



**Guide to Measuring
Community
Core Capacities for
Comprehensive Change
Initiatives**

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Development of Community**

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Committed to building the capacity of organizations and institutions to develop the health, economic equity, and social justice of communities.

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Introduction

Bringing about broad and important changes for children, families and communities is at the heart of the *Making Connections* initiative, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Having committed to stimulating and sustaining positive transformation of neighborhoods and the strengthening of families to achieve positive results for children, the 10 *Making Connections* sites worked to achieve these results by creating “connections” to economic opportunities, to deeper social networks, and to quality services and supports in their neighborhoods.

From the outset, the *Making Connections* initiative built in a focus on underlying “Core Capacities” that would be needed to help communities develop and implement appropriate strategies as well as to achieve and sustain desired outcomes. The Annie E. Casey Foundation believed that by identifying and developing these critical core capacities, the initiative would be well positioned for lasting success and impact.

The Foundation asked the Association for the Study and Development of Community (ASDC) to develop this guide to help those involved in *Making Connections* as well as similar community change initiatives understand and assess how well they are building these core capacities in their communities.. The guide offers a systematic way of determining if each of the Core Capacities is present in a community change effort and to identify gaps that may need to be addressed. The guide can be used with its companion volume, *Understanding and Measuring Community “Core Capacities”* that ASDC developed to define what is meant by “capacity” and the specific elements of each core community capacity.

The “Core Capacities”

There are eight core capacities that the Annie E. Casey Foundation and its local partners identified at the beginning of the initiative as being critical to the success of the work in *Making Connections* sites. These capacities are:

- Shared Vision
- Resident Leadership
- Strategic Partnerships
- Powerful Strategies
- Transforming Public Systems
- Learning and Use of Data
- Communication
- Governance

Three additional capacities were added by ASDC in collaboration with the Foundation based on ASDC’s experience and research on creating successful community initiatives:

- Cross-Cultural Competency
- Community Capacity Building
- Conflict Transformation

The Structure of this Guide

This guide is divided into eleven sections—one section for each capacity. Each section includes: (1) an overview of the capacity and the measurement tools associated with that capacity, (2) a questionnaire for assessing the capacity, and (3) a method for measuring a site's success in building that capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Capacity

Each capacity includes a questionnaire that will assist a site in assessing its strengths in specific areas that research has shown to be important in building that capacity. The questionnaires contain a set of questions that can be used several different ways to help a group of partners examine the extent to which their partnership has built a particular capacity:

1) An individual (e.g., the local initiative director, a community leader) could use the assessment form to evaluate the capacity. This is the easiest approach but one that will provide limited evidence of the strength of the capacity since the results are based on the perspectives of only one knowledgeable person.

2) A number of people involved in neighborhood change initiative could fill out the questionnaire and the results tabulated to provide an average score. By having more than one knowledgeable individual fill out the questionnaire, the initiative team will be more confident that the results reflect the true strength of the capacity. Instructions for tabulating and analyzing the results are included with each questionnaire.

3) The questionnaire may also be used as a discussion guide. Rather than asking participants fill out the form individually, a group of people (e.g., local partners, community residents) could discuss each element, explore their different viewpoints, and establish a common understanding about the capacity and their expectations of the partnership. Such a discussion could occur during a regularly scheduled meeting or at a specially scheduled event. It is recommended that a skilled person be engaged to facilitate the process should the assessment form be used in a group setting.

Strategy for Measuring Success

The strategy for measuring success provides a feasible way to determine if a given capacity has been built. The recommended strategy for each capacity will provide a stronger level of evidence for the presence of that capacity than the questionnaire alone. Instructions for implementing the strategy are included and are designed to enable a member of the initiative to manage the assessment process. Where specific expertise is needed, such as group facilitation or data analysis, it is noted. While a local partnership may choose to look for a consultant or outside expert to perform these tasks, it is possible that the needed expertise resides within the partnership (e.g., a skilled resident leader, or local academic partner).

To the extent possible, we have broken down the success strategies into simple step-by-step instructions. Still, a look at some of the resources that are provided will provide a fuller understanding of the complexities and nuances that may accompany the recommended strategy.

How to Use the Guide

There are several ways a community change initiative may approach assessing these capacities. A site may want to get a “big picture” look at how well the initiative has built the collective set of capacities. If so, the questionnaires for all 11 capacities can be completed (by one or more initiative participants). The results will show which capacities are relatively strong and which ones need to be strengthened. Or the local collaborative may choose to be more selective and focus on measuring those capacities that are most important to their work. If participants believe they have excelled at building a particular capacity, use the tools for measuring success to ensure that the capacity has been effectively cultivated. Therefore, a site may pick and choose a handful of capacities to investigate or it may decide to assess the acquisition of all of the capacities. Which approach is taken depends on time and resource constraints as well as existing strategic priorities.

Methods

To measure the core community capacities, we are primarily recommending the use of four widely used data collection techniques: questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and content analysis. In this section we provide you with a brief definition of each technique as well as an assessment of each technique’s advantages and disadvantages (see Table 1). We offer this information to help you understand why we recommend these methods rather than others. Next, we make explicit our assumptions regarding the resources and pragmatic issues associated with measuring each community capacity to help you better understand why, for example, we suggest conducting individual interviews for one capacity and focus groups for another. Finally, for those of you interested in gaining more in-depth skills and knowledge about how to use these methods, we provide a list of resources.

Why these Methods?

The recommended methods are widely used in the human services field specifically and the social sciences more broadly. Questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups are versatile tools that can be used to investigate a range of issues. These techniques can be used to gather information about factual matters, attitudes or opinions, perceptions, future expectations, etc. Content analysis is a useful technique for obtaining information from available data such as written documents. Definitions are provided in Table 1, along with a brief assessment of each method’s advantages and disadvantages.

Table 1. An Overview of Methods: Questionnaires, Interviews, Focus Groups, Content Analysis^a

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Questionnaire</p> <p>Definition: A questionnaire contains written questions that people respond to directly on the questionnaire form itself, without the aid of an interviewer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used to gather data less expensively and more quickly than with interviews • Can be mailed to respondents, allowing data collection from a geographically dispersed sample • May provide more accurate answers than interviews, with questions of a personal or sensitive nature • Eliminates the problem of interviewer bias (i.e., when an interviewer influences a person's response to a question) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not measure thoughts, feelings, and behaviors directly; measures only what people <i>say</i> about their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors • Requires a minimal degree of literacy and facility in English that some respondents may not possess • Must contain questions simple enough to be comprehended on the basis of printed instructions • Provides no opportunity to probe for more information or evaluate nonverbal behavior of respondent • Introduces non-response bias (i.e., people who do not complete the questionnaire differ from those who do, thus the answers do not represent everyone)
<p>Interview</p> <p>Definition: An interview involves reading or asking questions to respondents and recording their answers. Interviews can be conducted either in person or over the telephone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can help motivate respondents to give more accurate and complete information • Affords the opportunity to explain questions that respondents may not otherwise understand • Allows for more control over the respondent through presence of the interviewer (i.e., interviewer ensures respondent is answering questions) • Provides a more flexible form of data collection than questionnaires (e.g., style can be tailored to needs of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents cost issues (interviewers must be hired, trained, and equipped) • Presents time issues (start-up time for developing questions, designing schedules, and training interviewers; travel time; time for callbacks) • Introduces interviewer bias (i.e., interviewers may misinterpret or mis-record a response because of their own personal feelings; the characteristics of a respondent can influence the way in which the interviewer asks questions and interprets

	<p>study)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for collection of observational information in addition to respondent answers (i.e., attitude, honesty, emotion) 	<p>responses)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces the possibility of variation in wording from one interview to the next or among interviewers, which can create variation in response unrelated to the respondents' thoughts about the issues under investigation
<p>Focus group</p> <p>Definition: A focus group is an interview with a whole group of people at the same time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a more flexible, less expensive, and more rapid method for generating results as compared to more structured, single-person interviews • Allows for interaction among people to stimulate ideas and encourage group members to participate • Useful for obtaining information about very personal or subjective experiences that require a less structured interaction to be fully understood 	<p>As compared to single-person interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results are less generalizable to a larger population • Data are more difficult and subjective to analyze • Quantitative data are less likely to be generated
<p>Content analysis</p> <p>Definition: Content analysis refers to a method of transforming the symbolic content of a document, such as words or other images, from a qualitative, unsystematic form to a quantitative, systematic form. It is a form of coding (i.e., categorizing behaviors or elements into a limited number of categories).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a useful method for analyzing written and visual materials • Provides a useful method for identifying ideas and issues of concern or importance to a group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents a potential challenge related to accessing needed documents • Presents a potential challenge related to consistent availability of the full range of materials needed • Presents a potential challenge related to determining criteria for analysis • Requires extensive staff time to organize, read, code, and analyze data

^a Monette, D. R., Sullivan, T. J., & DeJong, C.R. (1998). *Applied Social Research: Tools for the Human Services* (4th ed.). New York: Harcourt Brace College Publisher.

Why these Methods for these Capacities?

In recommending particular methods for measuring success, a number of factors were considered. The primary goal was to identify the most robust method for measuring success that was both feasible and cost-effective. The recommended methods listed in the guide may not be the ones that would provide the strongest level of evidence if sites had significant resources and ready access to expertise to devote to evaluation. The recommended methods for measuring capacity success, however, are those that will provide a reasonable level of evidence *and* are most likely to be implemented given a limited evaluation capacity and limited resources.

As with any evaluation effort, there are multiple ways to collect data. There are pros and cons associated with each method, and choice of method will affect the reliability and validity of the results as well as how inclusive the process is, how long it will take, what it will cost, and the required expertise. In selecting the methods for measuring success that are included in this guide, we sought to maximize the reliability and validity of the data collected while minimizing the cost and expertise needed. For instance, with Shared Vision, one way to measure if the vision is truly shared within the community would be to conduct a community-wide survey. While this method would determine if the initiative's vision has become a common language in the community, it is very resource-intensive. Therefore, content analysis is recommended as a more feasible means of determining if the vision is truly shared.

How Do I Learn More about these Methods?

Sage Publications is a respected source for research, methods, statistics, and evaluation products. To review their products online, visit <http://www.sagepub.com>. Specific publications are most easily found by typing the method of interest (i.e., interview, focus group) into the "Browse Sage" field. We have found the following publications particularly useful in our work:

Fink, A. (2005). *How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-by-step Guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Fink, A. (2002). *The Survey Kit*. (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Krueger, R. (2000). *Focus Groups* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Morgan, D. (1997). *The Focus Group Kit: Volumes 1-6*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Neuendorf, K. (2001). *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Weber, R. (1990). *Basic Content Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

I. Shared Vision Assessment Instruments

Definition of Shared Vision Capacity

Shared vision capacity is the ability to create and sustain a collective vision and common purpose.

Reason for Measuring

When a community change initiative is successful in creating and promoting a shared vision within the broader community, the intended results for families and children are more likely to be achieved. A shared vision among those participating in a community change initiative influences priorities and resource allocation among the public and private sectors. Where there are infrastructure gaps, new institutions are created to fulfill the community vision. Nontraditional partners (such as banks or other businesses) join the collaboration or adopt the shared community vision and make investments accordingly. New streams of resources are engaged in meeting the community vision. Gradually, systems are put in place to support, strengthen, and sustain the community's commitment to this collective vision.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Shared Vision Capacity* provides an instrument for examining whether the local community initiative has the knowledge, skills, relationships, and resources for building a shared vision and the degree to which it has created a common agenda for change. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual such as the local initiative director or completed by multiple individuals involved the initiative and aggregated) or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.

2. *Strategy for Measuring Success in Building a Shared Vision* provides a way to determine the extent to which the vision is shared in the community and how deeply it influences the programmatic and funding decisions of other community partners. The recommended measurement strategy is a content analysis of documents that will indicate the degree to which your site has successfully developed a vision that is truly shared. In particular, the content analysis focuses on the following indicators:

- The shared vision has become a “common language” for the community in public dialogue about children and families.
- The shared vision influences resource allocation for public and private organizations both inside and outside of the community change initiative.

These indicators of success can be measured by analyzing data available in documents such as the annual reports, strategic plans, and funding plans of key partners; speeches by public officials; newspaper editorials or articles; and newsletters or other formal communication by partner agencies.

