Community Innovation

Tools & Resources

In an effort to provide additional support to those who are passionate about community innovation, Bush Foundation and Wilder Research worked together to compile *Community Innovation Tools & Resources*. Our hope is that these tools and resources help you engage in new and deeper ways with your work and meaningfully contribute to your organizational evaluation and learning. We chose these tools after talking with Community Innovation grantees and applicants regarding helpful tools for their work, and after reviewing a number of publicly available tools and resources for community innovation. You will find the following tools and resources:

1. **Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory**, a tool for assessing the effectiveness of collaborations

2. **Community Tool Box: Primary Data Collection Tools**, including a tool for learning about a community's strengths and needs, and a tool for evaluating initiatives

3. **Community Scales**, a systems analysis tool

These tools and resources are by no means exhaustive; we encourage interested parties to continue their search for useful community innovation tools and resources. **Additionally, grantees or applicants are <u>not</u> required to use these tools after receiving or while applying for a Bush Foundation Community Innovation grant**. These tools and resources are offered solely as supplemental support for grantees, applicants, or any others who are passionate about community innovation.

Wilder
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Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory

What does this tool do?

This tool helps groups assess the effectiveness of their collaboration on 20 research-tested success factors. This tool can be used for stakeholders and partners to assess the effectiveness of their own work group, or the effectiveness of collaboration in their community at large. Please go here[1] for an overview of the tool.

This tool is the result of research regarding factors that contribute to successful collaborations. **Organizations can use the tool for free for non-commercial purposes by including the following citation on any documents developed from using the tool: Mattessich, P., Murray-Close, M., & Monsey, B. (2001).** *Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory*. **St. Paul, MN: Wilder Research.**

How do you use this tool?

Project members rank statements pertaining to each collaboration factor on a five-point scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" (See below for an example success factor, statements that operationalize that factor, and the rating scale.) Once all project members have completed the ranking form, scores for each factor are averaged to give an overall rating for each success factor.

This tool can be used on an individual basis and can also be distributed among a group, with the scores of all participating members aggregated into one data set – you can click here[2] to use the tool this way via an online webpage. You can also download a paper version of the tool click here[3], which lends itself to mixing and matching success factors to your needs.

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[1] https://www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Research-Services/Pages/Wilder-Collaboration-Factors-Inventory.aspx
[2] http://wilderresearch.org/tools/cfi/index.php
[3] http://www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Publications/Studies/Forms/Study/docsethomepage.aspx?ID=877&List=5ffe87fb-8c61-4035-86cc-db1b1907fa0a&FolderCTID=0x0120D52000F239CA0ED16F9A49B139AA1402664580003333A21DCC750948AD7DA120396FC83C&RootFolder=%2FWilder-Research%2FPublications%2FStudies%2FCollaboration%20Factors%20Inventory&InitialTabId=Ribbon.Document&VisibilityContext=WSSTabPersistence

Example from the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory

Factor	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral, no opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
History of collaboration or cooperation in the community.	1. Agencies in our community have a history of working together.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Trying to solve problems through collaboration has been common in this community. It's been done a lot before.	1	2	3	4	5

How can this tool be used in different phases of the Community Innovation Process?

This tool is useful at all phases of the Community Innovation Process as a check-in for partners and stakeholders who are completing project tasks together or separately. Particularly when some partners or stakeholders have been working on individual tasks, the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory can be used to refocus and remind partners and stakeholders of other aspects the project. This tool can also be particularly helpful at the beginning of a project or at key junctures in a project's lifespan to assess or reassess a collaboration's effectiveness.

Community Tool Box: Primary Data Collection Tools
"Developing a Plan for Assessing Community Needs and Resources" and "Evaluating an Initiative"

What is the purpose of this resource?

The main purpose of both facets of this resource is to provide you with an outline from which to move forward with your own primary data collection procedures. ("Primary data collection" refers to conducting focus groups, interviewing community members or stakeholders, or administering a survey.) This resource provides descriptions of the processes included in developing a plan for assessing and describing a community, as well as an overview of the steps included in evaluating the outcomes of an initiative.

To visit the "Developing a Plan for Assessing Community Needs and Resources" tool, click here[4]. To visit the "Evaluating an Initiative" tool, click here[5].

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[4] http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/develop-a-plan/main
[5] http://ctb.ku.edu/en/evaluating-initiative

How do you use this resource?

Both facets of this resource ("Developing a Plan…" and "Evaluating…") should be consulted as project members begin planning processes for primary data collection. Project members will find information regarding:

- Understanding and describing a community

- Needs assessments and other surveys

- Focus groups, public forums, and other events that require group facilitation

- One-on-one interviewing

- Logic models and research questions

- Data analysis and communicating findings

How can this resource be used in different phases of the Community Innovation Process?

