Moving Forward!
Community-Based Policy and Action Plans
Hosted by First Nations Development Institute
Introduction by A-dae Briones
Presentation by Vicky Karhu, Martha Lowery, and Clayton Harvey
Announcements

• All attendees are on mute

• Questions:
  • Listen: Type in Question box and we will read
  • Q/A also at end of presentation

• Evaluation: survey will pop up when webinar ends and sent in an email. Please complete.

• Recording and attachments can be downloaded from www.firstnations.org/fnk next week.
Moving Forward!
Community-Based Policy and Action Plans
Now you have conducted your Food Sovereignty Assessment and have compiled a lot of great information from your community/tribal members. What is the best way to use this information?

Your staff’s first step is to take a serious look at what your people have told you...

Think seriously about their opinions, ideas, concerns, suggestions and the data that they have shared revealing their interest and knowledge about your local food system. Start looking for trends in the information. Discuss among yourselves what information has surprised you and how you may adjust your organizational plans to reflect what you have learned.

This is the reason you’ve reached out to your community/tribal members in the first place!
As you examine and discuss your results, pay attention to what emerges as:

- The most repeated responses from your tribe/community regarding the priority issues that you chose to ask them about.
- What new or unanticipated information have you learned?
- What information will be the most helpful to you as you develop program plans and grant proposals?
- What have your community/tribal members identified as the projects or activities that they will be most likely to participate in if your organization offers them?
- What responses are particular to your cultural context and how will you respond to that?
- Are there any issues and responses that could be the basis of proposals that you could approach your tribal or local government with for possible legislative action?
What obstacles to food sovereignty have been identified?
What can your Tribe/organization do about them?

Maybe some of these issues emerged:

• Lack of access to healthy, locally produced foods.
• Traditional food knowledge, skills and seeds are quickly disappearing.
• Healthy foods are too expensive, especially organic (chemical free) produce.
• Work with your tribe/local government to offer local foods in food service programs.

In response, your Tribe/organization may plan to:

• Establish local farmers markets.
• Hold cooking classes using cultural favorite foods.
• Hold seed saving classes.
• Identify local organic growers and ask them to teach interested citizens how to grow successful family or community gardens.
• Develop youth and elder programs for intergeneration sharing of food knowledge.
Develop an Action Plan or Proposal for Legislative Action

Once you have completely “digested” your information, put it into a succinct format that can be presented to community/tribal leaders with the goal of gaining their support for your future programs.

Create an organizational Action Plan addressing key issues, assessment results and program/project plans. You can use this plan to provide proof of community input in your grant proposals.

Be sure that you report your compiled results and Action Plan back to your communities!

Many community leaders, National Council Representatives and community members expressed that they would devote time to improving the food system and preserving the traditional knowledge. They expressed difficulty in being able to get transportation to programs in Okmulgee. They are willing to share resources in most communities, especially the southern, rural ones. Citizens have land that is not being used that they would like to see food grown on.

Steps we can take:

❖ Access resources that will stimulate local food production
❖ Identify resources for farming equipment, supplies and labor
❖ Provide a tilling service to families and communities
❖ Establish and assist communities in establishing community and family gardens
❖ Establish and assist communities in establishing farmers’ markets.
❖ Take our programs into the communities, especially the rural ones
❖ Provide educational programs to teach organic gardening methods
❖ Create a native food cookbook to encourage using the traditional (whole) foods
❖ Provide cultural educational programs celebrating the Mvskoke food heritage.
❖ Record as much traditional knowledge as possible
❖ Host or assist communities in hosting monthly traditional meals
❖ Access resources that will stimulate local food production

Excerpt from Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative Action Plan
Evaluate Your Food Sovereignty Assessment Process!

As a final step, take time to evaluate yourselves:

- Do you feel that the responses you got were honest and candid?
- Did your presentation methods make people comfortable and encourage participation?
- Did the questions that you chose produce useful information for your organizational/tribal program planning or proposals for future actives or legislative action?
- What things would you change for the next time your gather information from your tribe/community?
- Is there information that your wish you had included?
- What things worked the best?

