

Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc.



Helping People Changing Lives

Strategic Plan 2012-2014

Approved by the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc.
Board of Directors on May 17, 2012

Update Approved by the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc.
on June 20, 2013

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History

In the fall of 1963, a number of community leaders in Rowan County met for the purpose of discussing the possibility of securing aid from the North Carolina Fund to implement a plan to better serve the needs of our community in the areas of housing, health, education, welfare and employment.

During the summer of 1964, Mr. Sterling Whitener conducted a survey of poverty conditions in Rowan County as his thesis for his Master's Degree in Social Welfare at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. The result of this study was used to formulate the plan for the Salisbury-Rowan Community Service Council, Inc.

In August 1964, the North Carolina Fund selected the Council as one of eleven areas in the state, in which to establish an experimental anti-poverty program. The Salisbury-Rowan Community Service Council, Inc. was chartered October 1, 1964 as an agency for the purpose of attacking and dealing with poverty.

During the latter part of May 1965, the Office of Economic Opportunity officially approved the Salisbury-Rowan Community Service Council, Inc. as a Community Action Agency to operate its program with federal funds. These funds provided permanent staff for the Agency and the development of new programs. On June 20, 2007, the agency name was officially changed to the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc.

What are Community Action Agencies?

Community Action Agencies (CAAs) are nonprofit private and public organizations established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to fight America's War on Poverty. Community Action Agencies help people to help themselves in achieving self-sufficiency. Today there are approximately 1,100 Community Action Agencies in the United States.

Service Area

The Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc. is a non-profit organization that serves families and individuals in the counties of Rowan, Cabarrus, Davidson, Moore, Montgomery and Stanly. Each year the agency conducts a Community Assessment to ensure that our services are aligned with the needs of the community.

Mission

The Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc., provides services for individuals, children and families to enhance their quality of life and promote opportunities for self-sufficiency.

Vision

Everyone will have opportunity for success in life.

Guiding Principles

The Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc. has developed the following principles to guide and direct the organization's work. The principles help determine how individuals in the organization will work together to successfully accomplish the agency's efforts in the community.

Accountability	Integrity
Advocacy	Performance-Driven
Collaboration	Respect
Communication	Technology
Customer Service	Transparency

Board of Directors

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The Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc. is governed by a fifteen (15) member tri-partite Board of Directors. One-third of the board consists of elected public officials or their representatives. One-third is representatives of business, industry, labor, religion, education or other major groups and interests in the community. One-third is individuals who represent the low income persons in the area served. The tri-partite composition of membership provides for the actual problems experienced by low income families to be voiced by their representatives and responded to by the representatives of the business and local government.

Overview

The goals outlined in the strategic plan are consistent with the six broad anti-poverty goals developed by the Community Services Network. These ROMA (Results Oriented Management and Accountability) goals provide a framework for continuous growth and improvement for local community action agencies. The National Indicators are:

- Goal 1: SELF-SUFFICIENCY
Low-income people become more self-sufficient.
- Goal 2: COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION
The condition in which the lives of low-income people are improved.
- Goal 3: COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION
Low-income people own a stake in their community.
- Goal 4: Partnership among supporters and providers of service to low-income people are achieved.
- Goal 5: Agencies Increase their capacity to achieve results.
- Goal 6: FAMILY STABILITY
Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

The SRCAA, Inc. is using results oriented management and results oriented accountability to determine its overall effectiveness, inform annual and long-range planning, support agency advocacy, funding, and community partnership activities. We expect to increase the agency's capacity in the following areas:

1. Assess poverty needs and conditions within the community;
2. Define a clear agency anti-poverty mission for community action and a strategy to address those needs, both immediate and longer term, in the context of existing resources and opportunities in the community;
3. Identify specific improvements, or results, to be achieved among low-income people and the community; and
4. Organize and implement programs, services, and activities, such as advocacy, within the agency and among "partnering" organizations, to achieve anticipated results.

