is...

An operating practice that has worked well in a state, as evidenced by good satisfaction scores from the local agencies, that other states can learn from and adapt, as appropriate.

Sample Compendium

Promising Practices
Compendium will include the
following:

- The promising practice
- Who employs the practice
- The purpose
- The method
- The challenges
- The benefits
- Tools/Templates/Resources

1. **Start Early: Timeline Mapping** – Develop a timeline, customized by the state, which outlines all the steps including completion dates needed to develop the State Plan

States Who Have Employed This Practice:

Maryland, Nebraska, North Dakota, Virginia, Utah

Purpose:

ACSI top-scoring states indicated they all started the state plan application process early in the fiscal year, engaged in conversations about the purpose of the State Plan, and held planned listening sessions for feedback. Developing an individualized timeline of these important tasks can help State Administrators execute the planning process to reduce workload burden, offer better Network engagement, and increase ACSI scores.

Method:

Establishing and maintaining a strong, collaborative relationship with the State Association and the Network is key in state planning. How State Administrators involve Eligible entities varies but the common thread is meeting with their Network early and frequently with in-person or one-on-one meetings to increase understanding of the State Plan with open feedback opportunities.

States must develop an outline specific to their needs, which includes state regulations related to CSBG, public hearings, and/or nonprofits, for example:

- Submission deadline
- Review of IMs/statutes for any relevant updates/requirements
- Ensure or establish user accounts in OLDC
- Obtain an updated Designation Letter (if applicable) - this can take longer in some states
- Collect ACSI survey information
- Collect monitoring information

STATE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Research: What We Learned

Promising Practices: Identified

State Plan Development: Research



Used the ACSI 2021 Survey data and verbatim comments to focus efforts and identify promising peer practices



Two surveys were conducted to gain insight into the different ways states approach developing the State Plan.



Seven high-scoring states were interviewed

2021 Aggregate Score and Impact Table

	National Score Min	National Score Max	2021 Scores	2021 Sample Size	National Impact
Sample Size			744	744	
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Timeliness of feedback	39	100	72	697	--
Clarity of process	39	100	73	590	--

How could the process of the developing the State Plan be improved?

If we started the review process earlier and had a series of meetings to ensure understanding and more review of the development based on feedback, it would provide more robust involvement opportunities.

Our State Office gives us multiple opportunities to participate in various formats and sends multiple reminders to participate. Across many years, they have included in-person, virtual, survey and focus-group type of opportunities for input. It is very transparent in our state, and I believe the State Plan reflects my agency's voice. I honestly don't know how they could improve the process.

*Involving the partners in listening sessions and actual planning sessions related to the state plan. **Establish statewide goals** that reflect the various uses for CSBG funding based on community needs assessments.*

*We are given opportunities to provide feedback but often feel that we are not heard. **Provide us with justification as to why certain things that are suggested, cannot be incorporated** to make our work administering these funds a bit easier.*

Additional training/guidance on understanding the State Plan and the process of preparing it.

*CAA participation through state association; CAA roundtables
Input sessions in varied places and times.*

***Make the state timeline for the plan available to the network**
Having CAAs at the table for beginning, drafting and final product*

