

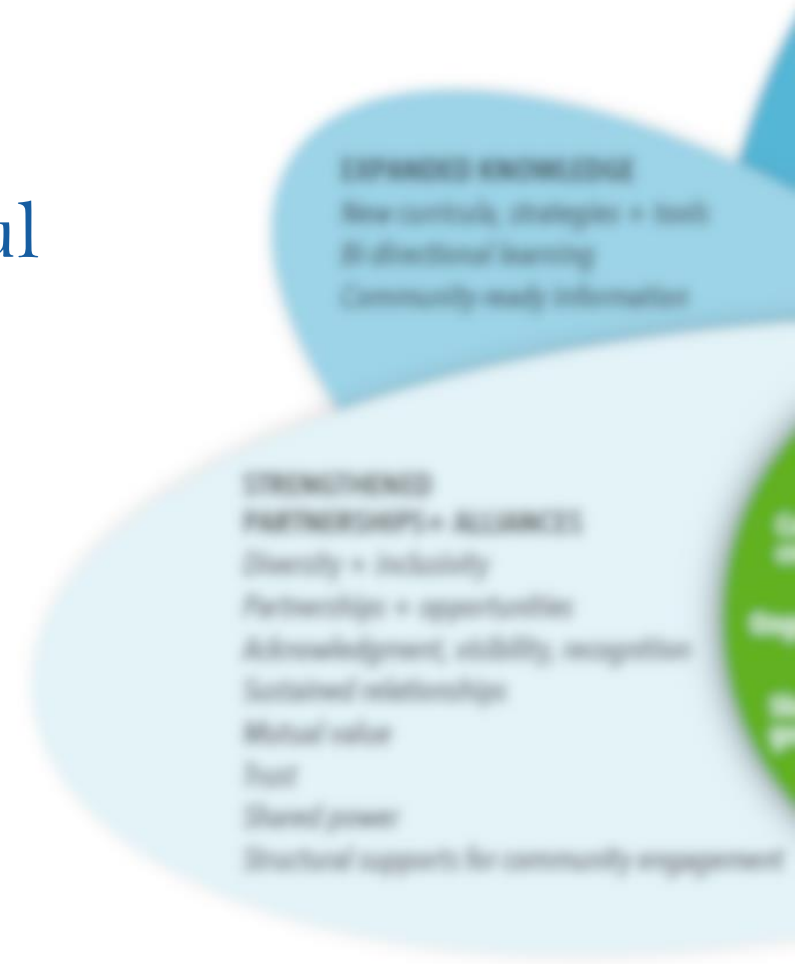
Measure What Matters: Meaningful Community Engagement

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Project background

Assessing meaningful community engagement





“Authentic and sustainable community engagement is integral to advancing health equity and eradicating barriers to community well-being.”

Urban Institute, 2021

And yet measurement practices to understand if engagement is happening and identify its impact are missing. **We need a strategy and resources.**

Project goal:

How might we build a menu of effective, evidence-based, community-engaged *indicators and metrics* that can be used to measure meaningful community engagement ...

- of individuals, families, community groups...
- that can characterize, track, motivate, and guide progress...
- with special emphasis on those most in need.
- in a wide range of settings...
- that shape how health and health care programs & policies are developed, implemented, overseen...

Project audience

Those who want to measure engagement to ensure that it is meaningful and impactful, emphasizing equity as a critical input and outcome. Potential audiences include:

- Federal, state & local agencies, territories & tribal communities
- Community-based groups & community members
- Patients & patient advocacy organizations
- Funders, philanthropists & other investors
- Academic & research institutions
- Care systems, health centers & hospitals
- Systems that impact health outcomes (e.g., housing, transportation, education)
- Payers, plans & industry





Organizing Committee

Community leaders, researchers, and policy experts with diversity across geography, race and ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity



Foundational standards for a measurement strategy

1. **Define the ideal** of what should be measured in meaningful community engagement
2. **Allow the community to see itself** in the language, definitions, and context
3. **Be sufficiently flexible** to measure engagement in any community
4. **Define health holistically**
5. **Embed equity** throughout
6. **Emphasize outcomes** of meaningful community engagement
7. **Present a range of outcome options** for various stakeholders
8. **Communicate the dynamic and transformative nature** of engagement