Now you are ready to move forward using information that is current and generated from your own tribal/community members.

GOOD LUCK!!!

And Thank You for attending these webinars!
CHAHTA FOUNDATION

Chahta Illimpa Project
(Choctaw Food Project)

Food Sovereignty Assessment Grant
First Nations Development Institute
CHAHTA ILLIMPA PROJECT

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHOCTAW NATION

• Federally recognized tribe, over 175,000 tribal members
• 10 ½ counties in the southeastern quadrant of Oklahoma, totaling 10,864 square miles
• Mostly categorized by USDA as rural or extremely rural
• StrikeForce and Promise Zone designations signify persistent poverty of over 20%, low economic growth, and low levels of academic attainment
• Childhood poverty within the Tribe’s boundaries is over 30.6%, compared to 21% nationally
• Over 1/3 of the adults have less than a 12th Grade education
• Childhood food insecurity in the Choctaw Nation is over 29.5%
• Over 40% of Choctaw children are being raised by grandparents
• Over 31% of Choctaw children are being raised by single parents
1. Onboard Tribal and Community Partners

2. Create Survey

3. IRB Process Led To Surprise Development

4. Finalize Survey and Data To Be Collected

5. Distribute Survey
   - Hard Copy at Tribal events and venues
   - Electronic survey
   - Survey Collection and Storage
   - Data Entry and Analysis

6. Report results to partners and stakeholders

7. Engage partners and stakeholders, plus tribal leadership, to weigh in on creation of Tribal Food Sovereignty Strategic Plan
CHAHTA ILLIMPA PROJECT
ONBOARDING TRIBAL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

• Grant period of 12 months began 04/01/2016
• Partners and stakeholders identified and recruited to the project during the writing of the proposal
• Partners and stakeholders were selected because they represented:
  - tribal food-related programs, both consumer- and producer- oriented
  - “typical” local (residing within tribal jurisdiction) Choctaw tribal members
  - regional community members and their needs
• We met with partners/stakeholders extensively (in person, conference calls, group emails) during the first three months to decide on:
  • Data points to collect via our survey
  • Data points to try to collect from tribal food-related programs to provide big-picture data about local food systems
  • Where/how we would distribute survey
  • Data collection and storage methods
  • How/when we report findings
CHAHTA ILLIMPA PROJECT

CREATING THE SURVEY

• Relied heavily upon the First Nations FSAT—invaluable resource and why recreate the wheel?
• Solicited input from culturally diverse college interns to create sample questions
• Solicited input from partners to cull/refine/approve the sample questions as well as create new ones to be used in needs assessment survey distributed to 4,000 tribal members
• Presented final list of survey questions to Foundation Board, representatives of Choctaw Nation food-related programs, Tribal leadership, and community members for approval/feedback
IRB Process Leads to Surprise Development

• Two weeks into our grant, we were notified by the Choctaw Nation Institutional Review Board (IRB) that we would be required to attain their approval to carry out the surveys and data collection/analysis proposed in our grant.

• IRB approval process took about three weeks and was painless. Required a detailed presentation of the data we would be collecting, who we would be gathering data on, how we would get the data, and what we would do with the data. It proved to be a great exercise to get our team and partners to really think about how the survey and the project would be best executed.

• Presenting our project to the IRB (several very influential tribal elders sit on the Board) helped generate conversation and lots of positive interest around our efforts.
IRB Process Leads to Surprise Development

• Another huge bonus resulting from presenting to the IRB: IRB put us in touch with a professor at the University of Oklahoma who had just completed a 2-year study on food security and wellness on 1,200 Choctaw tribal members. Her study was conducted for academic purposes, as her dissertation, and was not associated with the Tribe at all. Therefore, nobody at the Tribe knew about her research! Professor Jernigan shared her research data with us and we used the information as a springboard for our needs assessment.

• Win-win! Dr. Jernigan was happy her research would have meaning because it would be used by the Tribe to affect positive change, and we were happy because her research would help us identify and target issues within our food systems.

