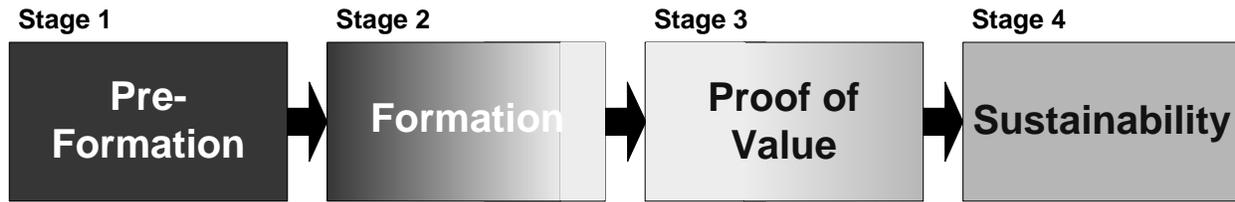




In the early Stages on-site technical assistance occurs more frequently, primarily to build the relationships and trust necessary for off-site technical assistance to be successful. As the consumers develop their sustainable organization (whatever form they choose), on-site technical assistance is less necessary, and frequent off-site communication and engagement occur to support the consumer voice and movement.



On-Site TA	Off-Site TA
<p>No organization formally exists. There is a feeling of great need, and individual consumers have begun to emerge as known advocates, perhaps in small groups. Consumers desire to be included and to provider leadership regarding the future of mental health services. Consumers, however, are “accessed” haphazardly and individually to provide their voice, rather than being empowered to share their voice collectively in solidarity. Efforts to organize further often fall short due to overwhelming barriers.</p>	<p>Consumers have formed an organization. In the early stages, it may not be incorporated. Towards the later stages of this phase, the effort becomes incorporated as a non-profit, or perhaps as a subsidiary of an “umbrella” organization. The group of consumers represented has grown, and common themes and priorities regarding needs and expectations have emerged. A vision and mission of the effort have been articulated. More advanced efforts have developed a business plan and are seeking seed funding to bring the organization to life with dedicated staff.</p> <p>The organization has incorporated and has been given seed funding, or committed funding, for at least 3 years. The focus, now, is to prove that the endeavor is worthwhile. Consumers do not get a free pass, and must implement tried and true practices to ensure that their organization is investment-worthy. The Board of Directors is strong. The programs and services are well-defined, and evaluation mechanisms are in place to capture value that can be shared. Marketing efforts exist, and extra effort is placed on ensuring that consumers are well-prepared to serve in the roles in which they now perform. The organization seeks to have key stakeholders and funding partners say, “This was a good investment, and we want to continue giving this organization funding.”</p> <p>As the months go by, the organization is continually fulfilling its mission and striving for its vision. It knows how to be an organization. It knows that the stakes are higher, because real money (perhaps tax dollars) is being invested in the organization. It has a sophisticated awareness that it needs to be accountable, not just to the consumers it serves, but to the sources of funding. It realizes that this delicate balance must be maintained, and it strategically forms relationships and collaborative arrangements with new organizations, new funding entities, and policy makers. It seeks positive press and leverages social media very effectively to build its brand. It is able to tell a story of effective growth and management, and new donors and funding agencies confidently place their donations and contract funds with this organization, knowing that their funds are well-allocated through this organization.</p>

In order to effectively deploy a finite amount of resources to assist the mental health consumers of many states, CAFÉ TAC will be utilizing an approach that not only leverages the EOE Model, but first understands the stage that each consumer population is at, and the corresponding level of engagement, support, and assistance needed within each state.

The following table includes a list of key milestones and corresponding questions and objectives that imply an increasing level of organizational capacity and competency necessary to empower the consumer voice within each state. CAFÉ TAC has identified this list of milestones based on its experience building consumer-driven capacity among peers and consumers in the states that CAFÉ TAC has served during its current SAMHSA grant. This table represents the tool that The CAFÉ TAC will use to understand the situation and context of the mental health consumer voice within each state. With a clear understanding, CAFÉ TAC can then design the level and types of engagement necessary to meet consumers at the level they are at, and empower them using the EOE Model to advance the consumer voice in their state. Circumstances within a state will undoubtedly have many more variables to consider beyond the milestones and related objectives described below, but these key milestones represent the proven growth path of consumer-driven capacity, and thus provide the primary focus for technical assistance. Customization and flexibility are a key part of our approach.