Ongoing lessons

Our own Community Engagement influenced significant aspects of this project:



**Committee
composition**



**Project focus &
processes**



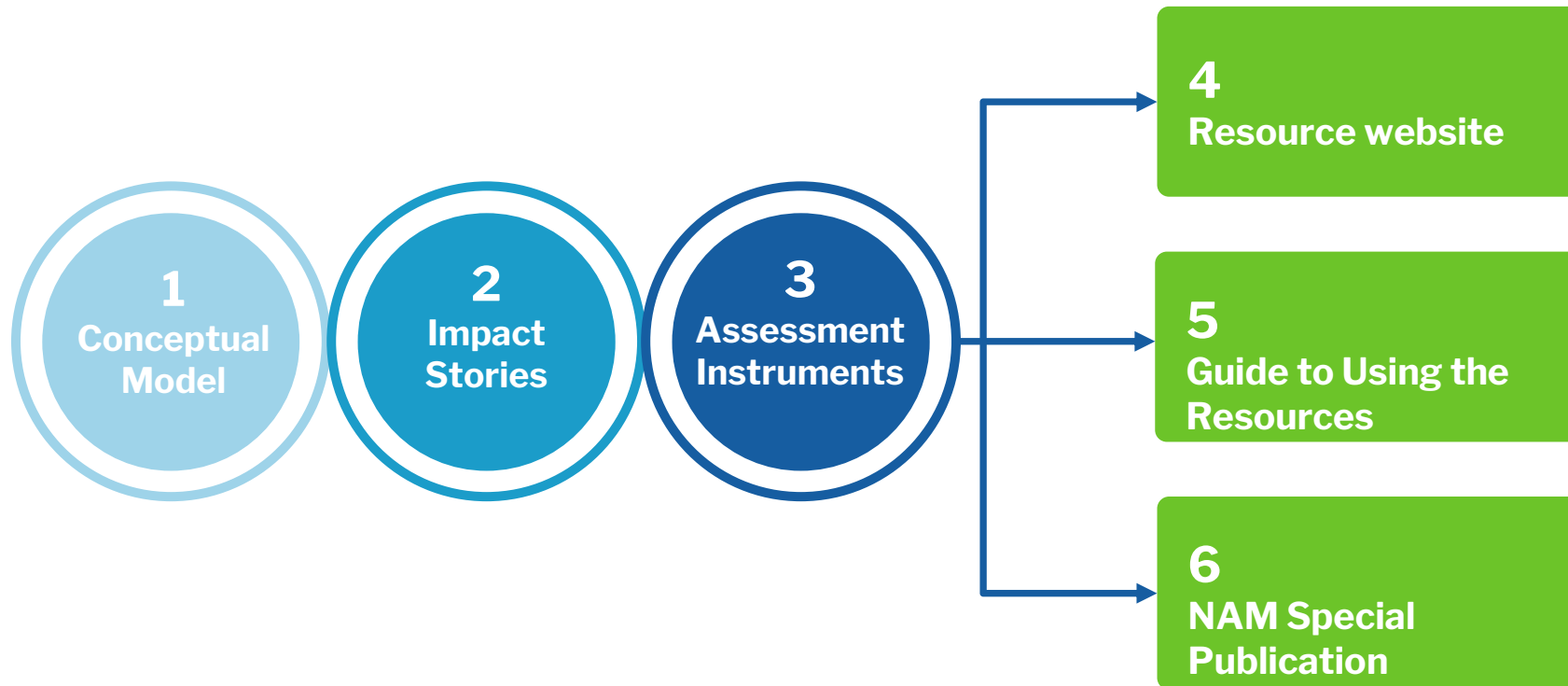
**Timeline &
resources**



**Project
outputs**



Project-generated resources + dissemination tools



Resource 1:

A Conceptual Model for assessing community engagement



Needed:

A conceptual model that illustrates the dynamic relationship between *meaningful* community engagement and improved health and health care outcomes.