Resources

Mattessich, P., Murray-Close, M., and Monsey, B. (2001). *Collaboration: What makes it work* (2nd ed.). St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

Neuendorf, K. (2001). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc

Questionnaire for Assessing Shared Vision Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths in the areas that research has shown to be important for building shared vision. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the initiative's shared vision capacity. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, individual answers will not be associated with specific names and individual responses will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to build a shared vision. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be*, and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies between two numbers, do not put a mark between the two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to do something a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring to a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall shared vision capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to shared vision capacity.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that enable definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring shared vision success as described in the assessment strategy on page 12. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of shared vision capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Shared Vision Capacity

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed a shared vision. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing a shared vision. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Vision							
1. Our initiative has a clear vision.	1	2	3	4	5		
2. The vision includes explicit outcomes for families and children.	1	2	3	4	5		
3. The vision reflects a clear path to achieving the desired outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5		
4. The vision reflects an understanding of the community's needs and priorities.	1	2	3	4	5		
5. Our vision statement is written in a format that can be shared and widely understood.	1	2	3	4	5		
Process for Developing Shared Vision							
6. The process for developing the shared vision was inclusive.	1	2	3	4	5		
7. The visioning process involved a wide range of stakeholders (e.g., residents, business leaders, youth, city officials).	1	2	3	4	5		
8. Participants in the visioning process were representative of the community in terms of race, ethnicity, and culture.	1	2	3	4	5		
9. Participants in the visioning process had an equal say in developing the vision.	1	2	3	4	5		
10. Dissenting views were aired and discussed.	1	2	3	4	5		
11. A community needs assessment was conducted to inform the visioning process.	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Impact of the Vision Statement							
12. Organizations outside of the core initiative team have endorsed or adopted the vision.	1	2	3	4	5		
13. The vision represents a common language for discussing results for children and families in the community.	1	2	3	4	5		
14. The initiative team refers to the vision when making decisions about how to spend its financial resources.	1	2	3	4	5		
15. The initiative team refers to the vision when making decisions about what strategies to pursue or not pursue.	1	2	3	4	5		
16. The initiative team refers to the vision when making decisions about what new partners or capacities are needed.	1	2	3	4	5		
17. Public and/or private institutions outside the core initiative team have provided funding or other resources to support implementation of the vision.	1	2	3	4	5		

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Measuring Shared Vision Success

Measurement Strategy: Content Analysis

Content analysis refers to a way of systematically examining the content of communication. It involves creating a coding framework to identify keywords and then examining the content of various texts to determine how frequently those keywords appear. More specifically, phrases or sentences that reflect the “common language” of the shared vision can be coded as evidence that the initiative’s vision and goals are, in fact, shared. The more frequently and consistently “common language” is found in a document and across documents, the stronger the evidence that a shared vision has been created. Similarly, recorded language that attributes funding decisions to the shared vision and goals may be used as evidence of its influence on resource allocation in the community.

Conducting content analysis requires access to the recommended documents as well as experience with coding qualitative data. Coding schemes can be created based on key concepts included in the shared vision. At least two people should independently review and develop codes for the documents to ensure coding validity and reliability.

Method

1. Collect the documents that contain (or should contain) references to the vision. These documents include, but are not limited to:
 - Annual reports of key partner agencies
 - Strategic plans of key partner agencies
 - Funding plans of key partner agencies
 - Speeches by key public officials
 - Newspaper editorials
 - Newsletters or other formal communication by key partner agencies
2. Develop a set of codes based on key words in your site’s vision statement. The codes may include references to specific goals, strategies, or results (use the examples below as a guide). When developing codes, it is helpful to focus on the core components of the shared vision such that there is a balance between creating codes that are not too broad and keeping the number of codes manageable.
3. Review each document and code the references as they appear. Use the attached form to keep track of the coded references and the documents they come from.

4. Analyze and summarize results. In this step, you will be looking at several aspects of the data:
 - How frequently does each code appear?
 - How frequently are references made by different categories of partners?
 - How many references are specific and directly related to the vision and goals versus more general and vague references?
 - How many references appear in the media and the public arena versus annual reports and programmatic documentation?

5. Interpret the data. There are no concrete guidelines to determine your level of success. For instance, while the number of references to the shared vision is one indicator, it is not possible to say whether you need 20 references or 50 references to determine that the vision is truly shared among the stakeholders and constituents you included in your vision-building process. The analysis is more complex. In addition to the number of references, you need to look at where they appear, how specific they are, and whether they reflect the core priorities of your local site. For instance, it may be more meaningful to see a few concrete references to the initiative's strategies in the media or from the mayor's office than to see many references in a neighborhood newsletter, particularly if your emphasis is on trying to develop a community-wide agenda.

When considering what the results of the content analysis mean in relation to how well your site has developed a shared vision, consider the following questions:

- Do the data reflect our priorities?
- Are the sources the ones we have targeted?
- Is there anything that contradicts or weakens our vision?
- Which ideas reflect central versus peripheral aspects of the vision?
- What are the messages most frequently conveyed?
- Are the content analysis data consistent with the results of the *Questionnaire for Assessing Shared Vision Capacity*? If not, is there anything in the capacity assessment that tells you what might be missing in building a shared vision?

**SAMPLE
Content Analysis Form**

Document Name/Type	Date of Document	Source (Key Agency or Official)	Code	Coded Words or Sentences
Annual report	2005	Community foundation	RL	“In 2004, we joined with partners of the Community Improvement Initiative to introduce a new resident leadership training program.”
Newsletter	May 2004	Community-based organization	BA	“New credit union opens in neighborhood and offers free tax preparation and savings accounts to low-income families.”
Funding plan	2003	Mayor’s office	ED	“The city will spend an additional \$1.2 million on early childhood education programs so that children entering kindergarten are ready to succeed in school.”
Speech	2006	Chief of police	SC	“Our department will work with a coalition of schools, businesses, and the juvenile justice system to reduce violence and provide productive opportunities for our city’s youth.”
Newspaper article	January 14, 2007	<i>Local paper</i>	SC	“By 2010 the community will forge new working relationships among law enforcement, business, juvenile justice, and the public school system.”

Sample Coding Scheme

SC: Systems change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service integration • New cross-agency collaboration • Policy change/legislation 	ED: Improving early childhood education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-school programs • Parent involvement in schools • Training and placing qualified teachers
BA: Building assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Savings accounts, IDAs, Earned Income Tax Credit • Financial education • Employment training/placement 	RL: Resident leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading community change • Community organizing • Resident training and engagement

**Shared Vision
Content Analysis Form**

Document Name/Type	Date of Document	Source (Key Agency or Official)	Code	Coded Words or Sentences

II. Resident Leadership Assessment Instruments

Definition of Resident Leadership Capacity

Resident leadership capacity exists when diverse residents have real (not token) power and control over decision making and program implementation.

Reason for Measuring

Resident leadership is essential to ensure that policies and practices are responsive to the real needs of the community. In addition, the sustainability of community change initiatives depends on residents staying actively engaged and spearheading the effort. In many of our communities the people affected by the problems and issues we are trying to address have been historically relegated to the role of “information-givers” in the change process (e.g., invited to town hall meetings, focus groups, etc.). They are continually asked for their ideas about how change should happen, but rarely given a real leadership role in making these changes happen. As a result, animosity, disengagement, and even hostility can often define the relationship between community residents and “helping” organizations. When residents are treated as leaders, with the resources and power to actually envision, plan, and effect change, there are huge benefits to any initiative. These include a major leap in the credibility of the change process for community residents; more effective strategies; greater community mobilization due to “buy-in” and connections; and a far greater sense of equity, fairness, and empowerment in the community.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Resident Leadership Capacity* provides an instrument for examining whether the community change initiative has the knowledge, skills, relationships, and resources to build or identify local resident leadership and the degree to which resident leaders are involved in the decision-making process. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual such as the local initiative director, or completed by multiple individuals involved in the initiative and aggregated) or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.
2. *Strategy for Measuring Success in Building Resident Leadership* involves a focus group of resident leaders who have been involved in the community change effort. The focus group protocol is designed to assess the role that resident leaders play in allocating initiative resources and the extent to which the community change initiative has contributed to developing resident leaders who have a meaningful influence on decision making. Indicators of successful resident leadership include the following:
 - Resident leaders are persons that represent and are accountable to a resident constituency.
 - Resident leaders serve in formal and informal decision-making roles.
 - Resident leaders are respected by organizations and institutions and viewed as equal partners in creating and implementing change.
 - Resident leaders generate collective demand and exert external pressure to generate systems change.

Resources

Krueger, R. (2000). *Focus groups* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Questionnaire for Assessing Resident Leadership Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths in the areas that research has shown to be important for building resident leadership. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the initiative's resident leadership capacity. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, individual answers will not be associated with specific names and individual responses will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to develop resident leaders. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be*, and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies between two numbers, do not put a mark between the two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the initiative team complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring to a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to resident leadership capacity.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that enable definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring resident leadership success as described in the assessment strategy on page 21. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of resident leadership capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Resident Leadership Capacity

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed resident leadership. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing resident leadership. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Resident Leader Relationships							
1. The initiative identifies, recruits, and engages true resident leaders (people representing formal or informal groups of residents).	1	2	3	4	5		
2. Resident leaders work together effectively.	1	2	3	4	5		
3. Resident leaders know how to access those with the resources they need to achieve their goals.	1	2	3	4	5		
Resident Leadership Development							
4. Members of the initiative understand the community's strengths regarding its resident leadership.	1	2	3	4	5		
5. Members of the initiative have identified areas that do not have adequate resident leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5		
6. Members of the initiative understand the strategies needed to build on the community's resident leadership strengths and potential.	1	2	3	4	5		
7. The initiative provides leadership training opportunities to residents.	1	2	3	4	5		
8. The initiative provides community-organizing assistance and support to residents.	1	2	3	4	5		
9. Residents participate in leadership development training provided by the initiative.	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
Resident Leader Participation & Decision Making						
10. Resident leaders are provided all information needed to make decisions that positively influence the community change initiative and their community.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. The initiative responds to issues, needs, and opportunities presented by resident leaders.	1	2	3	4	5	
12. Resident leaders have the power in the initiative to set its direction and hold participants accountable.	1	2	3	4	5	
13. The initiative facilitates and supports civic participation (e.g., meeting attendance, active involvement in addressing a community issue) among residents.	1	2	3	4	5	
14. Resident leaders participating in the initiative organize fellow residents to take action around community issues.	1	2	3	4	5	
15. Resident leaders participating in the initiative raise awareness among fellow residents around community issues.	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Measuring Resident Leadership Success

Measurement Strategy: Focus Groups

Focus groups (or group interviews) offer a flexible strategy for exploring personal and subjective experiences such as perceptions of influence and roles within a community change initiative. We recommend conducting two focus groups to gather evidence regarding the relative role and influence of residents in change efforts undertaken by the initiative. A focus group is an interview with a whole group of people at the same time (Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong, 1998, pp. 184-186). Focus groups are a useful strategy when seeking groups' subjective reactions. The group dynamics that emerge in focus groups (e.g., some people become leaders and others followers) can be used to help elicit responses to questions that might not have been obtained in a more standardized interview. The group experience provides a stimulus for people's responses.

Advantages of the focus group over more structured, single-person interviews include:

- Focus groups are more flexible, cost less, and can provide quick results.
- Focus groups use the interaction among people to stimulate ideas and encourage group members to participate.

Disadvantages of the focus group over more structured, single-person interviews include:

- The results are less representative of a larger population because focus group membership is not normally based on probability samples.
- The data are more difficult and subjective to analyze.

Method

To conduct a focus group, follow these steps:

1. Identify a community change effort undertaken by initiative. The effort selected should be tangible enough (e.g., issue-specific, time-limited) for focus group members to discuss their participation concretely.
2. Identify the membership for two focus groups: one group of resident leaders involved in the community change effort undertaken by the initiative and one group of non-residents involved in the same effort.
 - A focus group usually consists of at least one moderator and up to ten respondents.
 - A focus group typically lasts for up to three hours.

3. Identify someone to moderate the focus groups and someone to take notes. The moderator should not be formally affiliated with the initiative's leadership. The moderator should be an experienced group facilitator with the following skills:
 - Capacity to initiate discussion and facilitate the flow of responses. This includes asking questions, probing areas that are not clear, and pursuing lines of inquiry that seem fruitful.
 - Knowledge of group dynamics. For example, a good moderator will encourage the emergence of leaders and use them to elicit responses, reactions, or information from other group members. People will make side comments to one another and the moderator will note them and possibly encourage members to elaborate on them. In a well-run focus group, the members may interact among themselves as much as with the group moderator.
 - Ability to direct the group discussion. This includes moving from more general topics in the beginning to more specific issues toward the end. This also includes observing the characteristics of the participants in the group to ensure everyone's effective involvement. For example, someone who talks a lot but tends to be off-topic will need to be constrained, while someone who says little will need encouragement to participate. In a well-run focus group, there are very high levels of participation by all members.