• Lesson learned: no matter how well you’ve researched prior efforts of your Tribe, you may be surprised to learn that somebody has already started the research in a separate project that you knew nothing about. Be flexible and open to collaboration—it helped us and will help our tribal members!
CHAHTA ILLIMPA PROJECT

DISTRIBUTING SURVEY

• Annual Labor Day Festival (over 10,000 visitors over the 3-day weekend festival, most of whom are Choctaw tribal members)

• Choctaw Nation Community Centers—twelve throughout the 10 ½ counties. Lunches held every Wednesday

• Tribal events, traditional craft demonstrations, language classes, events put on by partners (usually Choctaw Nation food-related programs)

• Electronic surveys online—Chahta Foundation website and Choctaw Nation website (coming this week)

• Offices of partnering programs distribute our survey to their clients

• ALL survey respondents are eligible to win several incentives for participating in the survey
It’s important to keep the conversation alive about the project and this initiative, so that tribal members remain engaged and eager to read the Strategic Plan once it is distributed in April. Food sovereignty is something that we have learned is easy to become complacent about, and we don’t want to lose the momentum we have gained in getting people to think and talk about food sovereignty. To keep communication open and beneficiaries engaged, we conduct:

• Monthly conference calls
• Regular emails
• In-person meetings
• Update partners on progress so they can share with their clients
CHAHTA ILLIMPA PROJECT

CREATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN:

• Currently wrapping up data collection phase (with release of electronic survey on websites, we should have about 1,000 more survey results to tabulate)

• Data entry phase has been ongoing since November; some trends are beginning to appear in the data but still too early to report on them at this point

• Food systems realities are not what we assumed at the start of this project—it’s important to be flexible and open to a shift in direction, depending on where data takes you!

• Once data entry phase is complete, we will conduct data analysis with the pro-bono help of a data analyst and statistician

• Resulting data analysis = framework for tribal-wide Food Sovereignty Strategic Plan, to be finalized and distributed by April 30, 2017
FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ASSESSMENT

ON THE FORT APACHE RESERVATION

NDEE BIKIYAA, THE PEOPLES’ FARM
WHO IS NDEE BIKIYAA?

THE MISSION OF NDEE BIKIYAA (THE PEOPLE’S FARM) IS TO RESTORE PERSONAL AND CULTURAL HEALTH AMONG THE WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE THROUGH AGRICULTURE

• WE ARE LOCATED ON THE FORT APACHE RESERVATION IN NORTH CENTRAL ARIZONA, BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN YOUTH AND ELDER.

• WE BELIEVE IN COMMUNITY, HOSTING A SERIES OF FARM WORKSHOPS, FARMERS MARKET AND YOUTH LED OUTREACH.

• WE ARE THE ONLY TRIBAL OWNED FARM WITH THE USDA’S GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES.
WHAT IS A FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ASSESSMENT?

• A TOOL THAT DETERMINES YOUR COMMUNITY’S FOOD SYSTEMS
• GAGES KNOWLEDGE OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS
• HELPS ENTITIES LIKE THE FARM, FOOD PRODUCERS, AND HEALTH EDUCATORS TO FILL THE KNOWLEDGE GAPS AND DEVELOP CURRICULUM.
• ESTABLISHES A BASELINE FOR GRANT APP
HOW TO CONDUCT A ASSESSMENT

1. Identify your audience
2. Decide your format of survey
3. Phrase questions that reflect your community
4. Ask simple questions
5. Be a real person
6. Provide incentives
BENEFITS OF A FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ASSESSMENT

A better understanding of your community needs when it comes to access of healthy fresh food.

- education
- Access to fresh foods

Grants

- Data
- Concrete information of your community’s needs
LESSONS FROM NDEE BIKIYAA’S 1ST FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ASSESSMENT

- NDEE BIKIYAA USED FIRST NATIONS TEMPLATE FOR THE ASSESSMENT
- SURVEYED 192 COMMUNITY MEMBERS FROM 13 DIFFERENT TRIBAL COMMUNITIES
- GAINED VALUABLE INFORMATION, ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE DESIRE FOR MORE EFFORTS LIKE NDEE BIKIYAA

