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Keeping Kids Healthy

Through Collective Impact

SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Ontario Public Health Association

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These Situational Assessment Guidelines were prepared for the purposes of conducting a system-focused situational assessment that can inform activities aimed at system-level changes to promote health and health equity.

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About OPHA
The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) is a member-based, not-for-profit charity that has been advancing the public health agenda since 1949. OPHA provides leadership on issues affecting the public's health and strengthens the impact of those who are active in public and community health throughout Ontario. OPHA does this through a variety of means including promoting dialogue and education on healthy public policy, capacity building, and research and knowledge exchange. Our membership represents many disciplines from public health and other areas such as community health, health care, and the voluntary, private and academic sector.

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KEEPING KIDS HEALTHY THROUGH COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Keeping Kids Healthy through Collective Impact is a project being led by the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) that provides a forum for health and social sectors to work together for system level changes that can positively impact children's health through a locally, co-developed collective impact process.

As part of this project, OPHA is working with four communities* that are collaborating with their respective local networks of partners to adopt a collective impact process. Together, with their local Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership, each community will be conducting a situational assessment to help identify gaps in community capacity for partners to connect and work collaboratively across sectors to better serve and support children and families who are disproportionately impacted by the social determinants of health. The results will provide a basis to support the development of a common agenda and a locally driven action plan which aims to leverage community/system assets to strengthen community capacity and address barriers to cross-sector collaboration.

The following document has been developed to outline a process that can be used by backbone organizations from each community to complete the situational assessment and inform the development of a local action plan aimed at influencing the system for better health outcomes among children.

A Provincial Scan, conducted by OPHA in 2018, also contributes to our understanding of cross-sector partnerships, by describing the barriers and facilitators that were experienced by local project managers throughout local Ontario communities as they worked with cross-sector partners to plan and implement community-based, health promotion interventions during the Healthy Kids Community Challenge (HKCC). A Provincial Scan, conducted by OPHA in 2018, also contributes to our understanding of cross-sector partnerships by describing the barriers and facilitators that local project managers experienced throughout Ontario communities during the Healthy Kids Community Challenge (HKCC). The findings of the provincial scan have helped to inform the development of a process outlined in this guideline document.

Funding for this project has been provided by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care under the Health and Well-Being Grant Program (Community Development Stream).

*The meaning of what constitutes a community in this project has been self-defined by each community and could vary to include parameters around a specific geographic boundary, or encompass multiple municipalities depending on how communities initially chose to organize themselves in the Healthy Kids Community Challenge. The defined communities did not need to be geographically based and may also include specific constituencies (e.g., ethnicity, newcomer status, language, etc.).

WHAT IS A SYSTEM LEVEL CHANGE?

According to Gopal & Kania (1), system level change can be described as "a fundamental change in processes, relationships, and power structures, as well as deeply held values and norms, as the pathway to achieve common goals and make positive social gains sustainable at scale, whether it's around increasing equity, improving health, or reducing poverty." The system includes the supports, services, structures, relationships and/or societal factors in the community that impact the ability for all children and families to have an equal opportunity to be healthy. By making changes at the system level, partners and stakeholders in the community, who are working in areas related to children's health and the social determinants of health (SDOH), may be better positioned to support children and families disproportionally affected by the SDOH and reduce gaps in health equity.

"The system includes the supports, services, structures, relationships and/or societal factors in the community that impact the ability for all children and families to have an equal opportunity to be healthy."

THE SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Background Context

The situational assessment follows two important milestones in this project. The first, a provincial workshop brought together the project leads from each of the four communities to learn about the collective impact process and co-develop an approach for launching the project in each of the four local communities.

The second milestone, a local workshop was held in each of the four communities. Co-facilitated by the backbone organization in each community and the OPHA project team, the local workshops brought together a diverse group of partners and community stakeholders concerned with children's health and offered an open platform to engage in reflective dialogue around the social determinants of health, health equity and collective impact as a process for systems change to promote health and health equity. During this local workshop, the community partners, representing various local community organizations, agencies and institutions, completed a series of activities initiating the ground work for the situational assessment. This included:

Mapping of current partners, by sector, whose work is related to children's health in the community and key partners to engage in the conversation.

Brainstorming of existing situational assessments, data sources and reports related to SDOH, health and factors that influence health in the community.

Group discussions around the social determinants of health, the barriers they pose and impacts in the community.

Summary of group discussions around what can be done within organizations and across the system through partnerships in your local community to better serve children and families disproportionately affected by the social determinants of health.

Purpose of the Situational Assessment

The situational assessment is an important component of getting ready for action planning, as it will help to answer key questions about what may be some of the main or persistent community issues impacting children's health and to help to better understand and describe the complexities of these issues by applying a system-lens in their analysis. This step can also help to set locally-identified priorities to support the development of a common agenda.

Another important goal of the situational assessment process is to facilitate communities in taking stock of the valuable community and system assets and capacities available for local-action planning to support an asset-based, community development approach to planning for system change and strengthening the system.

Key questions that the situational assessment can help to answer:

What are the main or priority social/health issues impacting children and families in our community?

- Why are these persistent issues? What factors are contributing to the issues?
- What are the main barriers to solving these complex issues?

What is our organizational, community or system-level capacity to address issues impacting children's health and to work in partnership?

- What supports, services, processes, and relationships exist?

What are the gaps in organizational, community and system-level capacity?

- What are the barriers, challenges and/or gaps in organizational or service provider capacities that exist? Where do they exist?

How do we make sense of this all?