Community Assessment

The Agency uses the Community Needs Assessment to identify the needs and challenges that our families face. In September 2012 the agency conducted a Communitywide Needs Assessment. Based on the 2012 Community Assessment, the following recommendations and implications may be followed to design plans, make decisions about changes needed in the program, and implementing services to meet the needs of children and families:

1. The increasing Hispanic population seems to be the most significant trend that will need to be addressed by the program. The Hispanic population is growing steadily every year. There is an obvious need and opportunity to recruit and retain bilingual staff members with Early Childhood Education degrees to stay in compliance with Head Start Performance Standards. Hispanic children enrolled in the program are typically dual language learners. In order to support the monolingual and bilingual children and families, the program will probably have to institute a language policy that requires family service staff and at least one person in each classroom to be occupationally fluent or bilingual in Spanish. This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standards but more importantly allows for effective service delivery to the high-risk, limited English population. According to the US Census Bureau, there are 7.9% Hispanics in Rowan County as compared to the 8.6% of Hispanics in the state of North Carolina.
2. The increasing Hispanic population will also impact the ERSEA process (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance) for Head Start. Staff must be prepared to review North Carolina's evolving immigration laws, as well as verification of age and family income requirements.
3. Employment and adult education is another focus area for the agency. Employment has a direct impact on program services. For instance, Head Start/Early Head Start full day services can only be provided to families who are working or enrolled in school in order to stay in compliance with Head Start Performance Standards. Program staff must consider networking or developing partnerships with corporations to have a significant impact on their communities to enhance job creation. For example, Census Bureau data shows there are 107,723 over the age of 16 in the labor force, but there are only 67,242 people employed in Rowan County. There are 67,338 unemployed citizens in Rowan County. The rest are considered not to be in the labor force or in the armed forces. The program must remain flexible in its practices and maintain focus on preparing parents and clients for working in an increasingly competitive

environment. Suggested trainings include education attainment (GED and ESOL), literacy skills, and workforce preparation.

4. Safe, decent and affordable housing is another priority for the service area to help improve the quality of life for children and families. Family Well-being is one of the family outcomes of the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework. Since family engagement is an integral part of Head Start's School Readiness plan, as well as one of the goals for Community Action Agencies, program staff must begin to look at housing differently. For example, one of the agency's partners is Stanly Habitat, but that partnership only serves one county. Establishing or helping the other counties with Habitat for Humanity would be one way for Salisbury Rowan to explore other housing opportunities. It should also be noted that Head Start/Early Head Start served 16 homeless families and all 16 families acquired housing during the enrollment year according to 2011 PIR data.
5. Based on the data collected, the agency overall is doing an excellent job of providing quality comprehensive services, such as Head Start, Early Head Start, family engagement, youth employment, training, and weatherization, to the children and families in their service area. Access to healthcare seemed to be an issue for the some of the more rural counties in the service area, but the Head Start/Early Head Program was successful in providing services for children. The program insured that every child had a medical and dental home. However, in order to remain successful, the agency must continue to identify trends and make changes accordingly. The full community assessment document contains the facts and data to support the above mentioned findings and trends.
6. Finally, with the current climate and the possibility of new federal leadership, the agency should stay abreast of new initiatives and funding for expanding and enhancing services to be prepared for grant applications. Continuing to seek out funds and partners is the best way to continue providing services for children and families in their service area.

Goal 1: Low-income people are more self-sufficient

Challenge: Low-income people must rely on government programs for self-sufficiency

EXPECTED OUTCOME 1.1 Employment		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(1.1.A.) Individuals that are unemployed and obtain employment with assistance of SRCAA and its partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer Life Skills Workshops. • Work with partners to provide On-the-Job Training. • Provide limited internships. • Extended day services to aid parents 	1,266
(1.1.D) Individuals move from below the Federal Poverty Rate to above it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide case management to clients. • Enroll clients in Education & Job Training Programs. 	144
EXPECTED OUTCOME 1.2 Employment Support		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(1.2.B) Individuals complete ABE/GED and receive certificate/diploma.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enroll clients in ABE/GED programs. • Provide case management to clients. • Offer supportive services (i.e. HS/EHS). 	95
Expand adult education services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure facilities and staff to expand GED and adult education programming and begin ESL classes. • Explore additional funding for specialized adult education services. • Use Head Start Parent Rooms as sites for GED/ESL 	Enhance existing partnerships/collaborations.
(1.2.C.) Individuals complete post-secondary education program and obtain certificate or diploma.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and/or maintain public computer sites. • Work with colleges to provide additional courses. • Partner to provide additional training. 	328
(1.2.G) Individuals obtain health care services for themselves or family member in support of employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide case management to clients. • Broker/advocate on behalf of clients. • Refer clients for medical coverage. 	45
(1.2.H) Individuals obtain safe & affordable housing in support of employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide case management to clients. • Refer clients to housing opportunities. • Broker/advocate on behalf of clients. 	87
(1.2.A.1) Individuals obtain food in support of employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide case management to clients. • Broker/advocate on behalf of clients. • Refer clients to food pantries and other supplemental food sources. 	81

