

# 2025

## ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 22 – 26 | CHICAGO, IL

---

New Manager Orientation Part II  
State Plan, CNA/CAP and Contracting

---

*"Amplifying Our Impact"*

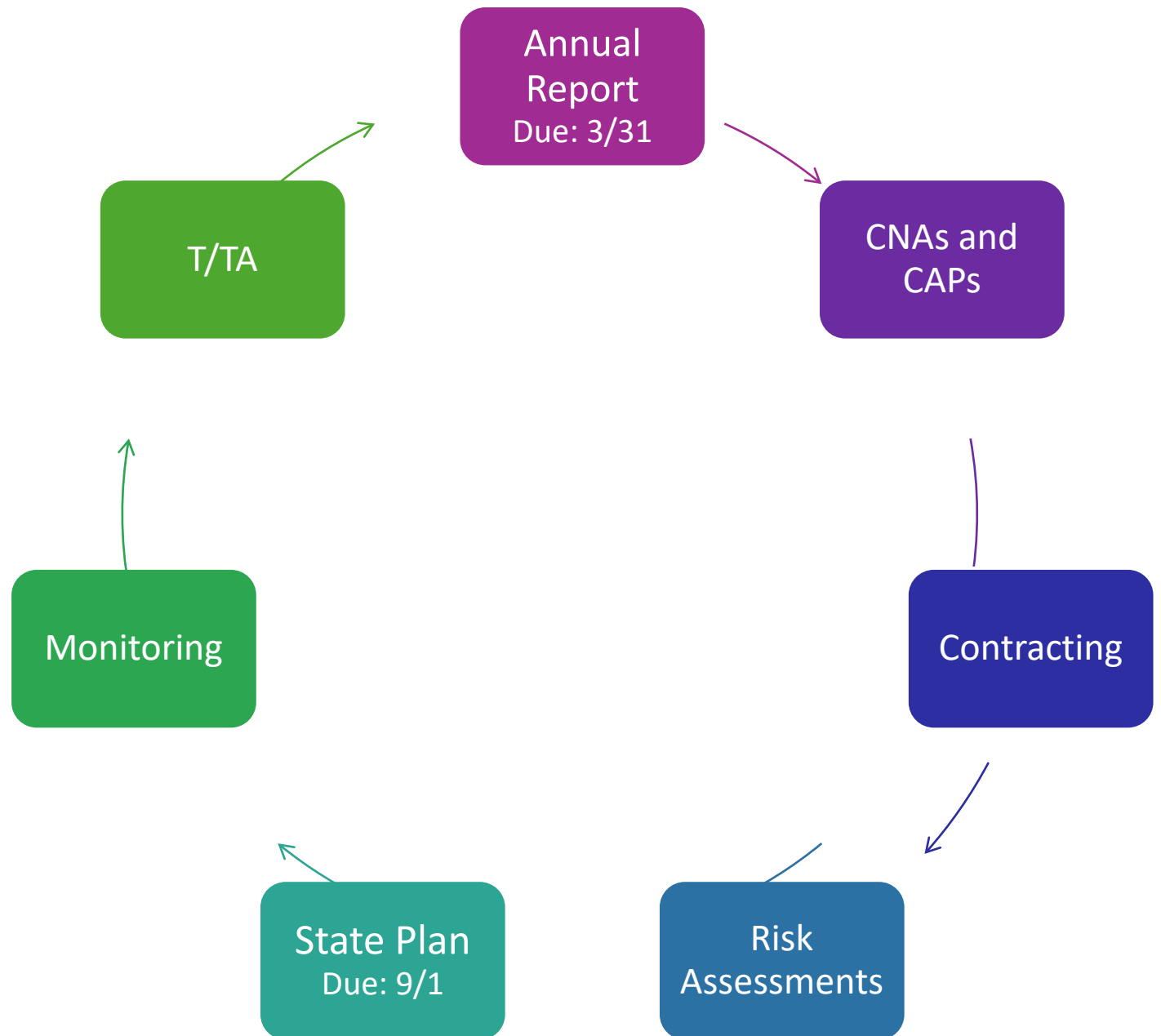






WELCOME

# Core State CSBG Activities



# What is the State Plan?

The **State Plan** is a requirement of the CSBG Act that gathers information about planned activities related to and funded by CSBG for the upcoming fiscal year—it serves as a blueprint for how CSBG funds will be administered and distributed across the state.

