



TOOL | ASSESSING COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Pre-conditions: *Does your Collective have the right people around the table?*

There are three pre-conditions of Collective Impact: Influential Champions; Urgency of Issue; and Adequate Resources. Together, these three pre-conditions identify three community elements that determine the success of a Collective Impact effort. A good assessment of these conditions enables groups to undertake the groundwork needed to build awareness, and ultimately momentum, around its issue.

TOOL DESCRIPTION:

This tool will help guide a conversation to gain greater clarity about the issue or opportunity you are trying to address. What does your gut tell you? At the end of the tool, you will find additional reflection questions for your team to consider when building your common agenda.

HOW DO COMMUNITY SYSTEMS CHANGE?	
External Factors	Engagement Strategies
Natural Disasters	Citizen engagement and action
Corruption	Policy changes (Federal, State & Local)
Visionaries (good & bad)	Community education
War	Community mobilization
Economic melt-downs	Community collaboration

TOOL HOW TO:

Step 1. – Invite participants to spend a few moments individually completing the attached tool. (10 min)

Step #1: Assessing Our Community Context Worksheet

Condition: Example- low fruit and vegetable consumption		
	What is challenging about this condition for our community?	Ideas for filling the gaps
History of Collaboration	Example- No one organization is responsible	Build a network
Influential Leaders		
Urgency of Our Issue		
Adequate Resources		
What is unique about our community that we have to pay attention to? (Past history of collaboration, interest in the issue, key leadership, etc.)		
How does the community context influence our community issue?		

Step 2. – Invite them to share their responses to the tool with one other person. Instruct the listener not to interrupt, and only ask the presenter to, “tell me more.” After a few moments get the two people to swap roles. (15 min)

Step 3. – In your pairs, join another pair (to form a group of 4) and share the similarities and differences that surfaced from their conversations. Have each group hand in their sheets. (15 min)

TOOL DEBRIEF:

Some suggested debrief questions include:

- How can we get others excited to work with us on this issue?
- What additional information do community partners require (& who should they hear it from)?
- Do we have this information? If not, where can we find it?