Power & inclusion

“We’re not there to rubber stamp.”

Equity & parity

Iterative conversations with community leaders, many themes

Language

“Word choice matters. Whose language?”

Authenticity, truth, respect

“Give communities an authentic voice: in inclusion, in direct involvement, in solutions”

Mutuality

“Good intentions $\neq$ getting it right”

People, not data

*“Maintain connection to peoplehood—
We can’t be reduced into labels. We can’t be
decontextualized.”*

Paradigm shift

*“Change people’s stories and
language when describing our
communities.”*

Closed loop information

Enduring value

*“Something needs to accumulate in the community — infrastructure,
capacity, leaders. Where is that investment?”*



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NAM Leadership
Consortium
Collaboration for a Learning Health System

Final Conceptual Model

Centered on community engagement



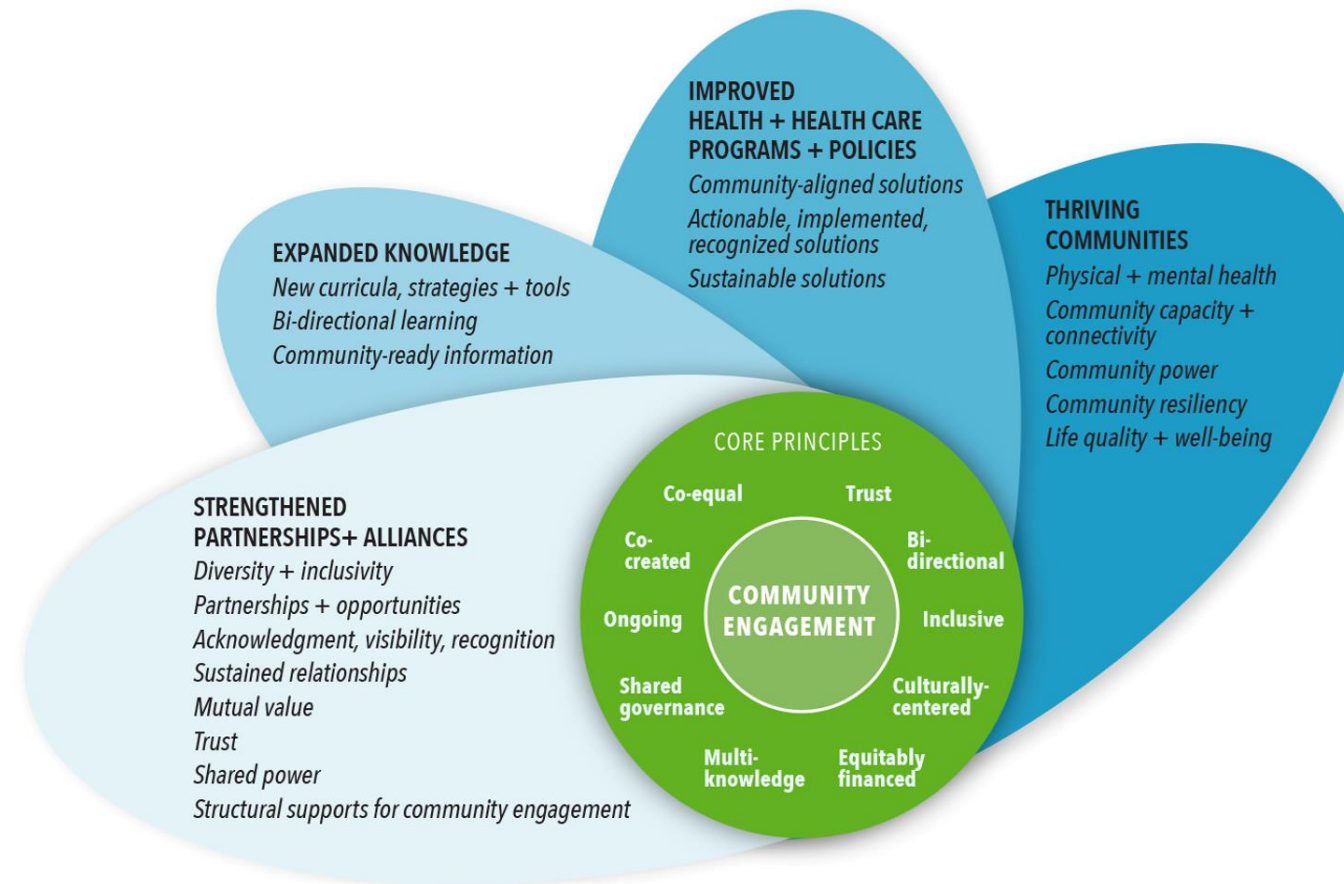
Final Conceptual Model

Built on meaningful practices



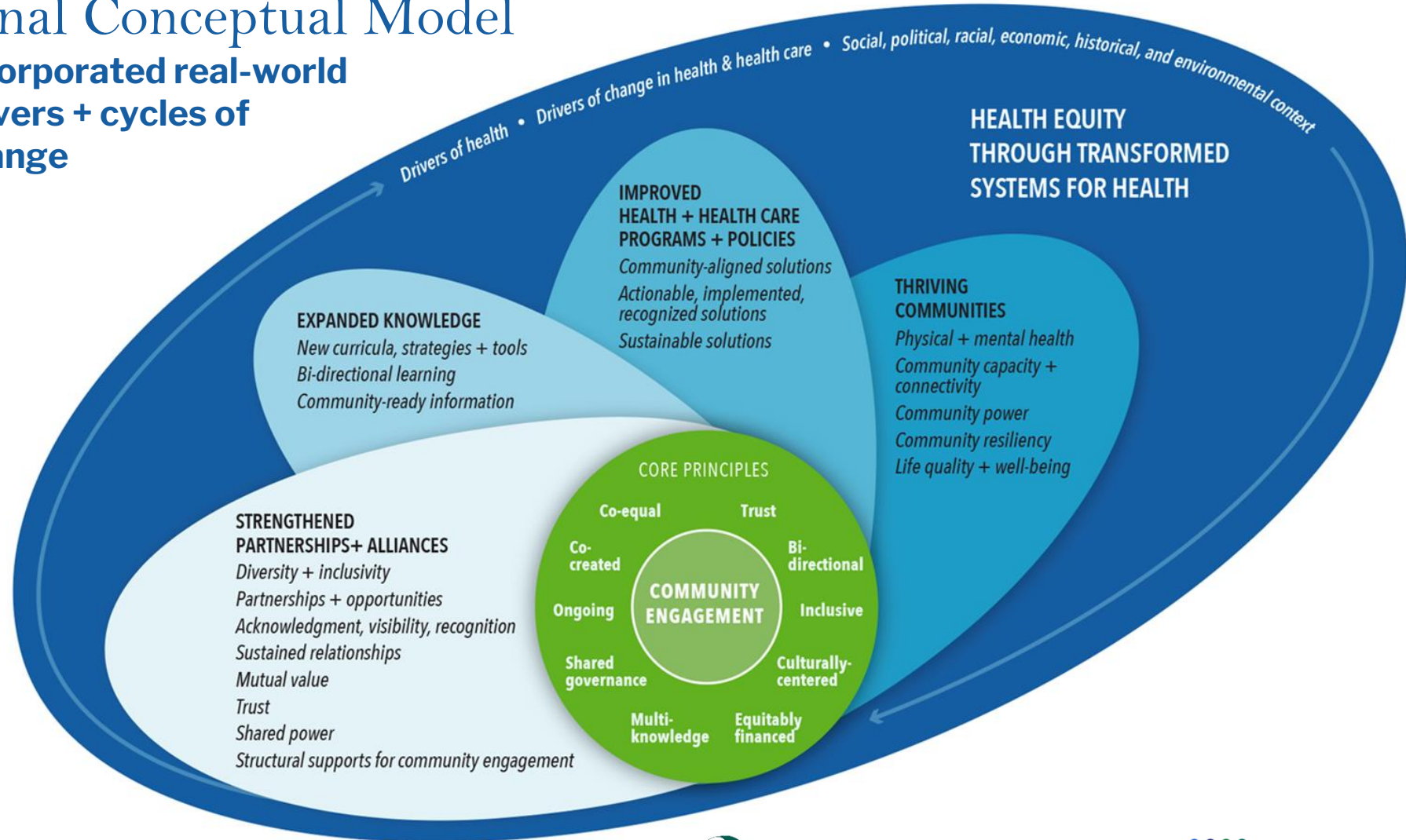
Final Conceptual Model

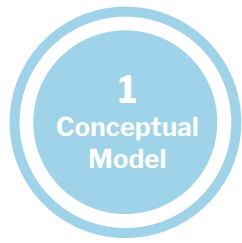
