
Nebraska Statewide Individual Development Account Program Visioning and Development Convening Follow Up

Prepared for:

Opportunity@Work, Nebraska's Foster Youth Council, Community Action of Nebraska, and Nebraska's Children and Families Foundation care of Annemarie Bailey Fowler of Opportunity@Work

Prepared by:

Inger Giuffrida, Financial Educator and Asset Building Consultant

Document Purpose

To provide observations from the convening and ideas for next steps.

Overall Observations from the Convening on August 10, 2008

Based on my perspective as facilitator of the meeting, we seemed to target the agenda well to the participant mix, their levels of experience with and understanding of asset building and IDAs, and their potential roles in a statewide IDA collaborative. The asset building and IDA material was essential, and I believe will provide a great platform for discussion—everyone will understand in general how IDAs work, how they are an asset building strategy, the programs and supports that are necessary to make IDAs work for some target populations, and the levels of resources (financial, infrastructure and human) to make such a collaborative work effectively and efficiently.

We could have used more time to:

- ❑ **Complete the IDA Material.** Because of time, I had to cut a lot of key information on how IDAs work, how participants experience IDAs, and more information about the programs and services that surround IDAs. This latter part was the greatest loss resulting from the lack of time in that these programs and services (financial education, credit counseling, asset specific education, case management, transportation assistance, child care, innovative approaches to managing geographically dispersed populations, etc) provide clear opportunities for partnership.

- ❑ **Hold the Small Group Discussions.** While the comments and questions from participants throughout the day were excellent, the small group

discussion would have given everyone the opportunity to reflect on and discuss the IDA and asset building information presented, the Jim Casey Youth Opportunity Fund information presented, and the model for Nebraska presented. While we received good feedback from the large group discussion, we are lacking the depth and breadth of comments, concerns and ideas that would have likely emerged from small group discussion.

- **Discuss more fully the Opportunities and Limitations of the Assets for Independence Act (AFI) Funding.** While this was touched on, I still have concern that there may not be a full understanding of the consequences of this funding.

Outcome and Output Attainment

Following are the outcomes and outputs identified for the convening on August 11th and my assessment of whether they were achieved:

1. Increased understanding of asset building and IDAs—**achieved.**
2. Increased understanding of the Nebraska Statewide IDA Program Model—**achieved.**
3. More ideas about resources to make the IDA programs successful—**partially achieved.**
4. Identification of additional key partner roles and potential partners for those roles—**partially achieved through discussion of case management. This outcome/output was least addressed due to time crunch experienced in the agenda.**

Recommendations for Next Steps

Following are general recommendations for next steps based on the discussion. Please note that this is not meant to be all of the steps necessary to launch the collaborative—these are just the steps that emerged as a result of the meeting.

1. Hold a debrief meeting among core planning team to ensure all reactions, ideas, and comments from the convening are captured and discussed.
2. Have a clear discussion on target audiences and outcomes desired as a result of the collaborative without consideration of AFI. Include

a discussion about assets that are likely to achieve the outcomes desired or have the biggest impact on participants' lives.

3. Look at the requirements and opportunities provided by AFI vis a vis the results of the discussion above. Identify those areas AFI will support and those that will require additional funding beyond the local (nonfederal) match required for AFI.
4. Look at the requirements and opportunities provided by Jim Casey Youth Opportunity Fund vis a vis the results of the discussion.
5. Identify logical committees/working groups and engage others from the convening (and those not in attendance but who would have a lot to offer) in the committees. [Note: This will obviously lengthen the planning process and require more management of the process; however, it is likely to garner higher buy in and ownership of the collaborative once it is established as well as generate a greater diversity of ideas.] Here are ideas for committees/working groups:
 - ❑ **IDA Policies (Collaborative AND Product/Program) Working Group** [Note: Procedures should probably be developed by the implementing agency, CAN.]
 - ❑ **Financial Institutions Working Group**
 - ❑ **Curriculum Working Group** [Note: This group can cover financial education, credit counseling and asset specific education; this group would also consider distribution models that take into account the realities of serving geographically dispersed populations.]
 - ❑ **Client Assessment and Program Evaluation Working Group**
 - ❑ **MIS Working Group**
6. Develop a memorandum of understanding among the individuals engaged in the planning process (or between the individuals/organizations and the initial advisory council to the collaborative)¹ to ensure core values and principles as well as expectations are clearly conveyed and agreed upon.