- What information do we already have? What is missing?
- What themes in terms of issues, barriers, or major assets/facilitators in this work are already beginning to emerge?
- How can we work collectively to discuss and understand these results to work towards a common agenda?

What's next?

WHAT IS THIS SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT FOR?

The following is a proposed approach to conducting the situational assessment, including some processes and tools that may support community leads and their partners as they gather information that will support working towards a common agenda and the development of their action plans.

The suggested parts outlined for a proposed approach to the situational assessment are briefly described in the text box below: What's in this Guideline Document. Depending on work that has already been done in your community, timelines, and local priorities, communities may wish to implement one or more of these activities/tools. Communities may also wish to adapt the tools to better fit their local context.

WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDELINE DOCUMENT?

PART A

LEVERAGE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS, INFORMATION AND DATA GATHERED AT LOCAL WORKSHOPS

This section discusses information that may have already been gathered in earlier steps of the project such as the local launch workshops or previous community conversations and how this information can be incorporated into the situational assessment process.

PART B

COLLECT LOCAL ORGANIZATION AND SERVICE PROVIDER DATA FROM KEEPING KIDS HEALTHY PROJECT PARTNER REPRESENTATIVES

* If not all the components of the situational assessment will be undertaken, we recommend that part B be prioritized as an essential component; with the implementation of the Partner Survey Tool as an important first step and the Community Capacity Inventory Template completed afterwards (or simultaneously).

This section provides tools that can be used to collect information from community partners and stakeholders. Tools include:

- Tool 1 (Appendix A): Building a Community Capacity Inventory Template is a tool to collect information about the different organizations, agencies, associations, and relationships that exist in the community. The inventory may result in a resource that can be shared with community partners which summarizes assets and capacities available in the community and system.

- Tool 2 (Appendix B): Partner Survey Tool is a tool that can help identify organizational and service provider barriers, gaps, and capacity issues that inhibit partners' ability to meet the needs of clients, promote health equity, collaborate with external partners and/or navigating the system of supports and services in the community.

PART C

UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMMUNITY AND ITS SYSTEMS AS A WHOLE

This section discusses an approach for local leads and/or a subcommittee to apply a systems- and community-as-a-whole approach to gather relevant and important information that might not be captured in Part B.

- Suggested activity 1: Work with a subcommittee of partners to apply a systems lens.

- Suggested activity 2: Conduct a high-level, rapid-rapid review of existing data, reports, and situational assessments to identify and describe the main issues and factors influencing children's health.

- Suggested activity 3: Local leads and/or a subcommittee apply a systems- and community-as-a-whole lens through group discussion and reflection. A tool is provided entitled: Guiding Questions to Understanding your Community and its Systems as a Whole, which provides reflective questions that can support the leads to consider, independently and/or with partners, important and relevant information about the systems interconnections, functions, resources and its partners/players.

PART D

ORGANIZE, SUMMARIZE AND INTERPRET/USE THE DATA

This section discusses what will need to be done with all of the information collected and proposes supports that may help in analyzing and summarizing the data.

PART E

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT STEPS

This section looks ahead at how the results from the situational assessment can be used to support local discussions around preparing for action planning and moving towards a common agenda.

CAN WE CONDUCT PART A, PART B AND PART C SIMULTANEOUSLY?

In Part B of the situational assessment guideline document, Keeping Kids Healthy project partners will collect information at the local, organizational and service provider-level within the community.

Part C of the situational assessment process differs in that it focuses more on the systems-level and community as a whole.

Part A involves leveraging sources of information already at your fingertips and integrating them into Part B and Part C processes.

Yes! Part A, Part B, and Part C can be completed simultaneously!

WHAT SHOULD WE PRIORITIZE GIVEN LIMITED TIME CAPACITY?

In Part B, specifically, there are two suggested processes with two respective tools provided – The Community Capacity Inventory Template and the Partner Survey Tool. We recommend including Part B as a priority process in overall proposed situational assessment as it will help identify needs and gaps in system capacity where the system might be strengthened through collective impact. Part B also takes stock of community assets and capacities that can address needs and gaps to strengthen the system. However, for Part B, we recognize that it may be burdensome for partners to have to complete both tools simultaneously. Therefore, to reduce burden with time permitting, it is recommended to implement the Partner Survey Tool first and the Community Capacity Inventory Template afterwards. The Community Capacity Inventory will be important in next steps of the project when developing asset and capacity-based local action plans.

In Part C, we also recommend engaging a subcommittee to support a high-level, rapid review of existing information and seeking to identify and describe the main, persistent community issues influencing children's health and important factors contributing to the issues. This will provide the basis for discussions at subsequent partnership meetings that aim to identify local priorities, to work towards a common agenda and to develop a locally driven action plan for strengthening the system and the community.

THE SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT

PART A LEVERAGE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS, INFORMATION AND DATA GATHERED AT LOCAL WORKSHOPS

Through OPHA's provincial backbone support, information from each of the four local workshops was summarized and provided to each community. Use the local workshop summary notes to begin thinking about information that might be useful to understand opportunities for building organizational and community capacity to work across the system to better support children/families disproportionately affected by the SDOH. Specifically, review the following information:

- Current partners, by sector.
- Key partners missing from the conversation (what partners and/or sectors are missing?)
- Existing situational assessments, data sources and reports related to SDOH, health and factors that influence health in the community.
- Summary of group discussions around the social determinants of health and their impacts in your community.

Table 1 identifies these key pieces of data that were collected at local community. It provides suggestions for how the information can be used, as well as suggestions for how you might integrate it into the situational assessment process and at what stage.