Identified key domains of influence



Final Conceptual Model

Incorporated real-world
drivers + cycles of
change





Ways to use the Conceptual Model

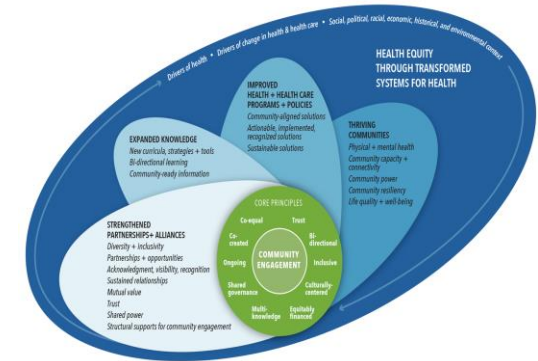
Spark a conversation & create shared language on community engagement as it relates to

- The vision for engagement
- Core principles from the Conceptual Model that matter most to the engagement
- Engagement practices that align with those principles
- The goals & the outcomes that underpin the engagement

Adapt the Conceptual Model to meet community engagement needs

- Identify the domains & indicators of the model that are most important to assess the impact of your engagement

Connect the Conceptual Model to the Impact Stories & Assessment Instruments



Resource 2:

Impact Stories



Needed:

Compelling illustrations, experiences, or approaches that demonstrate how the use, evaluation, or impact of meaningful community engagement inspired action.

7 Final impact stories

Title	Geography	Community	Health Focus
1. The Walkability Project	Roseville, CA	Low-income	Healthy built environment
2. The Faith-Based Organization Network	North Carolina	African-American, faith-based	Partnership development across health issues
3. Health Equity Zones	Rhode Island	Communities at highest risk of adverse health outcomes	Community-identified: teen pregnancy, lead poisoning, food access, etc.
4. IT MATTERS Colorado	Central Plains	Rural	Substance abuse treatment
5. Native Wellness Network	Native Wellness Network	American Indian/Alaskan native communities	Community-identified: healthy kids, healthy weight, diabetes prevention, breast feeding, suicide prevention
6. Act Now Against Meth	Los Angeles, CA	LGBTQ, LatinX, the recently incarcerated, and sex workers	Substance abuse (methamphetamines) & HIV
7. AltaMed's HEAL through PCOR	Los Angeles, CA	Multi-ethnic community, primarily LatinX	Strengthening patient and community engagement within an FQHC





For example

The IT MATTERS Impact Story

IT MATTERS is short for
*Implementing Technology and
Medication Assisted Treatment and
Team Training in Rural Colorado*

The story describes how a long-standing community/research partnership succeeded in building opioid awareness and treatment infrastructure in rural Colorado.

