



WELCOMING  
REFUGEES

# Building and Sustaining Community Collaborations for Refugee Welcome: A Community Engagement Toolkit

By Paul Stein

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**R**efugee resettlement organizations increasingly recognize the need to create greater community support for refugees, and to be part of broader community efforts that may benefit refugees but are not focused exclusively on refugees. How do refugee-serving organizations assess the state of their current efforts and what are the next steps they could take to advance their community collaborations? Once common ground is established between arriving and receiving communities concerning the importance of refugee resettlement and the value that refugees add to the community, how can these organizations pursue even deeper public engagement in pursuit of a more robust set of goals? As goals and stakeholders evolve, what new strategies and tactics should be implemented?

This Community Engagement Toolkit was created to help organizations and community groups identify their current strengths and consider specific new strategies and tactics for expanding and deepening their collaborations in order to promote welcoming communities.

This Toolkit is based on some important terms and concepts:

**Arriving communities** refers to the newcomer residents of a specific geographic area and the organizations in that area that have a significant focus on assisting them.

**Receiving communities** refers to the longtime residents of a specific geographic area where newcomers settle and the organizations in that area that have significant interactions with newcomers but do not focus on them.

**Community engagement** is the detailed process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people. Because community engagement is place-based and relational, the scale of engagement, and thus the size of the geographic area, is virtually never larger than a city or county, and is frequently as small as a neighborhood. Community engagement is not undertaken to affirm the status quo, but rather to

build the changed conditions necessary to achieve a collective goal that is bold and broad enough to provide mutual benefits for all in the defined communities. Change occurs at the intersection of urgency and preparation. Achieving welcoming is one of many urgent and bold community goals, and community engagement provides the preparation and process. Increasing community collaborations is the most important changed community condition—the strategies—for achieving this goal of welcoming. Community engagement is the process—the tactics—for achieving these changes. The process of community engagement builds and sustains community collaborations, and community collaborations achieve the goal of welcoming. Summarized, this change process is:



## ARRIVING COMMUNITIES

## RECEIVING COMMUNITIES

This Toolkit reflects perspectives of both arriving and receiving communities. The boundaries between these communities are simultaneously meaningful and flexible. An individual and organization can take action as part of one community for one set of goals, and take action as part of the opposite community for a different set of goals.

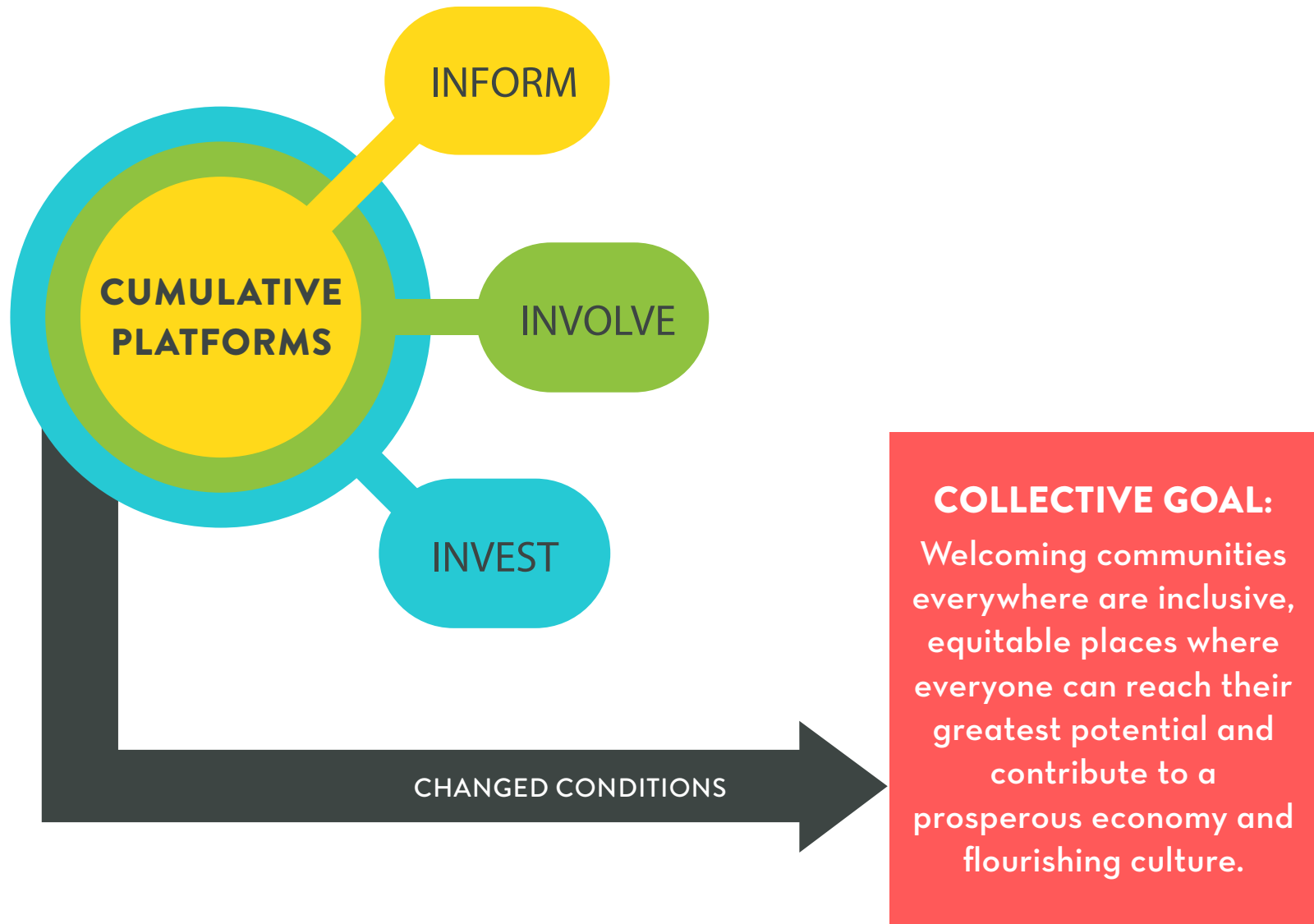
**Platforms** are a continuum of spaces for taking inventory of resources that are available for various iterations of community engagement, and building the most efficient, effective, and elegant relationships and programs possible with those resources. Community engagement is a cumulative process of continuous building in order to produce the changed conditions that will achieve a collective goal. This Toolkit discusses this process in terms of platforms rather than stages, in order to dispel the notion that community engagement is a progressive race to a finish line, or a means to prioritize and judge one set of actions against another.

**Inform, Involve, and Invest** are the three community engagement platforms identified in this Toolkit, and each of these platforms has its own set of characteristics, strategies, and tactics (collectively referred to as

“tools”). Readers are encouraged to begin reviewing the Continuum of Community Engagement and consider where their efforts fall on the chart. As you begin to consider the strategies and tactics that are part of each, consider who in the arriving and receiving communities can help you meet your goals.

**“You” and “your”** are used throughout this Toolkit to refer to a single organization or a collaboration of organizations in the specific local geographic area where community engagement will take place. Many of the strategies and tactics discussed in this Toolkit are as useful for the formation and strengthening of collaborations just within the arriving community as for the building and sustaining of strategic community collaborations between arriving and receiving communities.

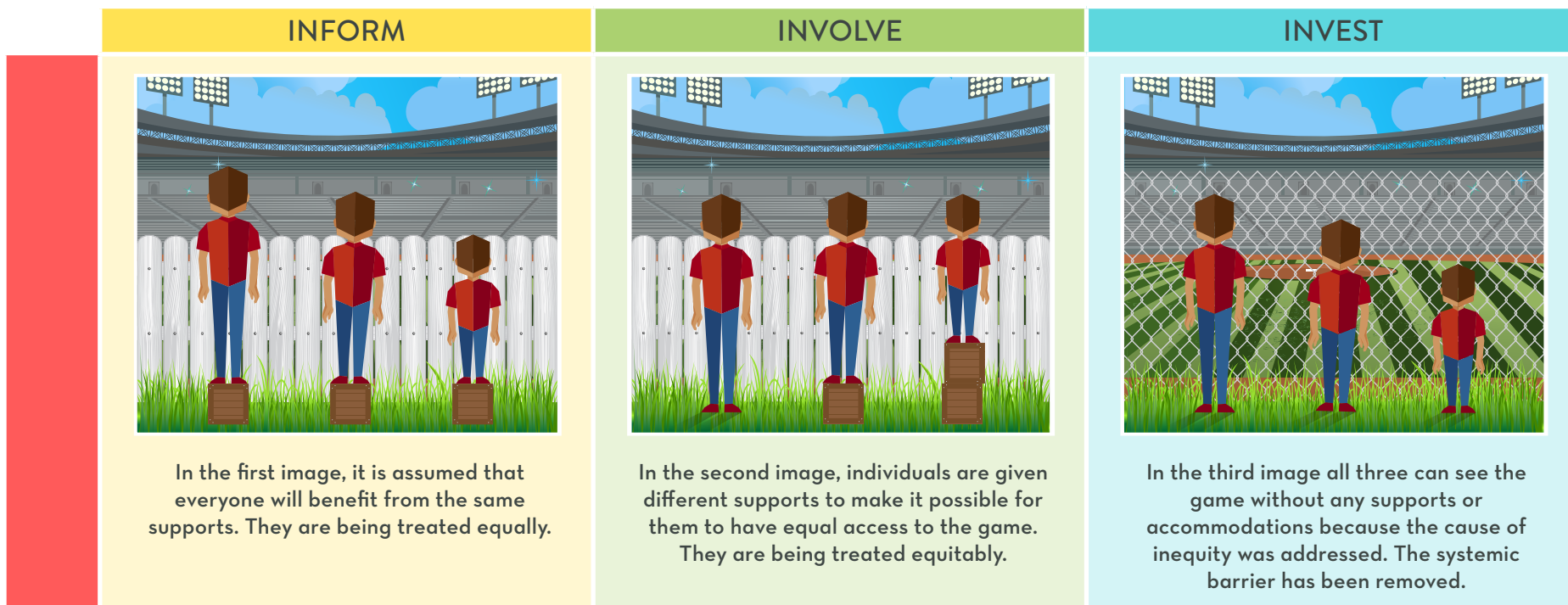
## Relationship Between Cumulative Platforms and Collective Goal



A quick way to understand the difference between Inform, Involve, and Invest platforms can be seen in a popular diagram<sup>1</sup> that has been adapted from health and racial equity literature to display the difference between activities that strengthen equality, equity, and change. A fuller description of the characteristics of each platform is provided later in the Toolkit.