- FROM A REPORT ON THE ASSESSMENT: “85 PEOPLE, 46%, RANKED FARMERS’ MARKETS AS ‘VERY IMPORTANT’ FOOD SOURCES (FIGURE 11), AND 36 PEOPLE, 19%, REPORTED THAT THEY DO NOT EXIST IN THEIR COMMUNITIES (FIGURE 12). THIS PRESENTS A CONUNDRUM, IN THAT THERE IS ONE FARMERS’ MARKET ON THE RESERVATION, IN WHITERIVER, WHERE ONLY 20 RESPONDENTS REPORTED LIVING (LEAVING ALMOST 180 OTHER RESPONDENTS). THIS INDICATES THAT FOOD SOURCES THAT ARE VALUED HIGHLY, THAT IS, THAT ARE CONSIDERED “VERY IMPORTANT,” MAY NOT AND MANY TIMES DO NOT EXIST IN THE COMMUNITIES WHERE PEOPLE VALUE THEM. THIS MEANS THAT PEOPLE MAY BE TRAVELING TO OTHER COMMUNITIES TO ACCESS THESE FOOD SOURCES, AS SHOWN IN FIGURE 4 (P. 8), SINCE MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS (68%) OF RESPONDENTS REPORTED GOING TO WALMART, LOCATED IN SHOW LOW AND OFF OF TRIBAL LANDS, TO DO THEIR FOOD SHOPPING. THIS ALSO MAY DEMONSTRATE COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR FOOD SOURCES SUCH AS COMMUNITY, SCHOOL, AND TRIBAL...
Lessons from Ndee Bikiyaa’s 1st food sovereignty assessment, cont’d

• GOING FORWARD WITH OTHER FOOD SOVEREIGNTY OR FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT EFFORTS COULD MEAN:
  
  • TRYING TO GET A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE, WHICH WOULD ALLOW GENERALIZATION TO THE ENTIRE POPULATION (WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRUST LANDS, IN THIS CASE) FROM THE RESULTS
  
  • EDITING THE CURRENT SURVEY INSTRUMENT TO COLLECT SIMILAR DATA, AND ADD NEW QUESTIONS AS WELL. ASKING SIMILAR QUESTIONS THROUGH TIME ALLOWS YOU TO SEE HOW AND IF THINGS HAVE CHANGED SINCE THE Last TIME YOU DID THE SURVEY.
EXAMPLE OF POSSIBLE QUESTION EDIT

• EDITING QUESTIONS FROM THE 1ST EFFORT THAT PROVED DIFFICULT TO INTERPRET
  • E.G., THE QUESTION, “WHERE DO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY SHOP FOR MOST OF YOUR FOOD?”
  • IS THE PERSON ANSWERING FOR THEMSELVES? FOR THEIR NUCLEAR FAMILY? FOR THEIR
    EXTENDED FAMILY? ARE THEY PROVIDING ONE ANSWER? AS MANY ANSWERS AS THEY
    WANT? WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU WANT TO GET OUT OF THE QUESTION?

• A POSSIBLE REVISION:
  1) DOES YOUR HOUSEHOLD BUY THE MAJORITY OF ITS FOOD AT ONE STORE? Y / N
     A) IF Y, AT WHAT STORE DOES YOUR HOUSEHOLD BUY MOST OF ITS FOOD? _______________
     B) IF N, HOW MANY STORES DOES YOUR HOUSEHOLD FREQUENT TO BUY THE MAJORITY OF ITS FOOD?
        1: NAME
        2: NAME
        3: NAME
        4: NAME
        5 OR MORE: NAME
  2) HOW OFTEN DOES YOUR HOUSEHOLD MAKE TRIPS TO THE STORE TO BUY FOOD?
     DAILY    WEEKLY    BIWEEKLY    MONTHLY
QUESTIONS?

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK: NDEE BIKIYAA

WEBSITE: HTTP://WMAT.US/WMAT_FARM_WEBSITE/NDEEBIKIYAA_HOME.HTML
Questions?
Thank You!

Feel free to contact me with any questions you may have as you continue your work.

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THANK YOU JOINING OUR WEBINAR TODAY!

Recording and attachments can be downloaded from www.firstnations.org/fnk next week

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