Key engagement activities included

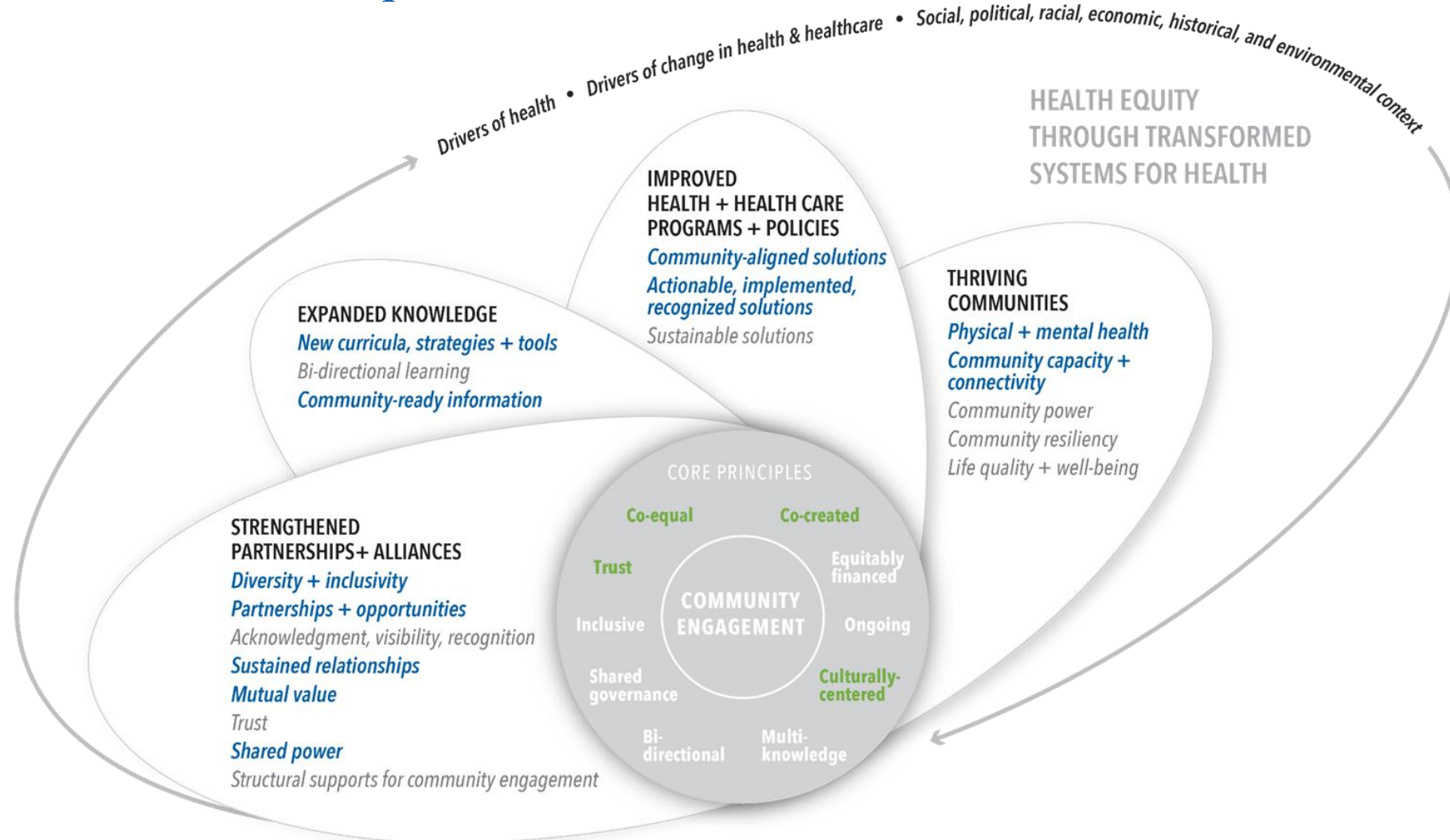
- Investing in pre-project community relationships
- Participatory grant writing,
- Leveraging community-driven dissemination strategies

Project outcomes included

- an increase in community awareness of resources and opioid use disorder treatments

Impact Stories

What does IT MATTERS look like through the lens of the Conceptual Model?





Ways to use the Impact Stories

Review & reflect on stories that resonate with community context & priorities

Identify gaps & opportunities in your engagement

- Learn about what others have done around engagement processes, practices & outcomes
- Identify any lessons learned & the influences they have on your efforts
- Consider new engagement practices & outcomes

Create & share your own impact stories to guide & inspire others

- Listen to the stories in your community & among partners
- Determine how & to whom to tell your stories & the potential impact (e.g., applying for funding, getting buy-in, guiding other local engagement efforts)

Map your own stories to the outcomes of the Conceptual Model.



Resource 3:

Assessment Instruments



Needed:

A set of measures that are:

- **Community-engaged**
- **Evidence-based**
- **Effective**

For those who want to *measure engagement* and ensure that it is meaningful and impactful.