4. Invite individuals to participate in the focus groups.
 - We recommend that the local initiative director (or someone who knows the individuals that will be contacted for interviews) contact individuals about participating in the focus groups. This will increase cooperation.
 - Schedule at least an hour and a half for each focus group.
 - Conduct the focus group in a location and at times convenient for most participants.
 - Provide child care, refreshments, and other incentives such as door prizes or gift certificates to increase participation.
 - We recommend conducting one focus group with residents and one with non-residents. Consensus between these two groups about resident roles and influence in the initiative's change efforts is more compelling evidence than consensus among just one of these groups. If resources permit convening only one focus group, we suggest that a group of residents be convened.

5. Develop a focus group protocol. This includes a sign-in sheet (name, contact information, resident group affiliation, years involved in group, leadership role), introductions, the interview questions, a note-taker (if resources allow, the interviews can be tape-recorded and transcribed.), and wrap-up. It is important to explain the purpose of the focus groups, how the information will be used, issues of confidentiality (i.e., individual names will not be linked to specific comments in any written report), and a point of contact should

participants want to follow up later. We recommend asking questions such as the following:

- What was the goal of the community change effort? Please describe the strategy and objectives.
 - How successful was this effort?
 - How was this particular community issue selected as a focus for change? (Probe regarding the non-selection of other issues of equal importance and whether the selection was driven by residents or non-residents.)
 - Who in the community participated in this change effort? (Probe regarding decision making, implementation, and leaders.)
 - What kinds of things could have been done differently?
 - What kinds of challenges were encountered? (Probe regarding communication and collaborating.)
6. Analyze and interpret results. The data from a focus group can be recorded by note-takers or tape-recorded. A decision will need to be made about whether the moderator will analyze and interpret the data or if someone from the initiative team will do this. When analyzing and interpreting the findings, consider:
- Is there consensus among group members and between groups about the purpose of the change effort?
 - Are there meaningful differences in perceptions and understanding?
 - What might explain these differences?
 - What strategies might be needed to create more uniform understanding and agreement about the purpose of the change effort?
 - Is there consensus among group members and between groups about the level of success achieved?
 - Are there meaningful differences in perceptions and understanding?
 - What might explain these differences?
 - What strategies might be needed to create more uniform agreement about the meaning and achievement of success?
 - Is there consensus among group members and between groups about who determined the change agenda?
 - Are there meaningful differences in perceptions and understanding?
 - What might explain these differences?
 - What strategies might be needed to create more equitable decision making about what changes are needed and how to achieve them?
 - Is there consensus among group members and between groups about who participated in and led this effort?
 - Are there meaningful differences in perceptions and understanding?
 - What might explain these differences?
 - What strategies might be needed to create more equitable participation and leadership in the change effort?

III. Strategic Partnerships Assessment Instruments

Definition of Strategic Partnership Capacity

Strategic partnership capacity is the ability of community organizations and other institutions to collaborate with each other in pursuit of common goals.

Reason for Measuring

Strategic partnership capacity is important for several reasons. It creates a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts by combining individual partner organizations' talents and resources for the benefit of the entire community. Strategic partnerships support the sustainability of a community change initiative by facilitating ownership of a common vision and increasing the breadth and depth of voices demanding change. This capacity ensures that strategies and their intended results are responsive to community needs by involving residents and diverse stakeholder groups in a meaningful way. Strategic partnerships enable resources to be pooled to have a greater overall impact.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Strategic Partnership Capacity*. This self-assessment instrument can be used to rate the knowledge, skills, relationships, and resources that define strategic partnership capacity. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual such as the local initiative director, completed by multiple individuals involved in the initiative and aggregated) or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.

2. *Strategy for Measuring Successful Strategic Partnerships* provides questions for all initiative members to determine whether they are experiencing the immediate effects of a successful strategic partnership. This method allows you to gather feedback from all initiative members for a comprehensive perspective on whether or not the strategic partnership capacity is working. Indicators of successful strategic partnerships include the following:

- There is a formal, mutually beneficial relationship between members of the partnership with clearly defined responsibilities and shared accountability.
- The partnership pursues a common agenda, with each member applying resources to achieve a set of common results.
- The partnership is responsive to the needs of the community and effectively leverages the community's assets.

Resources

Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health. *Partnership Self-Assessment Tool 2.0* (2004). Retrieved July 24, 2007 from www.partnershiptool.net.

Mattessich, P.W., Murray-Close, M., & Monsey, B. R. (2001). *Collaboration: What makes it work* (2nd ed.). Saint Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

Questionnaire for Assessing Strategic Partnership Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths in the areas that research has shown to be important for building strategic partnerships. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the initiative's strategic and collaborative capacities. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, your answers will not be associated with your name and will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to function strategically and collaboratively. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be*, and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies between two numbers, do not put a mark between the two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring to a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall strategic partnership capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to strategic partnership capacities.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that enable definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring strategic partnership success as described in the assessment strategy on page 30. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of strategy partnership capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Strategic Partnership Capacity

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed its strategic and collaborative capacity. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing a strategic partnership. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Strategic Capacities							
1. Knowledge of who in the community has expertise in target populations' needs and assets	1	2	3	4	5		
2. Knowledge of who in the community has expertise in effective interventions, services, program models, etc.	1	2	3	4	5		
3. Access to target populations	1	2	3	4	5		
4. Ability to identify opportunities best pursued together	1	2	3	4	5		
5. Ability to identify opportunities aligned most closely with the initiative's goals	1	2	3	4	5		
6. Access to local funding sources (e.g., businesses, foundations)	1	2	3	4	5		
7. Access to in-kind contributions (e.g., computers, space)	1	2	3	4	5		
8. Access to expertise needed by the partnership or target populations (e.g., job placements, legal counsel, financial counseling, accounting)	1	2	3	4	5		
9. Cultural and linguistic competencies	1	2	3	4	5		
10. Ability to place the initiative's goals on the public agenda	1	2	3	4	5		
11. Ability to prioritize which opportunities (aligned with the initiative's goals) to pursue	1	2	3	4	5		
12. Ability to pursue opportunities aligned with the initiative's goals once decisions are made	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
13. Ability to adapt to changing conditions, such as fewer funds than expected, changing political climate, or changes in leadership	1	2	3	4	5	
Collaboration Capacities						
14. Trusting relationships among members of the initiative	1	2	3	4	5	
15. Clear expectations around roles and responsibilities among members of the initiative	1	2	3	4	5	
16. Creation of new relationships among people or organizations who would not have worked together otherwise	1	2	3	4	5	
17. Mutually beneficial relationships among members of the initiative	1	2	3	4	5	
18. Accomplishing more together than could be accomplished if the collaboration did not exist	1	2	3	4	5	
19. Information sharing among members of the initiative	1	2	3	4	5	
20. Coordination of services among members of the initiative	1	2	3	4	5	
22. Shared power (e.g., decision-making authority, access to resources) among members of the initiative	1	2	3	4	5	
23. Ability to make decisions well as a group	1	2	3	4	5	
24. Ability to resolve conflict so that the entire collaboration benefits from the resolution	1	2	3	4	5	
25. Shared responsibility among members of the initiative	1	2	3	4	5	
26. Inclusion of members who are representative of the community in terms of culture, language, occupation, and life stage	1	2	3	4	5	
27. Ability to consider different approaches to accomplishing the initiative's goals	1	2	3	4	5	
28. Leadership capable of working well with other people and organizations	1	2	3	4	5	
29. Leadership capable of moving the initiative's agenda forward	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Measuring Strategic Partnership Success

Measurement Strategy: Group Discussion

A group discussion focused on the questions below that includes all partnership members allows you to gather feedback from *everyone* in the partnership. A comprehensive perspective provides stronger evidence for the success of this capacity than the perspective of one or two individuals because of the capacity's collective nature.

Questions for Group Discussion or Individual Interviews

1. How has the community change initiative worked with the broader community:
 - a. To establish common goals?
 - b. To identify the pool of resources available to address these goals?
 - c. To ensure that resources are used strategically (i.e., applied to the community's priorities, without duplicating effort)?
2. How has membership in the community change initiative benefited your organization and its ability to achieve its goals?
3. What responsibilities does your organization have in the community change initiative?
4. How do members hold each other accountable for the results the community change initiative is trying to achieve?
5. What resources does your organization bring to the community change initiative?
6. What accomplishments has the initiative achieved in the community?
7. What unique contributions does the initiative offer the community?
8. How does the community change initiative stay accountable to the community for the results it is trying to achieve and the resources used?

Method

1. Have each initiative team member respond to the questions as part of a group discussion.
2. Develop a set of codes based on the indicators of success. The codes may include references to specific benefits, responsibilities, resources, accomplishments, or unique contributions identified in members' responses.
3. Review each response and code the references as they appear. Keep track of the coded references and the sector they come from.
4. Analyze and summarize results. To analyze and interpret the data, consider the following questions:
 - How frequently does each code appear?
 - How frequently are references made by different categories of participants?

5. Interpret the data. Consider the following questions

- Do the data support the presence of strategic partnership capacity?
- What are the strongest attributes of the collaboration? Why are these attributes strong?
- What are the weakest attributes of the collaboration? Why are these attributes weak?
- Are the responses consistent with the results of the *Questionnaire for Assessing Strategic Partnership Capacity*? If not, is there anything in the capacity assessment that tells you what might be missing in building a strategic partnership?

IV. Powerful Strategies Assessment Instruments

Definition of Powerful Strategy Capacity

Powerful strategy capacity is the ability to consistently develop effective approaches and interventions.

Reason for Measuring

This capacity determines the extent to which the strategies implemented by the community change initiative can make a real and lasting difference in the lives of families and children, including the degree to which lasting positive outcomes can be achieved and the number of families and children that will benefit from those outcomes. Only through the development and implementation of effective and powerful strategies can your work really be successful for the most number of children and families in your community.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Powerful Strategy Capacity* provides an instrument for examining whether the community change initiative has the knowledge, skills, relationships, and resources for crafting powerful strategies. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual such as the local initiative director, completed by multiple individuals involved in the initiative and aggregated) or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.

2. *Strategy for Measuring Success in Creating Powerful Strategies* provides two methods of assessing the effectiveness of strategies. The recommended method for determining success involves an outcome evaluation to determine whether the partnership's strategies are, in fact, achieving the desired results. Evaluation is a scientific endeavor that requires financial resources and professional expertise. If such resources are not available, the initiative may employ an alternative method to measure its success in creating powerful strategies by developing and tracking community indicators to monitor trends over time. Developing community indicators involves creating a theory of change for each strategic intervention, identifying indicators and data sources, and collecting and analyzing data. Unlike a rigorous outcome evaluation, monitoring trends will not allow you to determine that your strategies are the cause of community change. Even so, this method will allow you to assess the degree to which the community is moving in the right direction and will still require careful thought and planning to perform.

Resources

Chavis, D., Lee, K., & Jones, E. (2001). *Principles for evaluating comprehensive community initiatives*. Gaithersburg, MD: Association for the Study and Development of Community.

Coulton, C. J. (2006). *Catalog of administrative data sources for neighborhood indicators*. Cleveland, OH: Case Western Reserve University.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation. (2002). *Logic Model Development Guide*. Battle Creek, MI: Author.

Questionnaire for Assessing Powerful Strategy Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths in the areas that research has shown to be important for building powerful strategies. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the impact of the initiative's strategies. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, your answers will not be associated with your name and will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to plan and implement powerful strategies. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be*, and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies between two numbers, do not put a mark between two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring to a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall powerful strategy capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to powerful strategy capacity.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that enable definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring powerful strategy success as described in the assessment strategy on page 37. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of this powerful strategy capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Powerful Strategy Capacity

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed powerful strategies. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing powerful strategies. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Strategy Design							
1. There is a clear understanding of the root cause of the problems the community change initiative is trying to address.	1	2	3	4	5		
2. Collaboration members stay abreast of best practices and strategies that work by reading current reports and publications, attending conferences or peer convenings, and/or consulting experts in the field.	1	2	3	4	5		
3. Site visits, peer discussion, or expert consultation assist us in designing strategies.	1	2	3	4	5		
4. Data are used to identify the appropriate geography and populations to target.	1	2	3	4	5		
5. Strategies target root causes of problems.	1	2	3	4	5		
Implementation							
7. Strategies adopted from other communities are adapted to fit the conditions in this community, keeping what is most important to maintain effectiveness.	1	2	3	4	5		
8. An implementation plan guides how resources are deployed and the timing and sequencing of steps during program implementation.	1	2	3	4	5		
8. The implementation process is monitored to ensure strategies are properly executed.	1	2	3	4	5		
9. Mid-course corrections are made to improve results.	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be			Best It Could Be		Comments
Evaluation						
10. Strategies have clear and measurable outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Implementation of strategies is assessed through process evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	
12. Effectiveness of strategies is assessed through outcome evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Measuring Powerful Strategy Success

1. Outcome Evaluation

Evaluation Plan

The strongest evidence of powerful strategies is having well-documented outcomes in each of the results areas identified through evaluation. Evaluating outcomes is a scientific undertaking that should be well planned. Ideally, the initiative team would develop an evaluation plan in collaboration with an expert in evaluation methods (e.g., from a research institution, university, or consulting firm). Together, initiative team members and evaluation experts would plan and conduct an evaluation to assess the impact of strategies in each of the results areas.

