TOOL COMMUNITY LEARNING MODEL RUBRIC

OVERVIEW

Collaboration is messy, complex work. For many, it can feel like wandering through an unknown wilderness, with an uncertain destination. Fortunately, research on effective collaboration can provide effective guidance. The Community Learning Model Rubric is a tool that coalitions and networks can use to understand their collaboration and demystify the process of working together toward a goal. It is intended for groups to assess where they are in their collaborative work and identify where they would like to focus their time and attention. Each section of the rubric corresponds to a different element of the Community Learning Model, which is then broken down into the key components that make up that element.

WHEN TO USE

Because the rubric is grounded in the best research on effective collaboration, it can be used in the very early stages of bringing partners together to provide a useful baseline for where a group is starting from and a helpful roadmap that describes the path ahead toward the desired community results. As a group or coalition matures over time, it can be used as a tool for continual learning and improvement, helping the group identify areas of focus in their work for the next period. Over time, it works well as an annual ritual to celebrate progress and chart the path forward.

HOW TO USE

Include the Right Partners

Identify the group of stakeholders to include in the initial assessment who will provide a good cross-section of perspectives on where the group stands on its collaborative journey. In the early stages of launching a collaborative effort, this might be a smaller team of actively involved members most familiar with the work. In more mature coalitions, this could include the full coalition and its action teams. The key is to make sure that the data collected will give

an accurate picture of the group's current state and provide useful information for planning the next steps together. Emphasize the importance of an honest reflection on practice rather than a measurement of whether the group is doing "good or bad."

Assess Where You Are

The rubric describes the elements of collaboration and places them along a continuum from "Foot in the Door" for the beginning stages on up to "Exceptional" for a fully developed level of collaboration for that element. Have each person fill out the rubric element by element, starting on the left side of the scale, and read each description to see if that matches the current state before moving right. Once the description that best fits where the collaborative is at this moment is found, stop reading and move to the next row. At the bottom of each page, capture the examples and evidence that came to mind when scoring that particular element.

COMMON RESULTS ORIENTATION

Start on the left and read each description before moving right. Once you find the description that best fits where the collaborative is at this moment, stop reading and move to the next row.

	Exceptional	Good Skills	Developing	Foot in the Door
Common Vision	Intentional direction is clearly defined through desired short-term goals and long-term goals.	Direction clearly defined through desired short-term goals and long-term goals.	Stop-gap goals and vision (Implement a program compared to developing a target for a higher-level state).	Undefined or assumed intentions bring people together (if you ask a group, they would have different perspectives or unknown related to intentionality).
Use of Shared Measures to Monitor Progress	Data used to inform progress towards-goals and identify when goals need to shift. Shared reporting of data monitored amongst all participants, who use common data collection tools or metrics.	Data is collected and mostly used. Majority of participants feel comfortable sharing data. Most metrics align and some common tools are used to collect data.	Some data is collected and used to inform progress. Some metrics align with common vision.	Data is not used to inform action, or if so, most metrics and data collection do not align.
Supporting Evidence	Please share some specific examples to support the ratings for Common Results Orientation.			

A group may complete this activity individually and then compile the results. I could also do this more interactively by printing out the rubric on large sheets of paper and having folks move around the room to add sticky dots to the stage that best reflects their assessment. They can use sticky notes to add examples and evidence. This can make it a more fun, engaging activity that helps to support a culture of learning rather than one of punitive evaluation. A word of caution, however, is that groups who do this activity openly need to have an established sense of trust. If you are using the rubric to surface disagreements that may be going unsaid, it may be better to opt for a more anonymous form of collecting the feedback.

It is important to note that the rubric is NOT intended to rate the quality of collaborative work. Instead, it is a tool designed to support collaboratives through the developmental process of building a culture of collaboration. The emphasis should be putting on an accurate reflection of the current practice, rather than on "getting a good score."

Discuss Results

Once each individual has completed their individual assessment, compile the scores onto a single combined rubric. This can be done as a group discussion at a meeting, or through an online tool if completed separately. Once all scores are gathered, and a composite score for each element is calculated, the group discusses their observations about where they stand on the rubric overall. Most groups find it useful to capture both a summary score by each element for simple (e.g. Results, Include, Dialogue, etc.) as well as sub-scores for each element (Representation of relevant stakeholders, Inclusive Processes, Welcoming Culture).

Questions for discussion might include:

- What elements of collaboration show the most progress? What caused that to happen?
- What areas show the need for more attention? What could that look like?
- Where do we see close alignment in our ratings? Where is there wider variation? What does that tell us?
- If we were to focus on one aspect of our collaboration that we think would make the biggest difference in our effectiveness, which one would that be? Why?
- What concrete next steps do we want to take to move our work forward?
- When shall we plan to reassess our progress? Where do hope to see ourselves then?

Act on What You Learn

Compile the individual assessments and notes from the discussion into a report and label it by date and whether it is a baseline assessment or an annual re-assessment by year. Include the concrete action items that were identified and review these at future points to reassess progress.

COMMUNITY LEARNING MODEL

Learn

Set goals and use measures to test the impact and quality of actions; learn from experiences and translate that information into more effective actions. Actors remain accountable to a shared vision and "return learning to the system" as a mutual contribution.

The Community Learning Model Rubric is a tool for the Learn phase of the Community Learning Model. To learn more about tools for dialogue and the other areas of the Community Learning Model, visit civiccanopy.org/clm.

THE CIVIC CANOPY