## Key Purposes:

- Ensures alignment with federal CSBG Act requirements.
- Outlines goals and strategies to reduce poverty across the state.
- Describes partnerships with other public and private entities.
- Provides a clear picture of how funds will be used to support eligible entities.

## Core Elements:

- Contains 15 sections that collect information on various data points.
- Each Section is specific to a Federal requirement
- States can submit a one-year or a two-year plan
- The plan is due in OLDC on September 1.

# What the State Plan is **NOT**

- Copy/paste from the year before
- Just *another* pointless task or *useless* document
- Shouldn't be done, and then put on a shelf to be forgotten
- Just checking a box

OMB Control No: 0970-0382

Expiration Date: XX/XX/XXXX



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**  
Office of Community Services

## Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) State Plan

### CSBG Cover Page (SF-424M)

SECTION 1: CSBG Administrative Information.....	2
SECTION 2: State Legislation and Regulation .....	5
SECTION 3: State Plan Development and Statewide Goals .....	6
SECTION 4: CSBG Hearing Requirements .....	8
SECTION 5: CSBG Eligible Entities.....	9
SECTION 6: Organizational Standards for Eligible Entities.....	12
SECTION 7: State Use of Funds.....	14
SECTION 8: State Training and Technical Assistance .....	19
SECTION 9: State Linkages and Communication .....	22
SECTION 10: Monitoring, Corrective Action, and Fiscal Controls .....	26
SECTION 11: Eligible Entity Tripartite Board.....	30
SECTION 12: Individual and Community Income Eligibility Requirements .....	31
SECTION 13: Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) System .....	32
SECTION 14: CSBG Programmatic Assurance and Information Narrative.....	34
SECTION 15: Federal Certifications .....	40

THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13): Through this information collection, ACF is gathering information about planned activities related to and funded by CSBG for the upcoming fiscal year. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 31 hours per grantee, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. This is a mandatory collection of information (Sec. 676, Pub. L. 105-285, 112 Stat. 2735 (42 U.S.C. § 9908)). An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB # is 0970-0382 and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX. If you have any comments on this collection of information, please contact M. Monique Alcantara at [melania.alcantara@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:melania.alcantara@acf.hhs.gov).

# State Responsibilities

## State Plan

---

Develop a State Plan and submit to OCS every 1 or 2 fiscal years

---

Hold at least one public hearing to get feedback on State Plan

---

Hold a legislative hearing every 3 years

---

Describe the use of discretionary funds, the service delivery system, linkages, distribution of funds, and use of funds

---

Must include the “state assurances” and describe how the state will carry them out

# What is a CNA?

A **Community Needs Assessment (CNA)** is a systematic process used to identify the strengths, needs, and resources of a community—especially as they relate to individuals and families with low incomes.

## Key Purposes:

- Understand the **current conditions** affecting people with low incomes.
- Identify **gaps in services** and **barriers to self-sufficiency**.
- Engage the community to inform **data-driven planning**.
- Support the development of effective **programs and partnerships**.

## Core Elements:

- **Data Collection** (demographic, economic, and social indicators)
- **Community Engagement** (surveys, focus groups, interviews)
- **Resource Mapping** (services, assets, partners)
- **Analysis of Needs and Priorities**

# What is a CAP?

The **Community Action Plan (CAP)** is a strategic, data-informed plan required by the **Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)** that outlines how a Community Action Agency (CAA) will address poverty-related needs in its service area.

## Key Purposes:

- Required by CSBG Act
- Based on a CNA
- Guides how the agency addresses poverty in its community
- Aligns staffing, budgeting, and partnerships with identified needs
- Reflects input from low-income individuals and community stakeholders

## Core Elements:

- Identifies Community Needs & Priorities
- Agency Mission and Vision Alignment
- Strategies and Services to Address Needs
- Outcome-Based Goals
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement
- Partnerships and Collaboration Plan
- Board Approval
- State Submission



# State Responsibilities

## CAP and CNA

---

Sets requirements for CAP submission (format, frequency, deadline)

---

Reviews and approves local agency CAP Plans

---

Ensures CNAs are conducted at least once every 3 years

---

Provides training and technical assistance

---

Monitors compliance with federal and state standards

---

Ensures CAP Plans align with CNA and state priorities

# Why it Matters

## CAP and CNA

Both the CAP and the CNA is more than just a requirement of the CSBG Act, it . . .