¹ If the MOU is between the advisory council and the committee members, a clear description of the advisory group must be developed as well as job descriptions for individual members. You will also need to develop a process for selecting people for this first advisory council.

7. Consider holding an IDA Training Institute sooner rather than later in the process to help the group with 2, 3, 4 and 5 (list of modules attached).
8. Send a follow up letter (email) to the meeting participants with an updated model and send regular updates (set up a listserv) based on your ongoing meetings.
9. Revise the model (my revision based on the discussion including the most excellent suggestion by one of the participants to put the clients at the center of the model is attached) and keep this model as well as the outcomes at the core of each meeting. Revise based on new ideas, etc. This will help keep the groups focused.

Nebraska Statewide IDA Program: Revised Draft Model as of 8/25/08

Notes on Model:

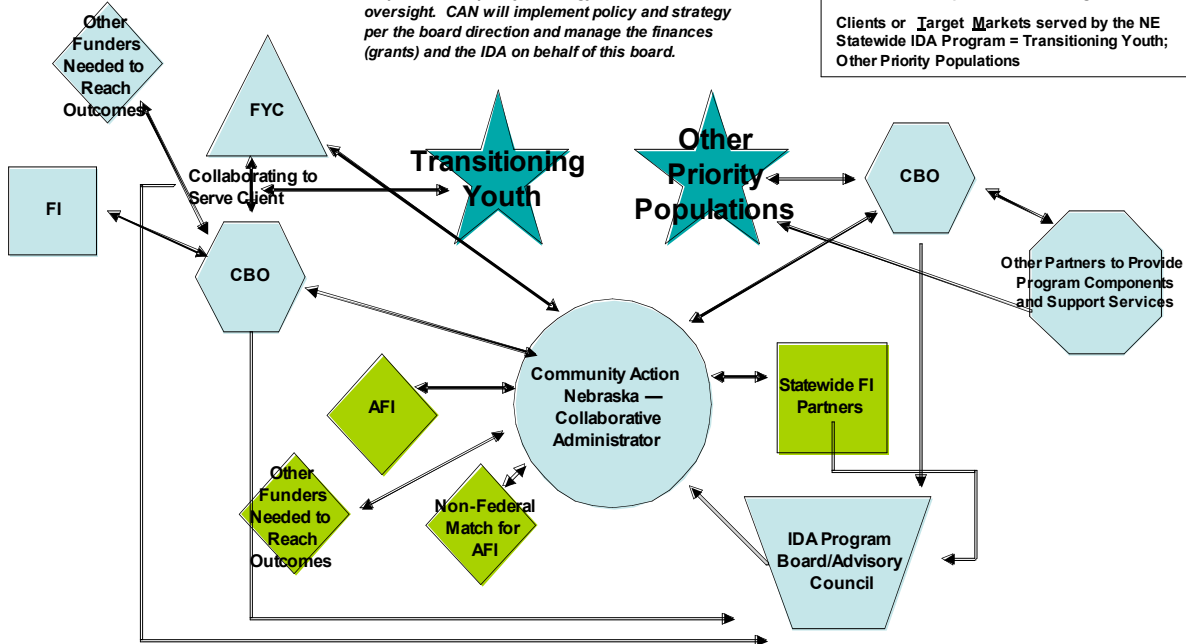
This model is representational only. It is assumed there will be many more organizations in the model, not just two.

Notes on Governance:

The IDA Program will be governed by a Board or Advisory Council comprised of representatives from the partner agencies much like a funding alliance. This board or advisory council will be responsible for policy, strategy and fiscal oversight. CAN will implement policy and strategy per the board direction and manage the finances (grants) and the IDA on behalf of this board.