1.3 Economic Asset Enhancement

Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(1.3.A.1) Households who receive tax preparation services and identify Federal or State credits <u>and</u> the aggregate dollar of credits/refund.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide free tax assistance for low-income families.• Enroll clients into financial literacy programs.• Provide case management to clients.	1,707

Goal 2: The Conditions in which the Lives of Low-Income People are Improved.

Challenge: Communities lack the opportunities and resources for low-income families. Systems are needed to teach low-income people leadership skills. There is an insufficient amount of safe, sanitary and decent housing units available for low-income people.

EXPECTED OUTCOME		
2.1 Community Improvement and Revitalization		
Goal	Strategies	3 Year Target
(2.1.C.) Safe and affordable housing units are preserved or improved through construction, weatherization achieved by community action activity or advocacy.	Preserve/Improve low-income housing through Weatherization or other rehabilitation programs.	364
Evaluate options for Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc. in the affordable housing arena.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities for homeownership. • Develop uniform partnerships with agencies providing housing programming in all counties in the SRCAA, Inc. service area. 	Obtain community buy-in. Identify funding sources. Explore local government & developers.
(2.1.E) Accessible safe & affordable child care/development placement opportunities for low-income families created or maintained.	Maintain or offer child care placement opportunities through Head Start services/enrollment.	84
EXPECTED OUTCOME		
2.3 Community Engagement		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(2.3.A.) Community members mobilized by SRCAA, Inc. that participate in community revitalization and anti-poverty initiatives.	Engage local community members through initiatives such as: Face to Face with Poverty, Poverty Simulations, etc.	61
(2. Agency Specific) Legislators briefed and/or updated regarding the needs of those living in poverty within their districts, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative visits • Local officials • Agency events • Head Start events • Other public relations events 	9

Goal 3: Low-Income People Own A Stake In Their Community

Challenge: Low-income people lack the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively advocate for themselves and their own interests.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES		
3.1 Civic Investment		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(3.1.A.) Volunteer hours donated by and/or "on-behalf" of low-income people thereby improving the number of opportunities and quality of life for families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities & Initiatives made possible by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Head Start - Workforce Training Programs - School events - Family Self-Sufficiency - Board of Directors - Policy Council 	361,540
3.2 Community Empowerment through Maximum Feasible Participation		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(3.2.A.) Low-income people participating in formal community organizations, governments, boards or councils that provide input to decision making and policy setting created or supported by SRCAA, Inc.	Engage low-income people through initiatives such as: Head Start Policy Council, Board of Directors, Youth Council Board, etc.	109
(3.2.D.) Low-income people engaged in non-governance community activities or groups created or supported by SRCAA, Inc.	Engage low-income people through initiatives such as: Poverty Simulations, etc.	2,560

Goal 4: Partnerships Among Supporters & Providers of Service to Low-Income People Are Achieved.

Challenge: Community partners are not always aware of local efforts in assisting low-income families. Systems are needed to reduce duplication of services. Coordination does not always take place to create the most efficient service delivery model.