### **Community Action Plan:**

- Aligns programs and resources with local needs.
- Provides measurable goals and outcomes.
- Supports CSBG allocation and renewals.
- Demonstrates responsiveness and transparency.

### **Community Needs Assessment:**

- The foundation of the Strategic Plan and Community Action Plan.
- Ensures services are relevant, targeted, and effective.
- Demonstrates accountability and community engagement.
- Supports continuous improvement in anti-poverty work.

# State Contracting

The **State Contracting** is the process by which the state formalizes agreements with eligible Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to administer CSBG funds. Contracts are based on approved Community Action Plans (CAPs) and aligned with the CSBG State Plan.

## Key Purposes:

- Establishes the terms under which funds are distributed and used.
- Connects local agency activities to state and federal priorities.
- Sets standards for monitoring, reporting, and fiscal responsibility.
- Ensures adherence to the CSBG Act, Uniform Guidance, and state laws.

## Core Elements:

- Scope of services based on the local CAP
- Budget and allowable expenditures
- Performance outcomes and reporting requirements
- Compliance with Organizational Standards
- Monitoring and audit provisions
- Contract term, renewal, and amendment procedures



# State Spotlight

Angela Fraser, MD – State Plan

Chris Rowland, NM – State Plan

Carey Gibson, ANCRT – CNA/CAPs

Jill Giles, NE – Contracting

Barbara Schachern, WI – Contracting



# MD's State Plan Process



2-Year Plan



9-Month Timeline  
(January –  
September)