Table 1: Key pieces of data and how they are useful

LOCAL WORKSHOP DATA COLLECTED	Current partners by sector (Those who attended the local workshop and any new partners who may have been subsequently engaged following the local workshop)
HOW IT CAN BE USED	Provides an inventory of who is currently engaged and in support of system-level action to support children and family health. Provides a ready-to-go contact list of key partners to reach/engage for the situational assessment (i.e. to administer the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership - Partner Survey tool and the Community Capacity Inventory Template – Part B.) This list documents information about key partners to continue to engage through project communications, meetings and milestones.
SUGGESTIONS FOR INCLUDING IN SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT (PROCESS AND/OR RESULTS), SUMMARIZING, AND/OR SHARING	Use this list as a list of primary stakeholders to disseminate the partner survey tool to, to assess gaps in organizational, community or system-level capacity. Use this to determine any partners that may be missing from your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership, particularly in relation to some of the community issues discussed that pose barriers to children's health. One suggestion is to develop a template to organize partner information that summarizes information about your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership that can continue to be revised as partners join the collective impact partnership or if partners are unable to stay committed. It is suggested to document the engaged partners by sector and note their level of engagement/participation (e.g., attendance at meetings, any preferences or restrictions regarding degree or ways in which they have capacity to partner or collaborate.)

LOCAL WORKSHOP DATA COLLECTED

Key partners by sector missing from the conversation
(Those identified as key partners that could/should be engaged)

HOW IT CAN BE USED

Provides an inventory of partners in the system that may not yet be engaged, but may be instrumental to addressing complex issues and barriers within the community/system and helping to support innovative community-driven solutions to address SDOH and support children's health. These are partners you should consider engaging to bring into the process.

Please note:

- Only partners who are engaged and currently committed to the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership should receive the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership - Partner Survey tool.
- Any organization within the system of services that could support children and families who are disproportionately impacted by the SDOH could receive the Community Capacity Inventory Tool.

SUGGESTIONS FOR INCLUDING IN SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT (PROCESS AND/OR RESULTS), SUMMARIZING, AND/OR SHARING

Look for themes in major issues or barriers to children's health in your community from the discussion notes and suggested reports/data sources from the local workshops.
Now consider which system partners would/could be important to address the issue or barriers. These may be partners you may wish to engage early on to try to include in the situational assessment. Consider whether the project lead or any of the current partners have an existing relationship with this partner/organization/sector to engage the partner as soon as possible so that they can be included in the target group for the partner survey.

LOCAL WORKSHOP DATA COLLECTED

Existing situational assessments, data sources and reports related to SDOH, health and factors that influence health in the community

HOW IT CAN BE USED

Provides valuable community information that is pertinent to the situational assessment. Review the reports/data to look for the following information:

- What are the main or priority social/health issues impacting children and families in our community?
- Why are these persistent issues (e.g., what are factors contributing to the issues? What are the main barriers to solving these complex issues?)
- What is our organizational, community or system-level capacity to address the issues and work with partners?
- What organizational supports, services, processes, and relationships exist?
- Where are the gaps in organizational, community and system-level capacity to address issues and work in partnership?
- What are the barriers, challenges and/or gaps in organizational or service provider capacities?

SUGGESTIONS FOR INCLUDING IN SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT (PROCESS AND/OR RESULTS), SUMMARIZING, AND/OR SHARING

Gather information to be used by local leads and/or local working table sub-committee (i.e. core partners) in Part C of the Situational Assessment to identify main issues affecting children's health, and barriers to health faced by children and families in the community.
One suggested activity is the recruitment of a small sub-committee to support the rapid review of reports and data sources to look for themes in issues, barriers and gaps in system capacity and to help to briefly define and describe the community issues.
Some reports/data sources may also document community- and system-level assets that might be leveraged when co-creating a locally driven action plan.
One suggestion is to summarize and describe a list of main community issues that are negatively influencing the health of children and families. Where possible, consider including the following information for each issue:

- Describe the issue (What is it? What is the extent/magnitude of the issue?)
- Analyze the issue (What about the issue is unacceptable? What are the factors contributing to the issue? What are the barriers to solving the issue? Has anything been done at the systems/organizational-level to try to solve the issue?)
- Identify key stakeholders (What partners would be important or essential to engage in this partnership to support systems-change to better address the issues faced by children and families disproportionally affected by the SDOH?)
- Share the summarized list of described issues and community/system-level assets in a situational assessment report (discussed in Part D of guideline document and consider sharing collected reports and data sources (where permitted) with partners to help increase their access to information and local data to support evidence-based planning.)
- Share the list of recommended reports and data sources (where permitted) in a situational assessment report that can be shared with partners within the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership to increase partners' access to information and local data/evidence to support evidenced-based planning within their own organizations to better serve children and families disproportionally affected by the social determinants of health.

LOCAL WORKSHOP DATA COLLECTED

Summary of group discussions around the social determinants and their impacts in your community

HOW IT CAN BE USED

Provides a list of key themes of SDOH-related community issues impacting children and families in your community.

Consider the themes for the following information:

- What are some of the main issues impacting children's health (e.g., violence/lack of safety, poverty, early childhood development.)
- What are any of the organizational or system-level issues that were discussed (e.g., system is fragmented with organizations working in silos; system partners are unaware of all of the community/system services available to clients through individual organizations.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR INCLUDING IN SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT (PROCESS AND/OR RESULTS), SUMMARIZING, AND/OR SHARING

A suggestion is to review notes from the local workshop and identify/categorize (1) the key SDOH-related and community issues impacting children and families in your community who are disproportionately affected by the SDOH; and (2) any organizational and/or system-level issues and barriers discussed that prevent service providers and organizations from better supporting/serving children and families in your community who are disproportionately impacted by the social determinants of health. Share the categorized summaries in a situational assessment report.