EXPECTED OUTCOME		
4.1 Expanding Opportunities through Community-Wide Partnerships		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(4.1.A-E.) SRCAA, Inc. will achieve the following outcomes by working with community organizations: - coordination of services - improve community planning - improve program efficiency	Outcomes made possible by the sustainability of community based initiatives.	283
Increase the literate population in the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc. service areas.	Develop new partnerships and expand existing partnerships to include literacy services.	Identify current partners and a list of all potential partners.
EXPECTED OUTCOME		
4.2 Partnerships with Faith Based Organizations		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(4.2.) SRCAA, Inc. partnering with Faith Based Organizations.	Encourage participation of local ministerial alliances in community & agency projects.	66

Goal 5: SRCAA, Inc. Increases its Capacity to Achieve Results

EXPECTED OUTCOME		
6. SRCAA, Inc. Has the Capacity to Meet Future Challenges		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
<p>TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase training opportunities for staff. • Create an environment of “One Agency” through collaborative training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross train employees. • Prepare the next level of leaders in the agency. • Make training a key performance goal for staff. • Maximize the use of training dollars. • Increase capacity by raising the education requirements for lead teachers. • Develop more CLASS reliable staff. 	<p>Create a training plan template for all staff</p> <p>Develop a succession plan for staff & board</p> <p>Identify & implement three cross training opportunities</p> <p>Require all Head Start lead teachers to have a B-K degree by the end of 2014</p> <p>60% of eligible staff to become CLASS reliable</p>
<p>PERFORMANCE-BASED AGENCY</p> <p>Move the agency to a framework based on goals and targets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and report the agency’s performance on a monthly basis. • Align employee performance goals and targets with the agency goals. • Reward employees based on achieving performance goals and targets. • Develop a team-based approach to implementation of School Readiness Goals. (this includes center directors, county services directors, lead teachers, family development specialists, bus drivers, parents, school system, etc.) 	<p>Create a performance based merit system for employees</p>

<p>COMMUNICATIONS</p> <p>Increase awareness of agency services for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community - Board of Directors - Staff 	<p>Increase the agency's visibility and improve its image in the community.</p>	<p>Develop and implement the agency's communication strategy</p> <p>Hire a Communications/ Development staff person</p>
<p>CREATE ENVIRONMENT OF "ONE AGENCY"</p> <p>Eliminate Department Silos.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore agency-wide case management standards, (integrating Family Services family development specialists, Head Start family development specialists and WIA youth development specialists) • Increase departmental collaboration • Improve staff knowledge about all areas of the agency. 	<p>Identify at least three (3) collaboration opportunities</p>
<p>COMPLIANCE</p> <p>Improve agency compliance monitoring and reporting.</p>	<p>Develop a "proactive" approach to agency compliance to meet local, state and federal requirements.</p>	<p>Implement internal calendar for monitoring</p> <p>Cross train staff to conduct desk top monitoring</p>
<p>BUDGETING</p> <p>Improve the agency's budget process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve planning of agency expenditures. • Engage more staff in the budget process & management 	<p>Staff budget training</p>
<p>DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>Increase the agency's revenue.</p>	<p>Develop non-government funding sources</p>	<p>Implement fundraising strategy</p> <p>Hire a Development/ Communications staff person</p>

<p>PROCUREMENT</p> <p>Improve agency's procurement process and procedures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and improve agency procurement process including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase orders - Budget process - Written agreements. - Contract management - Use of historically underutilized businesses. 	<p>Hire a Procurement Officer</p> <p>Increase contracting opportunities for historically underutilized businesses</p>
<p>POLICY & PROCEDURES REVIEW</p> <p>Ensure policies are reviewed annually.</p>	<p>Review, Policy and Procedures Including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Procedures • Financial Policies • Conflict of Interest Policy • Background checks • Board Records • Agency Licenses 	<p>Conduct review all agency policy & procedures on an annual basis</p>
<p>TRANSPORTATION</p> <p>Improve the Head Start Transportation Program</p>	<p>Analyze/review the agency's transportation program.</p>	<p>Implement recommendations based on the analysis of the transportation program</p>
<p>AGENCY PARTNERS</p> <p>Strengthen agency partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key agency partners. • Use memorandums of understanding to document key partnerships, roles and responsibilities. 	<p>Sponsor at least twelve (12) strategy sessions with key partners including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area employers - Child care agencies - Human services partners, etc.
<p>FACILITIES</p> <p>Improve the agency's facilities management</p>	<p>Analyze/review the agency's facilities program, (head start sites and central office).</p>	<p>Implement recommendations from the analysis of the facilities management program</p>