As diagrammed below, the Continuum of Community Engagement starts with a presumed collective goal. Every community engagement process should begin by establishing its own collective goal. For the purposes of this Toolkit, this broad collective goal from Welcoming America is presumed to be broadly accepted by Toolkit users: “Welcoming

communities everywhere are inclusive, equitable places where everyone can reach their greatest potential and contribute to a prosperous economy and flourishing culture.” In order to achieve the collective goal, a series of changed conditions has to be achieved. These changes are achieved through strategies (usually measured and expressed as outcomes—increases and decreases in social, economic, health, or environmental conditions) that are very specific to every community and its assets. For the purposes of this Toolkit, these strategies are broadly described as increases in community collaborations. Discussing a process for developing numerous community-specific collective goals and strategies is outside the scope of this Toolkit.<sup>2</sup>



1 This image was adapted by the author from an image adapted by the City of Portland, Oregon, Office of Equity and Human Rights from the original graphic: [www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/article/449547](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/article/449547)

2 Welcoming America has already published an excellent guide to developing community-specific outcome goals: Jan Reeves. *Community Planning Process Guide*. Welcoming America. 2015.

What is perhaps innovative in this Toolkit, certainly in the context of community planning relative to refugee resettlement, is the acknowledgment that changing the circumstances necessary to achieve and sustain a collective goal requires cumulative community engagement work on multiple platforms over time. That is, in order to achieve the necessary outcomes for changed conditions, each of the three platforms, with its own set of strategies to increase community collaborations, should be utilized. Finally, in order to achieve the strategies that lead to change, a number of tactics (also considered actions or activities) need to be implemented specific to each platform. These tactics are discussed later in the Toolkit, again with the understanding that the broad tactics proposed here will be supplemented with community-specific tactics.

### *Getting Started:*

Getting Started: For each of the three platforms discussed in detail in this Toolkit, there are a number of proposed tactics. This collection of tactics is meant to be both illustrative of work on each of the three platforms, and practical for your new and ongoing work to build strong collaborations. However, by no means is this collection meant to be exhaustive of all of the tactics that are possible for you to deploy. Hopefully, your work will refine these tactics and suggest new tactics, so as to warrant a subsequent update to this Toolkit.

Each tactic description is followed by a number of “Getting Started” questions, posed as either a single question or a cluster of thematically related questions. These questions can be used as prompts for you to discuss which platform overall best represents your current or desired work, and how a specific tactic might be implemented in your community. By asking and answering any or all of these questions, you can better understand the tactic and how you might use or modify it for your own work. These questions assume that “you” are working from the

perspective of the arriving community. Equally important, you might look at the questions first in order to decide if the tactic is relevant and should be a priority for you. If you are asking variations of these questions, then dig deeper into the tactic. If you are not asking or ready to ask these questions for a tactic, then come back to it later, and focus instead on where you do find synergies with a tactic and its questions. Finally, providing real-world examples of specific programs and practices that exemplify all of these tactics and their clarifying “Getting Started” questions is outside the scope of this Toolkit. However, as a companion project to this Toolkit, Welcoming America is developing a page on its Welcoming Refugees website—[www.welcomingrefugees.org](http://www.welcomingrefugees.org)—dedicated to community engagement that will serve as a repository for narratives about your actual programs that exemplify the platforms and tactics in this Toolkit.

Using this Toolkit assumes that you are ready to take some initial steps:

- Develop a working goal that your broad community might agree is compelling and worthy of the dedication of time, talent, treasure, and testimony, such as this goal from Welcoming America: “Welcoming communities everywhere are inclusive, equitable places where everyone can reach their greatest potential and contribute to a prosperous economy and flourishing culture.”
- Inventory the resources and relationships that you currently possess, or need to develop in order to achieve your goal, relative to leadership and organizational capacity, communications and data, and contacts and stakeholders.
- Review the three platforms in the Continuum of Community Engagement chart and determine which platform best represents your current and proposed efforts, and who in the arriving and receiving communities can help you achieve your goal.

As you review the continuum below, which platform best represents which of your efforts?

## CONTINUUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Collective Goal and Strategies

### COLLECTIVE GOAL:

Welcoming communities everywhere are inclusive, equitable places where everyone can reach their greatest potential and contribute to a prosperous economy and flourishing culture.

CHANGED  
CONDITIONS

### STRATEGIES TO INCREASE COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

	INFORM	INVOLVE	INVEST
ARRIVING COMMUNITIES RECEIVING COMMUNITIES	<p><b>Connect</b> with contacts in multiple organizations representing siloed sectors along separate integration pathways to establish two-way channels for periodic communications and outreach that cultivate empathy.</p>	<p><b>Connect</b> with collaborators in prioritized organizations and sectors representing multiple integration pathways to co-create efforts and programs that meet the holistic needs of refugees and immigrants.</p>	<p><b>Connect</b> with partners in cross-sector and cross-program leadership positions representing frameworks other than integration or welcoming to develop collective impact solutions that address complex social problems.</p>
	<p><b>Build</b> understanding and trust with other communities about their members, about the needs and strengths of the people they assist, about the differences and similarities in their organizational cultures, and about the constraints and flexibilities in their organizational mandates.</p>	<p><b>Build</b> access to programs and resources in other communities, to new allies and ambassadors, to new networks that leverage leadership and communications, to new ways to better deliver services, and to new ways to design and measure programs with other communities.</p>	<p><b>Build</b> opportunities that benefit from long-term collective impact projects that are based on innovation and social entrepreneurship in broad ecosystems, and that develop new service systems, program metrics, and community assets.</p>



The three platforms—Inform, Involve, Invest—are described in detail in the following pages, along with tactics and questions for getting started specific to each platform. A summary table for all of these tactics is as follows:

## CONTINUUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Toolkit Tactics

	INFORM	INVOLVE	INVEST
ARRIVING COMMUNITIES RECEIVING COMMUNITIES	1. <b>SWOT Analysis</b> of internal organizational capacities to achieve characteristics of this platform	1. <b>SWOT Analysis</b> of internal organizational capacities to achieve characteristics of this platform	1. <b>SWOT Analysis</b> of internal organizational capacities to achieve characteristics of this platform
	2. <b>Mapping</b> networks for contacts for outreach and communications based on ten integration pathways	2. <b>New Positions</b> created that co-develop communications and programs with other organizations	2. <b>Mapping</b> the frameworks in the community that are generating new collaborations and resources
	3. <b>Contact Prioritizing</b> of the strategic importance and pace of outreach to mapped organizations	3. <b>Mapping</b> networks for partners for program development based on ten integration pathways	3. <b>National Thought Leadership</b> identified for its local proponents and collaborations
	4. <b>Trusted Convener</b> engaged to assist arriving communities to work together and speak with one voice	4. <b>Holistic Prioritizing</b> of program designs to leverage correlations between integration pathways	4. <b>Integrated Services</b> developed to provide seamless programs across multiple systems
	5. <b>Communication Materials and Messaging</b> focus on values and narratives more than data	5. <b>External Prioritizing</b> of potential collaborations and programs to ensure success and sustainability	5. <b>Communications and Data</b> used and reframed to support broad local collective impact initiatives
	6. <b>Building Trust</b> of collaborators through mutual accountability and facilitated peer networking	6. <b>Trusted Convener</b> engaged for prioritizing processes and matching with new program opportunities	6. <b>Impact Investing</b> accessed based on demonstrating financial and social returns on investment
	7. <b>Feedback</b> welcomed and responses provided for difficult questions so as to create dialogues	7. <b>Communications and Data</b> add a focus on how programs technically work and are measured	7. <b>Community-Based Participatory Research</b> used to translate grassroots trust into data
	8. <b>Shared Activities</b> implemented to develop trust and understanding as well as leverage volunteer assets	8. <b>Lean Process Review</b> undertaken by collaborators to identify resource efficiencies and better outcomes	8. <b>Community Dashboards</b> of well-being include measures and learning opportunities related to integration

While the characteristics of each platform are discussed at length, below is a summary table of key terms for distinguishing the three platforms from a variety of perspectives and priorities.

## CONTINUUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Summary of Distinguishing Terms for Platform Characteristics

	INFORM	INVOLVE	INVEST
ARRIVING COMMUNITIES RECEIVING COMMUNITIES	Learning communities	Collaborating communities	Partnering communities
	Awakening cities	Engaging cities	Investing cities
	Individual interactions	Community adaptations	Public policies
	Equality	Equity	Change
	Multiple contact points	No wrong door	Whole of governance
	Leadership contacts	Leadership connections	Leadership
	Strangers	Colleagues	Entrepreneurs
	Charity	Empowerment	Equals
	Understanding	Access	Opportunity
	Fragmented programs	Braided programs	Collective impact programs
	Siloed	Parallel programs	Cross-sectoral programs
	Short-term planning	Mid-term planning	Long-term planning
	Program eligibility	Program modification	Program design
	Referral to services	Adaptation of services	Creation of services
	Obtain a job	Improve a job	Create a job
	At risk families	Stable families	Thriving families
	Ad hoc planning	Intentional planning	Strategic planning
	Recipients of services	Collaborators in programs	Experts for development
	Random treatment	Holistic treatment	Ecosystem treatment
	Statistically invisible	Statistically counted	Statistically dispositive
Social bonding	Social bridging	Social linking	
Performance metric ceiling	Performance metric floor	Performance metric change	

Key characteristics for the three platforms related to leadership and organizational capacity, communications and data, and contacts and stakeholders are listed in the following table.