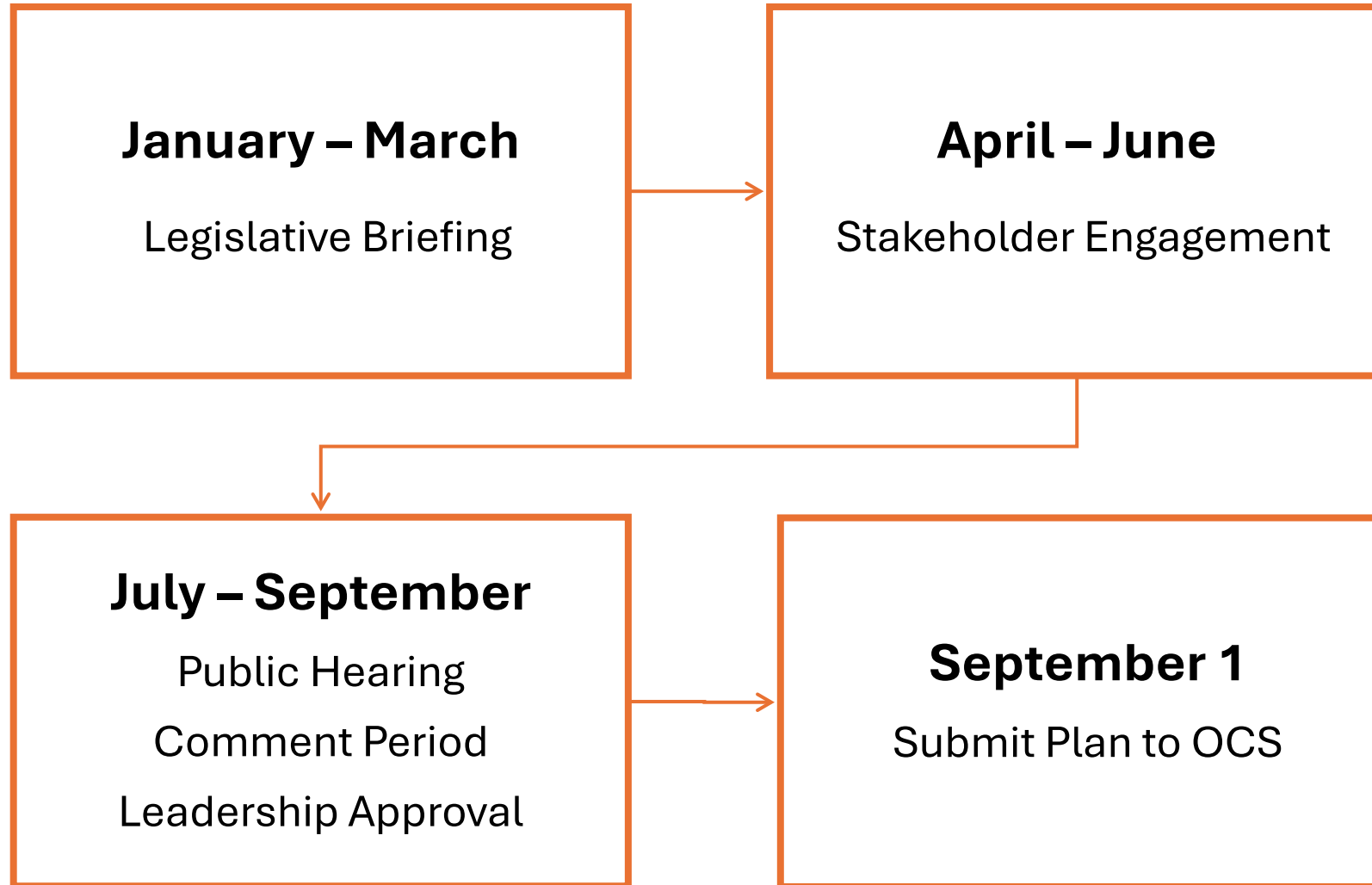


Required  
Actions



Stakeholder  
Engagement

# MD's State Plan Timeline



# MD's Required Actions



## **January – March**

State Legislative  
Briefing



## **July – September**

Public Hearing  
Public Comment Period  
Final Plan  
Leadership Approval



## **By September 1**

Submit Plan to OCS

# MD's Stakeholder Engagement



Listening  
Sessions



State  
Association  
Conference



State & Local  
Partners



Website



Email





# Opportunities

- Deep dive into the data
- Expand stakeholder engagement
- Strengthen nexus between State Plan, CAPs & CNAs

# NM Introduction to the CSBG State Plan

- **Part 1**: Chris Rowland, New Mexico CSBG Program Manager – Foundational Overview of the CSBG State Plan
- **Part 2**: Angela Fraser, Maryland Director of Poverty Solutions Programs – Maryland State Plan Overview

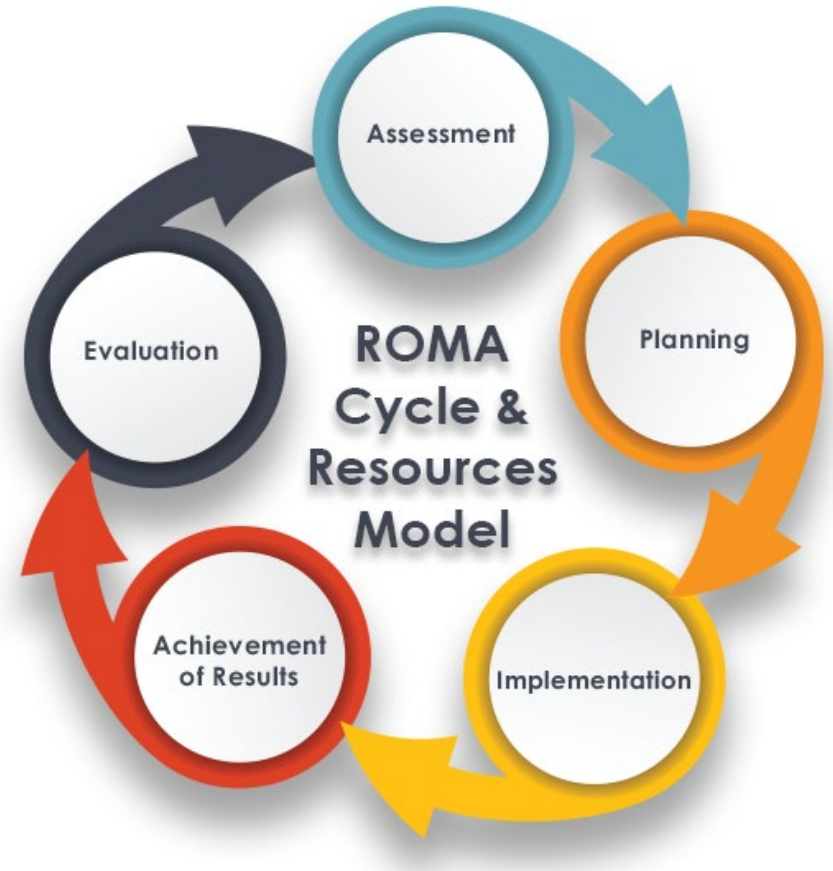
# NM The CSBG State Plan

- What is it?
- Why do we it?
- How does it get done?