LOCAL WORKSHOP DATA COLLECTED

Summary of group discussions around what can be done within organizations and across the system through partnerships in your local community to change aspects of the system that impact children and families being disproportionately affected by the social determinants of health.

HOW IT CAN BE USED

Provides a list of ideas of areas where the group could focus to align efforts.

SUGGESTIONS FOR INCLUDING IN SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT (PROCESS AND/OR RESULTS), SUMMARIZING, AND/OR SHARING

Share the list of options/ideas in the situational assessment report.

Use this list in the next stage of the project, 'Action Planning' (discussed in Part E of the guideline document), when your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership meets to discuss the results of the situational assessment. This list will support working towards a common agenda and exploring options for a locally driven action plan that leverages community and system-level capacity to address system-level issues, barriers and gaps in capacity.

PART B COLLECT LOCAL ORGANIZATION AND SERVICE PROVIDER DATA FROM KEEPING KIDS HEALTHY PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATIVES

In Part B, information will be collected from representatives to organizations, agencies and/or associations that are from community systems of relevance to health, the social determinants of health and health equity (e.g., health, housing, food, childcare, transportation, social assistance etc.)

A representative(s) from each organization, agency or association should be enlisted to take stock and document organizational assets, services, capacities and relationships through a tool called the Community Capacity Inventory Template (Appendix A). Collectively, each of the completed templates can be compiled into a unified resource that will provide a ready-to-go inventory of community and systems assets and capacities. It is recommended that the final resource be shared with all representatives who have completed the template on behalf of their entity.

Representatives from your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership should complete the Community Capacity Inventory Template as well as the Partner Survey. The Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership will be the sole target audience for the additional tool the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership – Partner Survey. The partner survey aims to assess, from an organizational and service provider perspective, the barriers, issues and gaps in capacity to work collaboratively and meet the needs of children and families disproportionally impacted by the social determinants of health.

The following tools can be used to support the collection of data from organizations and service providers, which will help your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership understand organizational/service provider perspectives, challenges/barriers faced by partners, and current assets/capacity at both the organizational and community/system level.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY INVENTORY TEMPLATE

(*The template and a sample Letter of Information are provided in Appendix A.)

The purpose of the Community Capacity Inventory Template is to help project partners collect information about the different organizations, agencies, associations and relationships that exist in their community. This inventory will help community partners take stock of organizational resources, services, and capacities within community systems that support health and address the social determinants of health and health equity. The template may be distributed to any organization, agency or association that serves your community, with a greater emphasis on targeting those entities whose services influence health and the social determinants of health, respective to children families. Once completed, templates can be quickly reviewed and compiled (by collating the information on the completed forms) as a packaged Community Capacity Inventory Resource that can be shared with participating community partners. This process will already begin to support capacity building at the system-level by increasing organizational and service provider knowledge about community and system assets, services and capacities, as well as relationships that exist among community partners.

PARTNER SURVEY

(*The template and a sample Letter of Information are provided in Appendix B.)

The purpose of the Partnership Survey is to identify organizational/service provider barriers, issues and capacity challenges to meet the needs of clients; to promote health equity; to collaborate with external partners; and to navigate the system of services and supports available in the community. This survey is intended only for representatives who are currently engaged in and committed to your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership to facilitate discussions around addressing gaps related to your Partnership's capacity during local action planning.

A brief summary of survey results should be included in your community's situational assessment report to inform local action planning at your next Partnership meetings.

TIP

To maximize response rate, you might consider disseminating the Partner Survey Tool first, then beginning work to build a Community Capacity Inventory once the Partner Survey has been completed.

PART C UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMMUNITY AND ITS SYSTEMS AS A WHOLE

Using a systems approach to health promotion, it is important to consider the various elements, agents and organizations within systems that promote health equity (e.g., health, social assistance, housing, transportation etc.). This includes a consideration of systems interconnections, functions, resources, and the missions and mandates of systems players.

To apply a systems approach, it is also important to understand the community and system as a whole, as this can provide insights to help your partners rethink complex or persistent community issues that may be impacting health equity. For example, in viewing the community or system as a whole, you may ask yourself or partners:

- How do community members, service providers, organizations, places, and systems fit together?

Alternatively, it is also important to look at the community and systems as a whole to understand the system and the system's capacity to promote health and support children and families disproportionately impacted by the social determinants of health. For example, you may ask yourself or partners:

- What are the barriers or constraints around health promotion among the community members we serve?
- What assets, services, supports and resources can be linked to one another to build stronger systems that better serve community members and promote health equity?

The intent of Part C is not to be exhaustive in searching for additional data. Rather, the aim is to fill in gaps in relevant data/information that will help to describe complex community issues and barriers related to health equity; as well as to continue to identify major community assets and resources from the community, systems, and provincial/federal levels to contribute the Community Capacity Inventory.

In your role as a project lead, you may benefit by recruiting a small subcommittee to support you in Part C to help you review, organize and summarize community and system-level information as part of your situational assessment. Recruiting support can help to alleviate time and capacity constraints on local leads and will encourage increased buy-in for the projects from key partners. A subcommittee can also be helpful to bring a more holistic lens with multiple perspectives from cross-sector partners when viewing the community and system as a whole.

TIP

Data and information collected in Part C of the situational assessment guideline document, Understanding Your Community and its Systems as a Whole, will help to further apply the systems lens to view and consider your community and systems as a whole in relation to complex and persistent community issues.