## Key Leadership, Communications, and Contacts Characteristics

	INFORM	INVOLVE	INVEST
ARRIVING COMMUNITIES RECEIVING COMMUNITIES	Leadership defaults to local resettlement agencies, which act as the gateways to refugees as groups with assets and needs, and advocate on behalf of refugees to close any gaps, while individual refugees are spokespersons for how their individual experiences mirror group experiences.	Leadership is shared by local resettlement agencies and partnering organizations in designing programs and opportunities for refugees that offer multiple pathways to integration, while refugees advocate for themselves and their affinity groups.	Refugee resettlement agencies and individual refugee leaders contribute expertise more than leadership in collective impact planning that utilizes frameworks different from refugee resettlement or integration.
	Receiving communities develop multiple points of contact to learn from a core group of refugee resettlement agencies about refugees as newcomer groups presenting isolated needs, but not to assume leadership or decision making about refugees.	Receiving communities take the lead to develop a no-wrong-door approach to planning and implementing services, and creating opportunities for engagement, which fully includes the diversity of refugee groups and takes a more holistic approach to individual needs and strengths.	Receiving communities develop whole-of-government and whole-of-city welcoming plans, and collective impact projects designed to deploy socially motivated capital at scale and for the benefit of all populations in need, including refugees but not focused on refugees.
	Communications and learning events focus on general population characteristics of the new arrivals and the role of organizations in meeting their needs, using shared talking points to address the need for information.	Communications focus on needs and assets of refugees, data and case studies selected to complement those from non-refugee programs that still meet resettlement needs, and community concerns addressed through dialogues.	Communications focus on the contribution of refugee-serving agencies and refugees to broaden community initiatives not focused on resettlement concerns, while data and narratives support long-term strategic community goals.
	Communications describe group traits, status, and needs, and are primarily from the perspectives of overcoming community concerns, promoting immigrant adaptation, and accessing existing services through English.	Communications accurately describe the demographics and integration process for refugees, present individual narratives, focus on program elements more than population traits, and translate outreach materials.	Communications focus on long-term projects that benefit the entire community, and treat refugees as community peers and former refugees, while data is maintained with separate tracking and analysis for refugees.
	Stakeholders are broadly divided into an internal circle of collaborators who provide complementary core refugee services, and an external circle of organizations that manage and deploy resources for the general population.	Refugee organizations create dedicated staff to coordinate with external non-refugee organizations, to improve access to their services, to develop expertise with their materials, and to support their program goals.	Refugee resettlement agencies contribute their deep trust and engagement with the refugee communities to broaden impact investment processes.
	Stakeholder groups become aware that their contacts with refugee resettlement agencies are overlapping, ad hoc, and need more coordination in order to meet both their needs and the needs of refugees.	Organizations adapt to create commissions and committees inclusive of refugees, raising awareness about refugees and including their concerns in coordinated planning initiatives, and braiding non-federal funding between stakeholders.	Community contacts are prioritized according to the specific expertise needed to achieve municipal strategic goals, and refugee resettlement and integration are valued force multipliers in larger community ecosystems.



## The Inform Platform

**Work on the Inform Platform** focuses on short-term transactional concerns that are closely tied to core program regulations, funding, and accountability: establishing program eligibility for clients and referring them to services, obtaining a first job, building a volunteer program, resolving the concerns of at-risk families, communicating about the general demographic and social/economic/health characteristics of those being assisted. Planning tends to be more ad hoc, focused on putting out fires specific to assisting refugees. Refugees are primarily recipients of services, regardless of whether they are called clients, customers, or community members. Although refugees are eligible for receiving community services, no special accommodations are provided to them, and the quality of these services for them is random. Refugees are invisible in the data sets of the receiving community. Whether as informal joint work or more formal collaboration, relationships with other organizations are based on social bonding, on the fact that they already share similar values, cultures, challenges, and opportunities. Information dissemination is based on multiple points of contact with sometimes contradictory messages. Despite any asset-based messaging by arriving communities, receiving communities may still focus on the challenges of welcoming and integration. Both arriving and receiving communities regard the respective program performance metrics that control their work as a ceiling, as the maximum that they can or must perform, leaving little room for program adaptation.

External relationships are mostly contacts. Contacts are different than the connections in the Involve Platform or the partners in the Invest Platform. Contacts are individuals and organizations with whom you can communicate to disseminate or request information. Connections are individuals and organizations with which you have a first-degree relationship focused on a shared project that is related to the core purpose of your program or organization. Partners are individuals and organizations with which you also have a first-degree relationship, but one that is focused on creating and investing in a new program or modifying a misaligned system, and that is related to the broader environment in which your program or organization operates. Contacts predominate on the Inform Platform because of its emphasis on communications and learning towards the establishment of understanding and trust. An important progression that takes place on this platform is moving from unaware to sympathetic, and from sympathetic to empathetic.

Contacts are often identified according to the public, private, philanthropic, and nonprofit sectors they represent. On the Inform Platform, contacts for and information about the integration pathways tend to be fragmented and siloed, in that each pathway is approached separately rather than in the context of more holistic correlations between the pathways. This mirrors how programs are generally developed and implemented in isolation, rather than in terms of their intersections with other programs on other pathways.

In order to address this program isolation and fragmentation, community mapping exercises are commenced. Community mapping is an aspect of asset-based community development in that it focuses on what communities have to offer rather than on what they lack, and identifies assets and resources that can be used for building relationships, programs, and systems in the pursuit of common goals.<sup>3</sup> Different aspects of community mapping are used throughout community engagement. For the Inform Platform, community mapping is used primarily to identify the individuals and organizations that already have,

or might have, an interest in developing the common ground needed for welcoming initiatives.

## Leadership and Organizational Capacity Characteristics on the Inform Platform.

Leadership defaults to local resettlement agencies, which act as the gateways to refugees as groups with assets and needs, and advocate on behalf of refugees to close any gaps, while individual refugees are spokespersons for how their individual experiences mirror group experiences. Collaborations between refugee resettlement agencies and other arriving community organizations are in their earliest stages, with collaboration members as likely to pursue individual agendas as they are to work and speak with one voice. Receiving communities develop multiple points of contact to learn from a core group of refugee resettlement agencies about refugees as newcomer groups presenting specific needs, but these receiving community contacts do not assume leadership or decision making about refugees.

## Communications and Data Characteristics on the Inform Platform.

Arriving and receiving communities begin to identify values and goals that they share in common. There are numerous points of entry for finding this common ground, none more important than another. The point could be a need for achieving family stabilization, a mandate to reach underserved communities, a call to welcome the stranger, a curiosity for cross-cultural learning, or an incident of anti-refugee bullying. These communities then begin to remedy the gaps in their knowledge about each other's organizations, stakeholders, clients, programs, cultures, funding, and accountabilities. These communities begin to develop messages that are well intentioned, but that might contain

<sup>3</sup> Much more on utilizing community resource mapping can be found at the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition. [www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/mapping/default.asp](http://www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/mapping/default.asp)

incomplete information, might inadequately align the desires to communicate with the needs to know, and might not be based on strategic goals. Communications and learning events focus on general population characteristics of the new arrivals and the role of receiving community organizations in meeting their needs, using shared talking points to address community concerns and need for information.

## Contacts and Stakeholders Characteristics on the Inform Platform.

This is the platform for learning and awakening between relative strangers, both personal and organizational. Arriving community stakeholders are broadly divided into a perceived internal circle of colleagues or collaborators who provide complementary core refugee services, and an external circle of organizations that manage and deploy resources for the general population. Receiving community stakeholder groups become aware that their contacts with refugee resettlement agencies are overlapping, ad hoc, and need more coordination in order to meet both their needs and the needs of refugees.

## Tactics for Strengthening the Inform Platform:

**1. SWOT ANALYSIS.** Conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis of your organization, focusing just on the internal characteristics (strengths and weaknesses) to make sure that there are organizational values, resources, and measures placed on developing and sustaining the characteristics of this Inform Platform. This analysis is undertaken with the assumption and acknowledgment that you are already working hard and doing good work. However, this is a threshold capacity review by an organization that helps to determine the potential extent of its community engagement and the likelihood for success. A helpful and neutral overview of the process and resources needed for a SWOT analysis can be found in Wikipedia at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SWOT\\_analysis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SWOT_analysis). Two

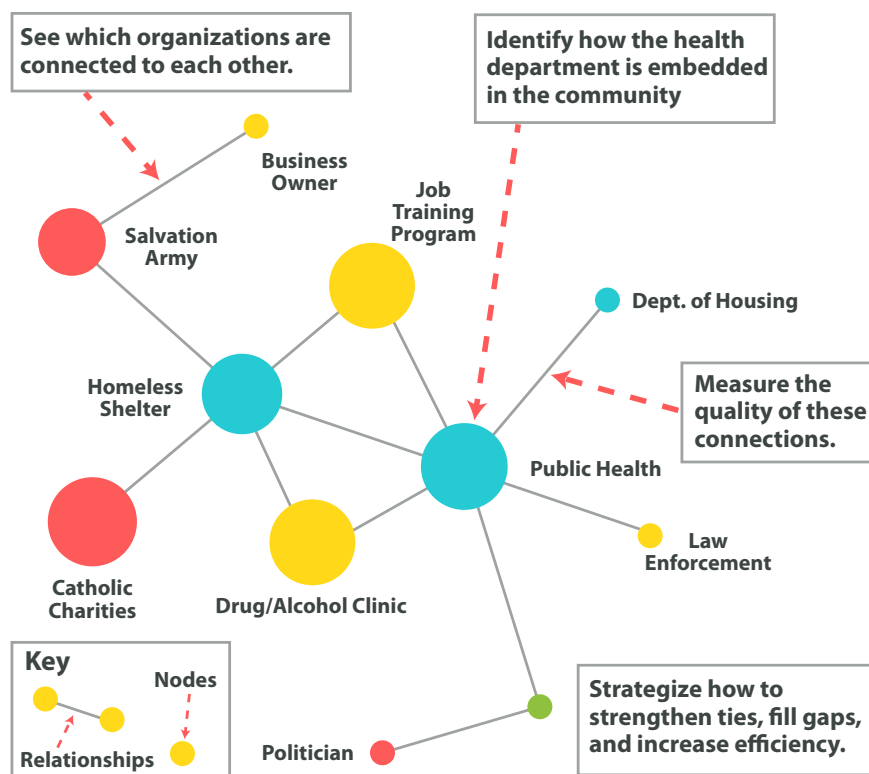
important considerations are, 1) that this internal process is often best led by an external facilitator, and, 2) that input should be solicited not just from internal staff, but also from select core partners that are identified through the mapping process described below.

