

**The National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute:
A Formative Evaluation of the Institute's Activities**

from

September 2004-October, 2005

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Executive Summary

This report is a formative assessment of the third year of the National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute (hereafter called the Institute), spanning the work conducted between October, 2004 – September, 2005. The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the quality and impact of the work conducted during that time. The evaluation was guided by the following questions:

- To what extent did the Institute meet its targeted goals and activities during this time period?
 - What do key stakeholders (including CADCA staff, federal partners, Community Systems Group, State Partners and participating coalitions) think of the Institute and its work during this period of time?
 - Do staff and federal partners feel the Institute is making progress towards meeting its GPRA Measures?
- To what extent are the Institute's training and technical assistance efforts increasing coalition effectiveness?
 - To what extent are the coalitions satisfied with the Institute's training?
- To what extent is the Institute's training-of-trainers process effective?
- How effective are the Institute's communication materials?
- What lessons can the Institute learn about its work to date and to improve its performance in the future?

An evaluation team from Michigan State University conducted this assessment during March, 2006 - June, 2006. Two evaluation methods were employed:

- Secondary analysis of all critical documents, including the Institute's strategic plan, work plan, theory of change and logic models, bi-annual reports, and other relevant documents.
- Semi-structured interviews of key stakeholders (total N = 57) including Institute Staff (N = 7), CADCA staff (N = 4), representatives from key federal partner organizations (N = 3), Institute trainers (N = 5), a state partner (N = 1), Institute consultant (N = 1), participants from the Greenhouse, National Academy Pilot, National Academy cohorts 1 and 2, Mid-year Boot Camp, 2-day Core Competency, and 4-day Creating Community Change trainings (N = 36). Within each of these groups lists of possible informants were obtained from the Institute. When possible, coalition interviewees were purposely sampled based on their federal funding status – Drug-Free Communities (N = 20) or Weed and Seed (N = 9). Several coalitions were neither a DFC or W&S coalitions (N = 7) (hereafter referred to as non-status coalitions). Within each status potential interviewees were randomly selected. Phone interviews which lasted approximately 75 minutes were conducted.

Key Successes

As the body of this report indicates, key stakeholders including participating coalitions, consultants, Institute staff and federal partners noted the Institute made important strides in Year 3. In regards to its primary aim - "increase the percent of effective

coalitions” many coalitions report that the Institute trainings had a significant impact on their coalition’s capacity and functioning. According to coalitions interviewed for this evaluation, the Institute’s trainings:

- **Increased coalition effectiveness and accomplishment of goals.** Eighty-four percent (84 %) of all coalitions reported that the training increased their effectiveness as a coalition.
- **Increased focus on and use of the core competencies and the Strategic Prevention Framework** (e.g., community needs assessments, strategic planning, logic model development, membership expansion). Many coalitions report developing the skills and the core products associated with the Strategic Prevention Framework and using these to make more strategic decisions within their coalition. However, it is important to note that the Institute’s trainings seem better positioned to impact some core competencies more than others. For example, the majority of coalitions report developing/revising community assessments, logic models and action plans as a result of the Institute’s trainings. However, only one-third of the coalitions report developing their evaluation and sustainability plans as a result of the training. A similar pattern is discovered when we examine the coalitions’ use of these core products: most coalitions have found their action plan the most useful in helping to inform their coalitions’ decisions and their sustainability plan the least useful.
- **Increased use of more effective decision-making processes.** Over 80% of all coalitions reported that the trainings made them more strategic, more comprehensive, and better decision-makers.
- **Increased coalitions’ collaborative capacity.** Some coalitions described how they now have an expanded membership base, enhanced member commitment to and participation in the coalition’s efforts, and are using resources more strategically as a result of the Institute’s trainings.

One training participant captured the sentiment of many in the following statement:

I went in, hoping to get some information that could be helpful in how we could reinvigorate the coalition. What I got was a paradigm shift of how I did work... So I did get what I wanted as far as information, but I got much more. It revolutionized how we do work. We were able to bury the old processes and just start over.

Federal partners reported similar perceptions of the Institute’s work during this time period. Most were pleased with the direction the Institute is taking and believed the Institute was well on its way to becoming *a valuable asset to the coalitions and the coalition field*. With the addition of the new trainers and an increased sophistication of the trainings, most partners felt that the Institute was on its way to reaching the desired scale and scope of impact.

In addition to these training successes, the Institute also made important strides in several other key areas:

- Significantly strengthened the operations of its research and communications units.
- Clarified the core focus of its trainings and their alignment with the SPF framework.
- Solidified a strong partnership with the National Guard.
- Launched the Pilot Academy.

Challenges

For some coalitions, however, the Institute's trainings did not lead to the above results. These coalitions (approximately 15%) reported that the training did not improve their effectiveness for the following reasons:

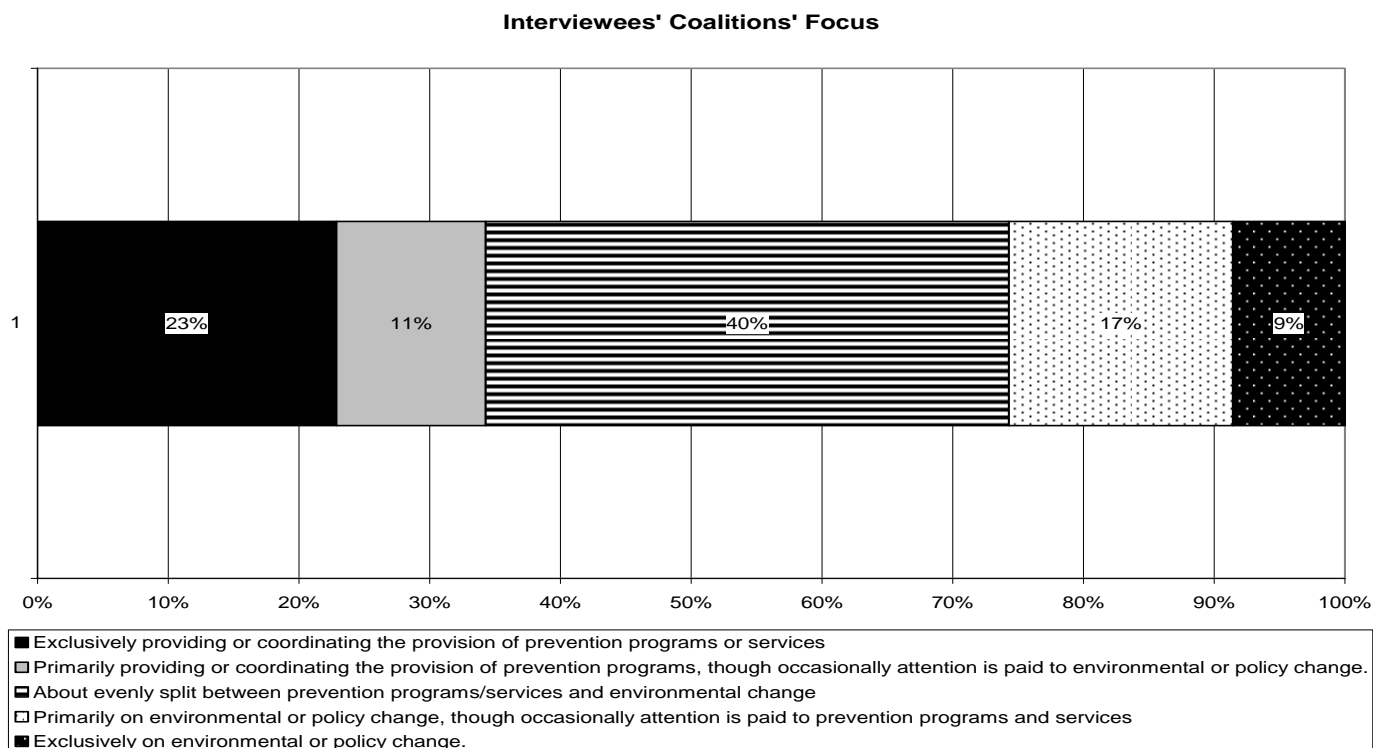
- The **training was too basic for their needs.**
- The **coalition was still in the "embryonic stage"** and could not fully utilize the information provided; or
- The coalition **has not used their key products enough** to help them become more effective.

The Institute continues to face some other challenges as it strives to reach its objectives and to make "*coalitions smarter, faster.*" In general, these challenges include:

- Limited staff resources amidst increased expectations from partners and constituents.
- Limited internal structure to plan for the future.
- Limited diversification of funding sources.
- Many stakeholders to accommodate making it difficult at times for the Institute to move forward.

Another set of challenges faced by the Institute concerns the great diversity that exists within the population of coalitions the Institute trains. As the Institute is well aware, coalitions vary significantly in a) how they define the purpose of their work; and b) how sophisticated they are as they approach this work. Figure 1 illustrates the diversity in the former. Coalitions in this evaluation were asked to describe the primary focus of their work (ranging from purely focused on providing or coordinating services to exclusively working on environmental or policy change). As this graph illustrates, coalitions were fairly well dispersed across this continuum, though more put emphasis on the provision and coordination of services than environment and policy change. Overall, this variety challenges the Institute to create content relevant to this wide range in scope of work.

Figure 1: Breadth of Coalitions' Work



The other source of variability – **the range in coalition sophistication** - creates a greater challenge for the Institute. For example, in the current group of coalitions interviewed for this evaluation, some had no core competency products developed prior to the training; others had already developed all five of the products. These two groups of coalitions require significantly different training approaches and the data collected for this evaluation would suggest that the current training approach is better designed, in some ways, to impact the development of core products in novice coalitions (those with no pre-training core competencies) than the revision of core products in more advanced coalitions. For example, 81% of all coalitions that did not have a logic model prior to the training developed a logic model as a result of what they learned in the training. Meanwhile, of those coalitions who already had a logic model prior to the training event, only 39% actually revised their model post-training. Interviews with training participants confirm that current training is not well designed to meet the more advanced needs of coalitions who are further along in their development: several participants noted the need for more advanced curriculum.

These differences in pre-training competency levels create not only training challenges but also create challenges related to how the Institute collects and reports on its outcomes. For example, as a result of these pre-training competency differences, evaluation data that looks solely at the production of core competency products (such as GPRA measure 3) will potentially under-represent the impact of the trainings. Our evaluation findings suggest that the Institute's trainings have multiple effects on

coalitions, only one of which is the creation or revision of core competency products. More importantly, both novice and more advanced coalitions report experiencing these other effects. For example, both types of coalitions report becoming more effective, more strategic in their thinking, and using their core products more to guide their coalitions' decisions as a result of the training.

The impact of differences in pre-training competency levels also means that the Institute's training has somewhat different effects on different coalition types, such as DFC and Weed & Seed coalitions. For example, at least in 2004/2005, DFC and Weed & Seed coalitions seem to differ in their pre-training core competency levels: DFC coalitions were far more likely to have had core products completed prior to the training than Weed & Seed Coalitions. Because current training appears to be designed better to impact the initial design (not the revision) of core products, it is not surprising that Weed & Seed coalitions reported that the Institute's training had a greater impact on their development of the core products than DFC coalitions. Overall, this suggests that the Institute must think carefully about the impacts its trainings are intended to create, which coalitions are likely to benefit from these impacts, and what outcomes should be tracked to measure this change.

The evaluation data collected for this report also suggests that few coalition members are repeat customers: only 5% of all of the 2004-2005 training participants interviewed for this study reported attending an Institute training in a previous year. This may be due to the fact that coalitions send different members to trainings across the years. Current tracking data available on training participants over the years makes it difficult to determine this accurately. However, information collected during the interviews suggests that some participants are the only members in their coalitions to be trained and that additional trainings were not pursued due to cost and/or the lack of advanced trainings offered by the Institute. If, at the coalition level of analysis, there are in fact few repeat customers, the Institute may face some challenges achieving some GRPA measures in 2006/2007 unless efforts are taken to attract these already trained coalitions. This is discussed in more detail in Sections 1 and in the Recommendations Section.

In conclusion, the Institute was charged with reaching an impressive set of objectives in 2004/2005. Building on its success and lessons learned in previous years, the Institute made important strides in refining its training curriculum and approach and establishing itself as a premier coalition training institute. As one partner noted:

I hope they continue to exist. They are at the leading edge of the field of what's going on with community-based coalitions, and they are vital against the "war on drugs." The Institute does a lot of the training for the prevention work that is vital. (partner)

This report is organized into the following sections:

Section 1: To what extent did the Institute meet the targeted goals and activities during this time period?

Section 2: What do key stakeholders (including CADCA staff, partners, and participating coalitions) think of the Institute and its work during this period of time?

Section 3: To what extent are the Institute's training and technical assistance enhancing coalition effectiveness?

Section 4: To what extent are the coalitions satisfied with the Institute's training?

Section 5: How effective are the Institute's communication materials?

Section 6: To what extent is the Institute's training-of-trainers process effective?

Section 7: What lessons can the Institute learn about its work to date and to improve its performance in the future?

Section 1: To what extent did the Institute meet the targeted goals and activities during this time period?

The National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute's mission is to increase the knowledge, capacity and accountability of community anti-drug coalitions throughout the nation. Its goal is to increase the percentage of effective coalitions.

Working towards this mission in 2004-2005, the Institute trained substance abuse coalitions across the country to use the Strategic Prevention Framework, with a large portion of the work consisting of providing training and assistance to SAMHSA and ONDCP for the Drug-Free Communities grant program.

Similar to 2003/2004, most stakeholders agree that the Institute largely accomplished what it set out to achieve during its third year of work. Overall the Institute's staff and partners felt very positive about the Institute's accomplishments during this time period. They felt the Institute accomplished what it set out to do and, in fact, some felt it surpassed its goals in its third year. Most staff and partners noted the Institute excelled in the following during 2004/2005:

- **Providing trainings**

We finally have the training piece...a distinct product for the field. (staff)

Institute staff and trainers were able to effectively communicate coalition-building strategies, and thus created stronger coalitions. (partner)

- **Increasing demand for trainings.**

We are in greater demand than we've ever been. (staff)

They were responsive to the needs of the field. (partner)

- **Improving communication products quality and dissemination.**

[referring to the Evaluation Primer] People call Sue all the time and say "can you send me 10 copies..." I think because it's new and we've never done anything like that, and the topic is important. Most of our constituencies are Drug-Free communities or are hoping to be Drug-Free Communities and since this is tied to what you need to know to do your DFC evaluation, it fits everybody's needs. (staff)

They did a really nice job on the "Handbook for Community Coalitions." It was a really nice piece. (partner)

- **Improving research management capabilities for themselves and to the coalitions.**

We have really improved our capabilities around managing the research. (staff)

I think they are sending a consistent message based on research of practice to the coalitions. (partner)

In addition, our more objective assessment of what activities were promised and which ones were accomplished support these stakeholder perceptions: Of the 151 activities planned for in 2004/2005, 126 (83%) were accomplished. The few activities that were not completed (i.e., Evaluation and Research Committee, the second round of the Greenhouse training, the “Taking to Scale Meeting.”) were suspended due to a lack of funding or contractor support. In addition, the Institute completed most of these activities within the first three months of the next fiscal year.

In general, coalitions were also positive about the Institute’s accomplishments during this time. Many found the trainings useful and enjoyed their interactions with the Institute staff. See Sections 3 and 4 for more details on the trainings’ impacts.

Below we describe the Institute’s three core strategies that comprise its theory of change and highlight the key activities and successes within each.

Strategy 1: Increasing the quantity and quality of Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) coalition development training for community coalitions.

During the 2004/2005 period, the Institute expended significant effort increasing both the quantity and quality of training and technical assistance provided to coalitions. Given the mission and purpose of the Institute, it is not surprising that the majority of its effort in 2004/2005 was focused on designing and delivering trainings in a variety of venues to coalitions across the United States.

Evidence of Increasing Quantity of Trainings:

Overall, the Institute **provided training to 338 unique coalitions, and 4,741 coalition members across 60 different training events** (a 100 percent increase over what was expected during this period of time and a 10% increase over the number of coalition members trained in 03/04). **These training events reflected an expanded array of training formats and training tools.** For example, at the request of the federal partners, the Institute added the 2-day training to their repertoire to meet the needs of some coalitions, particularly Weed and Seed coalitions. A few highlights of these training activities include:

- **99 Weed and Seed coalitions, 155 economically disadvantaged coalitions, and 259 Drug-Free Community coalitions** received training from the Institute. (Note: At times there are intersections between these categories.)
- **87 coalition members representing 59 coalitions** received four days of intensive training in the Mid-year Bootcamp. Many participants were DFC coalitions.

- **Over 670 coalition members** attended one of the three, no cost, two-day regional trainings.
- **91 coalition members representing 59 coalitions** began or completed intensive training to learn about all aspects of coalition operations through the National Coalition Academy Pilot and National Coalition Academy training.
- **Provided two trainings for CSAP project officers** for the DFCSP program to help them respond to the 700 plus new grants they will administer due to the administrative shift from ONDCP.
- **Participated in 5 DFC new grantee workshops.**
- **Provided 691 units of technical assistance** to coalitions on a variety of topics. This is slightly lower than the 700 units of technical assistance projected as the targeted goal.
- **Enrolled 28 coalition leaders in the leader/mentor program.** They received 4 days of training and leadership development. That is only slightly less than the Institute's goal of training 30 leaders.

In summary, the Institute not only offered expanded services in 2004/2005 but they were also in more demand. The increase in the demand for Institute trainings is, to a large extent, the result of enhanced advertising and outreach efforts that have *“taken them to a much bigger scale.”* The expansion in training venues offered by the Institute also served to increase the reach of the Institute. For example, the development of a cadre of trainers, video trainings, regional trainings, and business trainings have made the Institute better able to meet the expanding training demands.

Evidence of Increasing the Quality of Training:

In addition to providing a significant amount of training, the Institute also worked to improve the quality of coalition training and support efforts. In year three the Institute continued its learning orientation, working to improve training and technical assistance services to increase impact and coalition effectiveness. It also completed the following projects aimed at improving the quality of training:

- **Focused more on core competencies.** Two-day, four-day, and the National Coalition Academy trainings now have a pilot-tested set of Power Point presentations, participant guidebooks, instructor manuals and customized evaluation forms supporting the Strategic Prevention Framework. Many feel that the trainings' reputation for quality greatly improved over the last year because of this focus on the core competencies.
- **Developed an on-line referral system** for Drug-Free Community project officers to provide technical assistance referrals and receive feedback and summary reports from the Institute.
- **Advanced 50 trainers through the Institute's Training of Trainers training** to become certified coalition trainers.
- **Continued the partnership with the National Guard** to offer a certification training series where coalitions participate in a year-long training process through four

individual, week-long training sessions. The trainings were offered at National Guard training facilities throughout the United States. The National Guard absorbed most costs associated with the National Coalition Academy trainings, including housing, food, local transportation, materials and trainers.

- **Completed National Coalition Academy Pilot, and started additional National Coalition Academy cohorts.** Two additional cohorts have started the National Coalition Academy training process. Sixty coalitions have completed or are in the process of completing the National Coalition Academy training. Some staff and federal partners believe that this in-depth training “*took the field to a new level*” and put the Institute “*out front.*”
- **Built a new, improved training team.** Staff changes have resulted in a stronger training team that has been able to respond to the field in a way that “*fills the gaps*” and builds upon past lessons.