Assessment instruments

We prioritized effective, evidence-based, and community-engaged instruments that support the process of assessing community engagement

8 work sessions
with subset of Organizing
Committee refined the number
instruments

*We identified the critical
importance of prioritizing tools
that reflect both community
engagement and scientific rigor.*

2 prioritization criteria
were chosen to create a
manageable set of instruments

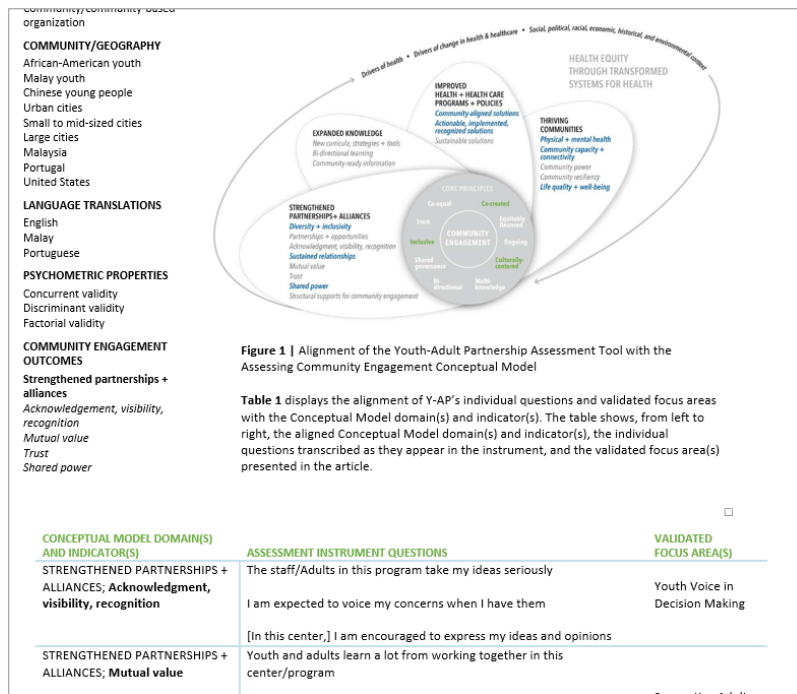
- 1. Articles must mention
community engagement in the
development, implementation or
evaluation of the instrument;*
- 2. Instruments must show validity
or reliability testing.*

→ **28**
instruments
prioritized

Assessment instruments

Toolkit: 28 instruments to support assessing community engagement

Each instrument and its questions are mapped to the conceptual model



Each instrument is presented with summary information

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT BACKGROUND

Context of instrument development/use

The study investigated the quality of community programs that self-identified as emphasizing positive youth development, effective citizenry participation, and youth voice. Services provided in the programs addressed social, recreation, health, and academic support. The article focused on the importance of measuring one effective type of youth participation, youth-adult partnership, which is characterized by youth voice in decision making and supportive adult relationships.

Instrument description/purpose

Y-AP measures youth-adult partnerships using two validated focus areas:

- Youth voice in decision making
- Supportive adult relationships

The instrument has a total of nine questions that use a five point Likert-type scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

This instrument can be accessed online [here](#).

Engagement involved in developing, implementing, or evaluating the assessment instrument

The initial version of the Y-AP was shared with the respective research teams from the United States, Malaysia, and Portugal for feedback. Modifications regarding "cultural relevancy" and appropriate questions were added to the instrument. The instrument also underwent translation and reverse translation processes to ensure accuracy. Y-AP was then piloted with young people in each country and final modifications were made.

Additional information on populations engaged in instrument use

Participants in the programs were African-American youth from across a wide catchment area of urban neighborhoods in the United States, from four state registered after-school programs in a large city in Malaysia serving Malay youth and Chinese young people, and from small to mid-sized cities participating as members of a national youth development organization attending a regional retreat outside of a large city in Portugal.