### *Getting Started:*

- Do your job descriptions and performance measures relate to these Inform Platform characteristics (such as abilities to lead planning processes, solicit and respond to external feedback, or develop shared communication materials)? Are these platform functions diffused over the responsibilities of many staff as “other duties as assigned,” or consolidated in the work of just one person as a core duty? Have you incorporated into the job descriptions skills that are appropriate for this platform and that relate to all three elements of leadership (as discussed near the end of this report): acting, thinking, and influencing?
- Are other sources of funding (such as from foundations or private donations) needed to do this work (without duplicating or supplanting current funding and work), or is a discussion required with a funder to reallocate resources? Could new funds be leveraged across many organizations, in both arriving and receiving communities?
- Is the person you have assigned to work on this platform known broadly in arriving and receiving community organizations as your “go to” person for the core activities on this platform? What kind of networking and learning support (such as web-based learning, workgroups, or local workshops) is provided for this person with their counterparts in other organizations?

**2. MAPPING.** Different types of mapping exercises occur on each of the platforms. Organizations should make an investment in one of the numerous software packages for mapping social networks. The same software can be used for different mapping on each of the three platforms. This is an excellent collaboration opportunity with a local community foundation, as such mapping enhances their work as well.

Ideally, a number of arriving community organizations or a collaboration will agree on a single software package because of its alignment with their needs and resources, and most important because of how it visually portrays social networks. This software should allow for the creation of custom filters to sort the contacts. The visual maps that result should be disseminated as part of organizational outreach and coalition building. In this platform, the mapping is limited to identifying contacts, the various audiences you want to reach with various communications. Visually displaying the contacts through such software is a good way to demonstrate a collective success (better than a spreadsheet), and a good reference point for holding yourselves accountable for making the contacts. An example of the visual output and applications of a mapping process is below.<sup>4</sup>



A particularly important way to organize mapping and sort contacts (in this and the other platforms as well) is according to where they primarily fit on any of the ten integration pathways depicted below.<sup>4</sup>

Ten Integration Pathways:	
1. Employment and Economic Sufficiency	6. Social Bonding
2. Education and Training	7. Social Bridging
3. Children's Education	8. Language and Cultural Knowledge
4. Health and Physical Well-Being	9. Safety and Stability
5. Housing	10. Civic Engagement

#### Getting Started:

- Have you reached consensus on what you want to learn, track, and communicate through a mapping process? Have you reviewed the potential of various mapping software programs, or community mapping consultants, to address your interests?
- Are there other current or past mapping efforts in your community, in particular any that focus on any of these ten pathways (even though that mapping might not focus on integration), that you can learn from and complement with your own mapping? Are you remembering to map what is already working well for you, those

<sup>4</sup> Example of output from the PARTNER Tool, developed by and used with permission from the Center on Network Science, University of Colorado Denver, School of Public Affairs, [www.partnertool.net](http://www.partnertool.net)

<sup>5</sup> Lichtenstein, G., Puma, J., Engelman, A., & Miller, M. (2016). *The Refugee Integration Survey and Evaluation (RISE): Year Five: Final Report*. Technical report by Quality Evaluation Designs. Denver, CO: Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Security, Colorado Refugee Services Program. <https://cbsdenver.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/rise-year-5-report-feb-2016.pdf>

relationships that are primarily with arriving community colleagues and that might be strengthened before new relationships are built?

- Have you contacted local foundations or municipal offices to discuss their interest in and need for mapping, and their possibly commissioning a mapping effort that could address your needs? Is there another organization, in particular a receiving community organization, that would share with you the expense, learning, and application of a mapping initiative?

**3. CONTACT PRIORITIZING.** As mapping software will help make much clearer than a list, not all contacts are equal. Some are on integration pathways that are more critical than others, based on a variety of local circumstances. Generally, these integration pathway contacts are sorted separately, such as contacts related to employment on one list, and those related to public safety on another list. Some contacts are gateways to many other networks of contacts, and others are islands unto themselves. There should be local agreement within and between organizations about who should be contacted when, and for what strategic purpose. In some cases the interactions will be just about communication content, but in other cases the interactions will be about opening doors to other networks. Part of the capacity discussion in the SWOT exercise is to have a realistic assessment about the pace with which the organization can absorb different types of contacts and the opportunities those contacts might open. For example, both a city's office of economic development and a refugee-focused microenterprise program might be identified through mapping as having an interest in economic development for residents in a specific neighborhood where refugees also live. However, the two contacts might warrant different prioritization. The city office might have a focus on identifying targeted types of businesses that are ready to expand into mixed use (commercial and residential) projects, while the microenterprise program might have a focus on nurturing and providing technical assistance for emerging businesses. While refugee organizations might contact the city office to provide outreach

materials about their work with refugees and express a general interest in future collaboration, these organizations might decide to prioritize accelerating their work with the microenterprise program so that more refugee businesses will have been developed and positioned to take advantage of the more long-term opportunities offered through the city's projects.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Do you have a matrix prepared (similar to the matrix you would prepare to identify the “haves and needs” in a personnel or board recruitment process) to assist you in this prioritization? Are you paying as much attention to prioritizing and strengthening existing relationships as to building new relationships? Are you ready to let go of unproductive relationships? What new relationships might provide the kinds of early wins that build confidence and trust?
- Do you have a process identified for how you will reach consensus or vote for the prioritization of contacts, based on both what they can provide for you as well as what you can provide for them? For every new relationship you identify, are you ready to give as much as you receive, and are you ready to be as good a partner to them as you want them to be to you?
- As with the mapping effort, could your prioritization be coordinated with or complement the prioritization efforts of other organizations, so that you coordinate with them rather than compete against them? Are you as focused on strengthening other coalitions and collaborations as much as your own?

**4. TRUSTED CONVENER.** Convening is an important and powerful community role, and generally refers to bringing diverse individuals and groups together, either to identify a collective goal or to work through defined strategies and tactics to achieve that goal. The convener is generally an individual who represents an organization that is respected and trusted in the community because they place long-term community interests over the short-term interests of



any single organization or sector. Community engagement is as strong or as weak as the wisdom, authority, and neutrality of the convener of the process. Attention should be paid to developing consensus within and between organizations concerning who could take on this important role. Often, the convener for arriving communities will be a trusted ambassador from the receiving community, such as a foundation program officer, a leader from a United Way or other prominent nonprofit, an activist member of the faith community, or a prominent business executive. Generally, this trusted convener can help facilitate agreements between arriving community organizations as a prelude to their speaking with one voice in their subsequent interactions with receiving community organizations. In some cases, this trusted convener can also serve as a fiscal agent for subsequent collaborative work on the other platforms. Equally important on this platform, the trusted convener can be a refugee leader, who can gather together representatives from a variety of agencies in order to share information about their own refugee community. (Visit [www.welcomingrefugees.org](http://www.welcomingrefugees.org) for more real-life examples of successful conveners).

#### *Getting Started:*

- Who has the community trust and stature, and can make the commitment of organizational resources (more in terms of time than funding), to assume responsibility for bringing you together, and for helping you create common ground with uncommon partners?
- Was this convening organization identified and prioritized through your mapping process (their role as a convener might be compromised if they were not)? Perhaps even better, did this convening organization help lead the mapping and prioritizing process?
- Do you and the convener have a clear understanding about mutual responsibilities (who does what, when they do it, and how you measure and celebrate success), knowing that this is an iterative relationship that will change over time?

## **5. COMMUNICATION MATERIALS AND MESSAGING.**

Data has an important place in community engagement, but not on this platform. This is the platform for developing communications that start with values, and then conclude with narratives about welcoming as the way to give life to those values. Welcoming America already has numerous toolkits on messaging and communications that are very relevant in this community engagement context.<sup>6</sup> What is worth adding is that there should be local consensus among arriving community organizations and collaborations about the content, and even the visual themes and presentations, of these communication materials. Sometimes one organization may present alternative messages, which may be complementary or contradictory to other messages. As discussed in the next tactic, part of the role of the trusted convener is to develop consensus around messaging and communication materials.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Do you have understanding and agreement about the importance of “speaking with one voice” and who will be the spokesperson for that voice?
- As with mapping and prioritizing relationships, do you have a comparable process for mapping and prioritizing the objectives and audiences for your communications, as well as the diverse content of those communications? Is this process flexible enough to respond to various changes in the environment in which you work? Are you taking advantage of all of the existing toolkits and trainings that provide positive messages about refugees, and skills for pivoting in a negative environment back to your own message?
- Because personal narratives are so important for this platform, are you taking the time to nurture the storytellers from your communities by obtaining their informed consent for sharing their

<sup>6</sup> *Reframing Refugees and Stand Together: Messaging to Support Muslims and Refugees in Challenging Times.*

experiences, by providing them with any therapeutic support they might need as a result of their sharing, and by letting them know later what has been accomplished through their narrative? Are you using the process of gathering and sharing narratives to empower the emergence of future leaders who will eventually advocate on behalf of themselves and their communities?

**6. BUILDING TRUST.** Building understanding and trust is the core strategic goal of this platform. Trust begins at home. If arriving communities cannot establish trust and understanding between each other, it is less likely that they will build it with receiving community counterparts. The old adage is particularly relevant in this platform: Go fast to go alone, but go slow to go together. Local organizations, whether working alone or in more formal collaborations, should create opportunities for peer networking just to develop more rapport with each other (facilitated happy hours do work), for peer learning (communities of practice) on a variety of topics of their choosing and of importance to participants, for aligning work such as communications, and for holding each other accountable. Mutual accountability is not easy, and has to be based on shared values more than contract compliance. The identified trusted convener can play a valuable role in this context for helping to establish consensus before there is conflict. Because communications and stories are so important on this platform, a good trust-building exercise is for an organization to use its website and other communications platforms, especially social media, to host communications and news from colleague organizations, and to use its communication materials to share stories and successes from other organizations. Creating a culture of shared materials is more likely to keep everyone voluntarily working in the same direction through the same messaging.