Community innovation phases	Uses for the Community Tool Box primary data collection tools
Identify need Build collective understanding Generate ideas	In these phases, project members will benefit from using the "Developing a Plan…" tool. This tool provides 20+ chapters related to learning about a community, how to describe a community, and how to go about getting data about a community. The tool also includes a chapter on conducting needs assessments surveys, which are particularly helpful for identifying a community need. The tool also provides detailed guides for gathering data from stakeholders. The tool includes chapters on conducting public forums, collecting information about the problem, conducting focus groups, conducting concerns surveys, conducting interviews, and other ways to build collective understanding and generate ideas about an issue.
Test and implement solutions Community innovation accomplished	The "Evaluating an Initiative" tool is most useful during these phases of the Community Innovation Process. This tool guides project members through phases of conducting an effective evaluation, including involving key stakeholders, developing a logic model, designing the evaluation, collecting data (this part of the tool links to primary data collection guides in the "Developing a Plan…" tool), analyzing data, and presenting data back to the community. The results of the evaluation can be used to improve and/or alter a project.

Community Scales

What does this tool do?

This tool facilitates thinking comprehensively about multiple dimensions of a community need or issue by asking project members to rank those dimensions on a scale of 1-5 ("In Crisis" to "Thriving"). For this tool, community dimensions include: Public Policy, Equity, Civic Capital, Service & Support System, and Economic Opportunity. This tool is useful for thinking about how these dimensions interact with each other, as well as the amount of attention that individual dimensions may need for a project to realize success. Additionally, this tool allows for intermediate progress measurements if administered at multiple stages of a project's lifespan.

The high-level overview of this tool is below. To view the detailed description of the tool and how to use it, click here[6] (this link downloads an online PDF file). The authors give an overall explanation of the tool and then provide detailed guidelines and examples regarding the five dimensions of "community" as they've defined them. We recommend consulting the full document before using this tool; it provides helpful background information and examples of the tool's intended use.

How do you use this tool?

Project members (stakeholders, partners, staff, etc.) rank the different dimensions as they relate to a community issue or goal ("community" should first be defined by project members). For example, if a project seeks to create a violence-free community, in the "public policy" column project members would rank the readiness of formal, written public policies – as well as unstated community norms – to support a violence-free community.

For brief definitions of the community dimensions, see the corresponding footnotes below the table. For in-depth definitions of community dimensions, click here[7] for the full tool description, (this link downloads the same online PDF file). Some dimensions may not apply to all projects.

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[6]   http://nascsp.org/data/files/csbg_roma/communityscale.pdf
[7]   http://nascsp.org/data/files/csbg_roma/communityscale.pdf

Thresholds		Dimensions				
		Public Policy [1]	Equity [2]	Civic Capital [3]	Service & Support Systems [4]	Economic Opportunity [5]
5	Thriving	Innovative	Achieves Equity and Values Differences	Investing	Comprehensive and Integrated	Vibrant
4	Safe	Supportive	Affirming	Contributory	Preventive	Emerging
3	Stable	Selective or Reactive	Toleration and Awareness	Participating	Comprehensive but Reactive	Stagnant
2	Vulnerable	None or Unenforced	Complacent and Uninformed	Awareness and Education	Responsive but not Comprehensive	Contracting
1	In Crisis	Hostile	Conflict and Fear	Isolation	Non-responsive	Collapsed

[1] **Public Policy** refers to the formal written policies of the community as well as the unstated norms adhered to by the general population.

[2] **Equity** refers to both economic and social distributions of power, opportunity, access, and freedoms. Sexism, racism, and classism are all equity issues.

[3] **Civic Capital** refers to any activity which a person participates in outside of their immediate family unit, including volunteer, social and recreational, religious, and citizenship activities. Civic Capital can also refer to a group of people extending their participation in their community beyond the usual sphere, such as corporate service projects.

[4] **Service & Support Systems** refers to all social and human services, public safety, health, education, child care, housing, justice, infrastructure, and government services. Gaps in the "safety net," the extent of collaboration between agencies, and the comprehensiveness of services are examples of conditions and systems interactions within this dimension.

[5] **Economic Opportunity** refers to the business climate, the labor market, the diversity of the economic base, entrepreneurship, capital stakeholding, and capital resources. Examples of activities in this dimension include strategies to attract or retain jobs, increase job retention and promotion, match labor skill levels with available jobs, and improve new business success rates.

How can this tool be used in different phases of the Community Innovation Process?

By completing the Community Scales process, project members have a shared context for their work, which is beneficial for all phases of community innovation. However, this tool is most useful in the following phases: "Identify need," "Build collective understanding," and "Test and implement solutions."

Community innovation phases	Uses for the Community Scales tool
Identify need	By completing the Community Scales process, project members develop a comprehensive map of the strengths and weaknesses of their community. This analysis can be used to identify which issues or weak points in certain dimensions should be prioritized by project members – as well as how efforts towards strengthening a particular dimension might be assisted by strengths and or hindered by weaknesses in the same or other dimensions.
Build collective understanding	The Community Scales process involves interacting with other project members (and could involve interacting with stakeholders and community members) to assess dimensions of a community. Doing this as a group builds collective understanding, since project members, stakeholders, and community members possess different knowledge and perceptions of community dimensions. Additionally, the Community Scales process shows project members, stakeholders, and community the dimensions about which they need more information.
Test and implement solutions	The Community Scales tool can be used to test implementations by comparing dimension ratings at the start of a project to dimension ratings at particular junctures in a project's lifespan. Additionally, the developers of the tool recommend developing multiple subscales of indicators within a specific dimension. Using these subscales, the Community Scales tool can be used to measure incremental progress *within* a dimension.