Selecting an Evaluator

Selecting the right evaluator is one of the most important steps in the evaluation process. There are a number of factors that should be considered when searching for the right evaluator. These factors include the role the evaluator will play, the type of evaluation activities that will be conducted, the requisite skills for those activities, and available resources. For instance, evaluators differ in educational background, professional training, and in their philosophies toward evaluation (e.g., participatory processes, use and beneficiaries of the findings, data ownership, practice of cross-cultural competence). Moreover, the evaluator's race, gender, socioeconomic status, and cultural competency contribute to how he or she may interact with residents and site team members. Thus, it is very important to interview potential evaluators to gain a sense of their style, training, background, and approach to evaluation.

Selecting Strategies to Evaluate

As part of developing an evaluation plan, it is imperative that evaluators and initiative team members collectively understand the specific types of strategies they are evaluating. Are they evaluating family-level interventions—strategies intended to effect change in a modest number of families? Are strategies initiated at the school level? If so, is it an elementary school, middle school, or high school intervention? Have sites decided to embark upon effecting change at the community level? If so, they will be evaluating community-level strategies.

Understanding the focus and intended outcome of strategic intervention is a necessary first step in evaluating their impact and usefulness. Ultimately, evaluation is dependent upon accurate data sources. Indicators of family-level, school-level, and community-level change are most often found in different data sources. Evaluators and initiative team members will need access to the right data to measure the impact and usefulness of strategies.

For more information about selecting an evaluator and conducting an outcome evaluation, consult these recommended resources:

Association for the Study and Development of Community. (2003). *A Guide to Evaluation Primers*. Princeton: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Available at: http://www.rwjf.org/files/publications/RWJF_ResearchPrimer_0804.pdf.

Connell, J.P. Kubisch, A.C. (1998). Applying a theory of change approach to the evaluation of comprehensive community initiatives: Progress, prospects, and problems. In K.F. Anderson, A.C. Kubisch, & J.P. Connell (eds.) *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives Volume 2: Theory Measurement and Analysis*. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute. pp. 15-44.

English, B. (2002). Competencies for Evaluation practitioners: Where to go from here? *Evaluation Journal of Australasia*, Vol. 2 (new series), No. 2, 13-15. Available at: http://www.gih.org/usr_doc/Competencies_for_Evaluation_Practitioners.pdf.

Grantmakers in Health (2007, May 31). Frequently Asked Questions. Retrieved May 31, 2007, from http://www.gih.org/faq3994/faq_show.htm?doc_id=482424.

2. Developing Community Indicators to Monitor Trends over Time

If resource constraints preclude formal outcome evaluation, the initiative team can employ a three-step process to assess their capacity to cultivate and sustain powerful strategies. In this process, community indicators are developed to monitor trends over time. Developing community indicators requires some of the same upfront planning and preparation as outcome evaluation. In fact, this process can be used to prepare for outcome evaluation later on. The key steps include: 1) developing a theory of change for each strategy within the outcome areas; 2) identifying ideal and available indicators for each strategy; and 3) analyzing the data, paying particular attention to competing explanations for the potential impact of strategies.

Although developing and tracking community indicators is not formal evaluation, it requires the same environment of cooperation and learning among members of the collaboration to be successful. Moreover, this alternative plan is dependent upon initiative team members collectively coming to an agreement on the level of strategic intervention they are assessing.

Step 1: Develop a Theory of Change for Each Strategic Intervention

A theory of change explains how and why an intervention is expected to produce a result, visually capturing the desired process of planned social change (Connell & Kubisch, 1998). While there may be a theory of change for the overall community change initiative, local sites also should create a theory of change for each of their strategic interventions, to determine how powerful the interventions really are. The theory of change for each intervention describes the way in which that strategy will effect change within the community. It is possible to use an array of illustrations when presenting a theory of change (e.g. flow charts, complex diagrams, tables, etc.). We suggest that local sites present their theory of change in the form of a simple matrix or logic model, which is a tool that explains the relationships among resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes. The matrix for each intervention should show: 1) site resources; 2) planned strategies and activities associated with resources; 3) intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term results; 4) measures that will quantify change; and 5) corresponding data sources.

The matrix will clearly delineate expected short-term outputs and intermediate and long-term outcomes. A thorough assessment of each category of outcomes is integral to monitoring trends

over time via the community indicators project. According to the United Way (<http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/mpo/intro.cfm>):

Outputs are the direct products of program activities and usually are measured in terms of the volume of work accomplished—for example, the numbers of classes taught, counseling sessions conducted, educational materials distributed, and participants served. Outputs have little inherent value in themselves. They are important because they are intended to lead to a desired benefit for participants or target populations.

Outcomes are benefits or changes for individuals or populations during or after participating in program activities. They are influenced by a program's outputs. Outcomes may relate to behavior, skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, condition, or other attributes. They are what participants know, think, or can do; or how they behave; or what their condition is that is different following the program.

Outputs of a neighborhood clean-up campaign can be the number of organizing meetings held and the number of weekends dedicated to the clean-up effort. Outcomes (benefits to the target population) might include reduced exposure to safety hazards and increased feelings of neighborhood pride.

The relationship among strategies, outputs, and outcomes can be complicated. Initiative team members must understand that the strongest evidence of powerful strategies is a long-term change in people's lives. Outputs alone are not indicators of powerful strategies.

The table below illustrates a hypothetical theory of change for a community change initiative similar to Annie E. Casey Foundation's *Making Connections* initiative.

Hypothetical Theory of Change

SITE TEAM'S PLANNED WORK		SITE TEAM'S INTENDED RESULTS					
Resources/Inputs	Strategies and Activities	Outputs (e.g., number of community job trainings, number of collaboration meetings, etc.)	Output Data Sources	Outcomes (e.g., school attendance rates, employment rates, etc.)	Outcome Data Sources	Long-term Impacts	Long-term Impact Data Sources
Highly networked residents, community organizers, staff at community college	Increase social networks to connect people to education and skills training, using highly networked residents to connect others to trainings at the Community College of Denver	Number of program participants	Workshop and training logs, statistics from community college	Perceptions of improved quality of social services	Results survey	Families have access to quality services and supports that work for them	Community asset mapping
Piton Foundation outreach staff, hybrid check cashing/credit union	EITC outreach campaign, Youth Bank, financial education for high school students, financial education training	Number of persons using traditional financial institutions	Training logs	Increased levels of resident accounts at traditional financial institutions, increased trust of financial institutions	Check cashing/credit union survey, results survey	Families have increased levels of assets	

Ultimately the theory of change will serve as a planning tool from which activities and strategies may be designed and/or revised. Participants in the community change initiative should revisit their theory of change periodically to find out if their activities and strategies are adequately resourced and if sites have made progress toward the intended results.

For more information about theories of change and ways to represent them, we recommend the following resources:

W.K. Kellogg Foundation. (2002). *Logic Model Development Guide*. Battle Creek, MI: Author.

United Way. (2007). Outcome Measurement Resource network. Retrieved May 31, 2007, from <http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/mpo/intro.cfm>.

Step 2: Identify Indicators and Data Sources

The initiative team must identify all relevant indicators and corresponding data sources. The results survey is a good place to start; however, site team members must remember that the results survey is an instrument used for measuring community-level change. Any sites that implement strategies on a smaller scale will have to collect data that meet their needs. Possible alternative data to explore include municipal government data, local data collaboratives, and data from resident surveys. If local site teams are interested in designing unique data collection instruments, they may find some concepts in the *Making Connections* results survey to be useful.

The table below offers examples of some of the variables from the *Making Connections* Core Results Survey that may be used to evaluate strategies. Each of the results areas makes up one column of the table. Variables that could assist in evaluating strategies are listed in the columns.

	Core Results Areas					
	Families have increased earnings and income	Families have increased levels of assets	Children are healthy and ready to succeed in school	Families, youth, and neighborhoods increase their civic participation	Families and neighborhoods have strong informal supports and networks	Families have access to quality services and supports that work for them
Sample Variables (questions for analysis) from results survey	6.1-6.4 – Can't fill prescriptions, pay rent, pay phone bill, buy food, etc.	8.33 – Own/rent	7.1 – Child in school (e.g., enrolled in pre-K)	3.1 – Spoken with local political official	3.2 – Talked to local religious leader	4.1b-4.1g – Street cleaning, trash, snow, street repair, fire, EMS
	8.4 – Adult employment	8.34 – Home value	7.3 – Parent satisfaction with school	5.1 – Volunteered	3.3 – Gotten together with neighborhoods about problem	4.2a-4.2f – Perceptions of and satisfaction with police
	8.13 – Employment tenure	8.41 – Own vehicle	7.4 – Child truancy questions			
	8.27 – Household income	8.47 – Savings account	7.6 – Read stories to children			

Other useful data sources that measure community-level change are:

- Kids Count (<http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/KIDSCOUNT.aspx>)
- National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (<http://www2.urban.org/nnip/index.htm>)
- U.S. Census (<http://www.census.gov/>)

Step 3: Analyze Data

The community indicators data will reveal only a correlation between the initiative's and community changes, as opposed to a causal relationship. Simply put, sites may be able to show a relationship between implementing a strategic intervention and a change in family, school, or perhaps community-level outcomes; however, it will not be possible to identify a strategy as the direct cause of a particular outcome. Through rudimentary trend analysis, sites may determine whether strategic interventions are associated with an environment that improves outcomes for targeted residents.

When analyzing data, the initiative team should conduct a trend analysis by asking themselves the following questions:

- Has there been a noticeable difference in indicators since the start of the initiative's strategic interventions?
- Is there a pattern (e.g., do outcomes appear to improve within certain segments of the population, are outcomes improving consistently at the same rate over time, are there any noticeable peaks or plateaus in outcomes)?
- When did changes begin (e.g., immediately following strategic intervention, two years after strategic intervention)?
- Are there competing explanations for noticeable changes (e.g., changes in legislation, appropriations, or demographic changes in the community)?

Sites may learn that no link exists between strategies and desired outcomes. If no changes are apparent, initiative team members should identify any potential external factors that may have mitigated strategic interventions (e.g., increasing unemployment, a loss of childcare workers due to pay cuts or a loss of benefits, etc.).

V. Transforming Public Systems Assessment Instruments

Definition of Transforming Public Systems Capacity

The capacity to transform public systems is the ability to organize and mobilize the public and generate collective action for changes in public policy and resource allocation.

Reason for Measuring

The ability to quickly mobilize residents and to advocate collectively on behalf of children and families ensures that policies and practices that are necessary to support strategies for change will be implemented. This capacity enables communities to influence public policies by reacting quickly and effectively when needed and by proactively seeking opportunities to advance their policy agendas.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Transforming Public Systems Capacity* provides an instrument for examining whether the community change initiative has the knowledge, skills, relationships and resources for transforming public systems. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual such as the local initiative director or completed by multiple individuals involved in the initiative and aggregated) or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.

2. The *Strategy for Measuring Success in Transforming Public Systems* is conducting individual interviews with the leadership of public agencies. The focus of interviews with public sector agency leads is to assess if practices and procedures have changed in their agencies as a result of the community change initiative and the extent to which this has occurred. Specific indicators of success include:

- Community generates collective demand for change
- Communities transform public systems to benefit families and children
- The initiative presents “proven” solutions or contributes to developing policy

Resources

Briggs, X. (2002). *The will and the way: Local partnerships, political strategy, and the well-being of America’s children and youth*. Cambridge, MA: John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Guthrie, K. et. al., 2005. *The challenge of assessing advocacy: Strategies for a prospective approach to evaluation policy change and advocacy*. Blueprint Research and Design, Inc

Questionnaire for Assessing Transforming Public Systems Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths in the areas that research has shown to be important for transforming public systems. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the initiative's transforming public systems capacity. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, individual answers will not be associated with specific names and individual responses will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to transform public systems. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be* and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies in between two numbers, do not put a mark in between the two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring to a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall transforming public systems capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to transforming public system capacity.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that enable you to construct definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring transforming public systems success as described in the assessment strategy on page 48. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of transforming public systems capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Transforming Public Systems Capacity

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed the capacity to transform public systems. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing this capacity. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be				Best It Could Be	Comments
System Knowledge						
1. Members of the initiative have an understanding of the systems they are trying to change.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Members have an understanding of how relevant systems overlap.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Members of the initiative have identified strategies to transform systems.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Members understand how policy change occurs in a targeted system.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. Members of the initiative know the key civic players (e.g., civic leaders, government officials, legislators) in this community.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. Members understand how to organize and mobilize community residents.	1	2	3	4	5	
Transformative Actions						
7. Community members advocate for needed policy change in targeted systems.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. Community organizers mobilize residents to take action to achieve desired policy changes.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. Members of the initiative have come together to create a shared policy agenda.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. Members have created an environment with mutual trust and respect among a diverse set of organizations working to advance similar policy goals.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Members of the initiative have relationships with legislators and/or their staff that can be used to help achieve the initiative's goals.	1	2	3	4	5	
12. Partners have relationships with media representatives that can be used to promote the priorities of the community change initiative.	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Measuring Transforming Public Systems Success

Measurement Strategy: Key Informant Interviews

We recommend conducting key informant interviews to gather evidence regarding the success of policy change efforts undertaken by the community change initiative.