#### *Getting Started:*

- How do you create a supportive and learning environment for holding each other accountable for developing and implementing shared goals, so that there are no misunderstandings about the

who-what-when-why of projects and agreements? Do you have a plan for scaling up mutual activities as trust is developed?

- Are you equally focused on achieving and communicating the success of your colleague organizations, especially those that you identified and prioritized initially on this platform? What methods are you using to lift up others?
- What role have you negotiated for your trusted convener to play in facilitating the development of your agreements?

**7. FEEDBACK.** Design an organizational culture not just for disseminating information through communications, but also for absorbing and responding to feedback and difficult questions. Such feedback and questions can be positive or negative, and shades in between. A response to feedback and questions is as important as the original communication. It is what makes it a dialogue. Because feedback can also be positive, organizations need to develop a way to celebrate success and recognize others when they do develop common ground, or when they do begin providing services to refugees for the first time (since establishing program eligibility is so important on this platform). This recognition could be an Ambassador of the Month recognition certificate, or a profile on a website. Regardless of the format, acknowledge success.

#### *Getting Started:*

- As passionate as you are about your work and communications, how intentional are you about listening to others, especially those who do not share your passion or walk beside you in your work? Do you have an organizational culture established that allows you to work through, rather than avoid, what can be uncomfortable situations, and do you support the individuals who are your ambassadors?
- What is your organizational culture for responding to feedback? Do you provide safe opportunities internally to practice pivoting from

negative feedback and difficult questions back to value-centered reframing and ways to find common ground?

- What communication modalities (website, social media, letters, phone calls, in-person coffees) does your organization use in order to demonstrate accountability to those who fund these efforts, and to those who enter into dialogue around your communications? Do you have still other modalities for communicating with colleagues and allies who may support your broad goals concerning welcoming and integration, but who may be critical of your specific strategies and tactics?

**8. SHARED ACTIVITIES.** There are numerous local opportunities for developing understanding and trust between individuals and organizations from both arriving and receiving communities. These can include arts exhibitions and performances, religious and ethnic cultural festivals, community gardens, culinary events, reading clubs, ESL and citizenship classes, health literacy classes, healthcare access assistance, academic mentoring, sports teams, dialogue circles, public proclamations (such as support for World Refugee Day), in-service trainings, and many others. All of these activities are opportunities for using volunteers, for leveraging and showcasing the capacities of partners who facilitate the activities, and for reaching individuals and organizations with which common ground has not yet been reached by promoting positive communications and learning towards building trust and understanding. All of these activities tend to be memorable and educational labors of love for those involved. However, any one of these activities can be very cost and labor intensive to implement and sustain, and participants tend to be those who already share common ground concerning the value of welcoming and find in the activity a means to express that value. While developing a shared activity is a useful and essential tactic, it should also be considered in the broader context of how much it actually

contributes to the overall collective goal (as identified earlier in this Toolkit). Less emphasis might be placed on creating serial and separate activities, and more emphasis might be placed on measuring possible correlations between activities and the long-term outcomes of these activities.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Before undertaking a new activity or project, are you ensuring that it aligns with and contributes towards achieving an already agreed upon strategic goal? Are you deliberate about designing activities that relate to building and strengthening the strategic relationships you already prioritized on this platform, especially if it means working with new individuals and organizations? Are you making as much use as possible of community volunteers (both those who are passionate about your work and those who are still not entirely committed), interns, and graduate students for capstone projects in order to leverage your limited resources and timelines? Are you saying thank you enough, and through enough communication modalities, to all of the individuals and organizations who make these activities possible, and as a way to demonstrate their prioritization?
- How are you promoting and participating in the activities of your partners, especially those relationships that you prioritized as being key to your ongoing operations and strategic goals? Do you give as much to the work of colleagues as you hope they will give to you?
- Before moving on to the next activity, are you debriefing about every activity to make sure that it contributed to your strategic purposes, and that you have extracted all of the possible new relationships and performance data? For every completed activity, have you explored all available local and national opportunities for sharing the positive story of that activity and how it promotes refugee integration?



## The Involve Platform

**Work on the Involve Platform** focuses on mid-term adaptation concerns that go beyond but are still compliant with core program regulations, funding, and accountability. Understanding the difference between eligibility and access, programs begin to modify and adapt their services to meet the needs of refugees. The emphasis is on intentional planning between parallel programs to address concerns for refugees who are similar to other populations receiving comparable services, such as improving jobs and maintaining family stability. Refugees become advocates for themselves and their individual needs as collaborators in program design and adaptation. Services are designed from a more holistic perspective, focusing on the intersections of multiple programs or the alleviation of multiple barriers. Refugees are now counted separately, and as a result planned for separately, in receiving community programs. Relationships and work with other organizations and collaborations are based on social bridging, on the fact that there is comfort and accomplishment when working from the perspective of different organizational cultures and accountabilities. Information dissemination and program referrals are based on a no-wrong-door approach, where there are consistent messaging and program decision trees that include refugees. Programs collaborate with each other to combine and braid resources, to leverage what each has in the interest of shared program goals. Both arriving and receiving communities regard the respective program performance metrics that control their work as a floor, as the minimum that they can or must perform, leaving much room for program adaptation.

External relationships are mostly connections, based on first-degree interactions to work together on projects related to program adaptation. These are now relationships with which common ground has been established concerning shared values and the potential contributions of arriving communities. Building understanding and trust has turned to building program modifications that create access to services. In many cases, solutions can be found through local efforts to better utilize existing resources through new or improved collaborations.

Collaboration activities focus on adapting to each other's programs. For example: establishing specific economic development programs for New Americans; creating career track education programs at community colleges; developing linguistically inclusive work support strategies and wraparound services; supporting three-generation approaches to reducing barriers to work and services; and changing recruitment practices by human relations partners to move from screening out refugees because of perceived deficits of language or culture, to screening in refugees because of the assets of being motivated, reliable, and dependable. Refugee resettlement programs provide staff development so that refugee staff who excel in language and culture competencies are also grounded in principles of social work and case management to equal those of receiving community colleagues.

Organizational and individual connections are still sorted according to integration pathways. However, there is now more attention paid to the holistic interactions and correlations between these pathways.<sup>7</sup> Where to deploy limited organizational resources, based on how to prioritize organizational connections and integration pathways, becomes the focus of additional but different mapping exercises. These mapping processes can identify new and available resources, determine whether existing resources are being used effectively, and identify any barriers to enhanced collaboration. Foundations and others can assert their roles as trusted community conveners to create opportunities for peer learning and networking between diverse organizations, and to support, for

example, community mapping exercises focused on all of the organizations working with certain populations, issues, or neighborhoods.

## Leadership and Organizational Capacity Characteristics on the Involve Platform.

Leadership is shared by local resettlement agencies and partnering receiving community organizations in designing programs and opportunities for refugees that offer multiple pathways to integration, while refugees advocate for themselves and their affinity groups. Receiving communities take the lead to develop a no-wrong-door approach to planning and implementing services, and creating opportunities for engagement, which fully includes the diversity of refugee groups and takes a more holistic approach to individual needs and strengths. New leadership is assigned or emerges naturally in both arriving and receiving communities, which begins to have the time, resources, and empathy to build connections in each other's communities, and develop comfort if not expertise with each other's websites and publications. These connections support mutual peer learning, technical assistance, and planning and program development.

## Communications and Data Characteristics on the Involve Platform.

Communications accurately describe the demographics and integration process for refugees, present individual narratives, focus on intersections of receiving community and refugee resettlement programs, and translate outreach materials. Communications focus as much on the organizational collaborations and connections—the intersections between arriving and receiving community programs—as on the

<sup>7</sup> For a data-informed analysis of the correlations between integration pathways see: Lichtenstein, G., Puma, J., Engelman, A., & Miller, M. (2016). *The Refugee Integration Survey and Evaluation (RISE): Year Five: Final Report*. Technical report by Quality Evaluation Designs. Denver, CO: Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Security, Colorado Refugee Services Program. <https://cbsdenver.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/riase-year-5-report-feb-2016.pdf>

communities of interest. Communications still focus on the needs and assets of refugees, but use terminology, data, and narratives that are selected to complement those from the collaborating programs. Formal two-way processes are established to give and receive feedback, and to demonstrate how feedback is used for modifications in programs or behaviors. Communications of collaborators accurately describe the demographics and service capacities of each other's programs.

## Contacts and Stakeholders Characteristics on the Involve Platform.

This is the platform for collaborating and engaging between colleagues who have already established common ground, both personal and organizational. Refugee organizations create dedicated staff to coordinate with external organizations, to improve access to receiving community services, to develop expertise with receiving community materials, and to support receiving community program goals. Organizations adapt to create commissions and committees inclusive of refugees, raising awareness about refugees and including their concerns in coordinated planning initiatives, and braiding funding between stakeholders.

## Tactics for Strengthening the Involve Platform:

*(note that all of the tactics from the Inform Platform are continued and sustained on this platform as well)*

**1. SWOT ANALYSIS.** Again on this platform, conduct an internal SWOT analysis. This time, while the questions about organizational values, job descriptions, performance measures, and funding alignment are the same, the focus now is on a very different set of competencies. Now what is needed are skills related to co-developing programs with other organizations with which common ground has already been established, and maintaining trust and understanding through co-creating programs. Establishing internal capacity remains

a fundamental tactic, and it should not be taken for granted that organizational staffing is available and adapted to implement the tools.

### *Getting Started:*

- Similar in process but different in choices from the Inform Platform, do your job descriptions and performance measures relate to these Involve Platform characteristics? Are these platform functions diffused over the responsibilities of many staff as “other duties as assigned,” or consolidated in the work of just one person as a core duty? Have you incorporated into the job descriptions skills that are appropriate for this platform and that relate to all three elements of leadership (as discussed near the end of this report): acting, thinking, and influencing?
- Are other sources of funding needed to do this work, or is a discussion required with a funder to reallocate resources? Could new funds be leveraged across many organizations, in both arriving and receiving communities?
- Is the person you have assigned to work on this platform known broadly in arriving and receiving community organizations as your “go to” person for the core activities on this platform? What kind of networking and learning support is provided for this person with their counterparts in other organizations?

