

# **NCHPAD's inclusive Community Implementation Process (NiCIP)**

## **Description of Stages & Steps**

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### **Stage 1. Prepare for Inclusion**

**Step 1: Mobilize an Inclusive Health Coalition.** The formation of an Inclusive Health Coalition is the foundation to community health inclusion. If a community health coalition already exists, it should be examined for inclusion of disability representation, consisting of people with disabilities and their family members or caregivers, and/or disability organizations. If an existing coalition is not inclusive, individuals or organizations that can provide disability representation should be identified and invited to join the coalition.

**Step 2: Conduct Community Assessments.** The aim of this step is to clarify the inclusion problem. This should be done at a local level where the inclusive changes are being made. There may be existing data on the inclusion problem from various sources that can be reviewed. There are many different assessment tools that can be used to collect new data, depending on the sector and domain being measured. Examples of inclusion and accessibility tools include the Community Health Inclusion Index and ADA checklists. Assessments should be conducted in partnership with individuals with disabilities.

**Step 3: Select Inclusion Solutions and Customize to the Local Context.** The inclusion solutions can be thought of as the answers to the inclusion problems identified in the previous step. The inclusion solutions chosen at this step will be narrowed down based on stakeholders identified needs, resources available, and other relevant community factors.

### **Stage 2. Align Inclusion Solutions**

**Step 4: Invite Community Feedback on proposed inclusion solutions.** Inviting feedback is an important action designed to clarify the driving force and motivation behind the need to become inclusive or improve inclusiveness for people with disabilities. This action should be a formal declaration disseminated by the inclusive health coalition to the community and beyond. It is a way to gain support and early feedback about the problem and inclusion solutions identified.

**Step 5: Identify Challenges to Implementing Inclusion Solutions.** To support the success of the inclusion solutions selected in step 3, a structured, comprehensive approach is advised to identify the challenges to their implementation. Often, it is difficult to understand the full scope of the challenge until it is discussed among a group of representative stakeholders. What may be perceived at the outset as a simple adjustment to practice may end up requiring broader systematic changes. Some of the barriers and supports may have already been identified in the previous stage.

**Step 6: Revise Inclusion Solutions to Fit the Community Needs.** The purpose of this step is to figure out how to address the challenges to implementing the inclusion solutions. Revising solutions may be a small change such as changing the wording to an inclusion solution to fit the context of the setting (without changing the solution's intent). Or the revision could be larger such as choosing from options for overcoming or addressing the challenges. For example, if it has been identified that a classroom for a nutrition program is not accessible, the IHC in partnership with the implementer will need to

prioritize solutions based on current resources and choose among options, such as moving locations, addressing signage, accessible entrances, parking lots, or other issues found from the assessments. Plans to address the long-term solutions that cannot be addressed in a timely manner should be put into place and not forgotten.

### **Stage 3. Prepare for Implementation of Inclusion Plan**

**Step 7: Finalize Evaluation.** Starting with Stage 1, evaluation is thought about and plans should be made in regard to what will be measured and how. As the coalition and implementers gets closer to the implementation phase, developing the evaluation plan to describe what information will be measured, who will measure it, and the method for collection is critical to ensure progress of the project. At this step, the evaluation can be formalized and needs to be thoroughly developed before moving on to the pilot test and implementation of the inclusion plan.

**Step 8: Pilot Test inclusion solutions.** Pilot testing inclusion solutions is important to do before implementation launches. The amount of time and to what scale the pilot test takes place is dependent on the resources and time available. For example, an IHC and implementers may only have time to pilot test inclusion solutions in one fitness/gym facility versus five gyms in the community.

**Step 9: Finalize the Inclusion Plan.** Up to this point, the inclusion problem(s) and inclusion solutions have been identified and customized for the local context. Working with the IHC and relevant stakeholders, all of the information should be used to lay out a formal plan of action- who is responsible for what, a timeline, and method of how the activities will be carried out and how they will be measured. This plan should be detailed and transparent about why certain decisions were made.

### **Stage 4. Implement, Evaluate, & Sustain Inclusion Plan**

**Step 10: Implement the Inclusion Plan.** The implementers who are responsible for executing the inclusion plan, with support and guidance from the IHC and other stakeholders, will start to put the plan into action.

**Step 11: Monitor and Evaluate the Inclusion Plan.** Monitoring the plan can be framed by addressing two main questions (1) is the inclusion plan being followed as intended?, and (2) does using the inclusion plan make a difference?

Evaluation should happen at both the level of inclusion plan uptake and the impact of the inclusion plan on the intended population of individuals with disabilities, service providers and organization. At this point, implementers and the IHC should begin to determine the impact of the inclusion plan. Indicators need to be determined. Unintended benefits and consequences should be monitored and formal and/or informal measures should be used to track the indicators. Data collection methods determined in Stage 3, Step 7 should be used.

**Step 12: Sustain & Update Inclusion Plan.** To sustain the inclusion plan, communities must aim to make policy changes and they must plan for sustainability early on. Four characteristics of sustainability are as follows: routinization, adapting to change (being responsive), skilled facilitation, and building capacity.

Since there may be changes in a community, organization, or IHC, due to changes in policies, resource availability, shifting priorities, etc. the inclusion plan may need to be updated. By addressing the four characteristics of sustainability and by ensuring there is a person or group assigned to the role of checking for updates, the inclusion plan is more likely to be maintained.