Method

1. Identify all of the public policy change efforts undertaken by the community change initiative.
2. Identify the public system representatives involved in these public policy change initiatives.
3. Identify someone to conduct interviews with the stakeholders involved in the public policy change initiatives. Ideally the interviewer will have social characteristics (i.e., socioeconomic status, age, sex, race, ethnicity) similar to those of the respondents as this can increase the success of the interview. This individual should be an experienced interviewer with the following qualifications:
 - a. Capacity to collect complete and unbiased data using the interview questions
 - b. Capacity to establish rapport quickly and elicit cooperation by the respondent (e.g., businesslike, but friendly)
 - c. Ability to ask follow-up questions as needed to elicit clearer and more complete responses
 - d. Ability to accurately identify what should be recorded, summarizing the “high points” of what is said without injecting his or her own interpretation (Note: If resources allow, the interviews can be tape recorded and transcribed.)
4. Identify the individuals with the most knowledge about the public policy change initiatives and have the interviewer contact them for interviews.
5. We recommend that the local initiative director (or someone who knows the individuals that will be contacted for interviews) first contact individuals about participating in an interview. This will increase cooperation. The interviewer can follow up to make specific arrangements.
6. Schedule one hour with each individual at a time and location most convenient for the respondent.
7. For each policy change initiative, we recommend a minimum of three interviews with at least two of the individuals interviewed representing the public systems targeted for change. If resources permit, we recommend interviewing individuals at different organizational levels (e.g., top, middle, point of contact/frontline) that were involved in the policy change initiative(s). Consensus about success among many individuals is more compelling evidence than consensus among a few individuals.

8. Conduct the interviews in person when feasible and by telephone when a face-to-face discussion is not an option. Assure confidentiality. We recommend asking the following questions for each policy change initiative:
 - a. What was the focus of the policy change? Please describe the strategy and objectives.
 - b. How successful was the policy change initiative? Please describe the nature of the changes and the differences they have made in the lives of children and families.
 - c. What resources were needed to accomplish the policy change?
 - d. What challenges were encountered and how were they addressed?
 - e. To what extent was the policy change implemented and at what levels?

9. Analyze and interpret results.
 - Is there consensus among respondents about the level of success achieved?
 - Is there consensus among respondents about the objectives and outcomes achieved?
 - If there is a lack of consensus, what does this mean and how can differences be addressed?
 - What types of resources are required for transforming public systems and what are the implications for replication in other communities?
 - Are there typical challenges associated with transforming public systems that can be addressed proactively with technical assistance?

Examples of Public Policy Change Efforts and Stakeholders to be Interviewed

Examples of Policy Change Efforts	Key Stakeholders/Advocates
Legislation mandating universal preschool	Member of the community change initiative Key proponent of legislation Department of Education/Early Childhood Education representatives Parents of preschoolers
Legislation mandating a living wage	Member of the community change initiative Key proponent of legislation Department of Labor
Legislation mandating paid family leave	Member of the community change initiative Key proponent of legislation Working parents
Legislation mandating universal health care	Member of the community change initiative Key proponent of legislation Working parents
Policy that increases the availability of child care subsidies for low-income families	Member of the community change initiative Administration of Child Care representative Families in need of affordable child care
Policies that mandate cross-training among juvenile court, domestic violence, and child protection agencies	Member of the community change initiative Juvenile Court judge Domestic Violence Shelter Executive Director Child Protective Services – Department Director
Policies that mandate co-location of employment, social, and health services	Member of the community change initiative Department of Labor Department of Social Services Department of Health
Policies that fund mechanisms for coordinated case management and service planning among agencies	Member of the community change initiative Department of Social Services Department of Health Family Resource Center Court Advocate/Guardian Ad Litem

**Transforming Public Systems
Policy Change Form**

Policy Change Effort	Targeted Public System (Health, Education, Employment, Legal, Social Services)	Targeted Jurisdiction (Federal, State, County, City, Agency)	Goal of Change Effort	Stakeholders Involved in Change Effort	Role of the Community Change Initiative (Initiated, Partnered)

VI. Learning and Use of Data Instruments

Definition of Learning and Use of Data Capacity

Learning and use of data capacity is the ability to regularly collect, analyze and learn from data to inform strategic decision making.

Reason for Measuring

It is important to build a community's capacity to understand data and use it to make strategic decisions that will best benefit children and families. At the local level, the initiative needs to have the ability to design the most effective strategies and programs and to learn how to improve them over time. A solid grasp of community-level data and a commitment to learn over time is essential for a community to understand its residents' needs and assets as well as the outcomes they are attaining collectively. In addition, this capacity is essential for measuring each site's progress and holding participants accountable for results.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Learning and Use of Data Capacity* provides an instrument for examining whether the community change initiative has the knowledge, skills, relationships and resources to learn from and use data effectively. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual, such as the local initiative director, or completed by multiple individuals involved in the initiative and aggregated) or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.
2. *Strategy for Measuring Success in Learning and Use of Data* provides a way to assess how well a broader range of initiative participants and community members think the collaboration contributes to the community's ability to gather data and information to inform decision making and create a learning culture. By surveying a larger number and broader range of stakeholders, you will be better able to determine if the initiative's capacity-building efforts have led to an increased ability to use data effectively. In particular, the survey will allow you to measure the following success indicators:
 - The availability of easily accessible data to support local planning and decision making
 - The degree to which the community change initiative contributes to a culture of reflection and learning in the community

Resources

Russ-Eft, D. and Preskill, H. 2001. *Evaluation in organizations: A systematic approach to enhancing learning, performance, and change*. Perseus Publishing:Cambridge, MA:

Questionnaire for Assessing Learning and Use of Data Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths on the attributes that research has shown are important for building shared vision. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the initiative's shared vision capacity. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, individual answers will not be associated with specific names; rather individual responses will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to learn and use data. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be* and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies in between two numbers, do not put a mark in between the two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring into a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall learning and use of data capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to learning and use of data capacities.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that would enable you to construct definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring learning and use of data success as described in the assessment strategy on page 57. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of learning and use of data capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Learning and Use of Data Capacity

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed its capacity to learn from and use data. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing the capacity to learn from and use data effectively. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Data Availability							
1. Members of the initiative have access to a data warehouse	1	2	3	4	5		
2. The data available to us are useful and fit local needs	1	2	3	4	5		
3. Members of the initiative have a say in the type of data that are collected as part of the data warehouse	1	2	3	4	5		
4. Members of the initiative know who to contact to request data	1	2	3	4	5		
5. Sufficient staff and financial resources are invested in the data warehouse to keep it current and functioning well	1	2	3	4	5		
6. Our initiative has an evaluation program to collect data on how well our programs are working and the outcomes that are being achieved	1	2	3	4	5		
Effective Use of Data							
6. Our initiative uses data to develop strategies and design programs	1	2	3	4	5		
7. After programs are designed and implemented, we use evaluation data to inform what midcourse corrections should be made	1	2	3	4	5		
8. Data on progress and outcomes are shared with community stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5		
9. Members of the initiative use data to drive decisions regarding priorities, resource needs, and composition of the collaboration	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
Learning and Reflection						
10. Members of initiative respect each other's perspectives and opinions	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Members of the initiative continuously look for ways to improve programs, processes, products, and services	1	2	3	4	5	
12. Members create opportunities to think about and reflect on the initiative's work	1	2	3	4	5	
13. Asking questions and raising issues about the initiative's work is encouraged among participants	1	2	3	4	5	
14. Members of the initiative are not afraid to share their opinions even if those opinions are different from the majority	1	2	3	4	5	
15. Currently available data tells us what we need to know about the effectiveness of our programs, processes, products, and services	1	2	3	4	5	
16. When new information that would be helpful to others is learned or discovered, it is disseminated to those individuals	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee)

Strategy for Measuring Learning and Use of Data Success

Measurement Strategy: Survey

With this strategy, a questionnaire will be distributed to members of the broader community as well as the core initiative team. A more systematic process for conducting a survey is required.

Method

1. Identify who will be surveyed. To obtain a comprehensive look at the community's access to data and how well the partnership has developed a learning culture, you will want to identify a broad group of individuals who ought to have benefited from the presence of this capacity. In addition to members of the site team, community partners, resident leaders, government representatives, and other nonprofit service providers may be included in the group of individuals to survey.
2. Compile contact information and develop a tracking system to monitor responses. Determine if the survey will be distributed by mail or email (it can also be completed over the telephone, although this method will be more labor-intensive). Compile the necessary contact information and create a database or spreadsheet to track responses.
3. Prepare a brief cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey, how the survey should be returned, a deadline for returning the survey, and who can be contacted with questions. If distributing the survey by mail, it is a good idea to include a self-addressed stamped envelope.
4. To analyze the results, enter the data in a spreadsheet such as Excel. Each survey should have a unique identifier so that the data can be double-checked if necessary. Average ratings can be easily calculated and the data can be sorted by the different sectors if desired (e.g., business sector, neighborhood organizations, etc.). For ease of data entry and analysis, each question should be a separate variable.
5. Follow the guidelines in "Analyzing and Interpreting Responses" in the *Questionnaire for Assessing Learning and Use of Data Capacity* to determine how strong the capacity is and what the results say about possible gaps that need to be addressed.
6. A brief summary of results should be prepared and communicated to survey respondents, either through a direct mail communication, community meeting, or regular initiative event.

Effectiveness of Learning and Use of Data in the Community Change Initiative

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative contributes to the community's ability to use data and information to inform its decision making and create a learning culture. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing the capacity to learn from and use data effectively. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Data Availability							
1. Members of the community have access to neighborhood-level data	1	2	3	4	5		
2. The data available to us are useful and fit local needs	1	2	3	4	5		
3. Members of the community have a say in the type of data that are collected as part of the data warehouse	1	2	3	4	5		
4. Members of the community know who to contact to request data	1	2	3	4	5		
5. Sufficient staff and financial resources are invested in a data warehouse (i.e., a centralized repository of data) to keep it current and functioning well	1	2	3	4	5		
Effective Use of Data							
6. The community change initiative uses data to develop effective strategies and programs	1	2	3	4	5		
7. The community change initiative collects data and information from community members on the progress and outcomes of the partnership's work	1	2	3	4	5		
8. Data on progress and outcomes are shared with community stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5		
9. The community change initiative helps community members use data to drive decisions regarding local priorities and resource needs	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
Learning and Reflection						
10. The community change initiative includes community members in opportunities to think about and reflect on the partnership's work	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Community members have opportunities to participate in trainings or workshops that build skills related to data collection and use	1	2	3	4	5	
12. The initiative's participants and staff listen to and respect dissenting opinions of community members	1	2	3	4	5	
13. Asking questions and raising issues about the initiative's work is encouraged by participants and staff	1	2	3	4	5	
16. When new information that would be helpful to other community initiatives is learned or discovered, the initiative disseminates it to the broader community	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as an initiative or community member:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee)

VII. Communication Assessment Instruments

Definition of Communication Capacity

Communication capacity is the ability to shape public opinion, relate ideas and information, and inspire action through a variety of media and social networks.

Reason for Measuring

Communication capacity is critical for generating the public will necessary to demand change to achieve core results. Increasing public awareness helps generate constituency demand for change and bring legitimacy to issues of concern, making it more likely that the public and/or private sector will address these issues. A strong and united community voice increases the likelihood that resources will be redistributed and policies will be changed. A good communication system is critical for keeping a community connected to its vision and poised and ready for mobilization when needed, as well as fostering community power by keeping residents, organizations, and others informed.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Communication Capacity* provides an instrument for examining whether the community change initiative has the knowledge, skills, relationships, and resources to communicate core messages, ideas, and beliefs to engage and influence public will. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual such as the local initiative director, or completed by multiple individuals involved in the initiative and aggregated) or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.

2. *Strategy for Measuring Success in Communication* provides a way to assess the results of communication. The recommended measurement strategy uses up to three different approaches to media analysis: article counts, audience impressions, and/or content analysis. Media analysis will enable the initiative to measure the following success indicator:

- The public is aware of key messages connected to the community change initiative's targeted outcomes.