**2. NEW POSITIONS.** This is the bridge platform between the Inform and Invest Platforms. In addition to reconfiguring existing staffing (as discussed in the SWOT analysis above), the demands of this platform frequently require the creation of stand-alone new positions. These could be positions as varied as Integration Collaborations Coordinator, New American Entrepreneur Coordinator, or Immigrant Integration Manager. These positions should have the skills, time, and accountability to develop expertise with the program requirements and reports of other organizations, to become virtually as knowledgeable about other programs as their own programs. These new positions are also opportunities for refugees to begin assuming leadership and self-

advocacy, taking on positions in receiving community organizations such as Program Manager or Service Coordinator, and serving as a member of a board or commission. One possible measure of the effectiveness of communications from the Inform Platform is whether they result in such new positions being created that then carry out the work of the Involve Platform. Each new position such as this that is created is an opportunity for new communications and documentation of success.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Have you taken into account that a new person, rather than new duties for a current person, might best serve your work on this Involve Platform and best serve the focus of work on this platform with receiving communities?
- Are you inviting prioritized organizations (from your mapping efforts) to provide you with feedback for the scope of duties and required skills for the new positions you are creating? Are you using the personnel recruitment networks of your colleague organizations (especially receiving community organizations with which you wish to develop new programs on this platform) to develop a hiring pool for these new positions? Are you open to hiring someone from outside of your community, knowing that you need to balance the skills and networks a new person can add to your organization?
- Have you been nurturing the skills development of refugees from the community so that they can truly compete for such positions with you, and thus potentially have an easier pathway to comparable mid-level positions in receiving community organizations?

**3. MAPPING.** Mapping continues on this platform, but now with an emphasis on developing opportunities for shared work with connections. This mapping builds on the work of the Inform Platform that mapped contacts for communications. The connections that are now mapped have programs and services that complement each other, either between one arriving community organization to another, or

between arriving and receiving community organizations. As with contact mapping, this service-focused mapping can be filtered according to the ten integration pathways. One challenge in communities is that there are so many service matrices developed by so many organizations. These tend to be static documents, updated only occasionally, and with little overlap between the fields that are defined from one matrix to another. An opportunity exists through this tactic to coordinate mapping with other organizations. Not only is this a good use of resources, but it literally gets refugees on the maps of other organizations.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Are you expanding this new mapping effort so that it captures not only serving refugees through receiving community partners and programs, but also how your resources and skills might benefit a broader cross-section of the receiving community to help them achieve their strategic goals? Who might you bring into your network to help you explore new audiences and uses for your work? Just as you filtered your contacts for communications according to the ten integration pathways, are you still using those same pathways to now filter your connections for program development?
- Are you actively looking for opportunities to inform the strategic planning and mapping exercises of other organizations, in particular those in the receiving community that have resources you want to access?
- How could you disseminate the results of your mapping as part of your communications, so that you are viewed as taking leadership on a project that contributes broadly to community knowledge?

**4. HOLISTIC PRIORITIZING.** While a mapping exercise can identify a range of possible collaborating programs for co-creating services, it does not make the judgment as to which ones to prioritize. One way to prioritize is to look at the correlations between opportunities according to the integration pathways. These are opportunities to

take a more holistic view of how services meet the needs of individuals. Whereas on the Inform Platform the focus was on building understanding, in part so that refugees can be seen as eligible for services one program and integration pathway at a time, here the focus is on building programs that leverage as many of those integration pathways as possible. (See the description of correlations in the narrative description of this platform above.) For example, more priority should be placed on program development that provides an opportunity to combine employment skills development, language acquisition, and mentoring by volunteers (the respective integration pathways of Employment and Economic Sufficiency, Language and Cultural Knowledge, and Social Bridging). Participants in this prioritizing should include organizations identified in the mapping exercise discussed above, and must always include refugees who represent the communities that will be the focus of these services. Who in the collaboration (an arriving community organization or a receiving community organization) provides which of these program components will vary from collaboration to collaboration and community to community. The important point is that there is an intentional development of shared programming along several integration pathways, since such high correlation collaborations have more potential to more quickly achieve a collective goal.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Are you prioritizing which service collaborations with receiving community organizations to develop according to which ones can address more aspects of a refugee's life, perhaps as measured by how many integration pathways the potential program can address?
- Do you have a formal process for including refugees in the prioritization process and decision making about new program development with receiving community organizations that will impact refugee lives? Could this process become even more formalized as a commission or advisory board with seats for representation from

arriving and receiving community organizations, as well as individual refugees who represent their own communities? Are you capturing details of this process in order to have additional ways to develop your narrative about refugee empowerment?

- Are you soliciting feedback from current and proposed receiving community partners (especially those identified through mapping exercises) about this prioritization, so that you stay in alignment with and support each other? Are these receiving community organizations soliciting your feedback for their own prioritization processes, and what are you doing to ensure that they do?

**5. EXTERNAL PRIORITIZING.** Another useful way to prioritize which potential collaborations should be pursued is by conducting an external analysis. The external factors of a SWOT analysis (Opportunities and Threats) are not as nuanced or practical as an external analysis that takes a broader environmental scan and focuses on potential decision-making, economic, social, and technological barriers. For example, mapping might identify many opportunities to collaborate with public and private agencies. Such collaborations are much more possible in a city where prominent decision-makers have formally committed to building a welcoming city. Equally, there might be an opportunity to develop collaborations with a trade certification program to develop new skills and employment opportunities for refugees. Such collaborations are economically less likely in a community with higher unemployment, wage stagnation, and capital flight. Finally, all of the external filters at some point come down to how individual personalities regard building new approaches. Some people regard the status quo as a ceiling that defines the maximum that can be pursued, while others regard this as the floor that defines the minimum that must be performed. Given the choice between pursuing a collaboration with one personality or the other, the personality that sees floors rather than ceilings is a better investment.



### *Getting Started:*

- Because this external prioritization focuses on factors that are not internal to your organization, are you learning from colleague organizations in other communities (even other states) about how they took advantage of opportunities and overcame barriers for their comparable work specific to these decision-making, economic, social, and technological factors?
- Are you conducting this external prioritizing with your receiving community program partners, so that you maximize the relational assets you collectively possess in order to overcome barriers?
- What can you provide to decision-makers in your community (in terms of your communications and data materials) to help them help you, so that they have more support and incentive for becoming your ally and changing the status quo?

**6. TRUSTED CONVENER.** For both the holistic prioritizing and the external prioritizing discussed above, a trusted convener, especially a community-based foundation (but also a leader from a United Way or other prominent nonprofit, an activist member of the faith community, or a prominent business executive), is a valuable source of not just funding, but also introductions and insights about potential collaborations. Relationships should be developed with foundation program officers independent of funding requests, just to explore options for new collaborations. In many cases, being at a program planning table organized by a foundation is as valuable as the funding that could be received through a discretionary application process. Collaborations of course concern developing budgets that braid together funding streams and performance metrics for each collaborator. As important, but often overlooked, are opportunities to share outreach and coordinating services through each other's networks and listservs, to serve on each other's advisory boards or boards of directors, and to be ambassadors for each other's programs. Connections made through such a trusted convener can open up many new avenues for sharing information.

### *Getting Started:*

- Have you explored with the trusted convener identified and utilized through the Inform Platform (such as a foundation program officer, a leader from a United Way or other prominent nonprofit, an activist member of the faith community, or a prominent business executive) their willingness and capacity to serve a comparable convening function for the new work on this Involve Platform? Have you established a personal relationship with them so that they will routinely invite you to project and program planning meetings, or so that they will routinely make introductions between you and other organizations?
- Are you using introductions and networking not just to develop collaborative programs and funding, but also to share each other's success stories (such as on your own website and communications, and through awards by your organization) and serve on each other's governance bodies?
- Do you have the organizational capacity (perhaps through the new positions you have created, such as an integration partnerships coordinator) to absorb and adapt new information referred to you by this convener concerning other programs that achieve comparable outcomes to those you have proposed, but do so through very different programs that might not even focus on refugees?

**7. COMMUNICATIONS AND DATA.** Establishing shared values and common ground is the first step in building a collaboration. While values always lead as the reason for building a collaboration, they are now balanced by more technical communications about how the collaboration will work and how it will be measured. It is important for arriving community practitioners to become immersed in the language and data points of their collaborating partners, and reflect this in their own communications. Establishing a no-wrong-door approach to services requires that there is consistency in the words and numbers at all points of entry. Linguistic appropriation in pursuit of community

engagement is not plagiarism. For example, a refugee microenterprise program that begins a collaboration with a receiving community financial literacy program needs to begin reflecting in its communications how that financial literacy program describes its work and environment, and how it measures its services. The data that is developed on this platform becomes the admission ticket to the Invest Platform. Co-developed services are sustainable only to the extent that they are co-measured.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Have you developed the organizational capacity and commitment to accurately and meaningfully use data from your own program? Is one of the new positions you have created solely dedicated to data collection, analysis, and dissemination? Can you compare your data to other data from local colleague organizations, and to national trend data? Do you have a standing meeting for the data personnel from multiple organizations so that they can review the protocols for and validity of their data? How are you using data to complement, but not replace, narratives? Rather than a list of statistics, are you presenting data as an infographic that tells a story that ties directly back to the particular narratives of individuals?
- Does your data complement and use the same metrics as data reported by your receiving community partners? Do you understand the data points of your colleagues and collaborators well enough that you could make a data presentation with or even for them? Have you co-developed data at the same time that you codeveloped the program? Do you routinely disseminate data from each other's programs?
- Are you taking the time to acknowledge the hard work and accomplishments of your partners? Do you have an award (partner organization of the year, cross-agency co-worker of the month, etc.) to acknowledge success, and a variety of communication channels to publicize the award? Because collaborations require a lot of

meetings, do you have back-up personnel with project and program knowledge so that meeting momentum can be maintained without over-relying on a single individual? Do you routinely check in with your partners to make sure that your process for working together still supports the work you want to accomplish?