Acronym Key

Community Based Organization = CBO
 Foster Youth Council = FYC
 Financial Institution Partner = FI
 Assets for Independence Act Program = AFI
 Clients or Target Markets served by the NE Statewide IDA Program = Transitioning Youth; Other Priority Populations



The IDA Training Institute, which is for individuals interested in designing, improving or expanding Individual Development Account programs. There are eighteen modules to mix and match to make a one, two or three-day, highly participatory training. The training covers a wide range of topics including:

- Designing the account to meet the needs of different target markets and market segments,
- Implementing strategies that increase accountholder success during the savings period and after leaving the program,
- Finding adequate funding for both program operations and account match (the training also covers some of the ins and outs of federal IDA funding),
- Promoting the IDA program and asset building more broadly to community stakeholders, political leadership, and potential partners,
- Structuring collaborations that work and benefit accountholders,
- Negotiating with financial institutions in the set up and ongoing management of the accounts,
- Linking IDAs with other asset-building strategies that create long-term and sustainable opportunities for IDA program participants,
- Using effective and best practice information to improve the design, implementation, management and potentially expansion of IDAs,
- And more.

Assets Alliance IDA Training Institute Modules²

Module Number	Title	Session Purpose	Length
1 core	Introduction	Provides an introduction to the trainers, other participants and the Training Institute	30 – 60 minutes
2 core	Asset Building: Foundational Concepts for IDAs	Provides an overview of the relationship between income and assets, the distribution of income and assets, the positive effects of asset ownership and the history of government supported asset building in the U.S. in order to understand the case and context for IDAs.	60 – 90 minutes
3 core	IDA Program Overview	Provides an overview of what an IDA is, how it works, and the way in which a program is typically structured from both the program perspective and the accountholder perspective	90 minutes
4 core	Identifying and Understanding Target Markets and Market Segments	Provides the knowledge and skills to identify and understand target markets and market segments and the different ways in which IDA programs can be structured to meet the needs of different markets	90 minutes

² ©Assets Alliance, 2004. All rights reserved.

Module Number	Title	Session Purpose	Length
5 core	Developing IDA Program Goals and Outcomes	Provides the knowledge and skills to use the logic model as a foundation for designing and managing a program	75 -120 minutes
6	Choosing Permissible Uses	Provides an overview of permissible uses and a thoughtful framework for selecting permissible uses based on program outcomes and the needs of the target markets the IDA program serves	60 minutes
7 core	Designing the Account	Provides the knowledge and skills to design the account to meet the needs of the IDA program target markets and IDA program outcomes	120 minutes
8 core	Sustaining Accountholder Participation: Retention Strategies	Provides the skills and knowledge to design and implement strategies to promote accountholder retention and success	90 minutes
9 core	Finding, Selecting, Structuring and Managing Partnerships	Provides the skills, knowledge and tools to identify, select, structure and manage IDA program partnerships	60 - 90 minutes
10 core	Marketing the IDA Program	Provides the skills, knowledge, and framework for developing and implementing an effective and efficient marketing and recruitment strategy	90 -120 minutes
11	Troubleshooting Problems in an IDA Program	Provides an overview of the potential and typical challenges that face IDA programs and a methodology to identify true or root causes of problems within a program	75 minutes
12 core	Budgeting for an IDA Program	Provides an overview of IDA program cost data and information to develop and manage a program budget	60 minutes
13 core	Funding the IDA Program	Provides the skills and knowledge to access and use private and public funding for IDA programs.	60 minutes
14	Designing and Delivering Effective and Engaging Training	Provides the knowledge and skills to design and deliver effective and engaging financial and asset specific education	60 - 270 minutes
15	Operating and Managing IDA Collaboratives	Provides an overview of best practice information and tools to set up, operate and manage a collaborative IDA program structure	60 - 120 minutes
16	Conducting a Community and	Provides the knowledge, skills and a framework for constructing community and participant needs	60 - 270 minutes

Module Number	Title	Session Purpose	Length
	Participant Needs Assessment	assessments and methods and resources for getting the questions answered to ensure the IDA program is designed to build on the assets and meet the needs of the community and participants to be served	
17	Facilitating the Asset Purchase Process	Provides a framework and the knowledge for structuring effective policies and procedures for asset purchase	90 minutes
18	Creating an Effective Post Purchase Support Program	Provide the knowledge and tools to develop an effective post-purchase support program to ensure accountholders retain and maintain their assets	90 minutes

Additional modules are in development. Sponsors may also have custom developed modules.