The increased quality of the trainings has an important secondary result including:

- **Increased public awareness of and demand for Institute trainings.** The trainings’ quality has become so good that individuals are now learning about the training through word-of-mouth.

People are getting to know that the training is available and that the info is going to be helpful to them. It takes time for people to understand what organizations have to offer and that it will be useful for them.

While the impact of these trainings is discussed in more detail in Section 3, it is important to note here that our evaluation suggests that there is a growing body of evidence to conclude that the Institute is making important progress towards **achieving its goal of increasing the percent of effective coalitions**. As the Institute’s Theory of Change suggests, “when a community coalition implements the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF), it is more likely to decrease rates of substance abuse over time.” Our evaluation indicates the Institute is making important progress towards **achieving the first step in this process**. The majority of coalitions described how they have either developed or revised some of the core competency products as a result of the Institute’s trainings. Many also described how they are using these competencies and products to make more strategic decisions in their coalition. See the below section on GPRA measures (page 15) and Section 3 for more details on the impact of the Institute trainings on coalitions.

Strategy 2: Improve coalition’s ability to identify and adopt tools, mechanisms, and measures to evaluate the creation and implementation of the SPF.

Strategy Two addresses the Institute’s effectiveness in increasing coalitions’ ability to identify and adopt instruments that would assist with evaluating the Strategic Prevention

Framework's implementation. The Institute addressed this strategy by distributing information to coalitions about how to evaluate the creation of the SPF. This included:

- **Developed and published several publications to aid coalition evaluation.** During 2004/2005, the Institute developed several publications, including an Evaluation Primer, and a quarterly, one-page *Research to Action* "fact sheet" that was e-mailed to all coalitions. The Institute also distributed tools through the Institute's website for coalitions to use to plan for local evaluation. All of these products are viewed as providing understandable and relevant evaluation information and have been very well received.

We've already done a 2nd printing [of the Evaluation Primer] because it's so popular. It's been flying off the shelves because people need evaluation and aren't as comfortable with it.

- **Produced *Research into Action*, a bimonthly publication.** These publications translated current substance abuse research into laypersons language and provided tips on how the coalitions could incorporate the information into their coalition work.
- **Selected and showcased effective coalitions.** During year three, the Institute selected 15 coalitions that demonstrated positive outcomes at reducing rates of substance abuse in their community. The coalitions had to demonstrate that they affected the four areas selected by ONDCP – reduction in use in the past 30 days, increased age of initiation, increased perception of harm associated with use and increased perception of disapproval of use by parents. The Institute also made necessary changes to the "Got Outcomes" process in 2004/2005 which significantly improved this selection process.

[We've been] making some changes from Year 1 & 2, and are getting better applicants than in previous years.

Strategy 3: Adopt and disseminate practical information about evidence-based policies, practices and programs and assist coalitions with their selection and implementation.

Many of the activities developed to achieve strategy two (Improve coalition's ability to identify and adopt tools, mechanisms, and measures to evaluate the creation and implementation of the SPF.) support strategy three as well. Efforts to communicate and share information with coalitions about coalition development (like the upgraded website) have also been used to inform coalitions about evidence-based policies, practices and programs. In addition, the following activities were planned for and accomplished during this period of time:

- **Translated key Institute products into Spanish;** however, they did not fully complete the development of the Spanish language area of the Institute's website.
- **Produced Four *Research into Action* one-page, quarterly publications.** These publications translated current substance abuse research into laypersons language and provided tips on how the coalitions could incorporate the information into their coalition work.
- **Produced *Coalitions Online*, a weekly electronic newsletter.** This newsletter provided coalitions with practical, timely information about the substance abuse field, including the latest research.

What else did the Institute accomplish in 2004/2005?

We were interested in identifying if the Institute accomplished other goals or activities during this time period that were not directly linked to the three core strategies, but were critical to the work of the Institute. Institute staff members were able to identify several additional accomplishments including:

- **Developed a strong staff team.** The staff stated the Institute continued to have a strong, knowledgeable, experienced staff that worked well together. The addition of some additional key staff helped to strengthen the Institute's infrastructure, contributing to the Institute's success in 2004/2005:

[The] Institute just has some really talented and intelligent people that come from the field, so that they bring not just the talent but some real deal experience which brings a level of credibility that you might not have otherwise.

- **Stayed focused on main goals.** Staying focused on the three core strategies and targeted outcomes has been a critical component of the Institute's success during this time period. As staff noted, the Institute "*stuck to what they had set out to do and built on what they learned.*"
- **Became more established, respected, and "in demand".** Through its expanded communication and training efforts, and the growing recognition of the expertise housed within, the Institute became a much more established and respected entity during 2004/2005. As one staff member noted:

[There's been an increase in] the number of calls we got from people seeking us out and when we travel, more people knowing who the Institute was and its relationship to CADCA as part of the organization.

- **Continued to respond to coalitions' needs through the use of surveys and evaluations.** The Institute continued to seek and use feedback from coalitions in order to adjust and improve its training offerings. This continuous improvement orientation has helped the Institute effectively meet the shifting needs of the field.

- **Became more user-friendly.**

[The] website is more user-friendly and visible. [We're] constantly making sure that we have documents and presentations available electronically for people to access. Year three was the best year so far, it really came together well.

- **Built more solid relationships with all partners and the field.**

Our allegiance is not exclusively our federal partners; it's also to the field, both member organizations and non-members. I think that is recognized and has lent itself to the success in the past year.

- **Improved partnership with the National Guard.** This relationship was critical in increasing the Institute's scale and scope. The Institute could not have increased its number of trainings without the support of the National Guard.

What did the partners think of the Institute's accomplishments during 2004/2005?

Overall, the federal partners felt that one of the Institute's biggest accomplishments during this period was the development of useful publications for the coalitions. They specifically mentioned the *Evaluation Primer* and the *Handbook for Community Coalitions*. One federal partner stated the *Evaluation Primer* was the best evaluation publication they had ever seen.

Other significant accomplishments identified by individual federal partners included:

- **Successfully aligned its work with the work of the federal partners.**

They also did a really nice job, I thought that year, of aligning their work with the message and documents and the pieces that we produce from the program side. We made great strides that year in all speaking the same language.

- **Effectively served the needs of new and established coalitions.** The Institute provided quality training to less seasoned coalitions, while also providing more in-depth training for older coalitions.
- **Created a good technical assistance system. The system has allowed both the federal partners and the Institute to effectively refer coalitions for technical assistance.**

They put together a really nice electronic system for referring DFC grantees and getting them brief technical assistance from the government program officers over at [a government organization]

- **Continued to be a good partner, despite the political tension between some groups.** The Institute was able to rise above the tension and forge ahead with its purpose and work.

Do staff and federal partners feel the Institute is making progress towards meeting its GPRA Measures?

Overall, both the staff and federal partners felt the Institute was meeting its GPRA measures. Generally, the staff felt the GPRA measures were being met because the Institute is 1) now known for its training, 2) training participation is high, and 3) tracking systems are in place to effectively measure the outcomes.

We are extending ourselves to everywhere coalitions are in order to achieve that goal, we're increasing the number of regionals by exploring numerous options for providing regionals, so not just solely relying on our current funders in order to provide regionals, but we're looking at numerous ways in order to provide opportunities for training to be accessed, and the Academy process as well.

Below is a detailed description of staff and partners' perceptions of the Institute's progress on the four measures and our assessment of the progress to date.

Measure 1: To increase the percentage of DFC coalitions who received training or technical assistance from the Coalition Institute. It is important to note that because 2005 was the first year for this measure, reported data reflects baseline levels. In addition, although this GPRA includes both training and technical assistance, TA is difficult to accurately track. The current agreement around this measure allows the Institute to only report on the training provided.

- **Staff and Partner's Perceptions of Institute's Progress.** Both staff and partners report that the Institute is making excellent progress at reaching DFC coalitions through their trainings and TA. In many ways the strategic emphasis on DFC coalitions through targeted marketing and communications has been helpful. As one staff member reported:

[We are] purposefully targeting DFC coalitions. We use blast emails, and promote trainings with project officers.

- **What the Data Shows:** 259 of the 714 Drug-Free Community coalitions received training from the Institute in 2004/2005. Thus, during this reporting period, the Institute **trained approximately 36% of the DFC coalitions.**

Potential Challenges with this GPRA measure. To some extent, the Institute may have been too successful during this baseline year, establishing a scope of reach that may be difficult to increase at projected levels for several reasons. According to

our interviews with coalitions, only a minority of them are “repeat trainees”: only 25% of coalitions interviewed this year attended more than one training in 2004/2005; less than 5% attended a training in previous years. Unless the Institute expands its training approach, primarily by offering more advanced trainings that could attract these repeat coalitions, it may be difficult to achieve this GPRA measure, simply due to the fact that the total number of new coalitions available to train decreases over time, while the number that needs to be reached must increase. The table below well illustrates this point. It was designed based upon the most conservative assumptions (i.e., no DFC grantee will be a repeat trainee in subsequent years; GPRA measures assume a 15% increase each year). As this table illustrates, if the Institute wishes to achieve its goal of increasing the percent of DFC coalitions served each year it must either: a) attract more repeat customers; or b) attract a larger percentage of DFC coalitions to the trainings (by 2006/2007 our calculations suggest that approximately 70% of all available [not yet trained by the Institute] DFC coalitions must participate in an Institute training in order to achieve the GPRA measure); or c) have a smaller % increase goal for this measure. (Please note that the numbers below are estimates. The number of DFC coalitions [new and old] was based upon information found on the DFC website. However, given the shifting nature of that status, these numbers may not be accurate).

Table 1: Projections of DFC Training Participants

	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007
Number of DFC coalitions¹	714 (227 were new grantees)	716 (176 are new grantees)	715 (201 are new grantees) ²
Actual number trained by Institute	259 (36%)		
Number available to train		176 (new) <u>+346 (old)³</u> 522 available	201 (new) <u>+298 (old)⁵</u> 499 available
Targeted % increase in DFC coalitions reached		15% ⁴	15%
Targeted number of coalitions that need to be reached		299 coalitions	343 coalitions
Percent of available coalitions that must be trained		57% of all available (522) coalitions	69% of all coalitions available (499)

1. Numbers for 04/05 and 05/06 taken from Drug Free Communities Web Site. 06/07 is an estimation based on average of previous years.
2. Estimation of new grantees based on average of previous years.
3. Estimation of old grantees available for training computed by taking 64% (the percentage of grantees in previous year who did NOT participate in training) of the total number of old grantees (540). This percentage was used as a conservative estimate, allowing us to assume that no grantees would be repeat trainees.
4. This is the percent increase you estimated for economically disadvantaged coalitions in this time period.
5. This estimation was computed by taking 58% (the percentage of grantees in previous year who did NOT participate in training) of the old grantees (514)

Measure 2: To increase the percentage of coalitions who received training from the Institute that represent economically disadvantaged communities.

- **Staff and Partner’s Perceptions of Institute’s Progress.** Overall staff and partners feel the Institute is making great progress towards this goal. The focus on serving diverse, economically disadvantaged communities has been a particular advantage in this area:

We have trainings specialized for certain groups, including information specialized for Native Americans and documents in Spanish. We are also trying to make sure there’s diversity in the Academy training.

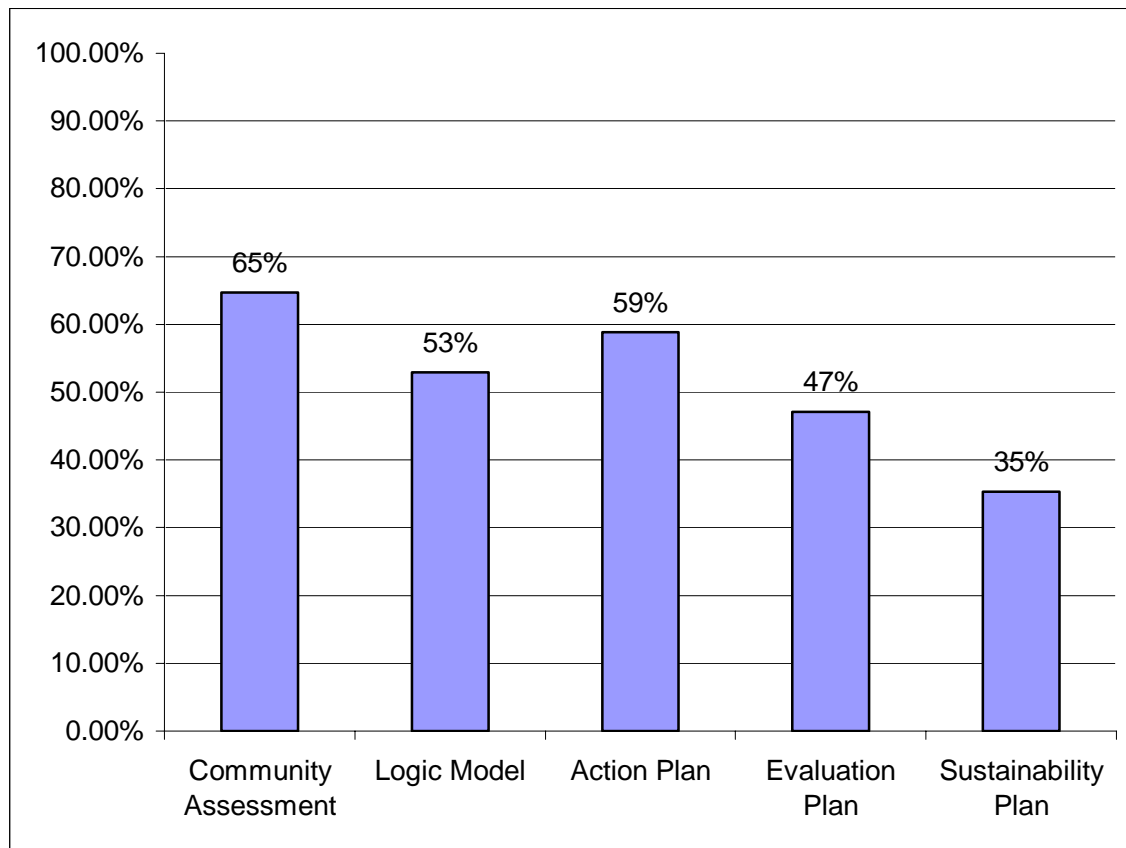
- **What the Data Shows:** **155 economically disadvantaged coalitions received training from the Institute in 2004/2005.** This number well exceeds the GPRA target of 99 economically disadvantaged coalitions in 2004/2005 and represents a 74% increase from 2003/2004.

Measure 3: To increase the percentage of coalitions who attend the Coalition Institute Academy Trainings who develop at least four or more of the five key products.

- **Staff and Partner’s Perceptions of Institute’s Progress.** Overall, staff and partners believe that the Academy training is well designed to achieve this goal:
- **What the Data Shows:** It is important to note that this year is baseline year for this measure. It is also important to note that because the first Academy cohort had not completed its training by the end of FY 2005, it is not possible to evaluate this GPRA using actual Academy data. For that reason, we examine this GRPA measure using the data from all of the coalitions we interviewed to illustrate that there are multiple ways to operationalize this measure. This is largely due to the fact that the Institute attracts two distinct groups of coalitions to its trainings: a) those who have already developed some version of a key product prior to the training; and b) those who do not yet have a product developed. For example, in the 35 coalitions sampled for this

evaluation, 85% had already developed at least one of the core products prior to attending a training¹ (See Figure 2 for the percentage of coalitions reporting they had each core product prior to training). As this Figure illustrates, the majority reported having a community assessment and action plan developed prior to attending an Institute’s training. This is likely the result of the increased requirements funders are placing on coalitions in their grant applications. For example, the majority of the coalitions who had at least one product prior to the training were DFC coalitions. These coalitions noted that they had developed these products as part of the DFC grant application process.

Figure 2: Percent of Coalition with Each Key Product Prior to Training

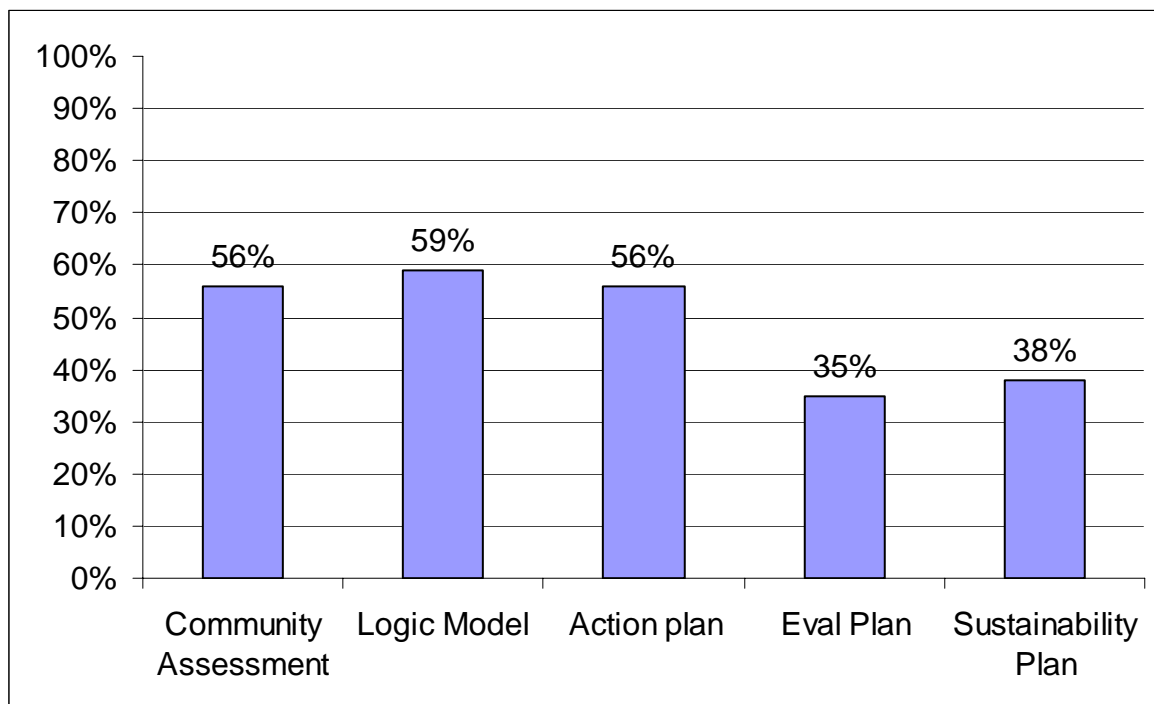


Thus, for some coalitions, a measure of the Institute’s impact in relation to this GPRA goal is whether or not they **revised** their current core product to integrate what they learned in the training. For other coalitions, it is whether or not they **developed** – for the first time – this core product. As a result, there are different approaches the Institute can take for tracking this GPRA measure and as the following section illustrates, depending upon which approach the Institute selects, a different story emerges. We illustrate three different approaches for tracking this GPRA measure below.

¹ Of course, this does not imply that the quality of these products represented the competencies embedded within the SPF.

- Approach 1: Assess the percentage of coalitions that have developed or enhanced their core products as a result of Institute training.** This approach tracks the overall impact of the Institute’s training on all coalitions who attend the training. To illustrate this approach, Figure 3 portrays the percent of coalitions that either developed or refined each core product as a result of the Institute’s trainings. As Figure 3 illustrates, the majority of coalitions whose members participated in an Institute training either developed or improved three out of the five key products as a result of the training. The training appears to have a significant impact on a coalition’s development or revision of a community assessment, logic model, or action plan. However, the Institute’s training appears to have less of an impact on the creation or revision of sustainability or evaluation plans. Only one-third of the coalitions reported creating or revising these products as a result of the Institute’s training.