**8. CONDUCT A LEAN PROCESS REVIEW.** Many collaborations start with the assumption that they need to jointly raise more money, but soon realize that not every problem needs the solution of new funding. In many cases, the collaboration motivates each participant to look at greater efficiencies in their own processes, and new efficiencies that they can co-develop. A Lean process review<sup>8</sup> can provide this framework for better resource allocation, which ultimately better serves refugees and all clients. Before building new programs, first correct those aspects of program design that hinder or even harm the effective use of what is already in place. For example, a Lean process review can result in changing the hours or locations of services, having dedicated teams and work groups to learn each other's organizational cultures so as to better serve clients based on deeper mutual understanding, addressing barriers to access that are more acute for refugees (translation, on-the-job training) as well as common barriers for all program participants (childcare and transportation). What is learned through a Lean process review, and how it is implemented to better serve shared clients, is as worthy of communication on the Involve Platform as is a refugee narrative on the Inform Platform.

#### *Getting Started:*

- What do you do as an organization, a collaborative, or a collaboration between programs for no better reason than that is the way you have always done it? How does your process impede your outcomes?

<sup>8</sup> For more on Lean process review, see the Lean Enterprise Institute: [www.lean.org](http://www.lean.org)

- As part of your external prioritizing, what is the risk for changing how you operate in such diverse ways as how paper flows, how meetings are structured, how new ideas are reviewed, or how resource allocation decisions are made? Rather than change for the sake of change, how can a change in process achieve better outcomes, and is the improvement worth the effort of change? Does the process change build bridges or burn bridges with others?
- Are you remembering to tell the important story of your process changes in the context of revitalizing or expanding organizational relationships, and ultimately making the large community changes necessary to achieve a collective goal?



## The Invest Platform

**Work on the Invest Platform** focuses on long-term opportunity to develop new systems, regulations, funding, and accountabilities. Cross-sector stakeholders use multiple frameworks to develop collective impact approaches that are more about their collective roles in an ecosystem than about their individual programs. New programs and services are created from the perspective of new systems and frameworks that benefit entire communities rather than just one subgroup, such as creating new types of jobs and ownership, or economically thriving families. The emphasis is on strategic planning involving community experts, with arriving communities and individual refugees having an opportunity to contribute expertise. Data concerning refugees is considered dispositive for making the case for innovation. Relationships and work with other organizations and collaborations are based on social links, on the fact that there is mutual respect as experts across different levels of power, sectors of the community, and roles in program leadership. Information dissemination and program design are based on a whole of governance approach, where both vertically and horizontally within an organization there is commitment and accountability for executing an opportunity agenda. Programs partner with each other as entrepreneurs to raise significant new capital that will have long-term return for the entire community. Both arriving and receiving communities identify program performance metrics that hinder opportunity, and work together for changes to how success is measured

External relationships are collaborations, the individuals and organizations with which you also have a first-degree relationship, but one that is focused on creating and investing in a new program or modifying a misaligned system, and that is related to the broader environment in which your program or organization operates. The Invest Platform mirrors what is increasingly called a “collective impact” approach. This platform addresses complex social problems, at a large scale that is the scale of community ecosystems, with a significant shared financial commitment, over an extended period of time and with a considerable commitment of time for organizing and deliberating processes. Data exists and is used both to demonstrate how these complex problems currently impact the entire community (not just refugees), and how any solutions will impact the entire community (including refugees).

Complex problems require complex solutions, which means not just a program by program intervention, but rather an ecosystem approach that weaves together, for example, the employment, childcare, and transportation interventions that are needed across the whole community to support living wages. Examples of such complex problems could include: reducing the social conditions that contribute to premature death; increasing local collaborations to better deploy the ample supply of capital for small business startups; reducing inequities in school performance outcomes; increasing affordable housing; reducing health disparities; increasing small business startup and success; reducing justice involvement for minority communities; increasing transit-oriented development; reducing gentrification in low-income neighborhoods; and increasing integration at a city scale for immigrants and refugees. The challenge for refugee resettlement leaders is how to develop the resources to contribute to and benefit from all of these investment platforms, not just those specific to integration or refugees.

Mapping on this platform is about identifying participating leaders from public, private, philanthropic, and nonprofit sectors. Not only are participants cross-sector, but they are also cross-program, depending on the

problem being addressed. Thus, from each sector, depending on the problem, participants could bring their institutional expertise related to financing, economic development, housing and land development, healthcare, community organizing, or refugee and immigrant integration. Participants all contribute resources in different ways, and all derive a way to measure success that is meaningful within their particular sector and program. Programs developed on this platform are likely to provide integrated services (as opposed to sequential services), such as co-located services from multiple organizations pursuing multiple goals.

Participating leaders have the commitment, expertise, and authority to formulate large-scale proposals to these complex problems that are based on data, and are at most one level removed from those in their organizations who make final decisions. These leaders already are known as ambassadors, thought leaders, and change agents within the sectors and programs they represent, and frequently already have a history of building trust and success with each other through the types of braided programs represented by the Involve Platform. Finally, these leaders are brought together for a sustained process through a central trusted convener from one of these sectors. The role of the convener is not only to maintain a forum for the equitable contribution from each participant, but also to maintain the equitable distribution of resources for problem solution to both grassroots and grassroots organizations.

Actions in this platform are premised on data-informed assumptions (often with the input of national level experts and researchers) that the current scale, pace, and allocation of resources is insufficient to solve the identified problem, and thus something new is now required. What will be created could be new alignments between existing organizations or a new organization, new ways to engage individuals in the communities most impacted by the problems and solutions, new funding streams or new ways to deploy capital, new ways to frame and solve persistent problems, and new ways to document and disseminate success or measure outcomes and impacts.

The process to determine what needs to be created is often complex and long, and generally demonstrates authenticity by involving voices from the communities that most experience the problems being addressed. This process needs to be urgent enough to take advantage of the convergence of leadership, resources, and data on a particular problem, but patient enough to engage the grassroots communities that will be impacted by the change. This platform requires a constant and delicate balancing of top-down and bottom-up approaches. The inclusion of refugee leadership and perspectives in this Invest Platform is not guaranteed, but should be pursued and is much more likely if success has been achieved and documented in the Inform Platform and the Involve Platform. Refugee resettlement agencies and collaboratives have a particular opportunity to contribute in the Invest Platform, because of their trusted connections and access to the refugee communities that can benefit from many collective impact strategies—but only if they have developed the expertise to contribute in this platform as a result of their successes in the other platforms.

The Invest Platform is where the relatively new framework of impact investing has emerged.<sup>9</sup> Impact investing lies in an evolving and dynamic middle ground between traditional investment that is focused just on achieving financial returns, and traditional philanthropy that is focused just on achieving social returns. Impact investing prioritizes sustainable development through the Triple Bottom Line approach, which guides a company or an investment to be: financially responsible (focusing on long-term business results and the economic interests of stakeholders); socially responsible (considering the interests of employees, communities, and the people whose needs the company impacts); and environmentally responsible (minimizing the use of natural resources). The fundamental impact pursued by such investments is social equity. At its best, impact investing in non-extractive, in that it takes out less value from a community than it adds to a community.<sup>10</sup>

Impact investments typically develop investment theses that: focus on social, economic, health, and environmental equity as the main drivers; look at investments and grants, and their measures for success, not just from the perspective of ameliorating the consequences of inequity, but also from the perspective of identifying and interrupting the root causes of the inequities; utilize a theory of change approach to community engagement that articulates the systemic context for inequities and the factors that truly influence how change happens; include arriving communities as an asset for investment.

Impact investing is a different way to deploy capital to find systemic solutions to social problems. These investments develop private sector and foundation sector layered or braided capital so that: respective best financial and social expertise can support immigrant-focused enterprises; resources are combined to distribute risk through different rates of return and timelines for repayment; nonprofits are funded to provide supportive services that complement for-profit investments; research is conducted to identify new ways to leverage resources that will benefit multiple stakeholders including immigrants; technical assistance and capacity-building platforms are developed for social enterprises, so that investments can support both their pre-launch development and long-term sustainability.

Integration practitioners typically do not bring to the impact investment table deep capital resources, or flexible organizational capacities that can be allocated beyond core mission goals and funding, or a community status as a trusted intermediary and convener—if they are even at the impact investment table. However, integration practitioners can bring to the table something almost priceless and outside the reach of most other impact investment participants, which is the profound trust and understanding that they have already established with their refugee and

9 The term “impact investing” was coined by the Rockefeller Foundation in 2007.

10 For an excellent overview of the current state of the impact investing framework, see: Katherine Pease and Sarah L. Thomas. *In Pursuit of Deeper Impact: Mobilizing Capital for Social Equity*. 2016. [www.katherinepease.com/publication](http://www.katherinepease.com/publication)

immigrant communities. All of the tools in this Toolkit, on all of the platforms, build on this fundamental trust and understanding, which prepare integration practitioners to be indispensable partners in impact investing.

## Leadership and Organizational Capacity Characteristics on the Invest Platform.

Refugee resettlement agencies and individual refugee leaders contribute expertise (thinking and influencing), even more than actions, in collective impact planning that utilizes frameworks different from refugee resettlement or integration. Organizations develop whole of governance approaches through which both vertically and horizontally there is a commitment to systems change. Collective impact projects are designed to deploy socially motivated capital at scale and for the benefit of all populations in need, including refugees but not focused on refugees.

## Communications and Data Characteristics on the Invest Platform.

Communications, webinars, reports, and communities of practice focus on the contribution of agencies and refugees to receiving community initiatives not focused solely on resettlement concerns. Data and narratives support long-term strategic community goals that benefit the entire community, and new data is developed that maintains separate tracking and analysis for refugees.

## Contacts and Stakeholders Characteristics on the Invest Platform.

This is the platform for partnering and investing between social entrepreneurs who wish to create new frameworks, both personal and organizational. Refugee resettlement agencies contribute their deep trust and engagement with the refugee communities to impact investment processes. Community contacts are prioritized according to the specific

expertise needed to achieve municipal strategic goals, and refugee resettlement is valued as a force multiplier in larger community ecosystems. Advocacy for new or changed regulations is based on a deep knowledge of each other's populations and programs, and deep trust of each based on program collaborations.

