DEFINITIONS

Assets: Community assets can be used to improve quality of life. They are resources that currently exist in the community that can be used to help meet community needs. Community assets include organizations, people, partnerships, facilities, funding, policies, regulations, and a community’s collective experience. Any positive aspect of the community is an asset that can be leveraged to develop effective solutions.

Community Engagement: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines community engagement as "the process of working collaboratively with groups of people who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interests or similar situations with respect to issues affecting their well-being."

Health is a state of complete physical, social and mental well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Health is created in the community through social, economic and environmental factors as well as individual behaviors and biology.

Health disparities are population-based differences in health outcomes (e.g., women have more breast cancer than men do). Although the term “disparities” is often interpreted to mean racial or ethnic disparities, many dimensions of disparity exist in the United States, particularly in health. If a health outcome is seen to a greater or lesser extent between populations, there is disparity. Race or ethnicity, sex, sexual identity, age, disability, socioeconomic status, and geographic location all contribute to an individual’s ability to achieve good health.

Health equity: Equity in health is the absence of disparities health, or in the major social determinants of health between groups with different levels of underlying social advantage/disadvantage. Inequities in health put groups people who are already socially disadvantaged at further disadvantage with respect to their health, which is essential to wellbeing and to overcoming other effects of social disadvantage. Health equity can be achieved when every person has the opportunity to "attain their full health potential and no one is disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances."

Health improvement is defined in two ways: improving health and well-being indicators, quality of life, and reducing health disparities. Progress will be determined through effective policies, interventions and practices over the short-term, through improvements in health care, health behaviors, physical environment, social determinants of health, and social determinants of health inequity over the intermediate term, and measurable changes in health and well-being outcomes and reduction in disparities over the long-term.
**Health focus**: rationale could include data that highlights inequities in health outcomes and/or the social, cultural, economic, or physical community conditions that drive inequitable health outcomes patterned, systemic set of negative health outcomes experienced by a community that is bound by geographic location, race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or other physical, cultural or social characteristics.

**Health inequities**: are differences in health status between more socially advantaged and less socially advantaged groups, caused by systematic differences in social conditions and processes that effectively determine health; health inequities are not only unnecessary and avoidable but, in addition, are considered unfair and unjust.

**Limited access to resources**: rationale could include lack of foundations, funders, corporate sponsors, or government support; low number of non-profit, non-government organizations; lower property tax base or other socioeconomic indicators; a history of systemic marginalization; limited access to educational opportunities, employment opportunities, or health related services.

**Partnership/coalition**: A group involving multiple sectors of the community, coming together to address community needs and solve community problems. Coalitions are:

- Partnerships of the many sectors of community
- Which gather together collaboratively
- To solve community’s problems
- And guide the community’s future

**Social determinants of health**: The circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age; and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life (including economics; social policies such as education and housing; and politics including power and decision-making,) that effectively enhance or impede access to opportunities for health, based on social hierarchies of advantage and disadvantage (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender).

See: [http://www.who.int/social_determinants/corner/SDHDP2.pdf](http://www.who.int/social_determinants/corner/SDHDP2.pdf)