Figure 3: Percent of Coalitions that Developed or Refined Each Key Product as a Result of the Institute's Training



- Approach 2: Assess the increase in the percentage of coalitions who have the core products in place.** Another approach to measuring this GPRA is to examine the actual increase in the number of coalitions who have the core competencies in place as a result of the trainings. Figures 4 and 5 illustrate this approach. Figure 4 shows the percentage of coalitions who reported having these core products in place both pre- and post-training. As this figure shows, 52% of the coalitions reported having logic models in place prior to the Institute’s

training; 90% report having them in place post training. Figure 5 shows the actual percent increase in the number of coalitions who have these core products as a result of the training. For example, according to this figure, the Institute's trainings produced a 38% increase in the number of coalitions who had a logic model. The trainings had a more modest impact on the development of sustainability plans: they produced a 15% increase in the percentage of coalitions with this product.

Figure 4: Percent of Coalitions with Key Products Pre- and Post-Institute Training.

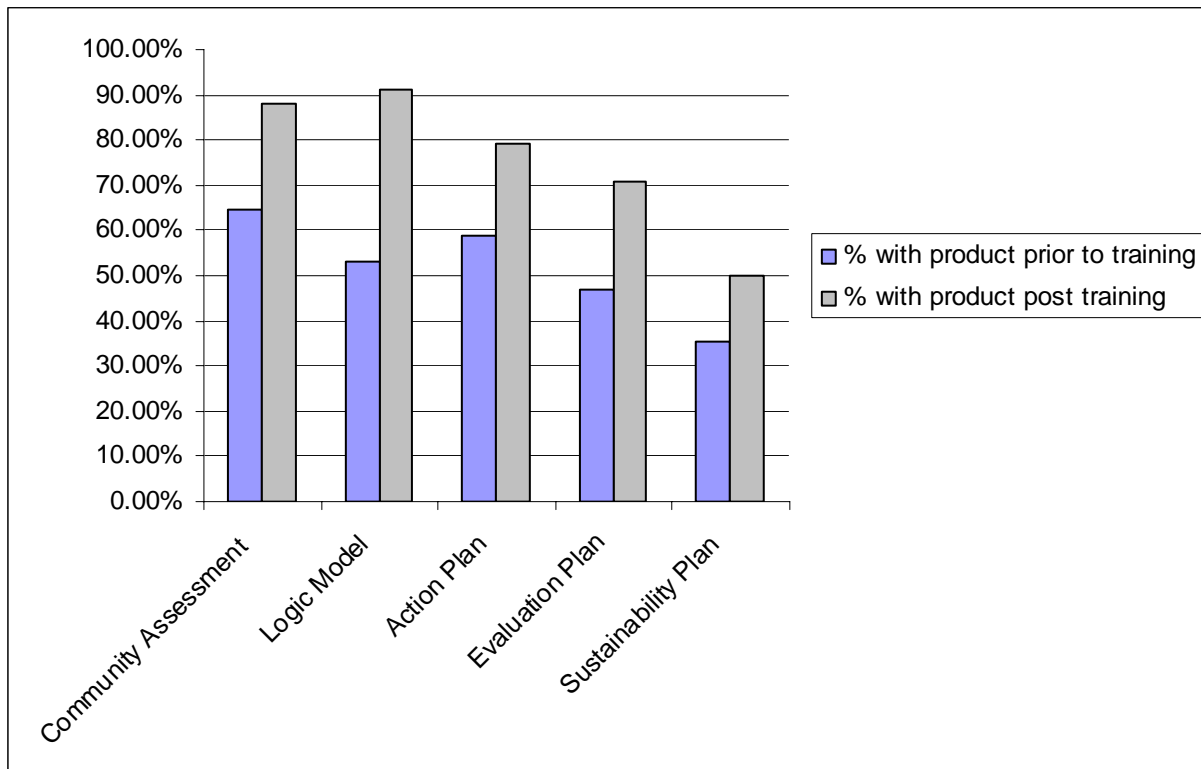
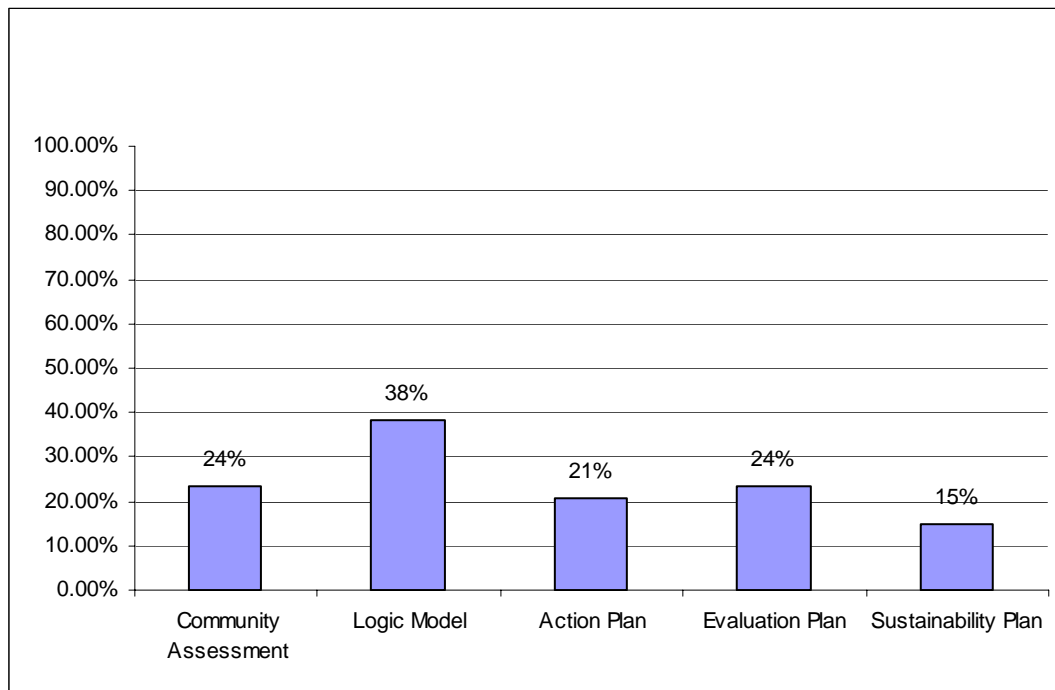


Figure 5: Percent Increase in Coalitions with Each Key Product as a Result of the Institute’s training



- Approach 3: Assess the unique impact on the development and revision of products.** In this approach, the two groups of coalitions (those with products prior to a training; those without) are examined separately to better understand and track the unique impact on the development and revision of core products. Figure 6 shows the percent of coalitions within both groups that were impacted by the training. As Figure 6 illustrates, the impact of the training on these two groups varies, depending upon which key product you examine. For example, 81% of all coalitions that did not have a logic model prior to the training developed a logic model as a result of what they learned in the training. Meanwhile, of those coalitions who already had a logic model prior to the training event, only 39% actually revised their model post-training. The pattern of impact on sustainability plans is quite different, however. As Figure 6 suggests, it appears that the Institute’s training has a greater impact on those coalitions who have already developed their sustainability plan prior to the training: 67% of these coalitions noted that they revised their plan as a result of what they learned at the training. On the other hand, only 23% of coalitions who attended the training without having a sustainability plan in place actually develop such a plan after the training.

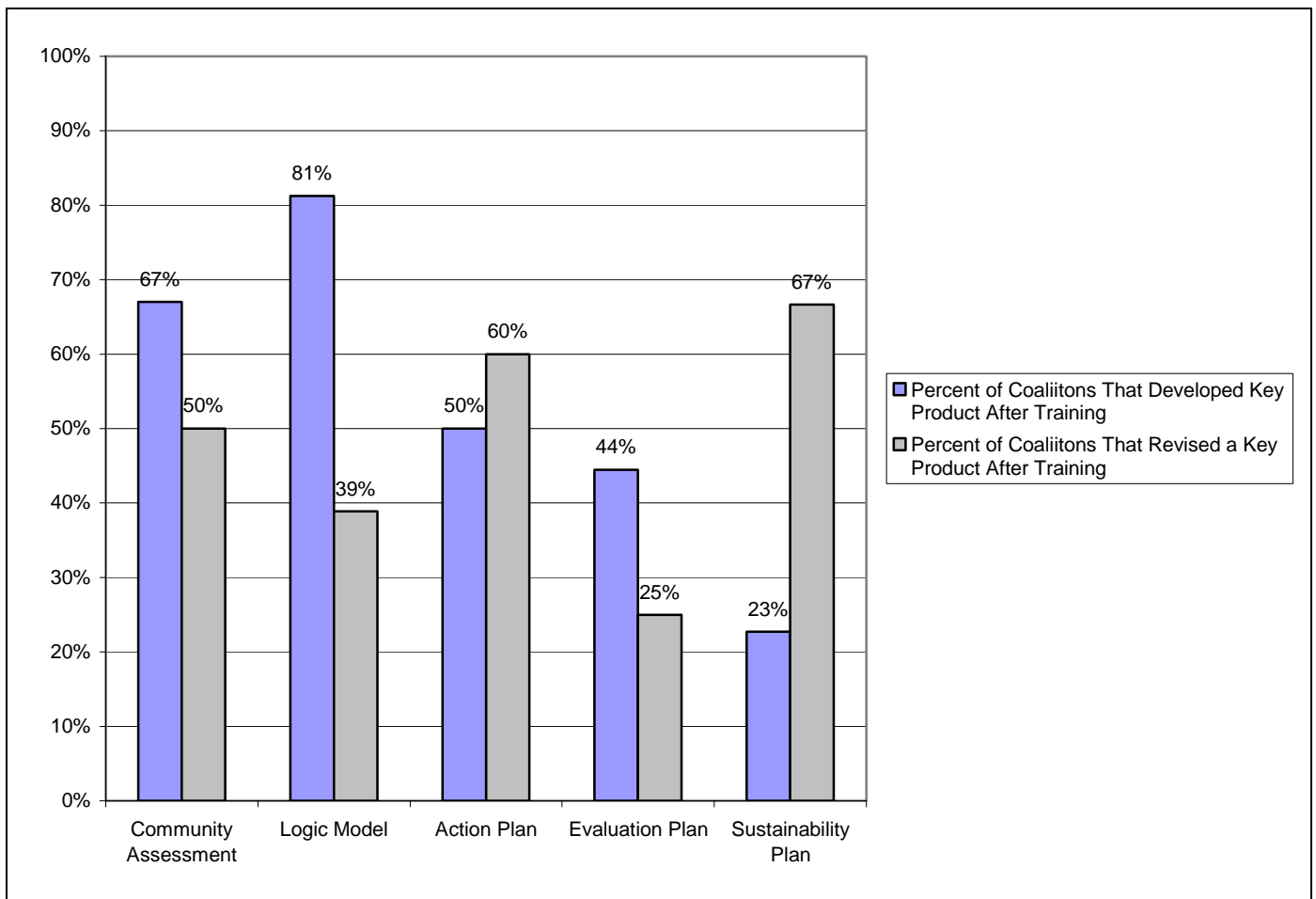
The exact reasons for these different patterns are not fully clear. However our interviews with staff and coalitions suggest the following explanations:

- Institute trainings dedicate a significant portion of time to logic models. This training is very well received and thus it is not surprising that this core

competency component has some of the largest impact on coalitions (by leading to the production or revision of a logic model).

- The evaluation and sustainability sections of the trainings are viewed as the most complex and difficult to understand by some trainers and coalitions. Some trainers felt that this material was difficult for coalitions to understand, not because the material was poorly written, but because the concepts themselves are difficult, and need to be presented more slowly. They suggested spending more time on these two sections. Interestingly, several of the coalitions stated that they found the sustainability and evaluation sections the toughest to grasp because the material was so new to them. This suggests that more time may need to be paid to these two subjects.
- A few coalitions continue to view evaluation and sustainability plans as unnecessary or peripheral to their real mission.

Figure 6: Percent of Coalitions that Developed or Revised their Key Products After an Institute’s Training



Measure 4: To increase the percent of coalitions who graduate from the Coalition Institute Academy who exhibit greater movement in the four core measures of the DFC Program as compared to coalitions of comparable classification who do not complete the Coalition Institute Academy.

- **Staff and Partner’s Perceptions of Institute’s Progress.** It should be noted that the Institute is not currently being held accountable for this measure at this time, so many staff and partners were not able to comment on this measure; however, one staff member felt the Institute needed to improve coalitions’ perceptions of what the trainings could do for them, i.e. make them more effective, to address this measure.

The graduation rate could be improved. It is an intense program, so the graduation rate is low. – They need to increase the perception of how important the training is, and getting the word out that “hey guys, the people who have graduated from our academies are this much more successful” Possibly tie the communications of success to funding, etc.

- **What the Data Shows.** Between 50-75% of Pilot and Academy training participants reported that they either developed or revised the core products as a result of the training. (Percentages vary, depending upon which core product you target, with logic model receiving the highest percentage and sustainability plan the lowest). Both training groups report using these products on a fairly regular basis.

What did not get done and why?

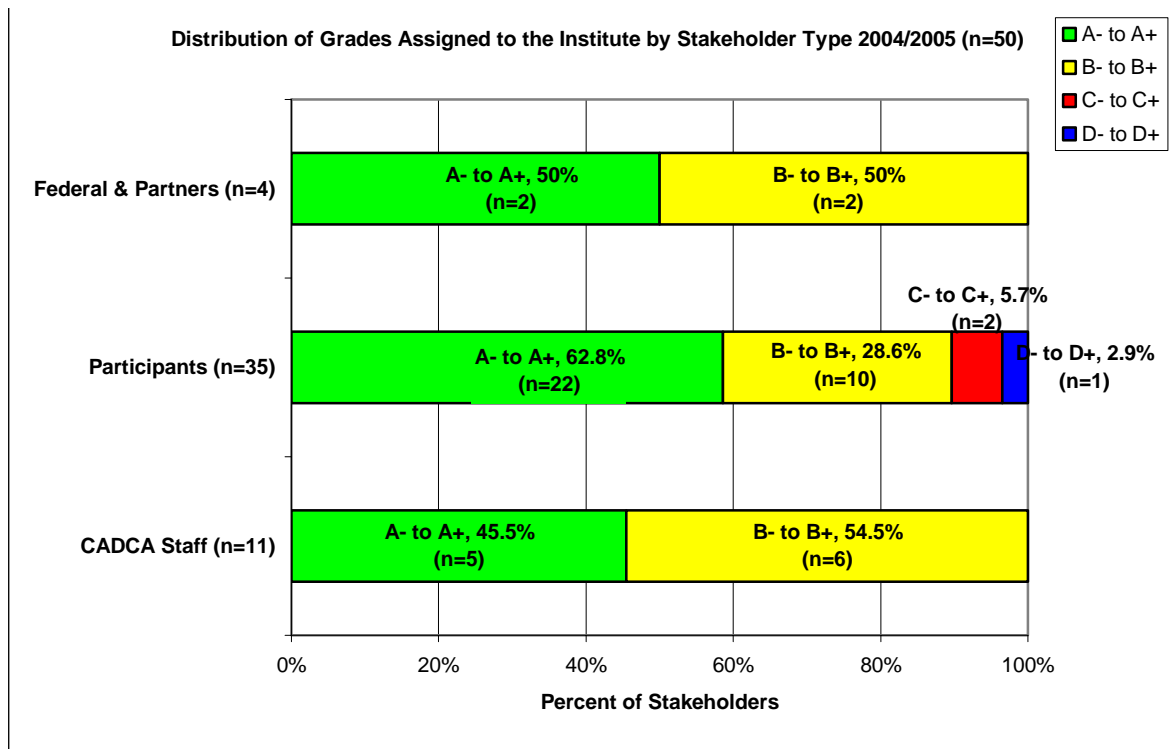
Overall, the Institute achieved almost all of the activities listed in its 2004/2005 work plan. (See Appendix 1.) Only four activities were not accomplished and all for reasons that were outside of the control of the Institute:

- **Did not hold a second Greenhouse training.** The Institute did not receive supplemental funding for this activity. However, the Institute shifted its activities to include more economically disadvantaged coalitions in the National Coalition Academy training and hosted three regional coalition trainings to accommodate this loss.
- **Did not hold monthly meeting with the DFCSPP project officers:** However, the Institute was able to meet quarterly with these officers. The Institute will take action in the future to schedule regular meetings with their federal partners.
- **Did not hold the Evaluation Research Committee meetings.** There was a lack of funding to support this meeting.
- **Did not hold the “Taking to Scale” meeting.** The contractor withdrew support for this meeting.

Section 2: What do key stakeholders think of the Institute and its work during this period of time?

When asked to grade the work of the Institute during 2004/2005, stakeholders gave an average of a **B+**, (higher than the B it received in 2003/2004). As Figure 7 illustrates, most stakeholders rated the Institute's performance higher this year than in 2003/2004. For example, 63% of the coalitions gave the Institute an "A" or "B" for this report year; only 43% did the previous year. As these figures show the quality and value of the Institute's work was greatly enhanced in 2004/2005 (See Figure 8 for last year's ratings). Given that coalition members gave the Institute a higher grade this year than last year, we thought it would be useful to compare the ratings given by participants from the different trainings included in this study (See Figure 9). We should note that these ratings should be interpreted with caution, given the small N that was available for each type of training. As Figure 9 illustrates, the 2-day Core Competency received the lowest grade overall. Participants described this training as too basic, given their coalitions' current needs and capacities. Interestingly, all 2-day Core Competency training interviewees that viewed the training as too basic were DFC coalitions.