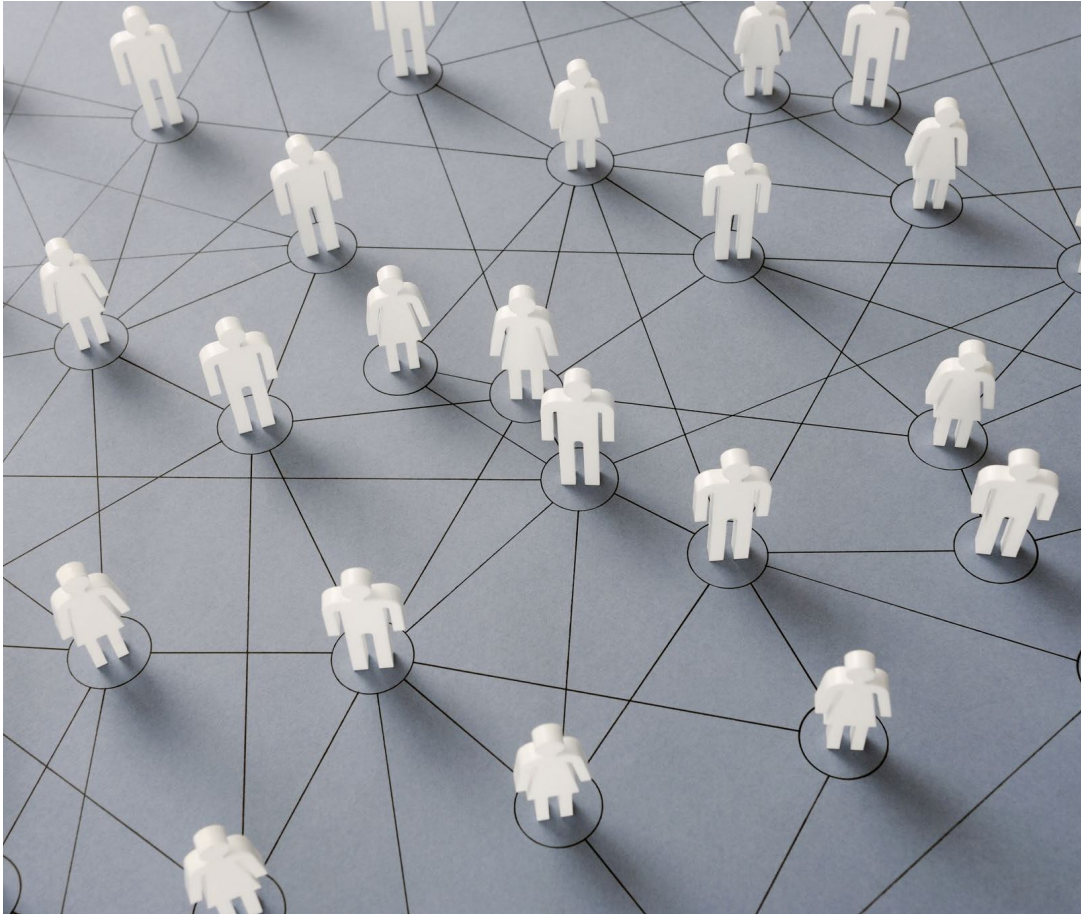
Be more data driven as it relates to current status of the counties.

Over the last year, the State has done an excellent job of hearing feedback from agencies, understanding how policy impacts customers, and working collaboratively with us to deliver the best programs we can in our communities.

We are developing a statewide community needs assessment for 2021. This should give us the needed info to develop a state plan.

***Engagement sessions that provide an opportunity to highlight success stories** from within the network and give more detail to the more general data provided in the plan.*

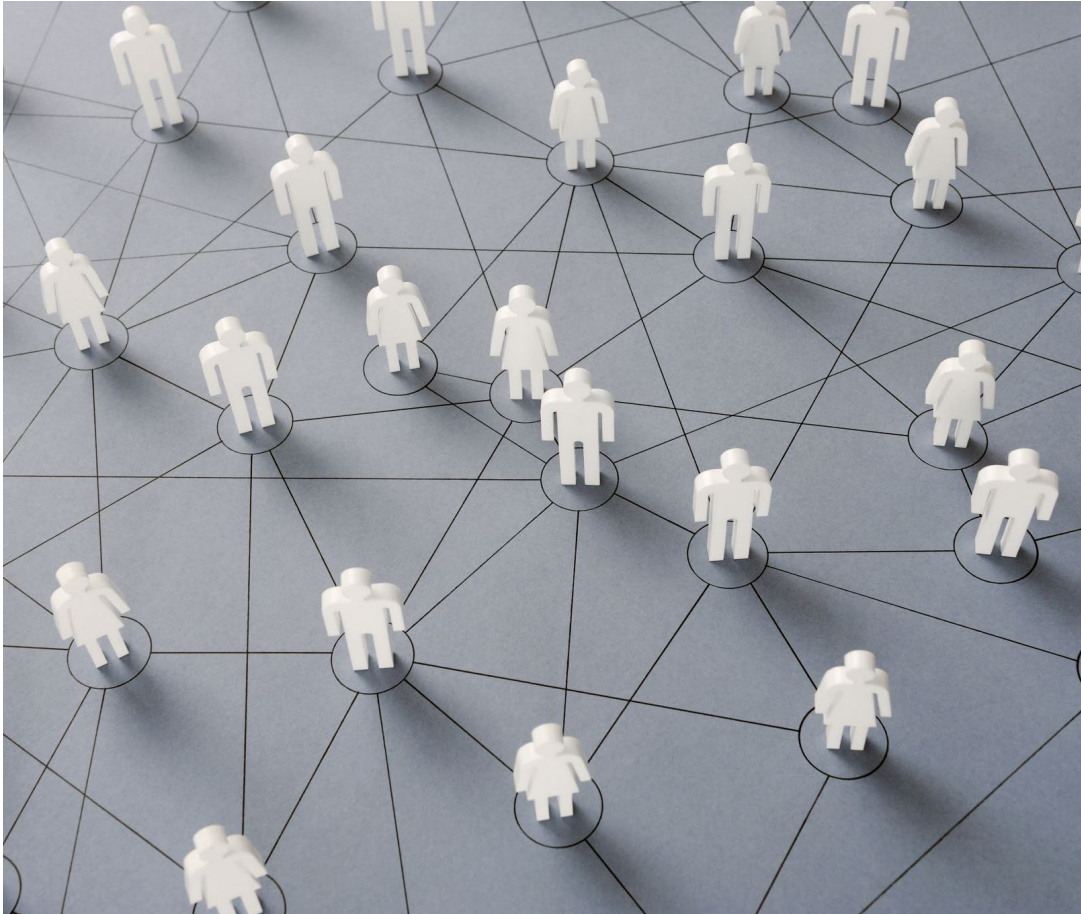
What is the State Plan?