# First, Let's Take a Look at the ROMA Cycle

(Results Oriented Management and Accountability)

At its core, the ROMA cycle is the scientific method applied to social services - both are disciplined, cyclical processes that move from identifying a problem to implementing a data-driven solution and evaluating the results to foster continuous improvement





# The Flexibility vs. Accountability Dynamic

- The CSBG program is a locally-driven answer to one-size-fits-all funding, enabling communities to innovate and tailor anti-poverty strategies that truly work for them
- This flexibility requires a unique expectation of accountability at many different levels that likely seems excessive compared to other programs
- Which requires a complex plan



# Develop a Timeline

- The development and administration of a quality State Plan is a lengthy process
- A well thought out and flexible timeline is crucial
- Expect the unexpected

# Clearly Define Roles

- A credible State Plan can not be developed by a single person
- The delegation of duties across the entire program greatly increases the quality of a plan
- Consider an individual or department's capacity to participate



# Engagement is Critical

- Engagement of stakeholders is important, and can be challenging
- Seek innovative strategies if you find its not working

## Resources

- [Section 676 of the CSBG Act](#)
- [NASCSP Member Resources](#)
  - Contains an extensive collection of training materials and also submitted State Plans
- OCS - [CSBG State Plan Toolkit](#)
- And equally important are your counterparts from other states, as well as your contacts at both OCS and NASCSP