Notes

- **Potential limitations:** The identified measures of Y-AP were assessed in the context of youth programs that meet regularly during after-school hours. However, youth-adult partnerships are also implemented in less "structured"

Assessment instruments

28 instruments contain 1028 measurement questions,
covering all 4 domains of the conceptual model



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Ways to use the Assessment Instruments

Encourage community-inclusive & rigorous measurement

Seek out questions around how your community engagement is working & how you want to improve it

- Review the summary of the Instrument(s) that appeal to your community context & engagement
- Determine which instruments align with domains & indicators of interest
- Review & compare the questions to use quantitatively & qualitatively to assess engagement

Bridge community & scientific evidence

- Use exact questions from the Instruments to compare with national data
- Modify existing questions or combine questions from multiple Instruments to match your community context & interests
- Create new questions to meet community & engagement needs

Adapt the Conceptual Model to visually identify what you are measuring

How can I navigate and explore the Instruments and Summaries?

Each Instrument may align with different community engagement goals and objectives. To learn more about the Instruments, the questions they use, and the alignment to the Conceptual Model, review the Assessment Instrument Summaries. To learn more about the content in the Summaries, [review this Navigation Guide](#).

Click on each button to show a dropdown of how to explore the Instruments and Summaries by:

Instrument name in alphabetical order



Most coverage of the Conceptual Model



[Engage for Equity Community Engagement Survey](#)

[Kapazitätsentwicklung im Quartier \(Capacity Building in Small Areas/Neighbourhoods Instrument\)](#)

[Partnership Self-Assessment Tool](#)

Conceptual Model domain alignment



Place of initial Instrument use



Available language translations



Psychometric properties



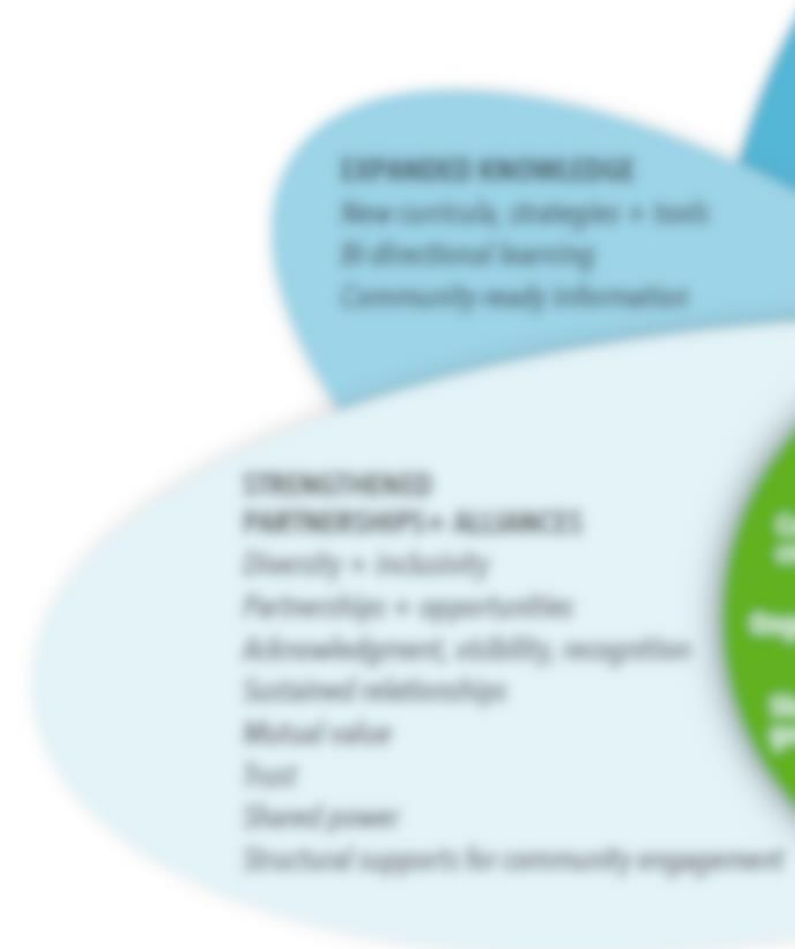
The way forward

**“Knowing is not enough; we must apply.
Willing is not enough; we must do.”**

—Goethe

<https://www.nam.edu/measureengagement>

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