The CSBG State Plan is the application process that State Lead Agencies use to apply for CSBG federal funding from the Office of Community Services.

The State Plan is used for planning purposes including but not limited to statewide goals, public hearing requirements, use of funds, training and technical assistance, state linkages and communication.

State Plan Development: Goal



Development of more robust State Plans that accurately reflect, support, and communicate the goals of the entire network and its various stakeholders, and that demonstrate clear, concrete and measurable steps will serve as a catalyst to achieving CSBG objectives.

VA CASE STUDY

STATE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING BEGINS EARLY AND THERE ARE MONTHLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Two-year state plan requires more planning time and forethought
- Planning starts at least one year before the new State Plan is due
 - Internal team planning with development of a detailed timeline to allow completion of all substantial elements at least three months prior to the Legislative/Public Hearing
 - In Virginia, we are required to have a Legislative Hearing, with a sub-committee of General Assembly. This requires multiple prongs of communication, and is a focus from beginning to end, cannot be over-planned and over-verified

VA CASE STUDY

STATE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

THIS PLAN BELONGS TO THE ENTIRE NETWORK

- During initial planning period, we ask for 5 agency partners to serve on a State Plan workgroup
 - To participate throughout the process, and in webinars presenting the results of the plan
 - Conduct a review of the things from last state plan that additional work can be done on (partnerships around key elements like WIOA, development of ROMA initiatives)

VA CASE STUDY

STATE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

STATE ASSOCIATION PARTNERSHIP

- Early planning includes conversations with the State Association on the key aspects that will require network leadership and information/input
- We utilize the State Association Peer Groups for additional information (ROMA, Finance, Training and Innovations)
- The work from the combined Training/TA plan is integral in two-year state planning
- The legislative hearing includes numerous speakers from the network, agency clients, and the President/CEO of the State Association

VA CASE STUDY

STATE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

PRESENTATION OF PROCESS AND KEY CONSIDERATIONS TO NETWORK

- After workgroup development and initial planning, a webinar is held to present the process for the state plan to the network
- Review of each element of the plan, the purpose of each section, and the key elements that typically are included
- Set out timeline and methods for regular communication that will occur throughout

VA CASE STUDY

STATE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

FEEDBACK LOOPS AND INTEGRATION OF NETWORK INPUT

- Each State Plan process involves at least two comment periods (possibly three depending on the amount of change from previous years)
- Timeline must support these two 30-day comment periods, and the delivery of information prior to beginning of each period.
- First comment period is typically early January, kicked off with a webinar and includes presentation of several questions to be considered by the network (as identified by the workgroup)
- Second comment period is typically mid-February-ish, and is a review of the State Plan as prepared to date, with feedback on areas for clarity/improvement

VA CASE STUDY

STATE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

ISSUES THAT MAY REQUIRE MORE ATTENTION

- If we have items that are more substantive changes, and will require closer review and more feedback from the network, those will likely require an additional session specific to them, with their own comment period
- Examples are our allocation formula updates, major changes to our monitoring process, large initiatives we hope to introduce (Whole Family, ROMA initiatives)
- Because the network will be presenting at the Legislative Conference, we want them to be excited and well-versed in all aspects of the changes particularly