PROPOSED STEPS FOR PART C - UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMMUNITY AND ITS SYSTEMS AS A WHOLE

STEP 1

Recruit a small subcommittee of partners from your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership who could support you to review, organize and summarize information as part of your situational assessment.

TIPS

- Consider inviting the five partners that signed on to the project in your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership application package and/or other partners that have indicated that they are willing to be more involved.
- The subcommittee can help you to leverage and apply community conversations, information and data gathered at workshops (Part A) and to make sense of it for further discussions at partnership meetings.

STEP 2

Provide a high-level or rapid review of reports, situational assessments, data and community discussions to identify emerging themes regarding community/system issues and barriers affecting children and family health; and to identify any major assets at the community/system level that could be leveraged during action planning.

TIPS

- The subcommittee could help you to rapidly review the reports, situational assessments and data sources that were generated as a list of resources, and help to generate brief summaries.

- To streamline this step, focus on identifying the main and/or persistent issues influencing children and families' health in your community; these summaries can support discussions at your local partnership meeting as you begin to explore a common agenda.

- Where possible, consider including the following information in summaries for each issue:
  - Describe the issue (What is it? What is the extent/magnitude of the issue?)
  - Preliminary analysis of the issue (What about the issue is unacceptable? What are the factors contributing to the issue? What are the barriers to solving the issue? Has anything been done at the systems/ organizational-level to try to solve the issue?
  - Identify key stakeholders (What partners would be important to engage to support systems-change to better address the issues faced by children and families disproportionally affected by the social determinants of health?)

- The subcommittee can help to review and consider partners that might be currently missing from the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership (particularly those related to emergent community issues); and can help to determine priorities for engaging additional partners relevant to the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership project.

STEP 3

Consider your community and its system as a whole.

This step involves collecting pertinent community and system-level information or data (e.g., information that would not be identified by the methods and tools provided in Part B in order to identify gaps in system capacity, as well as important system, provincial and federal-level supports, services and programs.)

TIPS

- You may consider a meeting with your partnership and subcommittee to review information and summaries generated in Part A to begin discussions about key themes that have begun to emerge and provide diverse perspectives when considering the community and system as a whole.

- Using the tool, Guiding Questions to Understanding your Community and Systems as a Whole (provided in Appendix C), can help to think about the systems that are important to health and health equity in your community. The questions facilitate the application of systems lens to consider your community and system as a whole and may and may uncover pertinent information related to key system players, barriers, assets and capacities to include in your situational assessment.

- To streamline the focus to collect relevant and pertinent information at this level of analysis, the subcommittee should contribute to building the community capacity inventory with an emphasis on systems and community-level assets that would not be captured/reported by organizations who receive the Community Capacity Inventory Template.

- Consider the systems relevant to the social determinants of health and prioritize provincial and federal supports that would not be captured in Part B. This may involve searching the internet to document important systems supports, services and capacities that would help remove barriers to health and help connect organizational partners from other sectors to better serve children and families disproportionately impacted by the SDOH. For example, identify and document provincial or federal services and supports within key systems, such as:
  - System: Financial/Poverty Reduction – Federal Support or Program: Canada Child Benefit
  - System: Financial/Poverty Reduction – Provincial Services or Programs: WSIB; extra income supplements under social assistance (transportation, medical supplies, employment support, drug & dental, women in transition terminal houses etc.)

- For areas where there is likely to be similarities in the information gathered across communities, such as provincial and federal supports that would be available to all communities in Ontario, consider working with the leads of the other Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership communities to share inventories of community and system-level assets to help reduce duplication of efforts.

PART D ORGANIZE, SUMMARIZE AND INTERPRET/USE THE DATA

This section provides guidance about what to do with all of the information that has been collected in the above steps. This work could be undertaken by the community leads, and/or by a smaller working group of core partners who can help to gather and organize all of the information. By organizing and summarizing the data from parts A, B, and C of the situational assessment, your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership will be well positioned to:

Discuss and analyze community issues related to children's health and the social determinants of health; to facilitate a common understanding of community issues and support discussion around developing a common agenda and priority setting.

Discuss and assess gaps in community and system-level capacity; within the system of partnering organizations, agencies, associations and service providers.

Explore your Community Capacity Inventory to understand the range of system assets, services, capacities and relationships that can be leveraged to address gaps in system capacity, strengthen the system, and plan for systems change.

There are a number of suggestions provided in Table 1 that discuss key pieces of data and how they can be used for the purposes of the analysis and summary. While some themes might emerge while analyzing the situational assessment, it will be important to have community dialogue amongst your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership to share and make sense of the results of the situational assessment; to co-create a common understanding of community issues and gaps in capacities; to collectively identify local priorities for the Partnership; and to collectively move towards a common agenda and action plan that aims to change aspects of how the various players in the system work together to improve health outcomes for children.

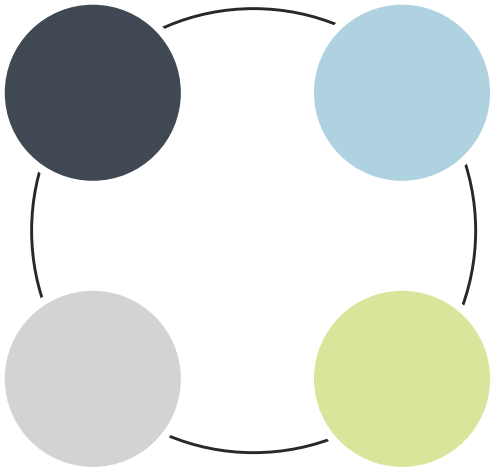
PART E LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT STEPS

In looking ahead at next steps, the summary of the situational assessment will help to inform initial conversations that will prepare your community partnership for action planning. These conversations will take place during local meetings. OPHA and project partners, will provide support to prepare for and facilitate these discussions. Some next steps for these discussions might include:

Discussions around complex community issues and the local context to help build a shared understanding around persistent issues.