Figure 7: Distribution of Grades Assigned to the Institute by Stakeholder Type



Note: Grades were not obtained from trainer interviews

Figure 8: Stakeholder Grades of CADCA Institute in 2003/2004

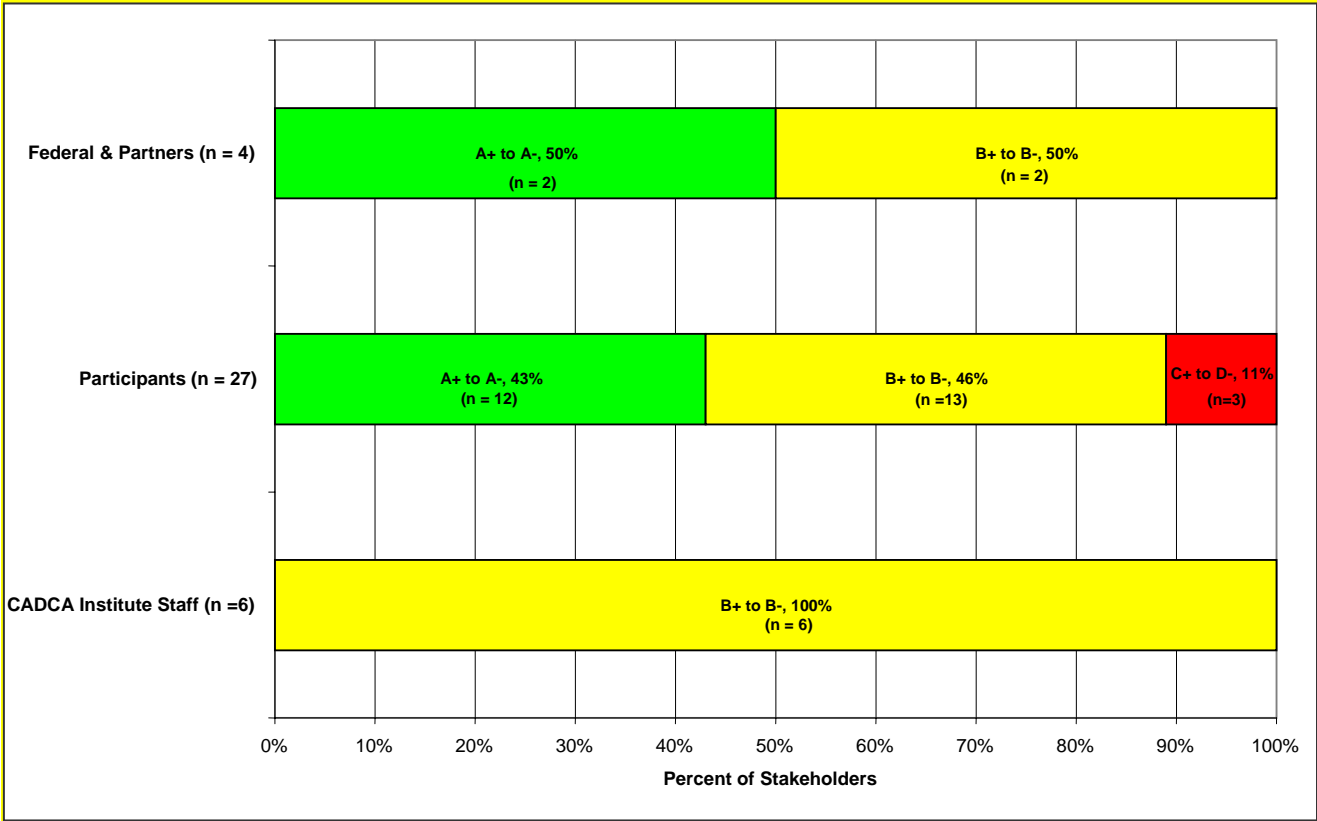
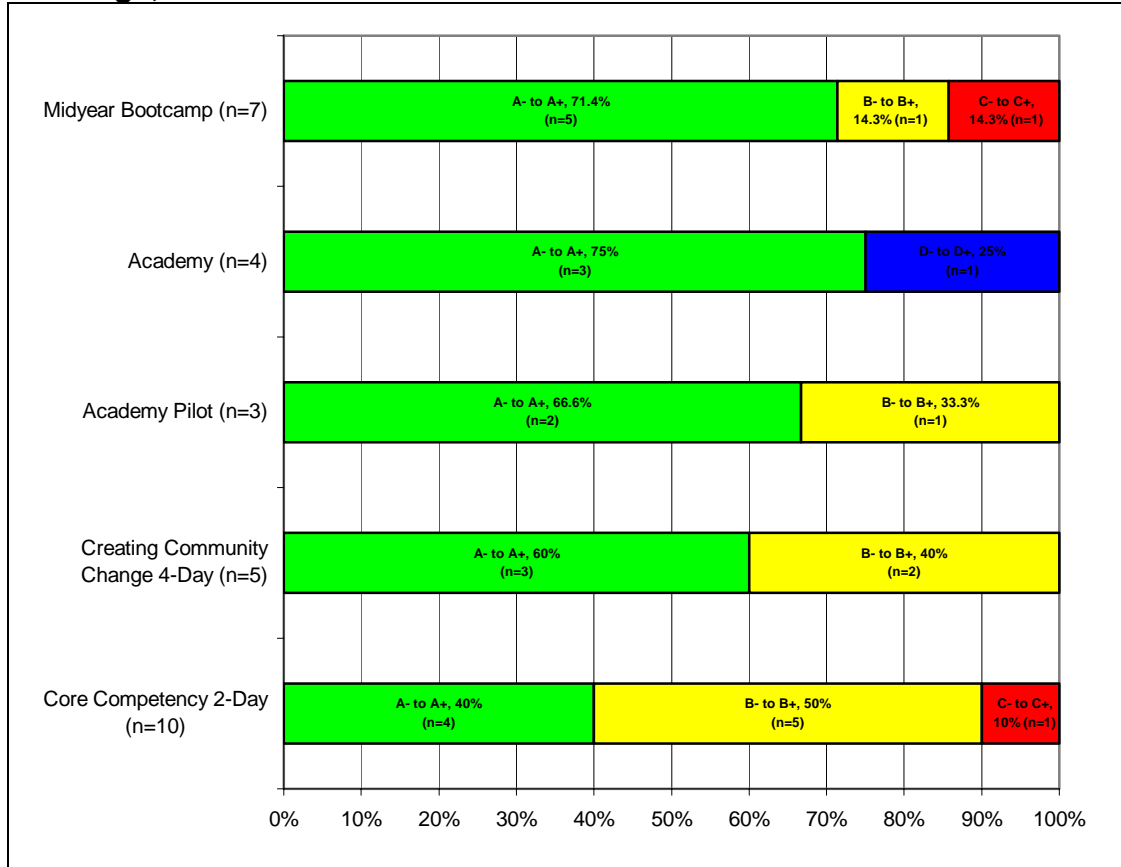


Figure 9: Distribution of Grades Assigned to the Institute Across Different Trainings, 2004/2005



What are the current strengths and potentials of the Institute?

Partners and Institute staff noted many strengths and capacities within the Institute that facilitated its ability to accomplish its goals during this reporting period. In fact, some noted that the Institute is the best it has ever been and its continued emphasis on growth and improvement has culminated in the creation of a very strong training entity. One staff member captured this sentiment well.

There is not an area that the Institute has not improved; the cumulative impact is that we're more efficient than we were. It has lent itself to the credibility, the genuineness and sense internally that we are successful, that we are making progress and meeting our goals, that we do have the opportunity to make a difference and make an impact. There is a sense here that the work has an outcome of some real impact. There is a continuous attention that all the leaders of the Institute have toward what they are doing...all of us are constantly looking at our piece and thinking about 'How can we make this thing better?' It stems from hiring employees that think this is more than just a job. It's inherent as part of the personalities that work here.

Within our interviews, we asked both partners and staff about the Institute's strengths. Many of the strengths mirror what we heard in 2003/2004 and fall into two categories: 1)

those that describe WHAT the Institute has become as an organizational entity (**Strong Organizational Characteristics**), and 2) those that describe HOW the Institute operates effectively (**Effective Processes and Strategies**). Interestingly, federal partners and staff noted many of the same organizational strengths.

Table 2: The Institute’s Strengths and Capacities in 2004/2005

STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a knowledgeable staff (same as 2003/2004) and stable senior leadership. <i>Staff is made up of people in roles they serve, and the talents they offer, with the vision and passion that they bring...and I'm speaking about every single staff person in the Institute, including the intern. (Institute staff)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has strong leadership. (same as 2003/2004) <i>She doesn't manage us, she leads us – a very important distinction. She knows how to provide us with enough support and enough leeway to get the job done. (Institute staff)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has greater goal clarity. (same as 2003/2004) The Institute has a clearer idea of what should be done, how to get there, and what role they play in this process. <i>The defining of who we are has been done. (Institute staff)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has more diverse funding. The Institute is developing a more diverse financial base, while continuing to obtain federal money.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has stronger organizational departments. Both the communications and research/evaluation units within the Institute made significant strides within this reporting period.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has strong support from CADCA. (same as 2003/2004)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has developed a national and international reputation. The Institute has become recognized as a leader in coalition building for all coalitions, not just Weed and Seed or DFC coalitions. This resulted in increased respect from their peers, a greater recognition from their federal partners, and an increased acknowledgement by the coalitions as “the” coalition trainer. The Institute has also become recognized internationally as a coalition resource. <i>The Institute is well-known in the field, and well respected.(Partner)</i>
EFFECTIVE PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built stronger relationships with multiple partners (same as 2003/2004) In a politically difficult year, the Institute was seen as rising above D.C. politics and “moving forward” to accomplish their goals. <i>Our relationships with federal partners as well as relationships in the field. We're unique in that we have genuine relationships at both levels, which has us situated in a very good place. (Institute staff)</i>

<p><i>They have become much more trusted within the federal partnerships, and they have become much more independent and I think that is why they are trusted more (Partner)</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Continued its strong consumer-based approach. The Institute has a strong connection to the coalition field, and avoids being “in the ivory tower of the training field.”</p> <p><i>[We] helped people develop coalitions without as much pain and heartache and mistakes as in the past (Institute staff)</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Enhanced its Technical Assistance System. The Institute invested in a needed tracking system for their technical assistance during this reporting period.</p> <p><i>[The Institute has] invested in some internal tracking systems – it’s invested in an electronic structure to track things for TA and for partners. (Federal partner)</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Developed a stronger training curriculum. Some feel that the Institute has really “owned” the SPF framework and this has facilitated the development of a stronger set of curriculum.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Kept training “fresh” and “on the cutting edge”. The Institute has a great ability to weave and convey new material into their trainings in an understandable manner for coalitions.</p> <p><i>They are on top of the cutting edge of things in the field, and are able to weave that into trainings and convey it well to the coalitions. (Partner)</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Developed some effective new trainers.</p> <p><i>They’ve developed a good cadre of trainers that have helped them meet the needs of the coalitions because they have a small staff. (partner)</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Maintained its continuous learning orientation and responsiveness to feedback. (same as 2003/2004)</p> <p><i>[They are willing] to learn while doing, especially when creating new processes for coalitions.(Federal partners)</i></p> <p><i>[The Institute is responsive to feedback, and when they do respond to it] they are not knee-jerk kind of people.” (Federal partners)</i></p>

What were the Institute’s greatest challenges (areas for improvement) according to staff and the Institute’s partners?

In addition to the Institute strengths, we also asked partners and Institute staff to identify key challenges the Institute faces. Again, many of the same challenges were mentioned by Institute staff and partners. Overall, these challenges fell into three categories: 1) Challenges with current **organizational operations**; 2) challenges with **partnerships**; and 3) Challenges with **trainings**. The below table highlights the specific dilemmas the Institute faced within each of these categories during 2004/2005.

Table 3: The Institute’s Greatest Challenges

Institute’s Greatest Challenges	Partner’s Perspective	Staff’s Perspective	Possible Resolutions
Organizational Operations			
<p>Significantly Understaffed. (same as 2003/2004) Both partners and staff reported that the Institute must increase its staff to address current and future work demands. Without expanded staff, some fear that the Institute will not be able to expand and take advantage of future opportunities. Others are concerned that the overworked staff might depart or the Institute’s reputation will suffer because things will inevitably fall through the cracks.</p>	<p><i>I’ve heard numerous times that coalitions call asking a question and they don’t hear back. I think people fall through the cracks on the telephone calls. I think sometimes they are overly focused on travel and in-person training and that the telephone help is the step-child, and that is when people are in a panic or in emergency mode and they really need to hear a voice... They need to hire more staff to man the phones.</i></p>	<p><i>There’s so much that we want to do, promise to do...we can’t get it done with the number of people that we have.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use current staff’s time wisely and efficiently. Make all meetings count. • Increase operational funding base to create pool of funds to hire more staff.
<p>Too reactive and poor planning (same as 2003/2004) Overall, the staff felt they had a good working environment; however, they continued to feel the Institute needs to improve project planning, including tracking project details to become better organized. Several staff felt there is currently not enough planning and preparing for upcoming projects.</p>	<p><i>They love coalitions and doing the work so much that they have a hard time stopping and doing leadership...They are not planning for their future the way they should. They are not spending the resources and time on it the way they should. They’ve still got internal structural issues they’ve got to address.</i></p> <p>Interestingly, most federal partners were unable to comment on the Institute’s timeliness and efficiency in its work, because most felt they had not worked on the project long enough to determine the progress;</p>	<p><i>If we continue to move at the level we’re moving, there is a hurricane, a tsunami that will be coming.</i></p> <p><i>Programs are growing quickly and we’re getting a lot more requests with a small staff. It allows things to occasionally fall through the cracks.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start to prioritize work more effectively and be more deliberate in project management timelines. • Materials need to be prepared and released in a more timely manner. • Create long term goals. Start to think 5-7 years ahead and start planning to meet those goals.

Institute's Greatest Challenges	Partner's Perspective	Staff's Perspective	Possible Resolutions
	however, one federal partner did feel the Institute had improved.		
<p>Limited use of technology for information and training dissemination. Some feel that the Institute underutilizes the power of technology in its office management and training program. With expanded use of technology, some feel the Institute could expand its reach and become more efficient.</p>	<p><i>I think it would be valid for them to really look at ways to accomplish what they accomplish using technology rather than having people travel to them and them traveling to people. For example they could use video teleconferencing and videos over the internet.</i></p>	<p><i>[We need to} increase our capacity on technology - for example, with the website.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use technology to expand various training methods (DVDs, and internet downloads). • Use technology for internal management of the office, including posting staff schedules electronically to keep everyone updated.
<p>Continued identity crisis. The Institute still struggles somewhat between its own identity and CADCA's identity. This identity crisis interferes with the Institute's ability to effectively communicate its own messages to coalitions. It also interferes with staff's ability to effectively market the Institute's services, and at times coalitions are confused about what communication they receive from different entities.</p>	<p><i>The struggle between whom the Institute is and who is CADCA is a hampering issue.</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes coalitions have a difficult time with the publications, because they are not sure if the communications are legitimate. They don't know who they are coming from. They call us and say, "why are they asking us to this, for example write your congressperson about a bill. They want to make sure the emails are not a hoax.</i></p>		
<p>Partnerships</p>			
<p>Too many diverse stakeholders to accommodate. (same as 2003/2004) The shifting and competing goals across partners,</p>	<p><i>They have many masters to please.</i></p>	<p><i>We need to use a lot of diplomacy often to get the work done.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to help partners understand the goals of the Institute and how their needs can and can not be meet within the

Institute's Greatest Challenges	Partner's Perspective	Staff's Perspective	Possible Resolutions
<p>combined with the lack of communication between partners continues to limit the Institute's opportunities.</p>			<p>Institute's current mission and work</p>
<p>Limited linkages with non-traditional partners (same as 2003/2004) Some staff and partners recognized that increasing the awareness of the Institute's work, and the services it provides may be an important mechanism for increased funding and scholarly pursuits.</p>	<p><i>They need to market what they do better. If they do that, then they should be able to enhance and diversify their funding base.</i></p> <p><i>They've got to look beyond the area of substance abuse only. Coalitions exist in many other forms and for many other reasons and I think they are doing a better job of embracing those potential friends, but I think there is room to grow there. The Institute is doing a good job of this, but they need to find a language to talk about this with their coalitions. When they do satellite broadcasts or trainings, one might explore what are the issues we care about and these other outcomes. Help them find a common ground, so they can share resources, increase sustainability.</i></p>	<p><i>They are supposed to publish papers and have not done this. They have not hooked into the right network – network with universities and researchers to figure out what research [and funding] opportunities are available.</i></p> <p><i>If they [National Guard] decide to not continue working with CADCA and the Institute - we use their sites – how would we be able to continue to provide an Academy? Sustainability is something we need to focus on</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase networking efforts within non-traditional partners including other organizations and funders that work with other health related coalitions. The Centers for Disease Control is one example of a funder who is committed to creating community-based solutions for health related issues. • Expand relationships with academics and universities to enhance the scholarly element within CADCA.
<p>Over reliance on CSG. Some view the business relationship with CSG as too interdependent. For example, some think the Institute's reliance on CSG inhibits its ability to critique curriculum materials. Some are concerned that having CSG create so many of the training curriculums does not increase the Institute's capacity.</p>		<p><i>They craft the training materials, so we depend on them to get the materials to us.</i></p> <p><i>We are more dependent on CSG than we want to be, and this is particularly true because we were understaffed for a while, but [it is getting better].</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop expanded relationships with other consultants. • Become more directly involved in curriculum development because the Institute has more extensive knowledge of coalitions.

Institute’s Greatest Challenges	Partner’s Perspective	Staff’s Perspective	Possible Resolutions
<p>Lack of friends and critics to “bounce ideas off.” The Institute staff does not have the friends and critics they need for critical reflection. The Institute is charting a new path, and needs to expand its “circle of friends” to include people who will challenge them to think outside the box.</p>	<p><i>They don’t enjoy the friends/critics that they need. Jane does not have a leadership circle that she can go to bounce ideas off of. The same is true for CADCA too. They should make friends with the CDC or deeply experienced grassroots leaders who’ve been doing this work for 30 years. Jane and Gen. Dean do not get critical reflection in a safe place with their peers. They need more colleague advisors.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-configure the Scientific Advisory Panel to become a smaller Advisory Group.
<p>Trainings</p>			
<p>Risking training credibility and quality. Several staff, partners and coalitions noted that some trainers lack the skills and quality expected of an Institute trainer. There is some concern that this reduction in training quality may damage the Institute’s reputation as a training broker.</p>		<p><i>Some of the trainers are not good, and that reflects back on the Institute. If they had trainers on the Institute payroll, then they could have more control over the reputation that they are developing out there.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more selective in recruiting trainers in the future. • Do not use trainers until they have been certified by the Institute. Have high standards in this certification process. • Terminate relationships with ineffective trainers.
<p>Competing for trainings with “Beltway Bandits.” Boundaries are unclear about who should be training which coalitions in the states and so the Institute is losing its opportunity to train Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant grantees.</p>		<p><i>The Institute is competing with the beltway bandits to train coalitions in some states</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build better relationships with states to increase the Institute’s visibility and ability to train more coalitions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, federal partners and Institute/CADCA staff acknowledged that during 2004/2005 the Institute really solidified who they are, and where and how they want to move forward. The Institute also greatly improved its capacity to deliver important and relevant trainings to substance abuse coalitions, thus increasing its scale and scope. However, the Institute continues to struggle with a somewhat inefficient organizational infrastructure. Given this barrier, it is a compelling testament to the quality of the staff and the products produced and delivered by the Institute that despite these challenges most coalitions and Federal Partners believe that the Institute is a highly effective organization that is working towards accomplishing its mission.

Section 3: To what extent are the Institute's training and technical assistance efforts creating more effective coalitions?