State Plan Development

Promising Practices

1. *Start Early*: Timeline Mapping
2. *Educate the Network*: State Plan Training
3. *Gather Input First*: Prior to Drafting the State Plan
4. *Close the Loop*: Follow-up on All Comments
5. Modified Public Hearing
6. Complete a Two-Year State Plan

I. START EARLY: TIMELINE MAPPING

MD, ND, NE, UT, VA

- Develop a timeline, customized by the state, that outlines all the steps including completion dates needed to develop the State Plan.
- Timeline should include all the touchpoints with the local agencies:
 - early training
 - gathering input
 - drafting the plan
 - gathering feedback on the draft
 - follow-up with local agencies about their comments.

2. EDUCATE THE NETWORK: STATE PLAN TRAINING

Host an annual State Plan kick-off webinar for the Network. Highlight what a State Plan is, why it is important, what is needed from the local agencies, and the timeline for developing the plan. (**MD, VA**)

3. GATHER INPUT FIRST: PRIOR TO DRAFTING THE STATE PLAN

Gather input from the Network at the beginning of the State Plan process (rather than drafting a plan and only then sending it out for comment).

- Roundtable Meetings (**UT**)
- Regional Listening Sessions (**MD**)
- Meeting EDs of agencies/association (**NE**)
- Listening Session during Annual State Association conference (**OH**)
- Informal request for Feedback through ListServ (**MA**)
- One-on-one T/TA with CAAs, emails/phone calls, monthly meetings (**ND**)
- Form a Workgroup (**MD, VA**)

4. CLOSE THE LOOP: FOLLOW-UP ON ALL COMMENTS

- Indicate why or why not network feedback was incorporated into the final iteration of the State Plan. **(MD, OH, UT, VA)**
 - Track all comments and the source of the comments throughout the process.
 - Use this as a checklist for reviews and discussions during any meetings with the agencies, internal state office meetings/draft preparations, and/or presentations with the state association.

5. MODIFIED PUBLIC HEARING

- Extended Comment Period Timeline (**UT**)
 - State Plan is open for one month prior to public hearing and one month after public hearing to ensure ample time for public feedback and comments.
- Combine CSBG and LIHEAP State Plan Processes (**MA, OH**)
- Public Hearing Held Using In-Person/Virtual Hybrid Model (**ND**)

6. COMPLETE A TWO-YEAR STATE PLAN

MD, MA, NE, ND, OH,
UT, VA

- Reduces workload and allows State Administrators the opportunity to focus on other prominent issues for the Network.
- Reduces repetitive cycle of planning.
- Allows states the ability to develop longer-term goals and provides more time needed to implement items listed in the State Plan and achieve meaningful progress.
- Allows states to gather more meaningful feedback.
- Helps to reduce CAA feedback/meeting fatigue.

TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: ROMA PROCESSES

Research: What We Learned

Promising Practices: Identified

Training and Technical Assistance: Research



Used the ACSI 2021 Survey data and verbatim comments to focus efforts and identify promising peer practices



One survey was conducted to gain insight into ROMA T/TA practices and tools



One focus group with thirteen State ROMA professionals was conducted



Four high-scoring states were interviewed

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What, if any, additional training and technical assistance needs do you want the State CSBG Lead Agency to address?

Trainings on development of documents

such as policies and procedures, CNA, CAP, Strategic Plan, Organizational Standards.

Training on setting up services and indicators

for programs so the State can have a level of all agencies providing accurate information.

The State CSBG Lead Agency has significantly ramped up its training and technical assistance efforts and coordinated exceptionally well with the State Association.

The network is given the opportunity through a survey and throughout the year to indicate its priority needs. Every effort is made to meet these needs, including when there is a transition in senior staff at local eligible entities.

Training is excellent but focuses only on process (how to complete an application for CSBG, reporting, etc.). **Training on the needs of people in poverty and how to best address those needs would strengthen agencies.**

Basic how-tos for new staff - what the State directives are, how to complete and submit a workplan, what to expect around monitoring, etc. Unless you are in the network or ask questions from other CAP directors, you have no idea what to do as a newbie.

Provide training on more basic aspects of the CSBG world, such as language, that would be nice for people just starting in this field of work.

Best practices within the network.