Identifying local priorities and working towards a common agenda.

Brainstorming collaborative opportunities and exploring innovative solutions tailored to needs and unique context of the local community.



Discussions around the system which supports children and families in the community, particularly issues, barriers and gaps in system assets and capacities.

Discussions around community and system assets, services, capacities and relationships that can be leveraged to strengthen the system, build capacity and facilitate cross-sector collaboration between partnering entities within the system to better support children and families.

Reference

1. Gopal S, Kania J. Fostering Systems Change (SSIR) [Internet]. 2015. Available from: https://ssir.org/articles/entry/fostering_systems_change

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY CAPACITY INVENTORY TEMPLATE

LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR BUILDING A COMMUNITY CAPACITY INVENTORY TEMPLATE

Suggested Format: Email
Subject Line: [Community name] Community Capacity Inventory!

Dear Community Stakeholder,

Would you be interested in a resource that outlines many of the services, resources and assets available at various organizations, agencies and associations in our community?

Don't miss out! By completing this brief template on behalf of your program and/or organization, you will receive the final resource in appreciation for contribution.

As an important organization in our community that provides supports and services for children and families you are being invited to participate in a Community Capacity Inventory. Results from the inventory will by compiled in a resource that will be shared with all participating stakeholders in the community.

By sharing information about your program and/or organization, we hope to capture the various organizational resources, services, and capacities that currently exist in our community. Therefore, the goal of the Community Capacity Inventory is to share information that may help us to better serve children and their families through our respective organizations/programming, and identify opportunities to connect and collaboration with other organizations to better serve the community.

To be part of our community inventory, we invite you to complete the attached questionnaire and return it to [insert lead contact] by [insert date here]. All participating organizations will be sent a copy of the resulting resource.
Thank you for your consideration to support this valuable community resource. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions about completing this template or for more information about the Keeping Kids Healthy through Collective Impact Project.

Yours sincerely,
[Signature]

Keeping Kids Healthy
Through Collective Impact

This initiative is part of a project entitled Keeping Kids Healthy through Collective Impact being funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and led locally by [insert lead organization] in collaboration with the Ontario Public Health Association. Check out this webpage to learn more about our project.

ABOUT THE BUILDING A COMMUNITY CAPACITY INVENTORY TEMPLATE

PURPOSE

Information collected from community organizations through the Community Capacity Inventory Template will help you collect information about the different organizations, agencies, associations and relationships that exist in the community, which can help to take stock of resources, services, and capacities that are available within community systems that promote health and address the social determinants of health/health equity.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This tool may be distributed to any community organization, agency, association or institute that serves people in your community, with an emphasis on those related to health and the social determinants of health. For example, community systems relevant to health and the social determinants of health include, but are not limited to: health care, education, housing, transportation, childcare, emergency response, environment, financial/poverty reduction, food, employment, and social services.

SUMMARIZING AND SHARING THE INVENTORY

Information from completed templates should be reviewed to ensure respondents have not included any potentially sensitive information. Once reviewed templates are approved, they can be compiled or merged to comprise a unified Community Capacity Inventory Resource. It is recommended that the resource be shared back with all representatives and their respective organizations in appreciation for their contribution.

This approach in itself helps to build capacity among system-level organizations as the completed Community Capacity Inventory Resource can increase knowledge about services, capacities or relationships that exist among external organizations in the community. It can also be an incentive in itself; encouraging organizations to provide staff time to complete the template by offering the resource in return as a value-add for their in-kind contribution to building the inventory.

For your convenience, a draft email providing information about the Community Capacity Inventory and the Keeping Kids Healthy project has been provided for you to customize (see above in first section of Appendix A).

COMMUNITY CAPACITY INVENTORY TEMPLATE

Please complete the following questions about your organization to support the development of a Community Capacity Inventory Resource that compiles valuable information about assets in our community. This resource will be shared with all participating organizations to help build organizational capacity and knowledge around community assets and capacities to better support the people served through community organizations.

*This template is adapted from McKnight and Kretzman – Mapping Community Capacity Toolkit – 1996.

Contact Person (*person completing this form)
Name:
Occupation:
Address:
Date:

Organization, Agency or Association
Name of Organization, Agency or Association:
Website URL:
Description (e.g., who we are, vision, mission):

Community members served by your organization:
Is this template being completed on behalf of the entire organization, agency or association?

If no, please name the department or program to which this information pertains:

Organizational Resources
How many people are a part of your organization?
Staff ____ Volunteers ____ Members ____ Board members ____ Clients_____

What type of service providers are available at your organization?

What kind of funding does your organization have? How/where else do you get support?

How does your organization communicate with its members/clients? (For example, what kind of written media materials/newsletters does your organization have?)

What kinds of services, programs or supports does your organization provide that promote or address health and/or the social determinants of health among children and their families?

What kinds of services, programs or supports does your organization provide that promote or address health and/or the social determinants of health among children and their families?

Please use the following table to categorize the types of health- and social determinants of health-related supports, services, programs and service providers available.

Category of Assets and Capacities (Related to Health and the SDOH*)	**Types of Services, Supports, Programming and Service Providers Available**
Health care, health promotion or health protection	For example: Health protection: Child immunization clinic
Employment	
Poverty reduction/social assistance	
Housing	
Food access, healthy eating and nutrition	
Physical activity access or promotion	
Mental health and addictions	
Child care	
Newcomer and refugee settlement	
Language	
Transportation	
Education	
Safety from violence and harassment	
Other	
How do you make these services known to the public, other service providers and organizations?	