"This coalition wouldn't exist without the CADCA Institute. If I hadn't gone to the CADCA conference I wouldn't have known how to create a coalition or even see the need for one. From them I got the ideas about who to model it after. Their information is really valuable." (training participant)

"Now we have a plan. We have a logic model. We have an action plan. We have the strategic plan. We have the resources, as far as people that you need to connect with and the community, not just stakeholders in order to not only financially support, but support policy wise for the coalition to continue to sustain and expand." (training participant)

The primary goal of the Institute is to make coalitions more effective at reducing the rate of substance abuse within their community. To examine the Institute's progress towards this goal, we asked coalitions to answer the following question: "Would you say your coalition is more effective as a result of the training?" (Yes or No). As Figure 10 illustrates, most coalitions believe that the coalition has made them more effective, with **84 % of all coalitions reporting that the training increased their effectiveness**. Coalitions that had neither a Weed & Seed or DFC status reported the strongest effect,

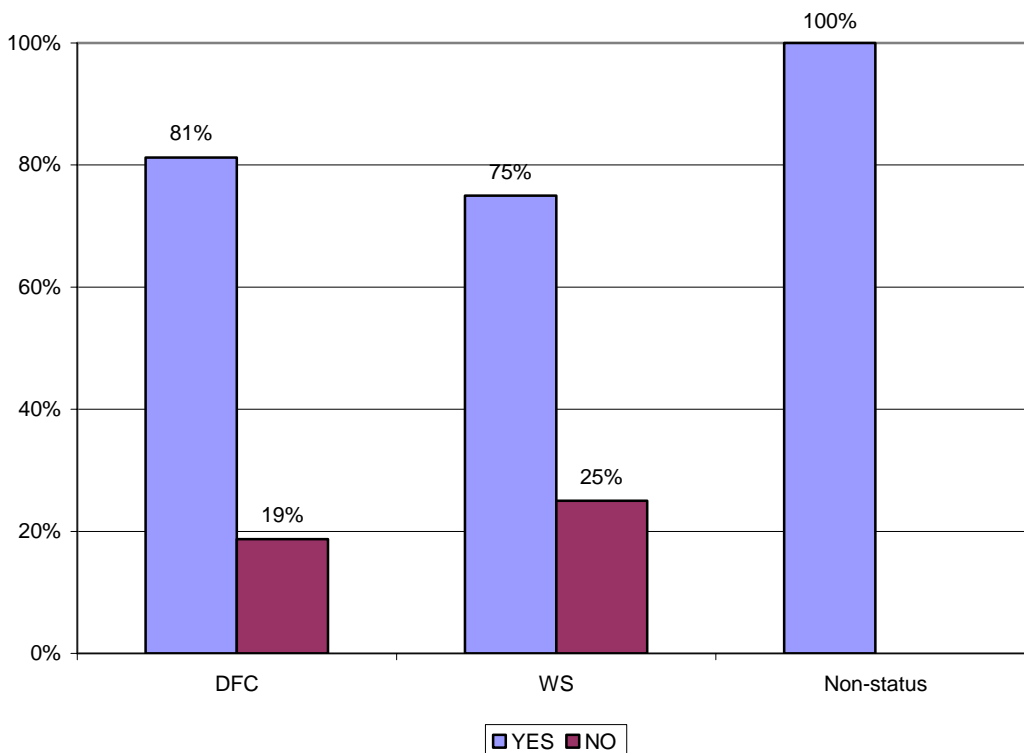
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Figure 10: Percent of Coalitions Reporting that the Institute’s Training Made Them More Effective



In many ways, the Institute's trainings are designed to build a coalition's effectiveness in several ways: 1) by increasing coalitions' development and use of the SPF core competencies; 2) by improving the decision-making processes used by coalitions; and 3) by increasing the general collaborative capacity of a coalition. To further understand the specific impacts of the Institute's trainings, we examined each of these strategies. In the following section, we report our findings on:

- The extent to which the training **increases the use of the SPF framework** within coalitions. This includes the extent to which coalitions have **developed** the core competency products (e.g., logic model, action plan) and are **using them to inform and guide the work of their coalition**.
- The extent to which the training has improved the coalitions' decision-making processes, particularly through the use of **more strategic decision making, better decision making, and more comprehensive thinking**.
- The extent to which the training **increases the general collaborative capacity** of a coalition. This includes the degree to which coalitions report having an increase in skills, knowledge, and relationships as a result of an Institute training.

It is important to note that we also evaluated the sustained impacts from the Institute's trainings by interviewing some Greenhouse training coalitions who attended their training 2 ½ years ago. This data is listed at the end of this section.

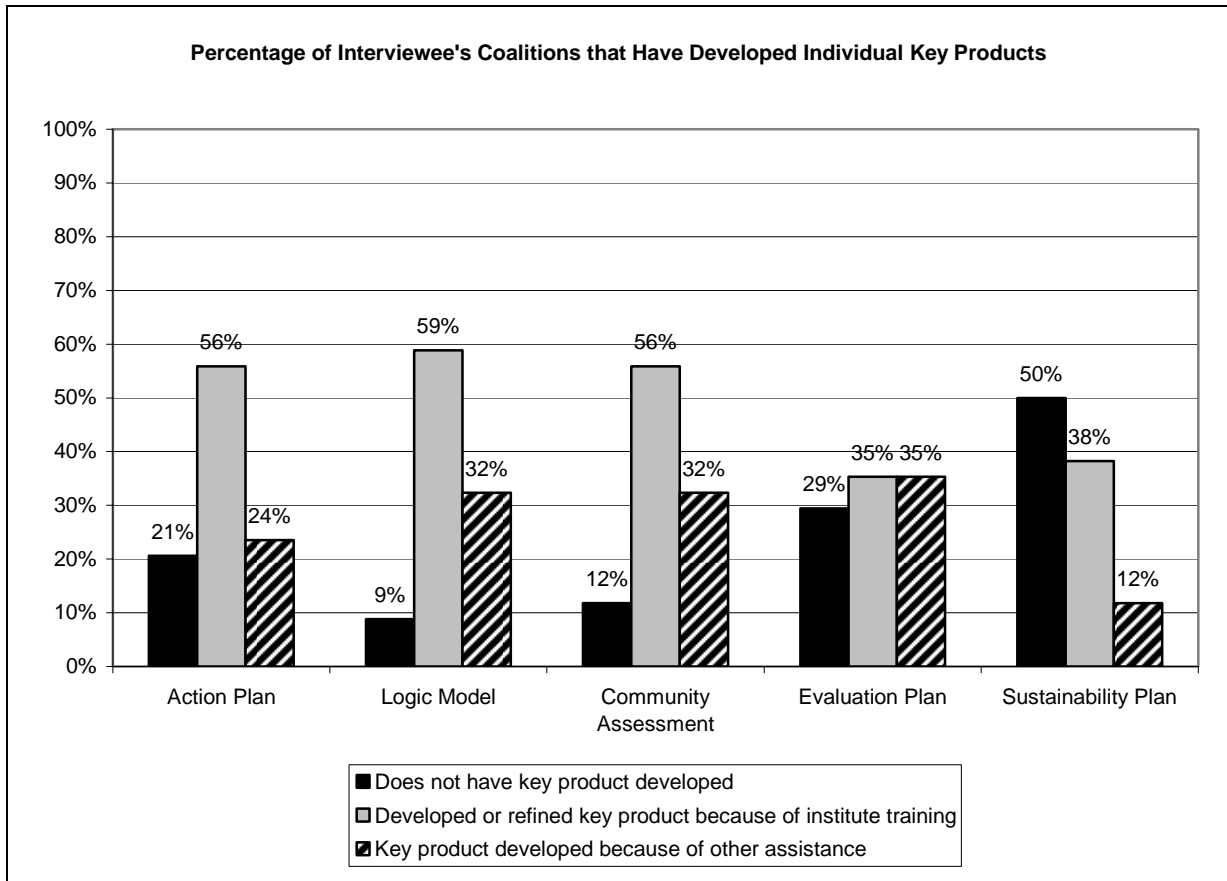
To what extent does the training increase the development and use of the SPF core competencies within coalitions?

The Institute's training is designed to increase the use of the SPF framework by coalitions in two important ways: 1) through the **development** of the core products associated with this framework; and 2) through the **use** of the core products in day-to-to-day decision-making. We discuss the impacts on these two areas below.

Development of Core Products

As we discussed above in the GPRA measures section on page 15, the majority of coalitions whose members participated in an Institute training either developed or improved three out of the five key products as a result of the training. The training appears to have a significant impact on a coalition's development or revision of a community assessment, logic model, or action plan. However, the Institute's training appears to have less of an impact on the creation or revision of sustainability or evaluation plans. Only one-third of the coalitions reported creating or revising these products as a result of the Institute's training. Figure 11 illustrates the percent of coalitions who a) reported developing or revising their key products due to the Institute's trainings; b) reported that the training had no impact on their existing core products; and c) reported not having the core products.

Figure 11: Current Status of Core Products in Coalitions and the Impact of the Institute’s Trainings on These Products.



As Figure 11 above suggests, for some coalitions the Institute’s training results in their development or revision of the core products. For other coalitions the training does not impact them in this way: they either continue to use the core product they had in existence prior to the training OR they do not develop the core product. To better understand the reasons behind these choices, we asked coalitions to describe why the training did or did not produce a new or revised core product for them. Table 4 below provides a detailed analysis of the coalitions’ reasons for developing, revising, or not developing each of the key products.

It is interesting to note that one of the primary reasons driving both the development and non-development of a key product is the extent to which a coalition views the product as important to its work. Some coalitions reported that they developed a product because the Institute’s training helped them understand its benefits for their coalition; others reported that they did not develop a key product because they did not understand the value for their coalition. This is especially true for evaluation and sustainability plans, with many coalitions stating that these plans were not critical to the work of their coalition. It is also important to note that all of the coalitions who did not revise their core products noted that their existing products were sufficient for their current efforts and noted that they did not “*learn anything new*” in the training concerning these products. Other key reasons coalitions gave for the choices they made surrounding the development and revision of key products included:

Key factors associated with the development of key products:

- **Training demonstrated the importance of the key product.** For some coalitions, the training helped them understand the importance of the key product and the knowledge that they would gain from using it. This prompted them to develop and emphasize the products within their coalition
- **Training provided a template and additional knowledge to move the product development forward.** For many coalitions, the training provided a description and examples of what core elements should be included in each of the products, thus providing a template for coalitions to use on their own..

It helped me understand what a community assessment was, the components, and it helped me articulate it to where we were able to bring persons to the table to have a conversation.

Key factors associated with the revision of key products:

- **Training provided additional knowledge.** The training provided knowledge about additional elements that should be included or better ways to make the product “more clear.”

We had done one [community assessment] before but the trainings validated what I already did, and it made it easier to continue doing it.

Key factors associated with not developing the key products:

- **Other priorities.** Some coalitions felt they needed to develop their coalition’s structure or make additional decisions before they could work on their key products.

We are doing this type of planning [sustainability] but we don’t have this formally set up, because as the needs arise, we start working on different things.

- **Membership instability.** Additional coalitions felt their membership was too unstable to complete the key product. For some, this meant the loss of key members, and thus prohibiting them from making decisions; for others, it meant not having enough members at varying times to successfully complete the product.

We tried to develop one [logic model] when we went through the training, but four of the five folks who attended left the coalition.

Table 4. Reasons Why Coalitions Developed, Revised, or Did Not Create Core Competency Products

	Reasons for Developing the Product	Reasons for Revising the Product	Reasons for Not Developing Product
Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training helped move action plan development forward. Training added to already established organizational knowledge and helped the coalitions move the processes further. • Training provided a template for action plan. Training provided an example template and the skills needed to develop an action plan that the coalitions could apply to their own situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training provided additional knowledge. Some coalitions used the knowledge they gained from the training to help revise their action plan. <p><i>We had most of the stuff; it just had to be revised. They have good tools. It was a timely thing to do too.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have not taken the time to develop an action plan. Other issues have become a priority, so the action plan has not been developed yet. • Purposely waiting to make coalition decisions, and then develop their action plan. <p><i>We made a decision that we're not going to begin a rush to glory, we're going to give ourselves a 24 month period</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership characteristics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership instability. Coalition lost many members and was unable to obtain a stable decision-making processes to move forward. • "Just volunteers." "We are just volunteers," and therefore do not have the time to develop an action plan. • Lack of member follow-through. Members have problems following-up with previous decisions about the action plan, and delaying the process.
Logic Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training provided additional knowledge needed. The training provided additional knowledge needed to fully complete the tool. <p><i>...we learned how to do one but we are now taking the time and the data and mapping and assessing...doing it in such a way that</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training provided additional knowledge. The Institute's training provided additional knowledge, so the coalition could enhance their previous logic model <p><i>We've had them in the past, but again, this one is more</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not see the need for a logic model. The interviewee felt a logic model would not have changed their coalition's direction, and did not see the need to develop one. <p><i>I don't think we ever finished ours...I don't think it would have changed anything we would have done through the training with or without one, because the problems would still exist.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalition membership instability. The loss of members has created an unstable decision-making body, and a possible "knowledge loss"

	Reasons for Developing the Product	Reasons for Revising the Product	Reasons for Not Developing Product
	<i>we're going to come out with a much cleaner and clearer logic model that will help us understand what outcomes we want</i>	<i>comprehensive than what we had previous</i>	within the coalition. <i>No one tried to develop one when we went through the training, but 4 of 5 folks who attended have left the coalition.</i>
Community Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training demonstrated the importance of the community assessment. The training helped coalitions understand why a community assessment was important, and why they needed to develop one. • Training provided additional knowledge. The training demonstrated community assessment components and helped them to plan what actions needed to be taken to develop their own community assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforced the importance of the community assessment, and prompted them to use and emphasize their community assessment data more. • Training provided additional knowledge. The training provided the coalitions with additional knowledge of what should be included in the community assessment, and therefore, prompted coalitions to revise theirs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used other organization's data. Other local organizations perform community assessments, and the coalition used their data. • Lack of staff. Lack of staff to develop a community assessment.
Evaluation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training demonstrated the importance of an evaluation plan. Provided an opportunity for those not familiar with an evaluation plan an opportunity to learn about its importance, and encourage its development by the coalition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided additional knowledge. Revised evaluation plan because of the knowledge they received from the Institute training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other coalition priorities. Coalition decided to make other coalition development duties a priority over the development of an evaluation plan. <i>The group decided that based on our needs assessment, in order to be around a couple of years from now, let's take our time and do this right," so the coalition is working to align current documents to reflect its new focus as a coalition.</i> • Lack of local evaluators. There is

	Reasons for Developing the Product	Reasons for Revising the Product	Reasons for Not Developing Product
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided additional skills. The Institute’s training provided interviewees additional skills needed to develop their evaluation plan. <i>We were given information about how to hold a self evaluation and even use the people at your table, like myself who has done program evaluation as a career, to be able to utilize those people at the table to do an internal evaluation.</i> 		<p>a lack of local evaluators to assist the coalition in developing a plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of staff. There is a lack of coalition staff to take the time to develop an evaluation plan • Evaluation progress slow. A couple coalitions have hired evaluators to create an evaluation plan, but they have not progressed because they are 1) waiting for additional funding to determine their outcomes or 2) the coalition has not determined their outcomes. • Use other tools instead of an evaluation plan. Interviewee did not see the value in developing an evaluation plan because they use their other core products to assess how they are progressing. <i>We look at our logic model and our strategic plan and examine the outcomes. There’s our evaluation plan.</i>
Sustainability Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding requirement. Needed to develop sustainability plan to receive their DFC funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further program examination. One coalition used the knowledge they gained from the Institute’s training to further examine the development and long-term feasibility of a mentoring program • Additional knowledge. Training provided additional knowledge to refine and enhance their current sustainability plan <i>They helped solidify it. They</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not seen as priority. Other aspects of coalition development have taken priority, so they have not developed a sustainability plan yet. • Lack of importance. The interviewee stated that they do not understand the importance of developing a sustainability plan. • Received other organizational assistance. Sustainability plan not viewed as a priority because other organizations are providing additional support to the coalition. • Variety funding sources. The coalition has a variety of funding sources, so sustainability plan did not seem necessary. If additional funding sources “dry up” then there will be a need for a sustainability plan

	Reasons for Developing the Product	Reasons for Revising the Product	Reasons for Not Developing Product
		<i>gave good ideas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of coalition, staff, and community input <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership instability. Membership instability makes it difficult to create a sustainability plan. • Lack of staff. Lack of staff to develop a sustainability plan • Lack of community commitment. Lack of commitment from community organizations to assist in developing a plan. • No knowledge on how to create a sustainability plan. Two interviewees stated they did not have one because they can not figure out how to create a sustainability plan. One stated that they had asked the Institute for help, but was told the Institute could not help them develop one.

Differential Impact on DFC and Weed & Seed Coalitions’ Production or Revision of Core Products

It is important to note that the Institute’s training appears to have somewhat different effects on the production or revision of core products by DFC and Weed & Seed coalitions. This is largely due to the fact that these two groups of coalitions, at least in 2004/2005, seem to differ in their pre-training core competency levels. Not surprisingly, DFC coalitions were far more likely to have had core products completed prior to the training than Weed & Seed Coalitions. Many DFC coalitions stated that they had to develop some of the core products as a DFC grant funding requirement. As a result, the impact of the Institute’s training on these two groups of coalitions varies. As Figures 12, 13, and 14 below illustrate, while DFC coalitions have, post-training, more of the core products in place overall, Weed & Seed coalitions report that the Institute’s training had a greater impact on their development or revision of these products. For example, overall 100% of the DFC coalitions reported having a logic model in place, though only 53% reported that their logic model was revised or developed due to Institute training. Meanwhile, 71% of the Weed & Seed coalitions report having a logic model in place, post training, though 100% stated that they have one due to the Institute’s training. Also, as noted before, the key product development rates for the evaluation and sustainability plans are low, with less than half of the Weed and Seed coalitions completing the products. This again suggests that more emphasis and attention needs to be given to these products during the Institute’s trainings.