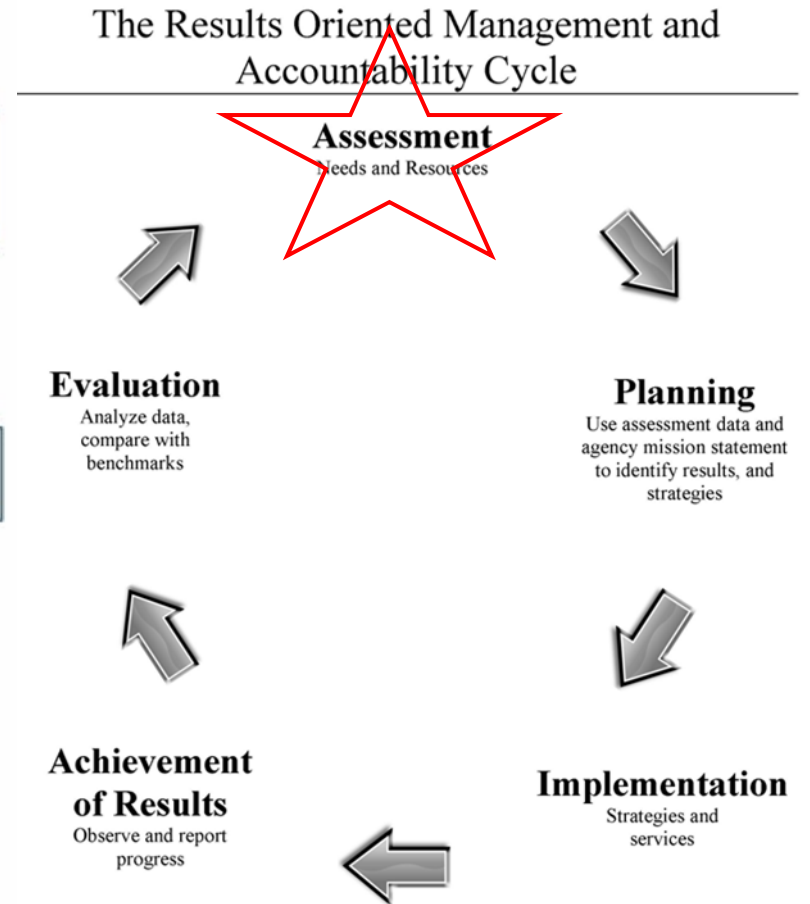
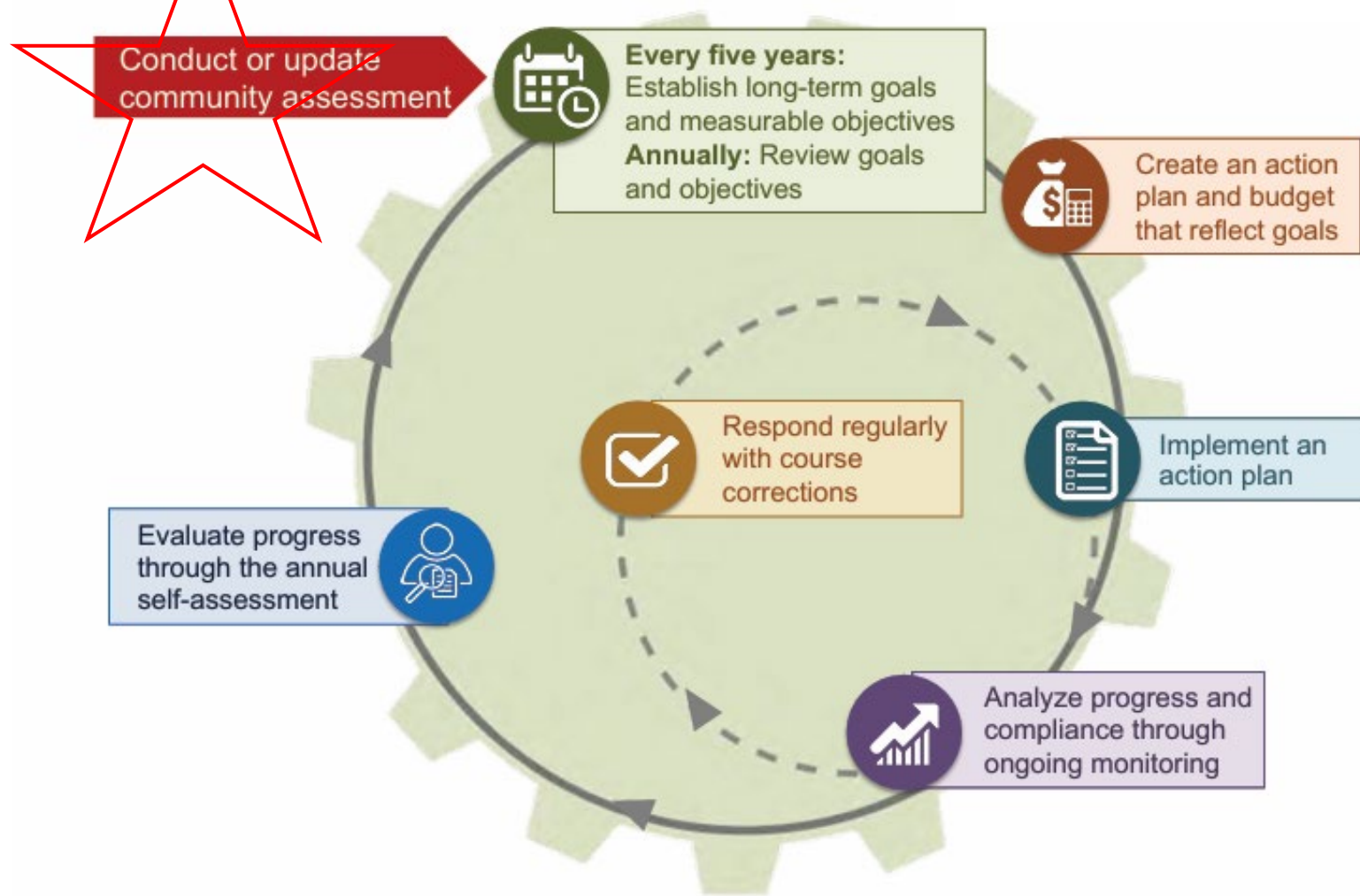
# Looking at Community Needs Assessments (CNA) and Community Action Plans (CAP) through a ROMA Lens

# Observations from across the network-CNA



**1. Comprehensive, non siloed,  
community needs assessments**

Figure 1.1 Program Planning Cycle



# Benefits



- Families don't live in silos—why should our data?
- Many of our clients use more than one of our services.
- Overlapping issues (e.g., housing instability, childcare needs, transportation barriers) are easier to address when we see them holistically.



# Benefits



- Reduces Redundancy and Saves Resources
- Aligns with Federal Funding Expectations
- Supports Stronger Planning
- Builds Trust with Our Community
- Opens Doors to Collaboration and Funding
- Are an investment in our own efficiency and impact

When we move from isolated efforts to a comprehensive approach,  
we don't just check a box—we transform how we serve our  
community.