Resources

Coffman, J. (2002). *Public communication campaign evaluation: An environmental scan of challenges, criticisms, practice, and opportunities*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.

Communications Consortium Media Center. (2004). *Guidelines for evaluating nonprofit communications efforts*. Retrieved July 23, 2007 from www.mediaevaluationproject.org

Questionnaire for Assessing Communication Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths in the areas that research has shown to be important for communication capacity. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the initiative's communication capacity. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, individual answers will not be associated with specific names and will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to build a communication capacity. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be*, and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think your rating lies between two numbers, do not put a mark between the two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring to a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall communication capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to communication capacity.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that enable definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring communication capacity success as described in the assessment strategy on page 65. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of communication capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Communication Capacity

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed its communication capacity. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing the capacity to communicate effectively. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Outreach							
1. Members of the initiative are trained to work with the media	1	2	3	4	5		
2. Our initiative has developed a media and communications strategy	1	2	3	4	5		
3. Our initiative has cultivated strong relationships with media representatives	1	2	3	4	5		
4. An adequate number of media representatives are members of the initiative	1	2	3	4	5		
5. Specific communications goals have been identified	1	2	3	4	5		
6. Our initiative has developed a clear message	1	2	3	4	5		
7. Data and research are effectively used in messages	1	2	3	4	5		
8. Our initiative has identified the correct audience(s) to target in our media campaign	1	2	3	4	5		
9. Our initiative has a clear understanding of what the target audience already thinks about the issues we want to communicate	1	2	3	4	5		
10. Our message is thought-provoking and persuasive; when the targeted audience(s) hears our message, they are likely to rethink issues and potential solutions to problems	1	2	3	4	5		
11. In our message, we clearly articulate what people should do to solve problems	1	2	3	4	5		
12. Our initiative has identified knowledgeable and trustworthy messengers to deliver our message	1	2	3	4	5		
13. Members are interviewed by the media regarding their work in the initiative	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
14. Our initiative identifies, builds, and maintains relationships with key personnel in print, broadcast, and any other forms of media that specifically target our intended audience	1	2	3	4	5	
15. Members of the initiative are proactively contacted by media representatives for opinions, statistics, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	
16. Members of the initiative regularly contribute to local media through radio shows, op-eds, evening news broadcasts, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	
17. Outreach materials are attractive, accessible, and exist in varied formats	1	2	3	4	5	
Response Capacity						
18. Our initiative has a method for evaluating our communication outreach	1	2	3	4	5	
19. When the public responds to our media campaign, our initiative is ready to direct this action (e.g. coordinate calls to representatives, mobilize volunteers, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Measuring Success in Communication

Measurement Strategy: Media Analysis

The most practical way to measure success in communication is through media analysis, which focuses on the frequency and placement of key words or themes in various media output. Specific types of media analysis range from quite simple to relatively time-consuming and complex. Article counts, audience impressions, and/or content analysis may be used depending on the personnel and financial resources available. The Institute on Public Relations advises using a variety of methods for a well-rounded approach to assessing communication strategies.

Article Counts

After identifying a key message, sites may use article counts to assess the number of placements or mentions of the key message in various media output. Though the marketing and communications field refers to this measurement strategy as “article” counting, article counts are frequently used to track messages in television, radio, and other media as well. Article counts are fast, easy, and inexpensive; however, they provide no information about the size of the article or the audience that the messaging reached. Below is a sample article count tabulation sheet for a hypothetical asset building messaging campaign. Article count tabulation sheets should be created for each messaging campaign within the community change initiative’s communication strategy.

<u>Article Title</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Date</u>

Audience Impressions

Where article counts track when and where key messages are cited in the media, audience impressions assess the potential reach of a story. Because this approach is routinely used in the marketing and communications field, audited data from third-party media research firms are widely available. These data numerically express “circulation” or “readership” figures for print media, “gross impressions” for broadcasts, and “daily average visitors” for Internet sites; however, audited data can be expensive to obtain. Moreover, the figures assume that all recipients of a particular media output actually read, heard, or saw your site’s messaging.

Below is a sample audience impression tabulation sheet for a hypothetical asset building messaging campaign. Audience impression tabulation sheets should be created for each messaging campaign within the community change initiative’s communication strategy.

Sample Audience Impression Tabulation Sheet: Asset Building Messaging Campaign			
<u>Article/Program Title</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Circulation/Impression/Visitors</u>

Audited audience impressions data may be obtained from third-party media research firms such as: VMS (www.vmsinfo.com) and BurrellesLuce (www.burrelles.com).

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a more sophisticated method of measuring success in communication. Content analysis not only assesses the placement of messaging, but also assists sites in understanding whether messaging carried out the site's communication objectives. Messages that reflect the site's communication objectives can be coded as evidence that the community change initiative is making an impact through its communication. The more frequently and consistently messaging is found in documents and across documents, the stronger the evidence that the communication agenda is effective.

Content analysis requires access to the recommended documents as well as experience with coding qualitative data. Coding schemes can be created based on key concepts included in the shared vision. At least two people should independently review documents and develop codes to ensure validity and reliability.

Method

1. Collect the documents that contain (or should contain) references to the community change initiative's vision. These documents include, but are not limited to:
 - Newspaper editorials
 - Radio transcripts
 - Broadcast transcripts
 - Newsletters or other formal communication by key partner agencies
2. Develop a set of codes based on key words in your site's vision statement. The codes may include references to specific goals, strategies, or results. (Use the examples below as a guide.)
3. Review each document and code the references as they appear. Use the attached form to keep track of the coded references and the documents they come from.
4. Analyze and summarize results. To analyze and interpret the data, consider the following questions:
 - What are the messages most frequently conveyed?
 - Does the communicated information reflect our priorities?
 - Are the media outputs the ones we have targeted?
 - Is there anything that contradicts or weakens our message?
 - Which ideas reflect central versus peripheral aspects of our message?

**SAMPLE
Content Analysis Form**

Document Name/Type	Date of Document	Source (Key Agency or Official)	Code	Coded Words or Sentences
Radio Broadcast	2006	WMC-H Radio Show	SC	“Our department will work with a coalition of schools, businesses, and the juvenile justice system to reduce violence and provide productive opportunities for our city’s youth.”
Newspaper Article	January 14, 2007	<i>Hartford Courant</i>	SC	“By 2010 the community will forge new working relationships among law enforcement, business, juvenile justice, and the public school system.”

Sample Coding Scheme

SC: Systems change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service integration • New cross-agency collaboration • Policy change/legislation 	ED: Improving early childhood education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding pre-school programs • Parent involvement in schools • Training and placing qualified teachers
BA: Building assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing assets • EITC, tax preparation • Employment training, placement 	RL: Resident leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading community change • Community organizing • Resident training and engagement

VII. Governance Assessment Instruments

Definition of Governance Capacity

Governance capacity is the ability to organize and manage a community change initiative.

Reason for Measuring

Community change initiatives are complex evolving processes that can become unwieldy and lose focus without a strong and appropriate governance structure. If the community initiative lacks governance capacity, the effort will not be sustainable. There needs to be an infrastructure in place to manage the operation, including staffing and funding, as well as to oversee the process of assessment, improvement, and growth. The management structure should represent key group interests and create a system of shared ownership, power, and leadership.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Governance Capacity* provides an instrument for examining whether the community change initiative has the knowledge, skills, relationships and resources for governing the local site. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual, such as the local initiative director, or completed by multiple individuals involved in the initiative and aggregated) or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.

2. *Strategy for Measuring Success in Governance* is an abridged version of the *Questionnaire for Assessing Governance Capacity* that should be given to all members of the community change initiative, including community partners, to assess their perceptions of the effectiveness of the initiative team's governance structure. By surveying a broader range of participants, you will be better able to determine if the internal workings of the governance structure are perceived as effective by the collaboration as a whole. Specifically, you will be able to measure the following success indicators:

- The ability of the collaboration to manage the scale up and institutionalization of the community change initiative's work.
- The presence of a clear system of accountability and transparent decision making.

Resources

Donahue, J. (March 2004) On Collaborative Governance. Working Paper No. 2, A working Paper of the Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative. Harvard University. John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Governance Matters: Nonprofit Governance Indicator Guide. <http://governance1.web132.discountasp.net/web/NGIG/print.aspx>

Questionnaire for Assessing Governance Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths on the attributes that research has shown are important for building governance capacity. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the initiative's governance capacity. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, individual answers will not be associated with specific names; rather individual responses will be aggregated together.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to build its governance capacity. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be* and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies in between two numbers, do not put a mark in between the two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring into a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall governance capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to governance capacities.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that would enable you to construct definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring governance capacity success as described in the assessment strategy on page 75. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of governance capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Governance Capacity

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed its governance capacity. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing its governance capacity. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Structure and Operation							
1. The purpose and collective responsibilities of the governing body are clear	1	2	3	4	5		
2. The roles and responsibilities of individual members of the governing body are clear	1	2	3	4	5		
3. There are well-established, written procedures that guide how the governing body operates	1	2	3	4	5		
4. Written procedures are working; my site team has a clear understanding of how it moves forward to effect change	1	2	3	4	5		
5. The governing body meets regularly throughout the year	1	2	3	4	5		
6. All members of the governing body are consistently prepared for meetings	1	2	3	4	5		
7. Time during meetings of the governing body is well spent	1	2	3	4	5		
8. Power and decision-making ability are spread among members of the governing body	1	2	3	4	5		
Accountability and Representation							
10. Members of the governing body follow-through on their commitments	1	2	3	4	5		
11. The governing body is accountable to residents	1	2	3	4	5		
12. The governing body is accountable to funders	1	2	3	4	5		
13. Members of the governing body are accountable to each other	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
14. Initiative members contribute to the process of defining goals, procedures, and responsibilities for the governing body and for the initiative team	1	2	3	4	5	
15. Resident leaders have a significant role in decision-making by the governing body	1	2	3	4	5	
16. The governing body represents all key stakeholders (e.g. public, civic, businesses, nonprofits, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	
17. The governing body consists of adequate representation of the community it serves	1	2	3	4	5	
18. The governing body includes an adequate mix of private sector, government, and nonprofit participants	1	2	3	4	5	
17. The governing body consists of adequate representation of the community it serves	1	2	3	4	5	
18. The governing body includes an adequate mix of private sector, government, and nonprofit participants	1	2	3	4	5	
Cohesiveness and Stability						
19. The governing body represents a cohesive set of opinions	1	2	3	4	5	
20. Initiative team members are in line with the governing body and share a common view of operations and success	1	2	3	4	5	
21. The fundamental goals and vision of the governing body is consistent from year to year	1	2	3	4	5	
22. Turnover amongst individuals in the governing body is low	1	2	3	4	5	
Effectiveness						
23. The governing body achieves its goals for the site from year to year	1	2	3	4	5	
24. Decisions made by the governing body are sound	1	2	3	4	5	
25. The governing body makes decisions in a timely manner	1	2	3	4	5	
26. The structure of the governing body is effective and facilitates getting things done	1	2	3	4	5	

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
27. The governing body has a sustainability plan for our site	1	2	3	4	5	
28. The governing body has a fundraising plan	1	2	3	4	5	
29. The governing body is able to secure adequate financial resources for our site	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Assessing Governance Success

Measurement Strategy: Survey

With this strategy, a questionnaire will be distributed to members of the broader community as well as to the core initiative team. A more systematic process for conducting a survey is required.

Method

1. Identify who will be surveyed. To obtain a comprehensive look at the effectiveness of the initiative's governance structure, you will want to identify a broad group of individuals who ought to have benefited from the presence of this capacity. In addition to members of the initiative team, community partners, resident leaders, and other community stakeholders may be included in the group of individuals to survey.
2. Compile contact information and develop a tracking system to monitor responses. Determine if the survey will be distributed by mail or email (it can also be completed over the telephone, although this method will be more labor-intensive). Compile the necessary contact information and create a database or spreadsheet to track responses.
3. Prepare a brief cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey, how the survey should be returned, a deadline for returning the survey, and who can be contacted with questions. If distributing the survey by mail, it is a good idea to include a self-addressed stamped envelope.
4. To analyze the results, enter the data in a spreadsheet such as Excel. Each survey should have a unique identifier so that the data can be double-checked if necessary. Average ratings can be easily calculated and the data can be sorted by the different sectors if desired (e.g., business sector, neighborhood organizations, etc.). For ease of data entry and analysis, each question should be a separate variable.
5. Follow the guidelines in "Analyzing and Interpreting Responses" in the *Questionnaire for Assessing Governance Capacity* to determine how strong the capacity is and what the results say about possible gaps that need to be addressed.
6. A brief summary of results should be prepared and communicated to survey respondents, either through a direct mail communication, community meeting, or regular initiative event.