What are your organization's most valuable resources and strongest assets?

What kinds of projects is your organization currently involved in now? Do you partner with other organizations on any of these projects? If yes, what organizations?

What has your organization accomplished thus far?

Partnering and Collaborating with other Organizations

What other organizations do you work with? What other organizations does your group sponsor events with? Share information with? Share resources or equipment with?

What capacity does your organization have to support linkages and collaborations with partner organizations from other sectors to better address health and the social determinants of health?

(e.g., referral system to mental health services; formal partnerships encouraged and supported by senior management; partnership committee regarding community housing issues; support a variety of working tables/work groups with external partners)

Beyond the services and supports that are targeted to priority clients your organization serves, does your organization have resources that could be shared or made accessible with other community members and/or service providers?

(e.g., service provider offers train-the-trainer; physical meeting spaces; in-kind contributions; referral to other organizations etc.)

Who else does work or provides the community with services similar to those provided by your organization? Does your group belong to any cross-sector partnerships?

(e.g., associations, networks, taskforces, advisory committees, working groups, communities of practice, coalitions, alliances etc.?)

What kind of associations or relationships does your organization have with local businesses and banks?

APPENDIX B: PARTNER SURVEY TOOL

LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR PARTNER SURVEY TOOL

Subject Line: Seeking your participation: Survey for situational assessment as part of Keeping Kids Healthy through Collective Impact project

Dear Community Partner,

Recently our community came together to launch a new project entitled Keeping Kids Healthy through Collective Impact. We were thrilled by the response and the interest identified in continuing to work together to find ways to build on our capacity as a community and positively impact children's health. As part of our next steps, we are working towards completing a situational assessment that will help us to:

- Better understand community issues influencing children's health;
- Identify gaps in community and system capacities to better support children and families disproportionately impacted by the social determinants of health;
- Take stock of community and system assets to strengthen our system; and
- Identify key priorities for our action plan.

In an effort to gather data for our situational assessment, we kindly ask that you complete a brief, voluntary survey by [insert date]. Access the survey here: [at this link / attached]

This survey will ask you to share information about your experience as a service provider and from an organizational perspective. Specifically, questions will seek to learn about any needs, barriers, issues and capacity in meeting the needs of clients, in being able to promote health equity, in capacity for partnering or collaborating with other organizations, and issues in navigating the system in relation to children's health. The survey results will be anonymized and summarized to support group discussions at our next meeting around key areas of focus for the development of our [insert community] action plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions about this survey or for more information around our next steps in this project as a community.

Yours sincerely,
[Signature]

Keeping Kids Healthy
Through Collective Impact

This initiative is part of a project entitled Keeping Kids Healthy through Collective Impact being funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and led locally by [insert lead organization] in collaboration with the Ontario Public Health Association. Check out this webpage to learn more about our project.

ABOUT THE PARTNER SURVEY TOOL

PURPOSE

Data collected through the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership – Partners Survey tool will be used to identify organizational and service provider barriers, issues and gaps in organizational and service provider capacity to meet needs of clients, to promote health equity, to collaborate with external partners, and to navigate the system of services and supports available in the community.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This survey is only intended for partners who are currently engaged in your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership. This is important to assess the capacity needs and gaps of only those who are engaged and currently committed to the project, so that discussions around solutions to capacity gaps during local action planning will be focused on partners committed to the project and able to support system change through leveraging assets/capacity within their own organizations.

SUMMARIZING AND SHARING THE INVENTORY

It is suggested that the results of this survey be shared in a brief summary report of the findings from your community's situational assessment and discussed during the next phase of the Keeping Kids Healthy project to inform local action planning for systems change and collaboration in your community.

KEEPING KIDS HEALTHY PARTNERSHIP – PARTNER SURVEY TOOL

Describe the characteristics of people your organization serves.

(e.g., age range; sex; individuals vs. families; ethnic, cultural or faith groups; newcomers to Canada; income level; other.)

What are the most pressing issues, barriers to health faced by the people your organization serves?

(e.g., poverty, housing, food insecurity, violence/safety)

What are the needs being addressed and/or supports provided through services at your organization?

What are some of the needs of the people your organization serves that your organization does not currently have capacity to support?

What prevents your organization and/or staff from meeting the needs of clients?

(e.g., not knowing what community services or supports are available outside of my organization; lack of expertise or appropriate service provider; lacking processes that facilitate collaboration with appropriate partners to meet clients' needs; organizational capacity cannot meet the demand for services)

What capacity supports would your organization and staff need to better address the needs of your clients?

(e.g., training in a particular topic area; access to a specific type of service provider; referral system to facilitate referral to external partners with capacity to meet client needs)

Please describe any processes, capacity and/or a partnership that your staff/organization have that facilitates collaboration with external partners to meet the needs of people you serve and promote health?

(e.g., referral system for families/caregivers of high risk children; formal partnership between Local Family Resource Centre organizations to provide resources/supports to families; partnership committees or working tables meet regularly)

What challenges does your staff or organization face in collaborating with external health and social sector partners to support the people your organization serves?