Providing a forum for grantees to talk about challenges and issues related to the grants and clients so that we can gather ideas from each other as to how we may deal effectively with these issues and challenges.

ROMA, leveraging CSBG dollars, formulas used to increase/decrease funding (ability to accurately spend increased funding to make an impact), innovative state-wide initiatives and better cross-collaboration with the Workforce Investment Boards and DCF to maximize efforts.

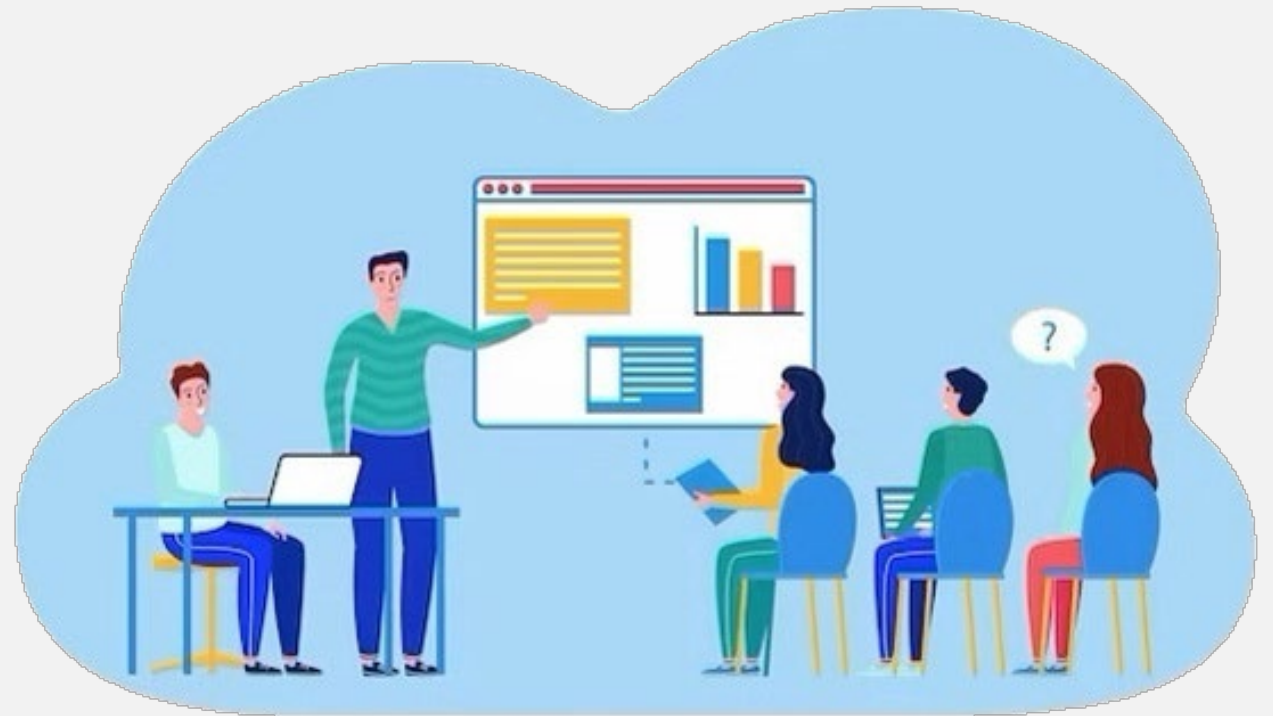
The state does an excellent job of keeping their website up-to-date and providing a plethora of information

Training on the use of Best Practice Models for service delivery. **Training less process focused and more innovation focused.**

AR CASE STUDY

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

UTILIZING CONTRACTORS FOR TRAINING



T/TA (ROMA Processes)

Promising Practices

1. Maintain active Certified ROMA Professionals at all levels of the Network
2. Standardize CSBG Terminology
3. Implement a Statewide Database
4. Utilize Contractors for Training
5. Communicate and Share

I. MAINTAIN ROMA PROFESSIONALS AT ALL LEVELS

AR, IL, MD, OH, TX, WA

Maintain Active Certified ROMA Professionals at all levels of the Network (State Lead, State Association).

2. STANDARD CSBG TERMINOLOGY

ID, MD, ME, OK, UT

Develop a statewide CNA manual and CAP Plan template, with logic models, which provides a standardized format and outlines what data should be included

3. IMPLEMENT STATEWIDE DATABASE

MA, ME, OK, VA

Identify, develop, and implement a statewide database. Eligible Entities input CSBG data related to client demographics, services, outcomes, funding usage, and/or organizational standards.