Effectiveness of the Community Change Initiative's Governance Structure

Instructions:

Please rate how well you feel the community change initiative is governed and managed. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in governing the initiative. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be				Best It Could Be
Accountability and Representation					
1. Members of the governing body follow through on their commitments	1	2	3	4	5
2. The governing body is accountable to residents	1	2	3	4	5
3. The governing body is accountable to the Foundation	1	2	3	4	5
4. Members of the governing body are accountable to each other	1	2	3	4	5
5. Initiative team members contribute to the process of defining goals, procedures, and responsibilities for the governing body and for the site team	1	2	3	4	5
6. Resident leaders have a significant role in decision-making by the governing body	1	2	3	4	5
7. The governing body represents all key stakeholders (e.g. public, civic, businesses, nonprofits, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
8. The governing body consists of adequate representation of the community it serves	1	2	3	4	5
9. The governing body includes an adequate mix of private sector, government, and nonprofit participants	1	2	3	4	5
Effectiveness					
10. The governing body achieves its goals for the site from year to year	1	2	3	4	5
11. Decisions made by the governing body are sound	1	2	3	4	5
12. The governing body makes decisions in a timely manner	1	2	3	4	5
13. The structure of the governing body is effective and facilitates getting things done	1	2	3	4	5
14. The governing body has a plan to sustain the work of the community change initiative	1	2	3	4	5

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be
Accountability and Representation						
15. The governing body is able to secure adequate financial resources for the work of the community change initiative	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as an initiative or community member:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

IX. Cross-Cultural Competence Assessment Instruments

Definition of Cross-Cultural Competence

Cross-cultural competence is a set of attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, skills, and policies that combined, enable a group of people in an organization, system, and community to work together effectively to change the processes and structures that perpetuate inequities.

Reason for Measuring

A community change initiative such as *Making Connections* seeks to improve the health, safety, educational success, and overall well-being of children and families. The people, organizations, and communities that are participating in the community change initiative are comprised of different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. Group differences, disparities, and structural inequities are prevalent in these communities. As such, the capacity to work across cultures to promote equity in the group process and outcomes is critical. The development of cross-cultural competence is an on-going process; therefore, the ability to monitor the process and evaluate the extent to which such competence has been developed is important.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Cross-Cultural Competence Capacity* provides an instrument for examining whether the community change initiative has the knowledge, skills, relationships, and resources to be culturally competent and to foster and sustain a cross-culturally competent community. The questionnaire can be completed by a single individual (e.g., the local initiative director or a community leader), completed by multiple individuals involved in the community change initiative and aggregated, or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.

2. *Strategy for Measuring the Partnership's Development of Cross-Cultural Competency* describes a method through which leaders and residents could assess the initiative's ability to perform in a cross-culturally competent manner. By conducting a series of focus groups with different ethnic, racial and cultural groups, the partnership can measure the following success indicators:

- People in the community feel they are treated equitably regardless of their racial, ethnic, or cultural group
- The community change initiative is culturally competent

Resources

Alliance for Nonprofit Management. Cultural competency initiative resource pages. Retrieved July 25, 2007 from www.allianceonline.org.

Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2006). *Race matters*. Baltimore, MD.

Questionnaire for Assessing Cross-Cultural Competence Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths in the areas that research has shown to be important for building strategic partnerships. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the initiative's cross-cultural competency capacities. You will also learn whether partnership members feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, your answers will not be associated with your name and will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to function strategically and collaboratively. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be*, and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies between two numbers, do not put a mark between the two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring to a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall cross-cultural competency capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to cross-cultural competency capacities.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that enable definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring cross-cultural competence success as described in the assessment strategy on page 83. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of cross-cultural competence capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Cross-Cultural Competence Capacity

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed its cross-cultural competence capacity. Consider each of the following statements and rate whether you think the initiative is the *best it could be* (5) or the *worst it could be* (1) for that particular attribute that is part of cross-cultural competence. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be				Best It Could Be	Comments
1. Members of the initiative intentionally develop and maintain relationships with community leaders and bridge builders across race, ethnicity, and culture	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Members of the initiative understand and examine both the assets and needs of the particular groups of people who live in their community	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Members of the initiative intentionally identify and address issues relevant to the groups of people who live in their community (e.g., history, language, value systems)	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Members of the initiative intentionally and strategically address behaviors, practices, and policies that negatively affect the groups of people who live in their community	1	2	3	4	5	
5. Members of the initiative pay close attention to how their assumptions and racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds could affect their interactions with people in the community	1	2	3	4	5	
6. The collaboration develops and distributes materials that reflect and respond to the cultures of the groups of people who live in the community	1	2	3	4	5	
7. The collaboration, particularly its leadership, is composed of people who reflect the racial, ethnic, and cultural groups in the community	1	2	3	4	5	
8. The collaboration engages people from different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups in planning, implementing, and monitoring its work	1	2	3	4	5	
9. The initiative team regularly assesses its services, materials, and events to ensure that they are culturally sensitive and responsive to the needs of the different groups of people in their community	1	2	3	4	5	

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
10. The collaboration dedicates resources in its budget for addressing and responding to different cultures (e.g., translation and interpretation, conducting events during non-traditional work hours and at different locations convenient and familiar to different cultural groups)	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Members of the initiative trust one another despite racial, ethnic, and cultural differences	1	2	3	4	5	
12. The collaboration has a clear and explicit process for dealing with conflicts that arise due to stereotyping, prejudiced attitudes and behaviors, and other problems related to group differences	1	2	3	4	5	
13. The collaboration's written documents about its functions and operations acknowledge the importance of equity (e.g., written policies about harassment and discrimination, employment equity, service equity, voting equity)	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Measuring Cross-Cultural Competence Success

Measurement Strategy: Focus Groups

Focus groups offer a flexible strategy for exploring personal and subjective experiences such as perceptions of an initiative's responsiveness and relevance to their lives. We recommend conducting focus groups with key racial, ethnic or cultural groups in your targeted neighborhoods. The number of focus groups you should conduct will depend on the number of racial, ethnic or cultural groups that influence or are affected by your work. At least one focus group per constituency is recommended.

Method

To conduct a focus group, follow these steps:

1. Identify a community change effort undertaken by the community change initiative. Whatever is selected as the focus of discussion, it should be tangible enough (e.g., issue-specific, time-limited) for focus group members to discuss their experiences and perceptions concretely.
2. Identify the membership for the focus group(s). The focus groups should be composed of residents from the various racial, ethnic or cultural groups (one focus group for each group is recommended). For example, if you community is comprised largely of Vietnamese, Sudanese, and Hmong then three different focus groups should be convened.
 - A focus group usually consists of at least one moderator and up to ten respondents.
 - A focus group typically lasts for up to three hours.
3. Identify someone to moderate the focus groups and someone to take notes. The moderator should not be formally affiliated with the initiative's leadership. He/she should be an experienced group facilitator with the following skills:
 - Capacity to initiate discussion and facilitate the flow of responses. This includes asking questions, probing areas that are not clear, and pursuing lines of inquiry that seem fruitful.
 - Knowledge of group dynamics. For example, a good moderator will encourage the emergence of leaders and use them to elicit responses, reactions, or information from other group members. People will make side comments to one another and the moderator will note them and possibly encourage members to elaborate on them. In a well-run focus group, the members may interact among themselves as much as with the moderator.
 - Knowledge of the group's cultural norms that could affect group dynamics (e.g., body language, treatment of authoritative figures, staying on time). Where possible, the moderator will have a similar cultural background. If not, someone capable of providing translation and interpretation will need to be available.

- Ability to direct the group discussion. This includes moving from more general topics in the beginning to more specific issues toward the end. This also includes observing the characteristics of the participants in the group to ensure everyone's effective involvement. For example, someone who talks a lot but is off-topic will need to be constrained, while someone who says little will need encouragement to participate. In a well-run focus group, there are very high levels of participation by all members.
4. Invite individuals to participate in the focus groups.
- We recommend that resident leaders engaged in the initiative (or someone who knows the individuals that will be contacted for focus group participation) contact individuals about participating in the focus groups. This will increase cooperation.
 - Schedule at least an hour and a half for each focus group.
 - Conduct the focus group in a location and at times convenient for most participants.
 - Provide child care, refreshments, and other incentives such as door prizes or gift certificates to increase participation.
5. Develop a focus group protocol. This includes a sign-in sheet (name, contact information, years living in the neighborhood), introductions, the interview questions, a note-taker (if resources allow, the interviews can be tape recorded and transcribed.), and wrap-up. It is important to explain the purpose of the focus groups, how the information will be used, issues of confidentiality (i.e., individual names will not be linked to specific comments in any written report), and a point of contact should participants want to follow-up later. We recommend asking questions like the following.
- Are you familiar with the community change initiative (or name the local entity with which people might be more familiar or a specific project)?
 - Do you feel that the community change initiative reflects the diversity represented in your community? Why or why not?
 - Do the members of the initiative engage you or other people in planning, implementing, and monitoring their activities? If yes, how do they engage you?
 - Do you feel that the information developed and distributed by the community change initiative is appropriate for your community? Why or why not?
 - Do you think that the community change initiative helps promote equality and equity for all the racial, ethnic, and cultural groups that live in your community?
 - What suggestions do you have for improving the community change initiative's work to be inclusive of all groups and to promote equality and equity?

6. Analyze and interpret results. The data from a focus group can be recorded by note-takers or tape-recorded. A decision will need to be made about whether the moderator will analyze and interpret the data or if a staff member from the community change initiative will do this. When analyzing and interpreting the findings, consider:
- Does the group view the community change initiative's work in the community as relevant to their lives?
 - If yes, how has the initiative made their strategies and activities relevant?
 - If no, what steps need to be taken to make the initiative more relevant to all groups?
 - Does the group view the initiative's work in the community as responsive to their needs?
 - If yes, in what ways is the initiative addressing diverse needs in the community?
 - If no, what steps can be taken to make the initiative more responsive?
 - Does the group view consider the initiative's staff respectful of their traditions and values and norms?
 - If yes, what examples were given as signs of respectful interactions?
 - If no, what strategies might be needed to improve the level of mutual respect and understanding?
 - Does the group view the community change initiative as a vehicle for promoting equality and equity for all groups in the community?
 - If yes, what kinds of activities were discussed as important?
 - If no, what strategies might be needed to improve cultural competency of the initiative?

X. Community Capacity Building Assessment Instruments

Definition of Community Capacity Building

Community capacity building is the ability of a community to mobilize and use resources for problem solving and development.

Reason for Measuring

Community capacity building expands the base of citizen involvement through networking, promoting collaboration, and developing community ownership. Through capacity building, communities acquire the ability to assess their needs and strengths and to develop strategies that gain widespread support. Community capacity building also enhances the leadership pool available in a community and builds on leadership skills through direct training for leadership, team-training methods, and organizational development techniques. It expands the information and resource base available to the community by brokering resources and information, dissemination and diffusion of models, promoting experimentation, and research and development.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Community Capacity Building* provides an instrument for examining whether the community change initiative has the knowledge, skills, relationships, and resources to mobilize and use resources for problem solving and development. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual such as the local initiative director, completed by multiple individuals involved in the initiative and aggregated) or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion.
2. *Strategy for Measuring Success in Community Capacity Building* uses a goal attainment scaling tool to set capacity-building goals and monitor goal attainment. A key way to assess the ability to build capacity is to explore the degree to which capacity-building techniques have been used to achieve intended results. A relatively simple way to make this assessment is to look at progress toward capacity-building goals.

Resources

Kiresuk, T., Smith, A., & Cardillo, J. (1994). *Goal Attainment Scaling*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Questionnaire for Assessing Community Capacity Building

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths in the areas that research has shown to be important for building a community's capacity. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the initiative's ability to build community capacity. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, individual answers will not be associated with specific names and will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to build community capacity. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be*, and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies between two numbers, do not put a mark between the two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring to a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall community capacity building score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to community capacity building.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that enable definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring community capacity building success as described in the assessment strategy on page 91. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of community capacity building.

Questionnaire for Assessing Community Capacity Building

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative has developed its ability to build community capacity. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in developing the capacity of your community. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Resource Network and Communications							
1. Our initiative maintains a “resource network” that shares vital information on best practices and experiences of other groups	1	2	3	4	5		
2. Our initiative disseminates information on model programs and models for problem solving in our results areas	1	2	3	4	5		
3. Our initiative supports open exchange of information and fluid communication between organizations	1	2	3	4	5		
4. Residents are informed about our initiative’s core outcome areas and are equipped with the skills they need to contribute to these outcome areas	1	2	3	4	5		
Capacity Building							
5. Our initiative is supported by an intermediary that offers technical assistance, information, consulting, training, research, and media and marketing services	1	2	3	4	5		
6. Our initiative has a capacity-building plan that includes an analysis of our collaboration’s strengths and weaknesses, capacity-building goals, and explicit action steps for achieving those goals	1	2	3	4	5		
7. Initiative staff participate in workshops or other training events to acquire new knowledge and skills	1	2	3	4	5		
8. Community leaders participate in workshops or other training events to acquire new knowledge and skills	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
9. We know of and have access to experts who can help us design strategies, acquire resources, evaluate our programs, and/or manage our operations	1	2	3	4	5	
10. We have adequate financial resources to address our capacity-building needs	1	2	3	4	5	
11. We have dedicated adequate time and human resources to address our capacity-building needs	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative.