Figure 12. Impact on Core Product Development in DFC Coalitions

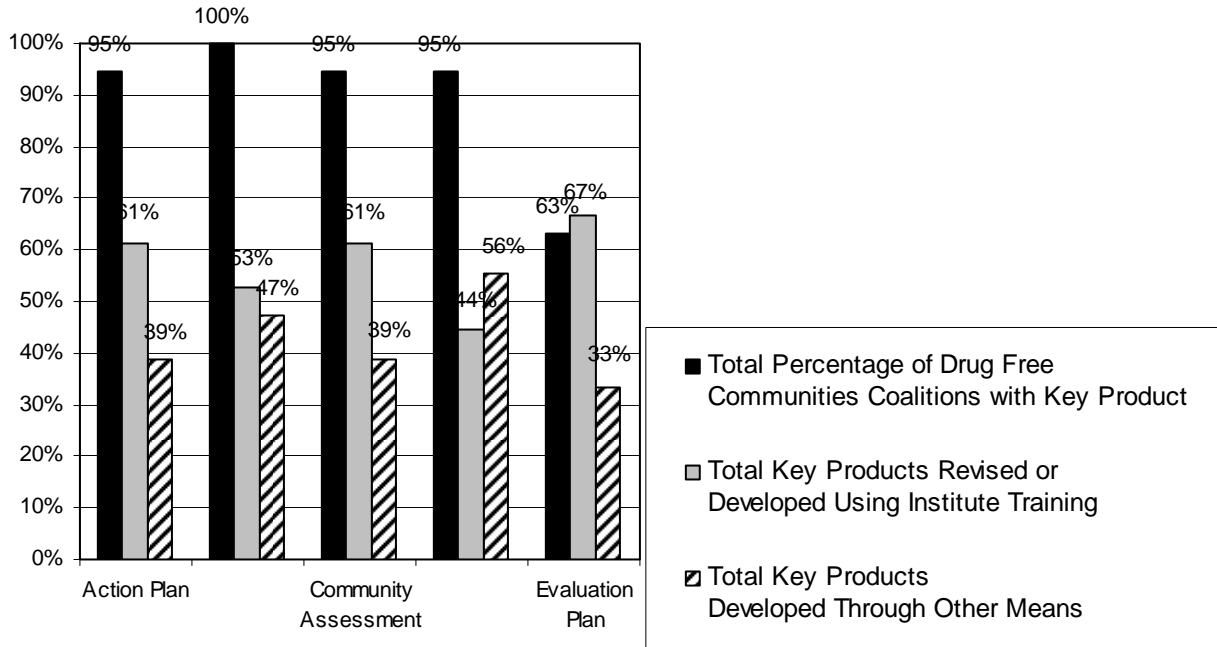


Figure 13: Impact on Core Product Development in Weed & Seed Coalitions

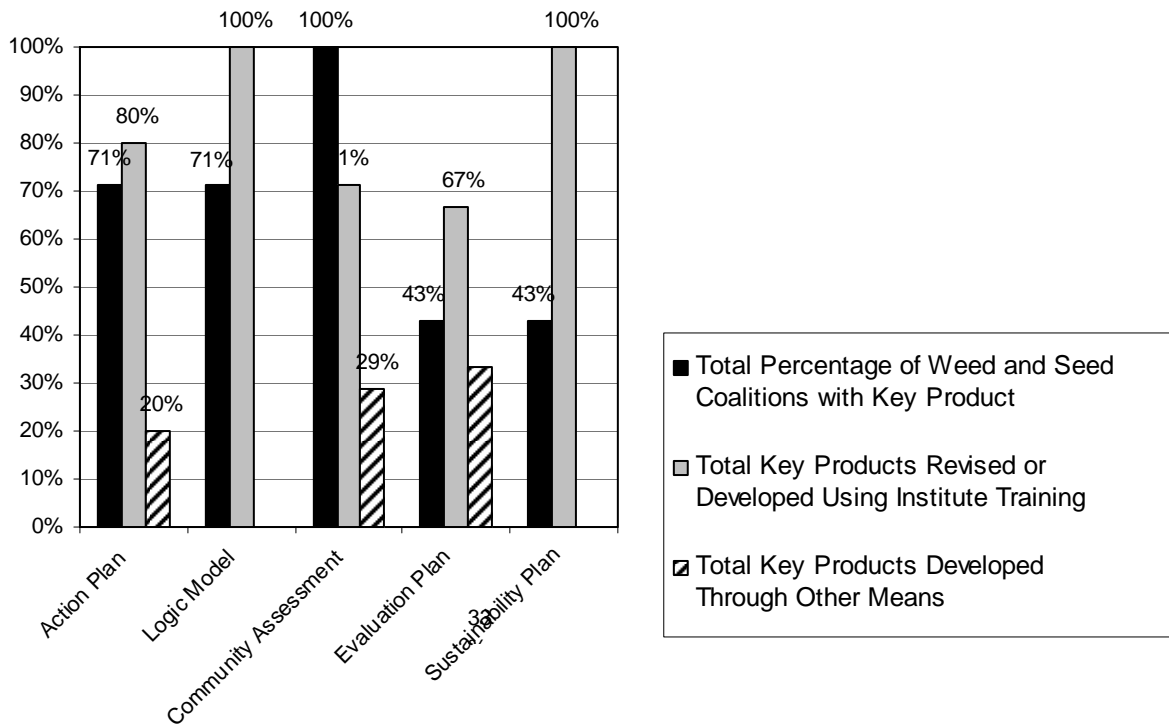
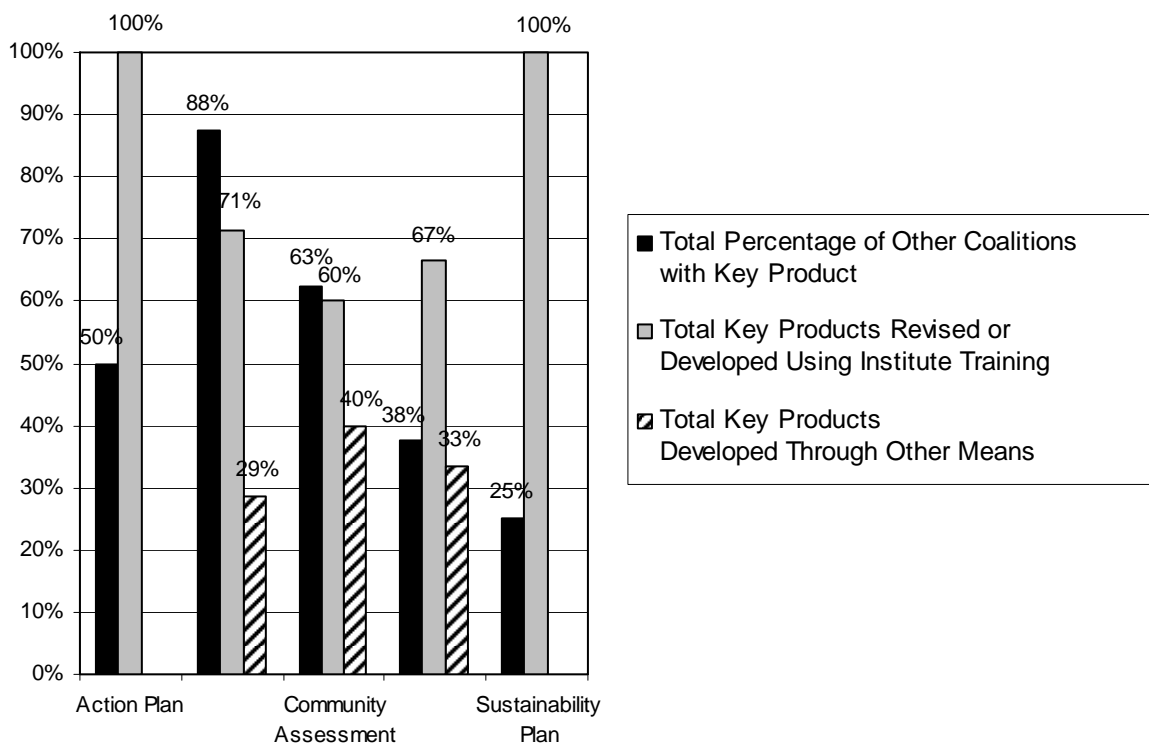


Figure 14: Impact on Core Product Development in Non-Status Coalitions



Note: This table includes coalitions that are considered either 1) economically disadvantaged, but not a W&S or 2) coalitions that have no federal funding status.

Use of Core Products

As the Institute’s theory of change suggests, “when a community coalition implements the SPF, it is more likely to decrease rates of substance abuse over time”. In other words, it is one thing to say you created a logic model; it is something else to say that you use this logic model to help your coalition think more strategically and make better choices. Thus, we also asked coalitions to describe if and how they use their core competency products. Specifically, we asked each coalition to rate (1=not at all, 5=always) how often their coalition “uses this product to inform the decisions of your coalition”.

As Figure 14 illustrates below, coalitions are using their core products on a fairly regular basis. Even some coalitions who reported not revising their core products (as a result of the training) noted that the Institute’s training shifted or expanded how they used their products in their day-to-day work. This suggests that a measure of the Institute’s impact on coalitions needs to consider both the development/revision of core products and the expanded use of these products. If training evaluations only consider the former (as GPRA does) they potentially underestimate the Institute’s impact on coalitions.

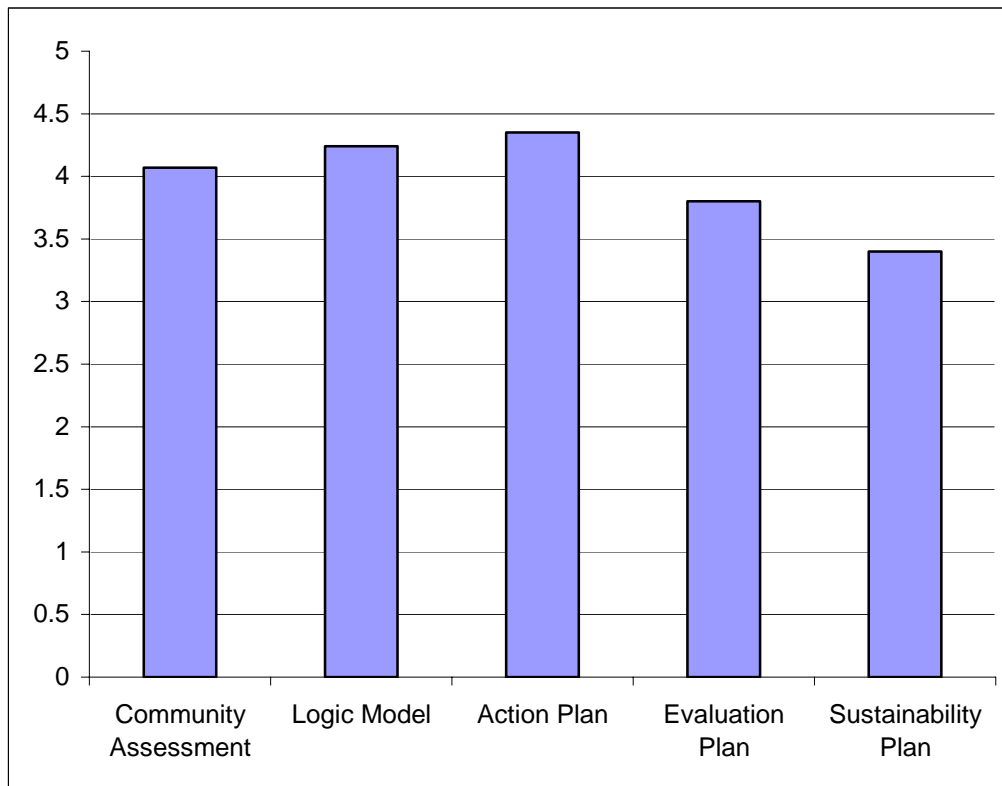
Overall, coalitions found their **action plan the most useful** in helping to inform their coalitions’ decisions and their **sustainability plan the least useful**. Many coalition interviewees stated that their action plan helped guide them in their work. “It keeps us on

track.” It was also seen as a working document that was constantly being revised as new activities were added, and thus more relevant to the “day-to-day” activities of the coalition. Community assessment processes were also seen as helping coalitions better meet the needs of their community:

“Now we understand that we need to hear from the community rather than just voicing our concerns as a coalition.

In contrast, the sustainability plan was not rated as highly because many coalition interviewees stated that they “sometimes” or “rarely” used their sustainability plans. For the coalitions who did use their sustainability plans often, they stated it was used to make programmatic or funding decisions. (It should be noted that no significant differences were found across the different trainings in regards to the use of these core products) .

Figure 15. Coalitions’ Assessments of How Often They Use Each Core Product to Inform Their Decision-making (1=not at all, 5=always)

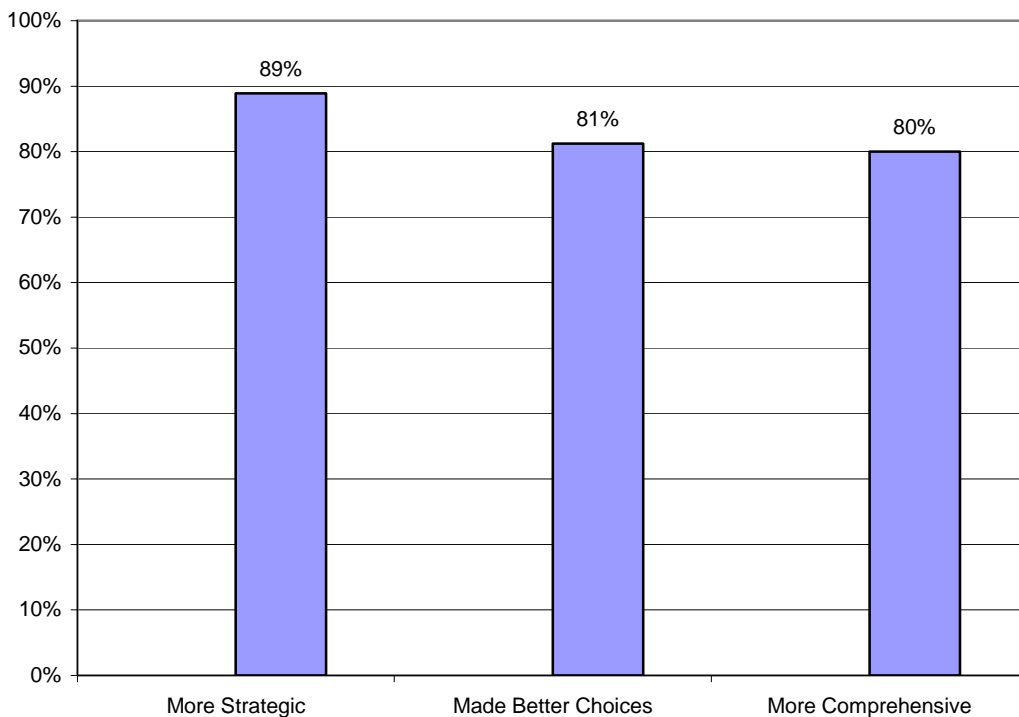


To what extent does the training increase the use of effective decision-making processes within coalitions?

To examine the extent to which the Institute’s trainings increased coalitions’ use of effective decision-making processes we asked coalitions if the trainings made them 1) think more strategically; 2) make better choices; and 3) think more comprehensively about

the problem of substance abuse in their community. Overall, as Figure 16 illustrates, coalitions reported that the Institute’s trainings had a significant impact on their use of more effective decision-making processes. Over 80% of all coalitions reported that the trainings made them more strategic, more comprehensive, and better decision-makers. We describe in more detail the specific impacts in each of these areas below.

Figure 16: Percent of Coalitions Reporting Being More Effective in Their Processes as a Result of the Institute’s Training.



Becoming More Strategic

Overall, our data indicates that the Institute’s trainings are having an impact on how strategic coalitions are in their decision-making processes, with more **coalitions reporting:**

- **Using more data and/or at least one of their key products (mostly community assessments and logic models) to assist in decision making.** Community data and input were the most commonly cited types of data coalitions reported using. For example, one coalition used local health department information about youth alcohol use in their community, along with their logic model to determine whether or not to sponsor an alcohol sting program in their community. Coalitions also described *“looking at their evaluation data more carefully”* and seeking more community data from various sources (e.g., police, schools).
- **Seeking and using more evidence-based information when making decisions.** When searching for evidence-based information, interviewees tended to use the following resources:

- SAMSHA website
- CADCA website
- State resources
- National organizations
- Additional federal websites (CSAP, Dept. of Justice, ONDCP)
- Email listserves

...some information we were given from the CADCA training helped us to be able to go on to different websites to be able to find evidenced based programs and interventions for us to be able to put into our coalition.

- **Being more intentional and focused in their actions.** Coalitions reported that they are now more intentional in their goal setting and think issues through more thoroughly before acting on them. This includes more carefully reviewing the programming they do, examining the effects of these efforts, and using this information to identify ways to improve coalition programming.

“I think we were able to strategically work with the school district a little better. Throughout the year we were able to implement a survey better. I went to this training the same time we were going through all of this, so I think it really helped direct our strategy towards what we were trying to accomplish and outcomes.”

“I think it helped us focus more. I know that I left with a renewed sense of how to direct the grant and felt more confident in working on it.”

- **Seeking/using resources more strategically.** Some coalitions described how they are using current resources more carefully and are more strategically seeking funding as a result of the training. Some noted that, due to the Institute’s training, they *“realized they had more resources within their community, and didn’t need to search for outside resources yet.”* Several coalitions have applied for grants as a result of the trainings; others have shifted how they approach grant writing

“We are now more strategic in our approach to writing the DFC grant. Before the training one person would write the grant. Now after training, we use a more collaborative approach.”

Many coalitions felt that because they had the core products, they were able to plan better and become more strategic in their decision-making process, and were no longer *“flying by the seat of our pants.”* Many reported that the trainings made them think about their current core products in a more strategic way. Some reported that the trainings made them *“more interested in becoming more quantifiable”*

“We are thinking more strategically because we are looking at the goals and mission, trying to plan ahead and making sure that those things are measurable and that impact can be made.”

Making Better Choices.

Through the use of data and their core products, coalitions felt more informed and able to make better choices about how to move their coalition forward.

It brings you back to what you need to do instead of getting caught up in the day-to-day. It makes sure that everything is effective as possible, and it just brings that home.

Becoming More Comprehensive

The Institute's training appears to help coalitions become more comprehensive in two important ways:

:

- **Having a more comprehensive understanding of their community's substance abuse problem.** This broader understanding encompassed considering a larger variety of community factors that might contribute to and solve the substance abuse problem. As one coalition noted, *"we no longer view it as just a treatment issue"*.
- **Expanding the scope of community groups and partners they engaged in their process.** Some coalitions described how the training increased the coalitions' awareness of the importance of working with the community, and actively encouraged them to seek out community input. One interviewee discussed how their coalition developed, as a result of the training, a "community committee" whose sole goal was to work more collaboratively with the community. .

We're reaching out to even more faith-based programs and institutions to assist not only with more youth buy-in, but more of a community buy-in with the coalition activities.

To what extent does the training increase the general capacity of a coalition?

In addition to fostering the core competencies and their strategic use, coalitions report that the Institute's training also enhanced their overall collaborative capacity in several important ways:

- **Expanded coalition's knowledge set.** Coalitions described how they are more knowledgeable about the prevention field and how to operate an effective coalition and are able to use this knowledge to move the work of their coalition forward:

"It equipped three of our members with the knowledge set and skill set that we didn't have prior to the training. It formed the basis of a strong grant proposal that we developed. It's provided us with an opportunity to think about how to move our coalition forward and how to keep us together."

Part of this expanded knowledge set came from the training content; some also came from talking to other coalitions at the training:

“Another key is being able to hear from other coalitions about what they are doing and how they are doing it and then having a measuring stick about where we are and where we could be.”

- **Expanded understanding of the role of a coalition.** Coalitions described how they now understand “the work of a coalition” and how they fit into the “big picture” of their community as a result of the Institute’s training. Some also described how they learned how to structure their coalition more effectively:

“We now know, some of the pitfalls...it kind of outlines some of the pitfalls some of the coalitions may go through from membership to community buy in.”

“Helped give us the business tools, and the legal tools, and the marketing tools that we needed in order to make the coalition successful.”

“brought more clarity to my position, because we were so new starting out, and it created a model of what it’s supposed to look like, how it’s supposed to be governed, who is supposed to assisting us, what is the coordinator’s role compared to the steering committee’s role, it just made me see what my role would be leadership wise.”

- **Expanded Relational Network.** Coalitions described how the Institute’s training helped them to expand their network in two important ways.
 - **In the trainings themselves** coalitions met other coalitions, key officials (e.g., local Congressman) and federal programming officers (e.g., SAMHSA rep). For some, these networking opportunities helped them gain resources.
 - **Back in their home community,** some coalitions used the information they gained to expand the membership of their coalition or create more strategic relationships with local organizations. As a result, some reported that they had increased community input into their coalition. For example, some talked about how they have now joined the Chamber of Commerce and have involved youth and business members more in their coalition.
- **Increased coalition member commitment to involvement in the coalition.** Some also described how the techniques they learned helped them to more effectively engage their coalition members in the “work of the coalition” and how coalition members are now more committed to the collective efforts.

“Fifteen people got involved in logic model development, including members who had not really been involved before.”

“Most coalition members are on the same page now, so we are able to move forward.”

- **Enhanced coalition’s role and visibility in the community.** Some coalitions described how the shifts they have made as a result of the trainings have made them “more relevant to the community.”