# Challenges



- Be sure to review all program specific assessment standards to ensure nothing is missed!
- Conflicting timelines
- Larger scope-more time, more resources
- Increased inter-departmental collaboration

# Observations from across the network-CNA



## **2. State-Wide Community Needs Assessment**

# Benefits



- Reduced administrative burden
- Decreased cost
- Consistency increases ease of review
- Opportunity for deeper dive into domain areas
- Opportunities for partnerships
- Can support statewide policy development and advocacy efforts

# Challenges



- Too narrow of a focus
- Timelines may conflict
- Potential for loss of:
  - Understanding unique local needs
  - Customer satisfaction data
  - Qualitative data
  - Local agency report data
  - Local resource data

# Opportunities to improve

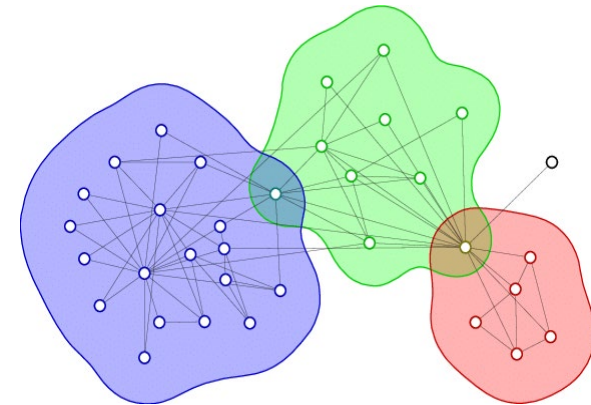
- Quantitative data-sometimes too much and not in context
  - Need to connect need data to demographic data
- Customer satisfaction data-collected, but not included; not used to identify agency level needs
- Resources-are they accessible?
- Agency Report data-often missing. Should be present to show agency capacity.
- Not clear on what analysis technique was used
- Unclear what prioritization technique was used
- Needs are not identified on Family, Agency, or Community levels



# Show the connections!

Raw data about income, housing, education, etc. as stand-alone elements don't help us understand the need.

- For instance, do we see that seniors report higher rates of food insecurity than other ages?
- Do residents of one zip code identify transportation as a barrier, but others do not?
- Are areas where adults have limited education also areas of higher poverty rates?





# Observations from across the network-CAPs

# Benefits



- Statewide templates help ensure consistency across the state
- Increase in plans that have a strategic thinking vs. provision of services approach
- Greater consideration around when to strengthen vs. when to abandon services
- Greater focus on community involvement

# Challenges



- Plans need to reference the needs identified in the CNA
- Ensure that all CAA activities are represented, not just CSBG
- Plans should clearly state the outcomes, rather than just describing services or strategies
- Services and strategies often do not match the level of need and/or outcome

# Challenges



- Plans typically include number projected to be served, but often do not include the number projected to obtain the outcome
- Plans often do not include measurement tools and processes
- Plans are not regularly reviewed and updated
- Disconnect between planning and implementation

# Nebraska Contracting Process

- Nine Non-Profit Community Action Agencies
- New Contracts
- Additional Allotments



# Wisconsin CSBG Contracting Process



CSBG  
CONTRACT  
YEAR



ANNUAL CSBG  
APPLICATION



NOTICE OF  
AWARD  
FROM OCS



FUNDING  
ALLOCATION  
PLAN &  
CONTRACT  
LANGUAGE



INTERNAL  
REVIEW  
PROCESS



# Wisconsin CSBG Contracting Process



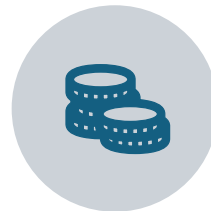
CSBG Revised Applications



Carryover Funds



Contract Amendments



Reimbursement Funds



Agency Check-ins



Communication

Questions





This material is supported by Grant Number 90ET0506 from the ACF Office of Community Services, Community Services Block Grant within the Administration for Children and Families, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Neither the Administration for Children and Families nor any of its components operate, control, are responsible for, or necessarily endorse this material (including, without limitation, its content, technical infrastructure, and policies, and any services or tools provided). The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Administration for Children and Families and the ACF Office of Community Services, Community Services Block Grant.

Please scan  
here to  
complete the  
evaluation for  
this session!