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Measuring Community Capacity Building Success

Measurement Strategy: Goal Attainment Scaling

The indicator of successful community capacity building is a community's ability to achieve its goals. Goal attainment scaling, originally developed to evaluate mental health treatment, has been widely used for assessing many other forms of service delivery and intervention. Goal attainment scaling is a simple method that a community change initiative may employ to monitor progress toward improving community capacity.

Method

1. **Identify the specific goal(s) and timeframe for goal attainment.** To measure success in community capacity building, an initiative site should identify their goals within desired areas of the eleven core capacities. The use of goal attainment scaling assumes that the community change initiative has determined goals to be achieved within a particular time frame.
2. **Assess progress toward goals.** The process of identifying specific goals and the time period for their accomplishment also involves identifying indicators that the goal has been achieved. The expected outcomes are the results that could reasonably be expected to be achieved within a given timeframe.

For example, when working toward building resident engagement capacity, the initiative team may set a goal of activating effective resident and partner workgroups for each outcome area through the increased use of active resident organizers and residents currently involved in each outcome area. The initiative team may give itself 12 months to attain this goal.

3. **Establish rating.** The initiative team should indicate the degree to which it met the goals set for capacity building during the past year, rating its progress as: achieved more than expected, completed, started, or not started. For goals rated as "started," the initiative team should specify as: just started, halfway complete, or almost complete.

Interpreting the Data

The goal attainment scaling tool is designed for situations in which specific goals are set jointly by key stakeholders in the community change initiative (i.e. residents, initiative staff, private and public sector representatives, etc.). These stakeholders should be convened to complete the goal attainment scaling and interpret the data. When analyzing and interpreting the findings, consider:

- Is there agreement among varying stakeholders on the status of goals?
- Are there any noticeable trends in goal attainment?
 - Have goals been consistently attained? If so, will the initiative continue working toward new goals at the same pace or is it ready to set more challenging goals?
 - Have goals been consistently unattained for any reason? Have goals been started but left incomplete? Are there goals that have not been started? How can the initiative team begin to set more realistic goals?

Goal Attainment Scaling Tool

Community capacity building success will be measured according to the principles of the goal attainment scaling (GAS) method. Place an X in the appropriate column to indicate the degree to which you met the goals set for your capacity building during the past year (i.e., achieved more than expected, completed, started, not started).

Goal rating key:

- A Achieved more than expected
- C Completed
- SA Started, almost complete
- SH Started, halfway complete
- JS Just started
- NS Not started

CAPACITY-BUILDING GOALS	A	C	SA	SH	JS	NS	Please explain any internal or external factors that may have affected your initiative's ability to reach the target.
Goal 1: Describe your goal: (Resident engagement) Build social networks, link residents and resident organizations to resources, and identify resident leaders by increasing connections through faith organizations							
Goal 2: Describe your goal:							
Goal 3: Describe your goal:							
Goal 4: Describe your goal:							

XI. Conflict Transformation Assessment Instruments

Definition of Conflict Transformation Capacity

Conflict transformation capacity is the ability of a community to deal constructively with the inevitable differences among its members that frustrate collaborative efforts to improve outcomes for children, families, and neighborhoods. Distinct from conflict resolution and management, conflict transformation goes beyond the immediate issue or presenting problem by keeping the causes of conflict (e.g., power differences, historical injustice) in the discussion and strengthening relationships among the people.

Reason for Measuring

Conflict transformation builds the overall capacity of the community change initiative and can increase the initiative's ability to attain its goals. For example, among collaboration members disagreements may arise from power differences between professional "experts" and resident "experts," related to access to resources and decision-making authority. In addition to discussing openly power differences and consequent conflict, professionals and residents will need the capacity to collectively identify ways of developing more equal and just relationships that can be used to create lasting resolutions. When used as an intentional strategy in the broader community, conflict transformation can build a sense of community, collective efficacy, and social capital. As a way of improving outcomes, the community change initiative may transform conflict among neighbors; among criminal offenders and their victims; or among students, families, teachers, and school administrators. Whether the process is used internally by partnership members or externally as a strategy for achieving initiative results, assessing this capacity and measuring successful efforts is essential.

Contents

1. *Questionnaire for Assessing Conflict Transformation Capacity* provides an instrument to assess the knowledge, skills, relationships, and resources that define conflict transformation capacity. The questionnaire can be used as described in the introductory section (i.e., completed by a single individual such as the local initiative director, completed by multiple individuals involved in the initiative and aggregated or used as a guide to facilitate a group discussion).
2. *Strategy for Measuring Successful Conflict Transformation* recommends that the community change initiative engage a researcher trained in participatory action research and a mediator trained in restorative practices (e.g., collaborative conferences and circles) to conduct an action research project focused on planning, developing, implementing and evaluating a conflict transformation process. If after this intervention, a goal that could not be achieved previously is achieved, there will be evidence to support a successful conflict transformation process. If the group is able to transform future conflict without the assistance of a mediator, this will provide stronger evidence.

Resources

<http://arj.sagepub.com> (Action Research journal published by Sage Publications) Reason, P and Bradbury, H. (Eds.) (2001). *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

www.iirp.org/whatisrp.php (International Institute for Restorative Practices)

Questionnaire for Assessing Conflict Transformation Capacity

This questionnaire can help your group assess its strengths in the areas that research has shown to be important for conflict transformation. There are no right or wrong answers.

Your rating of the initiative is important, even if it is very different from the ratings of others. When your group sees the results, you will have a better understanding of the impact of the initiative's strategies. You will also learn whether participants feel the same or differently about these attributes.

Unless your group has decided to put names on the questionnaires, your answers will not be associated with your name and will be grouped with the answers of others.

Providing Instructions

Ask the individuals completing the questionnaire to follow these instructions exactly:

1. Read each item.
2. Circle the number that indicates your rating of the initiative's ability to transform conflict. Circling "5" means you think the capacity is the *best it could be*, and circling "1" means you think the capacity is the *worst it could be*.
3. Do not skip any items. If you think that your rating lies between two numbers, do not put a mark between two numbers and do not circle them both. If you think your rating lies between 1 and 2, for example, take the time to decide which rating most accurately represents your opinion and circle that response.
4. Return your form as instructed by your group leader or facilitator.

You might want to complete the questionnaire a bit differently, but we have learned from experience that your group will get the most benefit if people fill out the questionnaire as the instructions describe.

Tabulating Responses

The calculation of scores can rely upon the judgment of one person, a few people, or many people. We recommend, however, that ALL members of the collaboration complete the questionnaire for this capacity. A greater number of raters will produce a more reliable result, and one that reflects the many different perspectives that individuals bring to a group.

When all raters have completed their questionnaires, the initiative's overall conflict transformation capacity score can be calculated using the following steps:

1. Add together all the ratings for the items related to conflict transformation capacity.
2. Divide by the total number of ratings for those items.

The scores can be tabulated by hand or by keying the questionnaire into a data file for computer analysis (using Excel, for example).

Analyzing and Interpreting Responses

This questionnaire does not have normative standards or established psychometric properties that enable definitive interpretations of numerical scores for the capacity. Instead, the scores on the questionnaire can be used as a basis for constructive discussion and planning for your partnership.

As a general rule, we would say:

- Scores of 4.0 or higher show sufficient capacity and probably do not need special attention.
- Scores from 3.0 to 3.9 are borderline and should be discussed by the initiative team to see if they deserve attention.
- Scores of 2.9 or lower reveal a lack of capacity and should be addressed.

Here are some other things to consider when reviewing your results:

Assessing the overall strength of the capacity:

- Based on the overall score, how strong is this capacity?
- If the capacity is not as strong as you would like it to be, what aspects of this capacity need improvement?
 - Why might these weaknesses exist?
 - What can be done to address them?
 - What resources do these solutions require?
- If your score indicates a strong capacity, think about what you have been doing to achieve this capacity.
 - What factors have been particularly helpful in this work?
 - How can this level of capacity be sustained?
 - Do the results indicate any gaps in the capacity area that could be strengthened?

Looking at how different participants rated the capacity:

- Do representatives from all sectors involved in the community change initiative tend to rate the factors the same way?
 - If not, which factors are rated differently?
 - Why might those factors have been rated differently?
 - What do the results imply about the true strength of the capacity?
 - How might the gaps be addressed?

Because this questionnaire offers a way to assess the perspectives of a limited number of participants, you may now want to take a deeper, more rigorous look at this capacity by measuring conflict transformation success as described in the assessment strategy tool on page 99. This strategy provides a way to more objectively examine the presence of conflict transformation capacity.

Questionnaire for Assessing Conflict Transformation Capacity

Instructions:

Please rate how well you think the community change initiative transforms conflict. Consider each of the following statements and rate each according to whether you think the initiative has done the *best it could* (5) or the *worst it could* (1) in transforming conflict. What score between 1 and 5 comes closest to your opinion? Circle only one response for each statement.

	Worst It Could Be					Best It Could Be	Comments
Internal Capacity							
1. Members of the community change initiative are committed to transforming conflict in order to work together	1	2	3	4	5		
2. Members of the initiative have a sense of collective ownership when conflict emerges, even if they are not directly involved	1	2	3	4	5		
3. Members of the initiative identify the underlying causes of conflicts when they emerge (e.g., power differences, historical injustices)	1	2	3	4	5		
4. Members of the initiative work together to settle the causes of conflicts when they emerge	1	2	3	4	5		
5. Members of the initiative share an understanding of the initiative's outcomes and how to achieve them	1	2	3	4	5		
6. Members of the initiative have experienced conflict and resolved it	1	2	3	4	5		
7. Past conflicts experienced among members of the community change initiative have stayed in the past – old conflicts do not re-emerge	1	2	3	4	5		
8. When conflict emerges, the initiative has a safe environment (e.g., formal or informal processes in place) for people to express and exchange intense emotion	1	2	3	4	5		
9. When conflict emerges among members of the initiative and we can't resolve it internally, we access other resources (e.g., training, mediators, facilitators, model processes) to help us	1	2	3	4	5		

	Worst It Could Be		Best It Could Be			Comments
10. When conflict emerges among members of the initiative, we listen to each other's points of view	1	2	3	4	5	
11. When conflict emerges among members of the initiative, we all express how it has affected us	1	2	3	4	5	
External Capacity						
12. The community change initiative facilitates community conflict transformation	1	2	3	4	5	
13. The community change initiative provides technical assistance to the community on conflict transformation	1	2	3	4	5	
14. The community change initiative provides interested members and/or residents with training in conflict transformation	1	2	3	4	5	

Please indicate the sector you represent as a member of the initiative:

- Initiative staff
- Public sector (e.g., city/county government, government agencies, schools)
- Business sector (e.g., business leaders, banks)
- Nonprofit sector (e.g., hospitals, foundations)
- Neighborhood organizations (e.g., resident leaders, tenant/housing associations)
- Professional groups (e.g., health, education, housing, law)
- Cultural groups (e.g., faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee centers)
- Other _____

Strategy for Measuring Successful Conflict Transformation

Measurement Strategy: Action Research

Action research engages researchers and practitioners in the process of generating knowledge and innovations in practice relevant to many critical problems. We recommend taking the following steps to design an action research study.

1. Engage a qualified (e.g., experienced in conducting action research) and independent researcher to participate in this research.
 - a. Immediate outcomes the research team might consider include agreements that resulted from the process, compliance with agreements reached, and participant satisfaction with the process.
 - b. Longer-term outcomes might include relationships that are sustained beyond the conflict resolution, a greater sense of community, or improved collective efficacy. In addition, research might examine increased capacity in other areas such as shared vision, resident leadership, strategic partnerships, powerful strategies, learning and use of data, communication, and governance.
2. Engage a mediator trained in restorative practices to work with the site team. The mediator would help identify a conflict and facilitate the transformation process.
3. Participate in a formal conflict transformation process that targets an issue impeding goal achievement.
4. Evaluate collectively (i.e., the researcher, the mediator, the site team) the extent to which immediate, short, and long-term goals were achieved as a result of the intervention.
5. Identify successes and explore why and how they were obtained.
6. Identify unresolved issues and explore why and how they remain sources of conflict.
7. Assess the extent to which the conflict transformation process can be linked to achieving other outcomes or the ability of the community change initiative to implement different strategies.

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