<p>TECHNOLOGY</p> <p>Improve the agency's use of technology</p>	<p>Implement and/or expand use of technology in agency operations.</p>	<p>Fully implement ChildPlus.net Head Start software</p> <p>Implement electronic timesheet system</p> <p>Implement grant management system</p>
<p>EMPLOYEE HEALTH & FITNESS (WELLNESS)</p> <p>Promote a healthy staff and work environment.</p>	<p>Create opportunities to increase employee health and wellness.</p>	<p>Implement the Employee Wellness Program</p>

Goal 6: Low-Income People, Especially Vulnerable Populations, Achieve Their Potential by Strengthening Family and Other Supportive Systems.

Challenge: Families lack the necessary supports to achieve higher levels of self-reliance. This includes basic skills and knowledge, sufficient income to improve their quality of life and awareness of services and resources that are available to support their efforts.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES 6.1 Independent Living		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(6.1.A-B) Vulnerable populations such as senior citizens and adults with disabilities obtain non-crisis energy assistance.	Refer seniors and disabled clients to receive assistance through Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).	24
EXPECTED OUTCOMES 6.2 Emergency Assistance		
Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(6.2.A.) Eligible low-income people receive emergency assistance for food.	Refer clients to agencies to increase their opportunities to obtain emergency assistance for food.	342
(6.2.B.) Eligible low-income people receive emergency assistance for Emergency Payments to Vendors for fuel and energy bills and rent/mortgage payments.	Provide low-income people with opportunities to obtain emergency assistance programs, (including fuel and energy and rentals payments). This includes referrals for emergency assistance.	621

EXPECTED OUTCOMES
6.3 Child & Family Development – Infants & Children

Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(6.3.A.1) Infants and young children obtain age appropriate immunizations, medical and dental care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement systems to ensure that all children, infants and pregnant mothers enrolled in Head Start & Early Head Start receive services. • Follow up to ensure that services were received. • Develop systems to document activities. 	3,480
(6.3.A.3.) Children to participate in activities to develop school readiness skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Head Start/Early Head Start services to income eligible children. • Implement and monitor School Readiness Goals. • Ensure all staff receives training on School Readiness and Agency goals. 	3,480
(6.3.A.4.) Children enrolled in Head Start are developmentally ready to enter Kindergarten.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children with the necessary knowledge to start school ready to learn. • Provide parent education opportunities on issues important to parents in the further development of their child. 	1,620

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES
6.6 Referrals**

Goal	Strategies	3-Year Target
(6.6.A.) Increased number of Inner-Agency Referrals made to clients served by SRCAA, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create all-agency intake, assessment, referral process for all programs. • Train staff to know and use all available inner agency resources. • Develop a method to update information systems to reflect current local referral resources. 	105
(6.6.A.3.) Increased number of Outer-Agency Referrals made to clients served by SRCAA, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create all-agency intake, assessment, referral process for all programs. • Train staff to know and use all available outer agency resources. • Develop a method to update information systems to reflect current local referral resources. 	231

Agency Programs and Services

The SRCAA, Inc. provides the following programs and services to serve low income families and individuals:

- Community Services
- Early Childhood Education (Head Start/Early Head Start)
- Family Self-Sufficiency (funded by Community Services Block Grant Program)
- Family Intake/Assessment/Referral
- Workforce Training Programs (funded by the Workforce Investment Act, WIA)
- Energy Conservation (Weatherization & Heating and Air Conditioning Replacement and Repair Program - HARRP)

The SRCAA, Inc. continually seeks to improve systems that will ultimately improve the programs and services provided to low income families. The 2012-2014 Strategic Plan highlights the key areas where the agency will seek to improve. These areas include but are not limited to:

- Board Governance/Oversight
- Planning and Development
- Program Monitoring (Compliance)
- Technology
- Communications
- Staff Training
- Financial Procedures
- Human Resources
- Staff Morale

The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.