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Key Milestone, or Level of Development</b>	<b>Corresponding Questions and Related Objectives</b>	<b>Level of TA Engagement</b>

Stage	Key Milestone, or Level of Development	Corresponding Questions and Related Objectives	Level of TA Engagement
-1, 1	<i>A group of at least 15 consumers have established themselves as an informal network and are requesting inclusion in the state's system of services.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did the group of consumers form on their own, or were they formed by an outside entity?</li> <li>2. Is there an articulated vision for what this group wants to accomplish?</li> <li>3. Are there roles and responsibilities among the group members, and what holds them accountable?</li> <li>4. Is this group acknowledged by any stakeholders?</li> </ol>	<p>Anything short of this first milestone means that strategic groundwork needs to be established. Consumers must be engaged and informed about a potential path towards empowerment by creating a consumer—driven organization, and they must be given the choice to choose this path. A combination of on-site and off-site engagement will be necessary, with greater emphasis on on-site assistance to build trust and rapport.</p>

Stage	Key Milestone, or Level of Development	Corresponding Questions and Related Objectives	Level of TA Engagement
1, 1+	<p><i>A network of consumers (often called a Peer Network, for example) exists and is striving to be acknowledged as a key stakeholder.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the group have a leadership infrastructure?</li> <li>2. Does the group have Bylaws or other rules of engagement?</li> <li>3. Is the group representative of the entire state?</li> <li>4. Does the state recognize the group as a relevant stakeholder?</li> <li>5. Does the group communicate with a broader constituency?</li> <li>6. What is the mission and vision?</li> </ol>	<p>On-site technical assistance is still crucial, along with off-site TA. At this delicate point in time, consumers are typically hopeful but not confident. TA focuses on helping consumers build confidence around their vision and the process of pursuing that vision. The goal is to empower the consumer network to make a commitment to pursue a more sustainable form of organization, if that is what they desire to do.</p>

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Key Milestone, or Level of Development</b>	<b>Corresponding Questions and Related Objectives</b>	<b>Level of TA Engagement</b>
-2, 2	<i>A more formal organization exists, but has not yet been incorporated. The State looks to this group as an up-and-coming partner, but needs this group to show more signals of dependability before truly investing additional resources in it.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How does the group communicate such that a statewide consumer voice is being represented?</li> <li>2. What deliverables will attract state funding?</li> <li>3. What traction does the group have? For example, what accomplishments or initiatives has the group delivered?</li> <li>4. What level of credibility do outside stakeholders assign to this group?</li> <li>5. What is the mission and vision?</li> </ol>	TA efforts would focus primarily on strengthening the leadership such that a concerted effort could be made towards incorporating, and beginning to demonstrate that the consumer-driven organization is worthy of investment. On-site planning meetings would be necessary, but the primary planning effort would be conducted via GoToMeeting webinars with the facilitator and a planning group of consumers and peers.

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Key Milestone, or Level of Development</b>	<b>Corresponding Questions and Related Objectives</b>	<b>Level of TA Engagement</b>
2, 2+	<i>The previously unincorporated group of consumers has now incorporated with their state's Secretary of State. A business plan is still being articulated, but a clear vision exists to guide the planning.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the Board of Directors strong, culturally competent, and representative of the state?</li> <li>2. As a working Board (in this early stage), does the Board know what initiatives to focus on that will attract future investments?</li> <li>3. How is the business plan being written and how is the business plan going to achieve the vision?</li> <li>4. What services and roles will this organization deliver such that it fulfills its mission?</li> </ol>	<p>Now that the consumer voice has a home within an incorporated organization, it must practice being an incorporated organization. The Board is a working Board, because there is no budget for staff. Therefore, Board development and coaching is needed, and is accomplished with a blend of on-site and off-site TA. The goal is to work through a business planning process that will result in an investment-worthy plan.</p>