APPENDIX C: GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMMUNITY AND ITS SYSTEMS AS A WHOLE

UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMMUNITY AND ITS SYSTEMS AS A WHOLE

Purpose: The following is a list of guiding questions and considerations that may be used by local leads and/or their local subcommittee to consider pertinent community and system-level information and assets that may be helpful to collect during your situational assessment. The intent is to apply a systems approach to view community systems and the community-as-a-whole to engage in group discussion and/or reflection. A tool is provided below entitled: Guiding Questions to Understanding your Community and its Systems as a Whole, which provides reflective questions that can support the leads individually and/or with partners to consider important and relevant information about the systems interconnections, functions, resources and its partners/players. To manage capacity, it is recommended to focus on important or relevant information and assets that might not be captured through the tools disseminated to organizations and partners in Part B (i.e., the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership – Partner Tool, and the Community Capacity Inventory Template.)

This process does not need to be exhaustive in trying to document all community systems assets but rather to begin to build an inventory of important and highly relevant system-level assets that might be leveraged to build capacity among members and organizations within your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership to work collaboratively and better serve children and families disproportionally impacted by the social determinants of health. For example, consider important systems related to health, such as poverty reduction and social assistance, and whether there might be provincial or federal supports/programs that might be important for partners to be aware of to address community issues influencing children's health.

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMMUNITY AND ITS SYSTEMS

*This question template has been adapted from:
The Community Asset Mapping Workbook – Community Outreach of Our United Way; and
The ABCD Resource Kit – ABCD Network.

Using a systems approach to health promotion and addressing the social determinants of health, it is important to understand elements and agents/organizations within a system, including the interconnections, functions and purpose of system players. Correspondingly, it is equally important to understand the community and system as a whole. For example, how do the community members, service providers, organizations, places, and systems fit together? What skills, assets, and resources can be linked to one another to build stronger systems and to better serve community members and promote health equity?

The following are questions for reflection and/or group discussion about systems and the community as a whole.

Systems Questions
To begin applying a systems approach to community change, think of all of the systems that impact an individual, family, or community's well-being. Please consider the following systems within your community:

- Health
- Education
- Housing
- Transportation
- Child Care
- Emergency Response
- Faith
- Environment
- Government
- Food
- Financial
- Recreation
- Employment
- Social Services
- Utilities

Are there community partners/organizations from within these systems that might be important to engage for your Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership?

Are there key organizations, agencies or organizations within these systems that would have assets and/or resources that could help build your Community Capacity Inventory?

Which systems are important to the community issues that have been discussed in your local workshop or that may be emerging from reviewing reports, situational assessments and data sources about health and the social determinants of health in your community?

Are there provincial or federal-level supports, services or programs within any of these systems that would help to promote health and/or address the social determinants of health your community?

Community Questions
How are decisions made about community contributions within the municipality(s)?

Is there a strategic plan for 'investing in the community'?

What are some examples of organizational practices or resources that can make a contribution or support capacity among the Keeping Kids Healthy Partnership? (e.g., education/training opportunities; in-kind contributions; communication methods/channels)

How do service users, service providers and organizations learn about what is going on in the community?

In what ways does the community have the desire and ability to work together?

What is the level of trust and sense of safety and security within the community?

What are sources of pride and joy within the community?

How do environmental or social conditions affect human interaction?

How consistent is access to food, shelter, and clothing?

Review the Community Capacity Inventory Templates completed by organizations in Part B of the process and consider the three A's:

- Availability: Are goods and services available in the community?
- Affordability: Can people afford the options that are available?
- Accessibility: Can people utilize the goods and services that are available?

Assets can be linked to one another and put to use in ways that realize the community's full potential.

APPENDIX D: OUTLINE FOR SUMMARIZING THE SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The following outline provides a template for organizing the situational assessment into a report format for sharing back with key partners. This report can form a basis for the next steps and discussions with community partners around determining key objectives for an action plan that the collective will work towards.

PROPOSED OUTLINE FOR SUMMARIZING THE RESULTS INTO A REPORT FORMAT

Introduction

- What were the key questions your situational assessment aimed to answer?
- What previous local initiatives or work was relevant to your approach?

Method

- Describe the steps you took to collect, analyze and interpret the information gathered for the situational assessment.
- Describe the population that you learned about in this situational assessment.

Results

- Describe the results from the key steps you undertook to collect information for the situational assessment.

Discussion

- What are the key levers for positively impacting children's health in our community?
- What aspects of children's health are of highest concern to the community?
- What areas demonstrate progress or alternatively, demonstrate negative trends (i.e. children's health is improving or worsening)?
- Describe any implications for health equity in your community revealed by the situational assessment findings. What appears to need to happen in order to advance children's health and address gaps in health equity?
- Were there any findings that were surprising or unexpected compared to your existing knowledge of the local context?
- What information was missing or not accessible during this process? Were there any limitations in your work, or potential biases to note?

- What community engagement was done throughout the situational assessment process and how did this influence or change interpretations of data collected? Please include the following details where possible (Can attach minutes from any community meetings in appendix):
    - # of new partners/stakeholders that were engaged in the process
    - # of total partners/stakeholders engaged in the process
    - # of partners/stakeholders engaged from health sector
    - # of partners/stakeholders engaged from social sector
- What was learned from the Situational Assessment that was particularly insightful for guiding intentions in moving forward?
- Has the understanding of the problem shifted or changed through the Situational Assessment, if so, can you describe how?
- Were there opportunities that became apparent for changing behaviour, rearranging the system or tipping the system, for positive transformational change?
- Were there areas where common programs were identified, or gaps and opportunities?

Conclusion

- In summary, describe what you learned from the situational assessment and how this information will be used to engage further with community partners and inform the action plan.

OPHA
Ontario Public Health Association
l'Association pour la santé publique de l'Ontario
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Keeping Kids Healthy

Through Collective Impact

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