“When I went there, I was desperate. Now we have abundance. We’re still operating on shoestrings financially, but the coalition now, is much more sustainable because it is viewed as viable in the community. We’re relevant. People are seeking us out in terms of how we can help because we have a fresh, new approach and we’re not competing against other providers”

- **Increased outcome orientation.** Some coalitions reported that the training “raised the bar” for them, causing them to realize that they should have higher expectations for their work. Some even delayed grant writing efforts so they could be better positioned to achieve more substantial results.

Why did the trainings not increase the effectiveness of some coalitions?

Training participants who felt their coalitions had not become more effective as a result of the training attributed this lack of impact to one of three factors:

- The **training was too basic for their needs** and did not enhance their knowledge and skills enough to build their effectiveness.
- The **coalition was still in the “embryonic stage”** after the training and could not fully utilize the information provided; or
- The coalition **has not used their key products enough** to help them become more effective.

To what extent do the Institute’s partners think that the trainings are making coalitions more effective?

Partners are somewhat mixed in their views about the impact of the Institute’s trainings on coalition effectiveness. A couple federal partners thought the coalitions had “*definitely improved the quality*” of the reports submitted to them and they attribute this improvement to the Institute’s trainings. However, two partners were unsure if the coalitions were more effective. One stated it was too early to determine their effectiveness, while another had mixed feelings about the trainings. They felt the short-term trainings did not have any impact except making participants more aware of the issues; however, the longer trainings, like the National Coalition Academy, could potentially improve coalition effectiveness.

To what extent does the Institute’s trainings have a sustained impact on participating Coalitions?

The Institute was also interested in understanding the sustained impact of its training efforts on participating coalitions. To examine this question, we 1) interviewed six Greenhouse coalitions who attended their training 2 ½ years ago; and 2) asked recent trainees about the possibility of sustained effects.

Sustained Impact on Greenhouse Coalitions

A majority of the Greenhouse coalitions described how the Greenhouse training has had a sustained impact on their coalition, with the training primarily helping their coalition to become and stay more organized and focused in their efforts. One coalition indicated the training was instrumental in helping them to define their role as a coalition, while another stated the training helped them better understand risk factors and apply them to their community.

A majority of the Greenhouse coalitions also discussed how the training increased their understanding of the benefits of expanding into the community to effectively bring key stakeholders to the table. One coalition even mentioned that as a result of the Communities Mobilizing for Change model, they now have all 12 community sectors required in the Drug Free Communities Program.

Overall, the Greenhouse coalitions describe the following sustained impacts:

- **Increased focus and direction.**

[Before the training, the] coalition was just a group of people meeting because we wanted to do good for our community, and now we have some direction. We didn't have a logic model, we didn't have anything in place to help us move forward.

- **Increased connection to other coalitions in the state.** Having multiple Greenhouse training attendees from their state made them more connected to each other. The coalitions call each other for suggestions and ideas about program implementation.

- **Sustained member involvement.** In one coalition, all 5 members who attended the Greenhouse training were still involved with the coalition, a success directly attributed to the team bonding that occurred during the training and members obtaining goals.

- **Increased perception of capacity.** One coalition believed they can now prove their merit to funding organizations.

When we approach funding bodies or write grants, we can prove that we have capacity within the coalition to do what we say we're going to do.

- **Increased knowledge of risk factors and how to apply them.** One coalition described that after learning more information about the risk factors in youth substance abuse, many of their programs were designed to reduce those risk factors in their community.

- **Increased community presence and connections.** A few coalitions described how they were now a vital part of the community and others actively sought out their coalition to participate in activities and for information on substance abuse.

The strength that we developed and the new knowledge and enthusiasm for what we were doing...sent a message to the rest of the community that we're here and we're going to continue to be here with no plans to stop or leave,"

Potential for Sustained Impact

A large majority of the coalitions who participated in 2004/2005 trainings felt the training's impact would be sustained 1-2 years from now. Overall, they felt the competencies would be sustained because they were essential to coalition development and therefore would be used on a daily basis. However, a few coalitions worried that member turnover may decrease the training's impact because the member's knowledge would be lost. To combat the "knowledge loss," one coalition began to recruit new people and purposefully began to transfer coalition-building knowledge to them.

We are trying to get people, because if we do lose people, then the knowledge and dedication is all still there so it can sustain itself not just being based on people. It is part of the sustainability plan.

What did interviewees think about the Institute's technical assistance?

The Institute was also interested in learning what coalitions thought about the technical assistance they received from the Institute. It should be noted that only about half of the interviewees had used the Institute's technical assistance, and of those recipients, most were satisfied with the services they received.

[I liked being able to] speak candidly about specific things that involved my coalition and how to address those particular issues.

...Just picking up the telephone and knowing that I had somebody on the other line that could help me...or if they didn't have the answer, knew how to direct me [was helpful].

With the decreasing federal budget and budgets in general, the information that we've received from CADCA has helped us prepare ourselves so we can make decisions.

Their reasons for requesting technical assistance varied and included:

- Gaining information about upcoming national policy changes.
- Receiving assistance on developing a core product.
- Looking for an evidence-based database.
- Complaining about a training.

Although coalitions were greatly satisfied with the services they received, many felt the TA had no impact on their coalition. For those who noted an impact, they felt the technical assistance helped them to either make a knowledgeable decision or move further along with the development of one of their core competencies.

Some interviewees were not satisfied with the technical assistance. All of these recipients felt the Institute could provide a timelier response to their requests.

If they can't offer it in a timely manner then it's almost better not to offer it at all

Only a few suggestions were offered to improve the technical assistance services, and included:

- **Improve the response time to technical assistance requests.** Some coalitions reported waiting days or not receiving a response at all to their technical assistance request. Hiring more staff to help respond to technical assistance queries may address this problem.
- **Be more specific about the services they provide** so coalitions do not call and find out they are not able to be helped.
- **Do not assume all coalitions have access to computers.** Many coalitions, especially faith-based coalitions do not have internet access, so providing information on DVDs or CDs would be beneficial.

Section 4: To what extent are the coalitions satisfied with the Institute's training?

During 2004/2005, the Institute spent a lot of resources developing and improving its training content and approach and was interested in learning what the training participants felt about the newly developed trainings. Overall, training participants were satisfied with both the Institute's trainings' approach and content. They especially enjoyed the small group work, and found the training content informative and useful to their coalition's work. We describe these findings in more detail in the following sections.

Training Approach

Overall participants liked the Institute's training approach. In particular, they liked the **small group work**, because it provided them with a hands-on opportunity to hone their skills and an opportunity to discuss issues with other coalitions. Coalitions appreciated the opportunity to ask other coalitions "*what would you and your coalition do in this situation?*" and reported that they gathered many new strategies and solutions for their coalitions' problems.

It helped to take a community issue and build a logic model while there and work it through with a small group. So many times you hear it and it makes sense, but when you try to do it yourself, you realize that it is not simple.

Even though training attendees liked the small group work, some had suggestions on how the small groups should be divided. One interviewee liked how the small groups were divided by state, thus providing an opportunity to network with others in their state and gain local knowledge and resources. On the other hand, another interviewee suggested the small groups be split into urban versus rural coalitions rather than by state. They felt that urban and rural coalitions have different issues, and should be divided as such.

While most interviewees liked the small group work, a few also liked oscillating between lecture and small group work because it broke-up the activities and also provided an opportunity to hear everyone's opinions.

Also, a couple interviewees felt the **trainers were very good**. They found them to be interesting, good at reframing the information, and very conscious of their audience by making sure they "*got it.*" Some Bootcamp training participants liked that the training was divided into two tracks – one for beginning and one for more advanced coalition members. This allowed them to bring coalition members of varying abilities to the training, and all could gain from the experience.

Training Content

Most interviewees liked the overall content of the trainings and, specifically, the logic model module which they found particularly helpful because it was the basis for the rest of their key products and much of their coalitions' work. A couple interviewees discussed how the logic model's "why here" questions helped them "dig down" into their community and think about the root causes of their community's problem.

[Regarding overall content] It was user friendly and relevant to everyone that was there. It wasn't too complicated for those who were new to the game, and it wasn't so basic that it would insult the intelligence of the folks who have been in the game for quite a while.

Additionally, coalition interviewees liked learning about programmatic information, specifically information about specific interventions and how to select and run a program. A couple of interviewees liked learning about the legal and structural aspects of a coalition, including information about how to become a 501(c)3.

For those who were not satisfied with the training, they noted the following reasons:

- **Training too advanced or too basic for some coalition members.** Similar to feedback received in the 2003/2004 evaluation, the training content does not always fit the needs of participating coalition members. For coalition members new to the coalition field, the training seems too advanced; for coalition members who are more experienced, or who have participated in other Institute trainings, the trainings were too basic for their coalition's needs.
- **Trainers lacked skills and knowledge to effectively conduct the training.** Some interviewees felt the trainers did not have the knowledge or time management skills to teach the training. Some noted that important information was skipped because of the lack of time at the end of the training, while others felt the trainer was not knowledgeable enough about the topic to conduct a training.
- **Trainings need to be more instructive about how to create key products.** Some felt that they spent a lot of time during the training creating a logic model, but not enough time discussing and creating other core products.

Coalition interviewees were also asked what other types of information they would like to see the Institute cover in its trainings, specifically information that would help their coalition achieve its goals. Some interviewees were unable to name additional topics, but some were, and the additional information they wanted included:

- **More templates and models on how to create key products.** Interviewees were interested in learning more about the key products, specifically the evaluation and sustainability plans. Some felt both tools would help their coalition become more effective and sustainable, and would be useful to their coalition's long-term goals. One interviewee stated that they would like to see more key product models demonstrated so they could get a better idea on how to customize and apply them to their community.
- **Information on how to collaborate with diverse groups and stakeholders.** Some interviewees wanted to learn about how to work with faith-based groups or with urban or rural coalitions, while others wanted to learn more cultural competency skills and how to apply them to various populations.
- **How to create and/or obtain additional funding.** A few interviewees wanted more information about how to write grants, and where to find funding information and resources. Another interviewee was interested in learning how to generate revenue for their coalition.

- **Information about “best practice” programs.** A few interviewees wanted more information about what types of “best practice” programs were available, and what problems they address. One coalition was particularly interested in learning about how to choose the “*best and cheapest*” programs to address their community’s problems.

What logistical aspects of the Pilot Academy training and Academy trainings did interviewees like?

As the Institute continues to build upon the Academy trainings, the Institute staff thought it would be prudent to find out if the Pilot Academy and Academy trainings’ current organization (three, week-long, intensive trainings over a one-year period) was conducive to trainees effectively participating in this training. They wanted to know if participants liked the National Guard facilities enough to continue the free trainings at the National Guard sites or if participants would rather pay for the Academy trainings and have them held at a hotel. They were also interested in learning if participants faced barriers in attending the trainings. Additionally, the Institute staff wanted to know if participants found the workstations useful.

Overall, both the Pilot Academy and Academy training interviewees liked the training and the National Guard training facilities. They felt the National Guard facilities were “great” and found the National Guard staff very accommodating. One Academy attendee liked that the Institute paired with the National Guard for the trainings because it demonstrated agencies working together to obtain a common goal and sharing resources. Another Academy attendee liked the location of the National Guard site because “*it’s close compared to other CADCA trainings.*” Also, training attendees (from both groups) liked that the training was paid for by the Institute. It allowed them to bring more coalition members and provided a shared experience for them.

Participants in both the Pilot and Academy trainings noted a few challenges in attending the training. These challenges were the result of:

- **Extensive time commitment.** Some participants noted that it was difficult to find people who could attend a one-week training. Some members could not leave for that long because of their position, while others could not economically afford to be gone that long.

Being gone for a week is difficult because you need to make sure everything is going fine the week before, and then scrambling to get caught up when you do get back.

- **Training competed with grant deadlines.** One Academy training was scheduled the week before a DFC grant deadline, which made it difficult for the attendee to actively participate.

Keep it away from when grants are generally due would make it easier... for me that was a problem, but I committed to doing it. So I showed up and just worked late every night.

Workstation Component

All Academy Pilot interviewees commented that the workstation component was still being developed as they went through the training. Interviewees liked that they were able to provide feedback for the “*work in progress.*” When the workstation was working, it was viewed as a very effective tool, and an easy, usable process. Attendees valued being able to communicate with their peers and would like to have continued access to the tools.

It was effective because I was able to learn from my peers, and put information out, and get feedback from my peers.

Video Teleconferencing

Overall, a majority of the Academy attendees felt there were possible benefits to using the video teleconferencing (VTC), including a follow-up to recently learned materials; however, the benefits were far-outweighed by the technical difficulties attendees encountered during the presentation.

I think they are a good idea, however, the implementation of it is lacking...It's never been any easy process. Something has always gone wrong.

The trainers echoed this sentiment, and felt the Institute needed to address the technical difficulties associated with the VTCs. One trainer suggested the Institute may want to provide the trainers with more training on how to trouble-shoot technical difficulties, and to also have a technician in the room during the telecast. This may help address some of the VTC problems.

Another coalition attendee stated they were not sure the VTC was worth the 6-hour round-trip drive they had to make to attend the VTC. This person also mentioned that the material presented was difficult for non-training attendees to grasp and suggested that if the Institute wanted training attendees to bring other coalition members to the VTCs, then they needed to provide appropriate material.

Payment for Trainings

Institute staff wanted to find out if Academy attendees would pay for the Academy training, if it meant that the trainings would be held in better locations. Interestingly, half of the Academy interviewees would pay for the Academy training if it was held at a different venue, but given the positive response to the National Guard facilities, the interviewees did not see a need to change the venue. One participant stated they would be willing to pay \$500-\$600 per training week; however, this figure would depend on how much their coalition could afford. Other participants would like to pay “*as little as possible*”, because the training money could be used within their community. The attendees who did not want to pay for the training provided differing answers – one did not want to take money away from their community, while the other did not feel the training was a good enough value for them to pay for it.

Section 5: How effective are the Institute's communication materials?

What did the interviewees think about the Institute's communication products?

During 2004/2005 the Institute significantly expanded its communication tools and products. We asked training participants and federal partners their perceptions of these products.

Overall, the expansion of the Institute's communication processes and products has been very well received. Almost all coalition members found the communication products very useful, timely, and relevant to the issues they faced. Many interviewees discussed how the emails and *Coalitions Online* kept them abreast of the latest legislative news, funding opportunities and upcoming Institute trainings, as well as providing them with information and ideas about how other coalitions deal with problems and issues. Interviewees also liked having the communication products sent electronically because it allowed them to pass the information to other coalition members and colleagues. Almost all interviewees stated that they liked receiving the information electronically, and thought it was the best way for them to receive future information. It should be noted, however, that a couple interviewees did not receive any of the Institute's communication products.

The information is relevant to what we are doing and relevant to my interest. I'll be honest, most of the stuff I get I just flip through things, but I get through these [Coalitions Online] and see the information that is contained in it. It is relevant to our interest and where we are in our work.

As a group, interviewees received a variety of communication products, but the one most cited was *Coalitions Online*. The following is a list of the communication products mentioned by interviewees in order of their citation frequency:

- *CADCA Online* (43.3%)
- Institute emails (18.3%)
- *Strategizers* (13.3%)
- CADCA/Institute website (8.3%)
- *Research Into Action* (3.3%)
- *Evaluation Primer* (3.3%)
- *Handbook for Community Anti-Drug Coalitions* (3.3%)
- *Mail* (3.3%)
- *Video teleconferences* (1.6%)
- *Training manuals* (1.6%)

Reach of the communication products

The Institute also wanted to find out if the interviewees felt that the communication materials were reaching the right people, and if coalitions felt they needed any additional types of information. In general, most coalition interviewees felt that communication products were reaching the right audiences. However, a couple coalitions noted that they did not receive any communication products and some felt that only DFC and W&S

coalitions received the communication products. One interviewee suggested the Institute needed to reach beyond the training attendees, and provide information to more coalitions. Another attendee stated that their coalition was located in a very rural area, and it was difficult for coalition members to receive electronic information.

Interviewees also felt their coalition members were well-informed of what was going on in the field; however, some mentioned additional types of information they would like to receive, including information about:

- **Evaluation**, including different methods and how to apply them to their coalition's needs.
- **Various programs**, specifically information about "best practices" programs and substance abuse programs.
- **Coalition success stories**, i.e. model coalitions and how they accomplished the success
- **Funding sources**, including information about grants and scholarships, and additional coalition funding beyond DFC and W&S money.

Section 6: To what extent is the Institute's approach to developing new trainers effective?

To meet the increase in demand for its training services, the Institute launched a training-of-trainers (TOT) program in 2004/2005. To assess the effectiveness of this TOT program, we asked trainers who participated in this training to describe their training experience and the extent to which it helped them become effective trainers. It should be noted that all trainers sampled for this report attended the TOT training in March, 2005 in Fort Indian Gap, Pennsylvania.

Overall, participants found individual segments of the training useful, but overwhelmingly felt the training was intense and too stressful. Also, trainers reported mixed experiences with the Institute. While they felt their interpersonal interactions with the Institute staff were generally positive, they were not pleased with the overall level of organization and supports surrounding the training.

Did the training prepare the participants to become effective trainers?

The majority of TOT participants felt the training did not prepare them to become an effective trainer. All interview participants had some prior training experience, and felt the TOT did not add to their skill base. One participant discussed how they felt the training was geared towards non-trainers and therefore had little to offer professional trainers.

The trainers stated the following reasons why they felt the training did not help them become effective trainers:

- **Not enough practice opportunities for the participants to hone the Institute's curriculum.**

There should have been more emphasis on how you are going to deliver this piece of information to the audience.

- **Training just provided an overview of the content, and did not really focus on the delivery methods.**

They focused more on the delivery of the content than on the delivery skills... We're not professors, we're trainers

- **Training was incredibly intensive and stressful and did not provide an environment conducive to learning how to effectively deliver the training material.** Many participants attributed the stress to an emphasis on tests and the test scores instead of learning the material and its delivery methods.

It was a fairly intensive week-long TOT. It was more like those college courses they condense in 2 weeks. It was more like that than a TOT. It was like being back in school.

It was nothing like a typical TOT that I've been too. They were more focused on the mastery of the content than delivery skills.

Yeah, I remember that training because it was intensive, hard and it was emotional for a lot of people who were there because we had to make 80%....What I remember most is that it was the training from hell. There were some people afterward, I swear to you that were crying. There were three of them...I didn't like how it was set up. I couldn't do anything about it. I understand that the subsequent TOT has not been like that. It was extremely stressful and I didn't particularly care for it.

This sentiment was echoed when interview participants were asked what they liked least about the TOT, the majority stated they did not like taking the tests. Only one participant did not mind the emphasis placed on the tests and test scores. All participants stated they had had passed the tests, but felt that there was too much emphasis on passing the tests. Many of the March 2005 TOT participants heard that the next TOT placed less emphasis on testing during the actual training, with participants being allowed to take the tests after the training. They felt this was a good change.

Did the trainers like the format and content of the training?

Even though TOT participants felt the training was too content driven, there were certain aspects of the training that they liked.

Lectures were well designed and content rich.

Overall, the participants liked the lectures. They felt the lectures were a good overview of the training content, and were easily understandable. A couple participants thought Paul Everson was a particularly good lecturer.

I think some people can lecture and some can't. Community systems – Paul is very good. He's animated. He's knowledgeable and brings a lot of his own stuff into it. I think the lectures were really pretty good because he did most of them.

Another participant felt the lectures were informative and provided participants with many different perspectives on the subject area.

