Step 2: Suggest Solutions and Screen Suggested Solutions

In this creative step, suggest solutions to address the most pressing needs identified in step 1. This list is then systematically narrowed so that only the most feasible options move forward.

2.1 Suggest Solutions

Once unmet community needs are identified, it is time for the advisory panel to brainstorm and suggest solutions. The completed **Program Inventory Worksheet** can offer inspiration. Solutions can include new programming or modifications of existing programs such as expanding the number of locations. Consider the example from step 1, which identified a gap between the prevalence of child food insecurity and participation rates in food assistance programs. In this situation, the panel might consider ways to improve participation in WIC and summer and after school meal programs — this might involve offering mobile WIC clinics in rural areas, providing technical assistance and funding to open new summer and after school meal sites, or improving transportation to existing summer meal sites. Suggest solutions that can be implemented in the near future, within a year or so.

SOLUTIONS can include new programming or modifications of existing programs.

This step is where the panel can be creative. There is a process later to screen out solutions that are not feasible — so do not let those concerns limit your imagination. Document each suggestion in the **Suggest Solutions Worksheet** with a unique title and a brief description. For example, for a direct service solution, briefly document where and when the program will be offered, whom it is for and the main impact expected of the program. It should be clear whether each suggested solution is a modification of an existing program or a new program.

The **Screening Worksheet** considers if solutions will work in the local context, by assessing:

- If a solution is financially feasible
- If there are sufficient personnel to execute the solution
- If other required resources (e.g., transportation, distribution, land or water) exist or are available
- If the community will support the solution

If modifying an existing program, plan for the smallest feasible change. If developing a new program, consider starting at the smallest scale possible (e.g., add only one new location). In most cases, the smallest feasible change is where there is maximum impact for the given resources. Some solutions will be more resource intensive than others because the minimum possible change or starting point is larger. However, it is expected that this type of program should also have a larger impact.

2.2 Screen Suggested Solutions

The **Screening Worksheet** narrows the list of suggested solutions to options the community can realistically implement. The typical number of solutions that should move forward in the process is five to ten. The screening questions do not indicate the value or appropriateness of a suggested solution. Screening is about efficiently using the panel's time and effort. It only moves forward suggested solutions the panel should evaluate further.

Screening questions assess overall financial feasibility, logistical feasibility and community and stakeholder support. For each suggested solution, answer the screening questions with a "yes" or "no." If "no" is the answer to any one of the questions for a suggested solution, exclude that suggested solution from moving to the next step, unless changes are made to address the reason for the "no" answer.

Do not hesitate to answer "no" if that is the true answer; otherwise, the panel will spend time considering suggested solutions that are not likely to be successful. Clearly document each decision; this is important for transparency. File, but do not delete the suggested solutions that are screened out, as they may be viable solutions in the future.