Stage	Key Milestone, or Level of Development	Corresponding Questions and Related Objectives	Level of TA Engagement
-3, 3	<p><i>The Board of Directors is a working Board, meaning that there are no staff or employees to do the work of the organization. The main goal is of the Board, then, is to attract funding in the form of donations, grants, and contracts. The organization needs seed funding, and once it attains it, the organization must deliver value.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What possible funding sources are available to the organization?</li> <li>2. What must the organization do to secure funding?</li> <li>3. How is the Board pursuing the funding sources?</li> <li>4. The business plan should be written, and will now be used as the main tool for approaching potential sources of funding.</li> </ol>	<p>The organization needs startup funding, or seed funding. It needs committed funds for three years, to give it an opportunity to hire staff and deliver what it has said it will deliver. TA focuses on coaching the organization to pursue funding, and on-site visits are focused on training the Board to pursue funding. Role-modeling is important. Off-site TA continues to empower the leaders to pursue their initial funding sources.</p>

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Key Milestone, or Level of Development</b>	<b>Corresponding Questions and Related Objectives</b>	<b>Level of TA Engagement</b>
3, 3+	<i>Seed funding has been secured, and the organization is now able to hire staff and deliver the services and value that have been articulated in the business plan. The primary focus is to do the job well, and prove that the funding was well-invested in this organization.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What funding does the organization have?</li> <li>2. What is the organization accountable for, with respect to the funding?</li> <li>3. How are staff recruited and hired?</li> <li>4. What programs and services are being designed and delivered, and how will they be measured?</li> <li>5. Does the Board know its role to ensure that operations go well?</li> </ol>	<p>The organization is now funded and has the responsibility to deliver solid programs and services to fulfill its mission. TA focuses on coaching and guidance with respect to delivering high quality programs and services. TA can guide the Board through the hiring process to ensure that the right talent is brought into the organization.</p> <p>Additionally, TA can providing ongoing coaching and guidance to help the Board and staff successfully deliver what needs to be done—the organization needs to prove that when it is given a dollar, it transforms that dollar into value for consumers and other stakeholders.</p>

Stage	Key Milestone, or Level of Development	Corresponding Questions and Related Objectives	Level of TA Engagement
-4, 4	<p><i>The organization has 6-12 months of operations under its belt and now has early measurements that demonstrate value. It now needs to implement its sustainability plan, which is to tell its success story to its investors, and to continue to deliver excellent programs and services. The primary focus is to build momentum and prove that the organization is a dependable go-to partner in the system of mental health services.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What measurements exist that demonstrate the delivery of value?</li> <li>2. Is there a strong relationship with the entities that provided startup funding? Do organization representatives communicate frequently with them?</li> <li>3. After the easy “stuff” has been done, do the Board and staff know how to keep the “pedal to the metal” and keep delivering great value? In other words, what’s next?</li> <li>4. Is the statewide consumer voice building momentum, and are stakeholders taking notice?</li> </ol>	<p>TA during this Stage is focused on coaching and guiding the organization with respect to relationship maintenance, and positioning the organization to tell its story to existing and future investors. On-site TA is not as necessary, but still occurs to help sustain the organization primarily by encouraging the leaders, as well as equipping them with tools and insights to help them manage the organization effectively.</p> <p>Empowerment is key. TA is delivered through off-site means, as well, to maintain frequent communication with key staff and Board members to help them navigate challenges.</p>

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Key Milestone, or Level of Development</b>	<b>Corresponding Questions and Related Objectives</b>	<b>Level of TA Engagement</b>
4, 4+	<p><i>The organization has 18-24 months of operations under its belt and now has consistent measurements that demonstrate value. Momentum is gaining, and stakeholders are seeking out the organization to collaborate with it. The organization has proven that it is capable and that it is investment-worthy. The consumer-voice now has built an effective and sustainable mechanism through which it can be an active and equal leader within the system of mental health services.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the brand of the organization, and how well has this brand been pushed to every corner of the state?</li> <li>2. What's next? How will the organization continue to impress its network partners in the next few years?</li> <li>3. What are the organization's capacity needs to ensure that it continues to excel?</li> <li>4. How is the organization developing new sources of revenue?</li> </ol>	<p>The future of the organization is only as good as its ability to continue to meet the expectations of stakeholders. The Board and staff need to be reminded of this principle. The focus of TA is to guide and coach the organization to understand what it needs in order to continue to excel, and to support the staff and Board to continue to evolve and solidify its policies and processes to ensure excellent service delivery. TA is primarily off-site, especially for established organizations. For existing organizations that are well-established and sustainable, TA can serve as a source of quality assurance, capacity-building, best practice sharing, support for complex challenges, and encouragement for the design and pursuit of the next level of vision.</p>