I think the lectures were informative and in-depth and gave many different types of perspectives for the subject area. Things you would never thought of in that way before, but by offering that sort of bouquet of perspectives at different levels for different sectors was valuable. You get to see the whole 360 degrees of the contact.

All participants thought the information was presented to them in an easily, understandable manner.

They broke it down. They didn't water it down. They broke it down in common language with lots of examples so you could really grasp those high-level concepts, because when you read it or see it on paper you are like 'what are you talking about?'

However, a couple participants felt that at times the material was skimmed over due to lack of time.

Some content that the TOT participants found particularly useful included:

- **The logic model** module because it helped them understand how to diagnosis community problems.
- **Definitions of Coalitions**
The stuff around what a coalition is and what they do around the table, and the information they give out about how you get people interested in coming and maintaining that.
- Information about the **Strategic Prevention Framework and the Community Toolbox**
- Information about the **Academy Workstation**
- **The Step-by-Step Process for Coalitions**

For each module there was much more detail for processes, which none of us had had before. We knew basically how to go about doing something, but this content with all 15 modules, they all had very specific steps that really locked in how to get to where you need to be.

Practice training sessions were valuable

Overall, when given the opportunity to present a module, some participants found it useful. It provided them with an opportunity to learn the material

It helped me get inside of the content and explain it to myself.

One participant felt the training opportunity provided participants a chance to network and get to know each other better. While another participant felt the “teach-backs” allowed participants to learn and share ideas on how to present the information.

However, two of the five participants interviewed did not find presenting a module useful. One trainer felt that the modules were too scripted and found it difficult to use their own style of training. Another felt the teach-backs were a “wasted process” where participants were given too little time to actually present the information. This participant also felt it was a waste of time for them to watch others “*do their skits.*”

Useful hands-on materials

Overwhelmingly, the TOT participants found the hands-on materials useful, and easy to understand.

What do the trainers think of their relationship with the Institute?

In general, the trainers felt they had a positive relationship with the Institute. Most trainers felt the Institute was supportive of them, and tried to address whatever issue arose.

When I had issues they would listen. It never got resolved, but they would listen and they would try to make it better, but there are just some things...I just don't know if there are some things that can change.

One trainer mentioned that they really appreciated the praise they received from Jane, Kareema and Carlton.

What is not going well?

The majority of the trainers were frustrated that they are not paid in a timely manner.

...I can not wait 2 ½ months to get paid.

While others mentioned that the trainers' pay was inadequate.

They need to pay their trainers more. They are behind industry standards.

A couple trainers felt that trainers needed to receive their materials in a timelier manner prior to the trainings. They felt this would help them be a more effective trainer. One trainer stated she has heard this suggestion from other trainers and coalition members. To address this issue, one trainer suggested that the Institute should complete the material prior to the TOT, and distribute the completed material well in advance of future trainings.

A couple trainers also felt that poor communication with the Institute was also an issue. This came in the form of the Institute not returning phone calls, and not providing trainers with more lead time before their training assignments.

I feel like if I had a better sense of what is coming up way before it comes up, I'd be in better shape. But, I don't always.

Trainers suggested that the Institute should hire more staff to help manage communications with the trainers.

Finally, a few trainers were concerned about negative comments that they had heard from several of the coalitions about the work of the Institute.

There is no real in-between for the Institute. I've heard comments from people who absolutely adore the Institute, and I've heard comments from people on the other extreme who can't stand them. That's what concerns me. If they are creating that type of emotions through this process, they just can't ignore those people that aren't happy with it.

What has been the impact of becoming a trainer on coalition members?

Three trainers interviewed were also coalition members. All were considered leaders in their coalitions. All stated that becoming a trainer has impacted them as a leader in their coalition in some way, including:

- **Increased use of core competency tools in their coalition.** Two trainers stated that, as a result of their involvement with the Institute, their coalition now uses the core competency tools. One of these trainers felt their coalition has become more effective

as a result. The other did not feel their coalition was more effective, but did believe their coalition now has a broader “*menu*” of possibilities.

- **Increased knowledge of substance abuse issues.** Two trainers mentioned that becoming an Institute trainer has broadened their understanding and perception of substance abuse problems in the United States.

It gave me a better perspective of the type of drug problems there are across America.

For some, participating in this training process had some negative consequences. One stated that training took up a lot of their time, while another stated that they have become disillusioned with the training process.

I used to hold CADCA in very high esteem as THE authority in the field. I'm not sure if I feel the same. I've been adversely affected by this whole [training] process in that way.

What did the October, 2005 TOT training participants think of the training and their relationship with the Institute?

Given some of the concerns raised by the first TOT trainees, we recently interviewed members of the October, 2005 TOT (second round TOT participants). We were primarily interested in determining if the second round of trainers had a better training experience.

Overall, in contrast to the first round of TOT trainers, the second round did have a much more positive training experience and were more positive about the Institute itself. They thought the training was well organized, informative, and much less stressful. Most of these trainees were familiar with the training experience of the first round TOT participants, and attributed their more positive experience to two factors: 1) they were prepared for an intense training because they talked to the first round of TOT participants prior to attending the TOT training, and 2) the Institute improved the training process, making it less intense and placing less emphasis on the tests during the training. In fact, training attendees were allowed to take their competency test after the training, not during.

Similar to the first round of TOT participants, the second round thought the TOT training content was informative and useful to them as a trainer, but they did not feel the training helped them to become a more effective trainer. Additionally, in contrast to the first round of trainers, the second round of TOT participants had a more positive relationship with the Institute. It should be noted, however, that the second round of TOT participants have not yet led any trainings on their own and have generally had fewer interactions with the Institute than the first round of TOT participants.

Section 7: What lessons can the Institute learn about its work to date and to improve its performance in the future?

In this section we summarize some key lessons learned in 2004/2005 and recommendations for moving the work forward. It should be noted that many of these recommendations are similar to those made in 2003/2004, suggesting that the Institute continues to face some core challenges that are indigenous to the nature of their work and the context within which they operate.

Focus on developing and maintaining a strong organizational infrastructure in order to meet current and future demands.

In a context where there is a constant influx of unexpected demands – and frequent absences of senior staff due to travel schedules – it can be extremely difficult to efficiently and effectively manage the personnel and the projects. This is especially difficult if the existing highly efficient and capable staff is unable to meet all of the demands required of them, not to mention the expansion that is possible in the future.

Recommendation:

- **Closely examine the Institute's infrastructure and the capacity of the existing staff.** The Institute has done a good job of developing an organizational and operational structure that can operate almost like a rapid response team. One of the strongest assets of the Institute is the knowledgeable and self-sufficient staff. However, even these staff sometimes feel that they are unable to meet all of the demands asked of them.
- **Assess current staffing levels, and adjust accordingly.** Additional staff is needed to maintain and expand the infrastructure that's needed to meet the current and growing demands of the Institute. If increasing staff is problematic find someone to advocate for this expansion.

Continue to expand partnerships and funding sources while developing some independence from the federal partners.

Quite similar to last year, some believe that the relationship with federal partners limits the potential of the Institute. Some feel that this partnership makes the Institute vulnerable to demands that might not fit with Institute's mission or be the best for the coalitions. The Institute has done a great job of diversifying funding through partnerships thus far but it is hoped that these efforts will continue over time.

Recommendation:

- **Continue to expand the variety of partners to work with.** Align with those who have similar missions (e.g. foundations, local community groups, individual

grants, national organizations) and technical resources (e.g. universities). Look into working more closely with more states.

- **Consider long term plans that might minimize the percentage of funding received from federal sources.**
- **Increase the sustainability of current partnerships.** Look at the needs of current partnerships and see if there is a way you can link coalitions, or other organizations, with those partners to meet both of their needs in some way.

Continue to listen to the field in order to determine the effectiveness of the Institute's trainings.

The Institute is best positioned to build coalition capacity if it remains focused on what is going on in the field, what is changing, what is needed, and how it can meet those needs. It seems that the coalitions are becoming more effective because of the Institute's trainings, but it is important that the Institute continues to listen to the field and adjust their trainings accordingly.

Recommendation:

- **Continue to gather information (formally and informally) from the field to inform the work.** You may even want to create outcome measures that include the documentation of coalition success stories or evidence of coalition effectiveness over time.
- **Continue to monitor the extent to which Institute's activities meet coalition expectations and needs.**
- **Follow-up with coalitions after the trainings to build relationships and increase the development and maintenance of the coalitions' core competencies.** Several coalition members interviewed, across all trainings, felt that the Institute could do a better job of following up with the coalitions that attend trainings. They felt that they would be better able to maintain the use of the core competencies they learned from the trainings if the lines of communication between the Institute staff and the coalitions were kept open. In addition, building relationships with the coalitions would help the Institute obtain a better understanding of what is happening in the field, and provide them with the opportunity to "tell the coalition story."

Continue to use electronic communication products but do not assume it is the best venue for reaching all coalitions.

The expansion and increased use of communication products have brought an increased visibility to the Institute. Keeping in touch with coalitions and partners in this way has also kept them informed about current events in the field and future Institute trainings. However, many small town or rural coalitions do not have e-mail access. Use training registration forms and the coalition registry to determine how coalitions would prefer to receive information.

Bolster "front end and back end" communication with coalitions.

Coalitions noted that they would have made better choices if they were provided more information about trainings prior to enrollment. Coalitions also reported that they would be

more likely to sustain their core competencies if they had more follow-up contact with the Institute.

Recommendations

- **Expand information provided to coalitions prior to trainings so they can make better decisions and be better prepared for the training in advance.** Some coalitions across all trainings noted that if they would have known before hand that they would be getting certain information they would have brought ideas/materials with them to make better use of their time. Some also felt that if they would have known the details of the training before registering they may have registered for a more advanced training.
- **Provide coalitions with opportunities to engage each other and the Institute in “refresher conversations.”** Through the use of online resources, the Institute could create e-learning communities where coalitions can continue to learn new material and ways to continue and expand the use of the core competencies.

Prove that the Institute is worthy of investment through expanded data collection and evaluation efforts.

As the evaluation data in this report illustrate, the Institute’s trainings are having a multitude of effects on coalitions and the GPRA measures capture only a limited number of them. As a result, an over-reliance on the GRPA measures is likely to underestimate the real impact the Institute is having on coalitions. This year’s evaluation findings suggest that the Institute should collect, over time, the following additional outcomes to more fully capture the story of its impact on coalitions:

- Coalitions use of the core products
- Coalitions use of more strategic decision-making
- Coalitions use of a more comprehensive approach to their work
- Coalitions’ effectiveness
- Coalitions progress towards reducing substance abuse rates in their community

Expand the content and level of training offered by the Institute.

Many coalitions have received training on the Institute’s core products and are using them to a varying extent. For these coalitions, there needs to be more advanced trainings offered, while also continuing to offer the Institute’s basic core products training for newer, less established coalitions.

Recommendations:

- **Clearly communicate to coalitions the capacity level needed to actively participate in a training.** This could be communicated through communication products.
- **Provide varying levels of courses at each training** (Evaluation 101, 201, 301, for example)
- **Provide more advanced trainings to coalitions.** Coalitions reported that they needed more advanced trainings. For more advanced coalitions providing various specialized trainings on needed information would keep coalitions coming back to the Institute. Also, this would ensure that the Institute becomes

known for creating effective coalitions rather than only being known for the core competencies content.

- **Tailor trainings by various groups.** The Institute should also tailor more trainings, i.e., urban versus rural trainings; trainings for particular substance abuse issues. A couple coalitions discussed how the trainings, and examples provided during the trainings, seemed to apply only to urban coalitions, and not to rural coalitions.
- **Provide sustainability and systems change trainings.** Coalitions and staff suggested training attendees would like to learn more about how their coalition can become part of a larger social system, how to sustain coalitions internally, and how to create an infrastructure to continually meet their goals.
- **Offer additional trainings in evaluation, board development and training, and cultural competency.** Trainers felt these topics were important and would benefit the coalition attendees.

Improve technical assistance services.

Across all participants interviewed (partners, staff, and coalitions), technical assistance services were rated fair. For those coalitions that had used the service, some reported either not receiving a response in a timely manner or not receiving a response at all. Some coalition members and a staff member mentioned that *“if it’s not timely service, then it’s not useful”*.

Recommendations:

- **Develop a well-staffed TA Hotline.** One participant recommended that the Institute may want to develop a TA Hotline where someone can consistently answer the phone and reply back to coalitions within a 24 hours. This may require that someone be hired to work specifically on TA.
- **Develop a TA tracking system.** There also needs to be a tracking system in place to track the information requested. Having a staff person hired for TA services would make sure someone was tracking this information.

Continue to offer free trainings.

Coalitions were concerned about the high turnover within their coalition. They were worried that the turnover would contribute to a group *“knowledge loss”* forcing them to continually develop their basic capacity, instead of moving to more advanced levels.

Recommendation:

- **The Institute should continue to offer free trainings so more coalition members are able to attend,** and therefore increasing the coalitions’ capacity and ability to pass the knowledge on. If funding for the free trainings decreases, then the Institute should find someone to advocate for this beneficial service.

Spend more time developing other key products during trainings.

Some coalitions felt they spent a lot of time during the training developing the logic model, and very little time developing the other key products. They would like to see more of a balance provided that would allow coalitions to begin developing other products.

Recommendations:

- **Spend less time during the training developing the coalitions' logic models, and more time discussing and creating other key products.**
- **Offer more advanced trainings that focus only on sustainability and evaluation plans.**

Improve the logistical aspects of trainings.

Trainers felt that the trainings' organization could be improved upon, including the training set-up, logistics, and the organization with the sponsoring site. At times, they felt that the lack of organization made their job more difficult which led to them not being as effective as they could be.

Recommendations:

- **Complete all training material prior to the actual training.** Trainers would like to obtain their training materials well before their scheduled training to ensure that they have time to review them.
- **Provide better coordination with training sites so rooms, materials, and audio/visual equipment are better organized and set-up for the training**

Continue to revise and improve training materials.

Both trainers and training attendees felt that the training materials were very good; however, both groups offered suggestions about what they thought could be done to improve the trainings even more.

Recommendations:

- **Spend more time on the sustainability and evaluation sections during the training.** Trainers felt this data was difficult for training participants to understand, because, for some, the concepts are new. A few coalition interviewees echoed this sentiment.
- **Make language used in the training more consistent with federal government's language.** One trainer suggested that the Institute should work to make the language used in the training more consistent with that of the federal government. For example, many of the federal and state grants ask for goals and objectives, but the Institute trainings never mention goals and objectives; therefore, the trainer needs to continually "translate" the language for the coalitions.
- **Provide more examples and allow more time to cover other key products during the training.** Several coalitions stated that they would like more examples about how to develop and apply the key products, as well as more time to cover various products during the training, instead of just concentrating on the logic model.
- **Provide more examples from the field.** Coalitions would find it useful if the trainings would provide more examples of "successful coalitions" they could model.

Revise and improve the Institute's Training of the Trainers training.

Participants of the first TOT training found the training content to be useful, but offered several suggestions to modify the training's approach to help improve the training. These suggestions tend to focus around making the training less stressful, and more directed towards teaching the trainers how to effectively deliver the materials. Some also suggested that the Institute should also become more selective about who is invited to the training.

Recommendations:

- **Provide manuals and video materials to the trainers before and after the training.** Several trainers would like to receive the training materials prior to the training, so they could review the material and be prepared. Others would like a video after the training to review and help them become fully prepared to conduct their own trainings.
- **Make the TOT training less test-focused.** Trainers thought the Institute should focus less on administering tests during the training, and more on the training content and delivery methods.
- **Focus less on training content and more on delivery of the material.** Provide participants more delivery opportunities during the TOT, instead of focusing so heavily on training content.
- **Require TOT participants to attend an Institute training prior to attending a TOT training.** To remedy the conflict between the Institute's need for TOT participants to learn the material with the participants' need for more instruction on various delivery methods, a couple of interviewees suggested that TOT participants attend an Institute training, preferably the Academy, to learn the content prior to attending the TOT. The institute could also use webcasts or web-based downloads to help participants learn the material prior to attending the TOT training. This would fulfill the Institute's need for TOT participants to learn the material, and address the TOT participants' need for more time to learn training delivery methods.
- **Use the computer more during the training.** This will allow participants to access the Workstation and Community Toolbox – products a couple trainers found very useful.
- **Give trainers modules to present during the training.** Prior to the training, each trainer could be assigned a training module to learn. Practice sessions would be schedule during the training week with a final presentation given to the group by each trainee at the end of the week. This approach would demonstrate the trainers' skills and content knowledge.
- **Be more selective of trainers.** If the Institute becomes more selective, then they will find it easier to train and retain the competent trainers.
- **Consider using the TOT process to build an established group of trainers within each state.** The data from this year's report suggests that coalitions are interested in receiving training from local trainers, and feel it would be a great benefit to them.

Continue to grant Pilot Academy coalitions access to the training manuals and workstation.

Academy Pilot interviewees enjoyed using the workstation, because it allowed them to continually gain information and develop their skills. One Academy Pilot interviewee mentioned that they would like to have access to the workstation even after the training so they could continue to use it and develop their skills.

Become more responsive to partner feedback.

The Institute is seen as an easy organization to work with, but there have been times when partners have provided feedback and the Institute has not responded. There have not been many of these situations, but if continued, it may damage the Institute's reputation.

Continue to increase the Institute's scale and scope.

While the scale and scope of the Institute is increasing, it is important that the Institute maintain that momentum, and continuously look for opportunities to grow. This would suggest that the Institute look beyond DFC and W&S coalitions, and possibly even beyond substance abuse coalitions. In addition, much of the content of the core competencies is also applicable to many non-profit, community-based organizations.

Recommendation:

- **Consider expanding the focus of the Institute's work beyond substance abuse coalitions.**
- **Use the Institute's communication products to expand the Institute's reach beyond the DFC and W&S coalitions**

Ensure the reliability of the GPRA data collected.

Several staff members were concerned about the accuracy of some of the current GPRA measurements because the Institute may not be obtaining all information in a complete manner. In order to gather more complete data, the staff felt the Institute needed to provide more follow-up with the coalitions and more accurate coalition information.

Recommendations:

- **Increase follow-up with coalitions.** This will allow the Institute to more effectively track the GPRA measures, and provide the Institute with more coalition "stories" to promote. Also, it will allow for a more accurate data collection method to determine if coalitions are exhibiting greater movement through the four core measures of the DFC program.
- **Increase the TA tracking system's usage.** One partner stated the Institute has struggled to use the TA tracking system because they did not hold their partners accountable to using the system. The Institute should continue to use the TA tracking system, and prompt their partners to use it also.
- **Prompt coalitions to update their registry information more.** This will keep the registry information up-to-date and provide the Institute with more accurate information.
- **Increase the perception of the importance of the trainings.** This will not only encourage more Academy training coalitions to complete all of the key products, but it will also potentially increase attendance at the trainings as coalitions understand the importance of attending the trainings.

- **Remember the main goal is to make stronger coalitions.**

Create a coalition building science.

As the Institute increases its knowledge about what it takes to build a successful coalition, it is important that the Institute passes that information on to others, so the processes can continue with not only substance abuse coalitions, but other coalitions as well.

Recommendation:

- **Keep the field up-to-date about information you have learned,** and how it can be applied to help make coalitions stronger and more effective within their communities.
- **Expand your publications outlets to include more academic venues.** Identify collaborative relationships with coalition scholars to facilitate that process.