4. UTILIZE CONTRACTORS FOR TRAINING

AR, MA, MD, ME, OH, OR, UT

Use outside vendors such as the State Association, National Partners, and/or other merchants for network T/TA needs.

5. COMMUNICATE AND SHARE

AR, CA, MA, MD, ME, NY, OH, OR,
TX, UT

Intentional, regular communication, and sharing of T/TA-related information that is clear, constant, and consistent.

SUMMARY OF OTHER PROMISING PRACTICES

Promising Practices Identified

Engaging the Network

Monitoring

Policy Development/Dissemination

Engaging the Network

Promising Peer Practices

1. Maintain a strong, collaborative relationship with the State Association
2. Minimize Administration, Maximize Engagement
3. Establish an Economic Opportunity Council (EOC) or similar group
4. Leverage Technology to better engage the network
5. Dedicate Staff to “Engaging the Network” efforts

Policy Development/Dissemination

Promising Practices

1. Regular, recurring review of policies – ahead of OCS review.
2. *Engage the Network* and all relevant Stakeholders (i.e., legal counsel, other state departments, State Associations, eligible entities, etc.) in multiple ways throughout the update process.
3. Minimize administrative burden by eliminating policies not required.

Monitoring and Oversight

Promising Practices

1. *Monitor for Impact*: It's all about improving the delivery of services to customers
2. Preparation is Key
3. Consistency is Critical
4. Post-Monitoring Efforts are Integral to the Process

Summary: Tools Developed by SMWG

Engaging the Network

- A write-up of the history, role, and purpose of Maine's Economic Opportunity Council.
- A write-up of what is needed to implement a detailed process of Q&A tracking using technology.
- NASCSP promotion at conferences and in webinars of the need for strong relationships between states and state associations.
- “Linkages” Promising Practices (developed in 2022) included in the SMWG Compendium of Promising Practices and the Data Map.

Summary: Tools Developed by SMWG

Policy Development /Monitoring

- A presentation detailing a state process for regularly updating policies (based on Colorado's experience).
- A modified NASCSP State Office Action Plan that includes regular, recurring reviews of policies and procedures, and provides a framework for the reviews.
- A modified NASCSP State Office Action Plan that includes the identified promising practices regarding monitoring.
- A packet of examples of pre-monitoring preparation that the SMWG has gathered and reviewed.
- A packet of examples, gathered and reviewed by the SMWG, that illustrate how to assure consistency in monitoring.
- A packet of current corrective action tracking tools.

Summary: Tools Developed by SMWG

State Plan Development

- A modified NASCSP State Office Action Plan that includes promising practices about developing the State Plan.
- A State Plan Training power point (based on VA's power point).
- A generic tracking system of state plan comments (using what MD, OH, UT, VA, WI do to track comments).
- “Developing a State Plan” training series explaining the entire cycle: Start early > Educate > Work involved > How it ties back to the Annual Report > Adding to OLDC.

Summary: Tools Developed by SMWG

Training and Technical Assistance

- A glossary of defined terms
- A crosswalk of CSBG CNA and Head Start Assessment requirements
- ANCRT updated training re: strategic plans and targeting.
- A document Identifying where data can be found to customize trainings (CNA, targeting, etc.) for the Network.
- A document listing the steps needed to establish a statewide database – sample RFPs; list of vendors.
- A crosswalk of what contractors offer what specific topics

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Expectations



Altogether over 20 products (tools, resources, and training) ***along with all the information that is contained in the Compendium/Data Map*** will offer a very helpful, easy-to-use Toolbox for the states to utilize.



Once implemented, we expect these to improve the quality, consistency and efficiency of the CSBG state offices.



We expect that use of the promising practices and accompanying tools, resources, and training will result in:

Better service delivery to the CAAs and increased satisfaction w/ the state office, as evidenced by improved ACSI scores for the states.

NEXT STEPS

- Contact SMWG Members: see the Compendium for contact information

Use the Compendium/Data Map on the [SMWG page](#)

- Attend an upcoming webinar

Compendium and Data Map

October 24, 2023, 1pm | Register [here](#)

Compendium and Data Map

November 16, 1pm | Register [here](#)

State Plan training

January 18, 1pm | Register [here](#)



Discussion



THANK YOU!

Scan here to
complete the
survey for
this session!