## Tactics for Strengthening the Invest Platform:

*(note that all of the tactics from the Inform Platform and Involve Platform are continued and sustained on this platform as well)*

**1. SWOT ANALYSIS.** Again, an internal SWOT analysis is conducted to assess the organizational needs for newly defined or newly hired staff to participate in this platform. There are two key features for these positions: first, because collective impact processes are complex and long, they have to be able to set aside large blocks of time for process participation and contribution; second, because collective impact generally involves working from multiple frameworks that might not even include welcoming or integration, they have to have an acute curiosity and capacity for working from a very different knowledge base than what is probably called upon in their other duties. Relationships and work with other organizations and partners are based on social links, on the fact that there is mutual respect as experts across different levels of power, sectors of the community, and roles in program leadership. More likely than not, a new funding stream will be needed to support this work, or great flexibility will have to be requested or presumed with existing funding.

*Getting Started:*

- Very different in process from the Inform Platform or Involve Platform, can you develop a job description and performance measures that relate to these Invest Platform characteristics without creating an imbalance with other positions in your organization, because by definition this platform operates outside of a traditional refugee and integration framework? Have you incorporated into the

job description skills that are appropriate for this platform and that relate to all three elements of leadership (as discussed near the end of this report): acting, thinking, and influencing? Would a contractor or consultant be a better fit for you for helping you work on this platform?

- Because more likely than not new funds would have to be raised specific to this position or contractor, do you have the organizational resources to raise and sustain the required funding? Could new funds be leveraged across many organizations, in both arriving and receiving communities? Could one position or contractor work on behalf of multiple organizations? Have you developed all of the mechanisms of complementary trust on the other platforms to support such sharing?
- Is the person you have assigned to work on this platform known broadly in arriving and receiving community organizations as your “go to” person for the core activities on this platform? What kind of networking and learning support is provided for this person with their counterparts in other local and national organizations? Could this person now be seen as a trusted convener for organizations working on the Inform Platform or Involve Platform?

**2. MAPPING.** A framework is a set of expressed organizing principles that mobilize resources and collaborations for collective goals. The mapping on this platform is different, because at first it does not look at individual and organizational contacts and connections. Instead, it first looks at frameworks and how they are or are not mobilizing resources in a community. One community may have vibrant work underway focused on capital absorption in communities impacted by transit-oriented-development, and another community may have no work underway because their mass transit development was completed a hundred years ago or has not even begun. Another community might have a foundation sector deeply focused on health equity, while another community might have an equally deep

foundation focus on economic stabilization. Any of these focus areas could generate a collective impact project. The challenge for this mapping is to determine which frameworks are generating dialogue in your community, and how you can participate as a partner in any local collective impact projects. It is important to link welcoming and integration to other frameworks and other non-refugee community conversations. Although its practitioners are deservedly passionate about their work, refugee resettlement and integration by themselves are relatively small and fragile frameworks for advocacy and coalition building. Through developing partners on this platform, integration can be included as part of a larger world and larger conversations.

#### *Getting Started:*

- What other frameworks are prominent in your community that are generating collaborations and resource allocation? Do these frameworks still align with the integration pathways identified on the Inform Platform and Involve Platform, or can you translate them into those pathways?
- What is your process for determining which non-refugee and non-integration frameworks are operational in your community? Are you working with your trusted convener (especially foundations) to determine their preferred frameworks? Are you paying attention to the priorities of decision-makers in your city and state to determine these frameworks?
- Have you included in your mapping not only what other frameworks are operating in your community, but also how you can contribute to the lead organizations working in that framework so that they achieve their success as they define it? Have you ensured that you have established measurable outcomes, as well as credibility and trust, from your work and leadership on the other two platforms, so that you can now work in more of a supporting role on this platform? Are you comfortable not being the largest dot or the central dot on a map? Can you articulate and measure how the success of a different framework will still support refugees and integration?



**3. NATIONAL THOUGHT LEADERSHIP.** Another approach to learning where collective action opportunities might be in your community is to research national thought leadership on a particular issue, again looking at the ten integration pathways as a way to organize research (economic opportunity, healthcare reform, language acquisition, early childhood learning, etc.), and then see if and how its proponents are working in your community. For example, Welcoming America is the national thought leader on welcoming and integration, and it is easy to learn which cities have adopted a welcoming framework through which local cross-sector collaborations might have been generated. Equally, the Democracy Collaborative is a national thought leader on economic equity issues and new ways to deploy capital for community wealth building. A great deal of the work of The Cleveland Foundation and The Denver Foundation, among work in about twenty cities, is organized around various frameworks developed by the Democracy Collaborative. Collective impact planning in these cities is underway through these frameworks, which is generating many new collaborations to create new programs and support new regulations, and which will ultimately result in the deployment of millions of dollars in shared investment. Any of the collective impact projects developed through a Democracy Collaborative framework (cooperative development, community land trusts, Community Development Financial Institution collaborative, anchor institution strategy, supply chain inclusion program, and others) has the great potential to benefit refugees, without being about refugees.

*Getting Started:*

- What national thought leaders (both organizations and individuals) are referenced and brought into planning efforts by your state and local government? Does your new personnel for this platform have access to and deep familiarity with this leadership, so that they personally can be at the table? If you do not have personnel to work on this platform, do you still have a way to raise your voice through the trusted convener who you cultivated on the other platforms?

- What national awards have been received in your community for work that has been completed, for pilot projects, or for planning processes? Do any of these awards relate to frameworks that could benefit you and refugees? Through your mapping and prioritizing efforts, what networks do you have to advocate for the inclusion of refugees in the benefits of current or future projects that are the focus of these awards?
- Are you paying attention to the national grants and awards, and the privilege of being the focus of national case studies, which are received by colleagues in other communities (particularly out of state)? Do you have a process to learn from the success of your colleagues and adapt your own work? Have you explored the possibility that the national organization that honored your colleague could be a source of technical assistance to you so that you would be more competitive for subsequent opportunities that they offer?

**4. INTEGRATED SERVICES.** Collective impact projects look at systems solutions. One systems solution at a scale of interest to and contribution from arriving communities could be developing integrated services solutions. Integrated services can take many forms, but they are essentially a remedy for fragmented services where agencies duplicate services or replicate gaps in services. The purpose of integrated services is to provide a seamless transition of care or range of services across multiple systems. For example, a refugee childcare program could develop in a mixed-use, transit-oriented-development project and thus benefit from lower rent due to tax credits. The childcare program could form a collaboration with a receiving community financial services program that will provide the back office support (bookkeeping, taxes, Childcare Assistance Program payments, outreach, intakes, inspections, etc.) to keep the program sustainable. The parents who drop off the children can use the mass transit to attend scholarship trade certificate programs, through which they will gain employment at significantly higher wages, and thus have more disposable income for family asset development. Such an integrated program addresses many complex social

issues (childcare, public transportation, skills development, asset development). Among the contributions of refugee childcare providers to such a project is trust from the community most impacted by this complex solution. Opportunities to participate in entrepreneurial projects such as this generally require being able to participate in a collective impact project.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Can you build on the holistic mapping and resulting program collaborations from the Involve Platform to now work at this even larger scale of systems solutions? Are you willing and able to say “yes” to working outside of the comfort zone of a refugee and integration framework, knowing that you will learn a significant amount about planning processes, data collection, and community resources that you can use in your other collaborative efforts.
- Do your data and narratives from the Involve Platform work support you taking a leadership role for these larger projects? Or, consistent with much of the Invest Platform, can you work as the refugee expert in an integrated services project just to ensure refugee inclusion in these more complex services and systems solutions?
- Are you using all of your networks to support those who are leading the development of these projects, particularly to help them overcome political barriers?

**5. COMMUNICATIONS AND DATA.** Client profiles, case studies, and reports should be developed that focus on the contribution of agencies and refugees to collective impact initiatives not focused on resettlement concerns. For example, refugees might have purchased a home or started a business through a refugee Individual Development Account program, and outputs and outcomes from that program would have already been reported to the funder. Now, however, there is an opportunity to reframe that same home purchase or business startup from the perspective of the whole community, for

how it contributes to a large-scale neighborhood stabilization or economic opportunity initiative lead by a local foundation or a city’s office of economic development. New data that was initiated on the Involve Platform is further developed on the Invest Platform through larger or longitudinal studies, such as the Refugee Integration Survey and Evaluation project (as cited in the narrative sections above). Just as new regulations might be developed, new data fields might be developed specific to refugees. For example, a public benefits program might develop a special indicator just to track refugees.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Are you looking at opportunities to retell your narratives from the perspective of other frameworks? Have you used the opportunity of working in the different space of this platform to promote refugee leaders more than yourself as the experts?
- Have you developed new ways to tell your organizational story from a leadership perspective, less for all of the ways you are acting, but more for all of the ways you are thinking and influencing?
- Are there opportunities in these broader community initiatives to develop new data that will better reflect refugees in a much broader context than just refugee resettlement?

**6. IMPACT INVESTING.** Impact investing is a relatively new framework for combining the best expertise and accomplishments of private sector and foundation sector investments. In order to intersect these investment opportunities, integration practitioners need to develop nonprofit work and finances in a manner that demonstrates even a minimal return on investment, in order for foundations to make program-related investments from their grantmaking funds, and mission-related investments from their endowments. What arriving community organizations often lack in financial capital for impact investing, they more than make up for in the social capital they have developed through their work on the other platforms, in particular

trust with and access to refugee communities. Consequently, arriving community leadership in impact investing will develop beneficiary engagement and alignment efforts to ensure that: refugee community voices are active in the investment process at all stages; real social and economic opportunities and challenges affecting people and specific communities are identified; place-based factors that can accelerate or decelerate meaningful change and its measurement are understood. In order to support and sustain these investments, arriving community leadership will develop research and evaluation (such as community-based participatory research, especially as applied to longitudinal research projects), based on community engagement and understanding what a community wants to accomplish and measure, and based on determining investments that achieve community goals as well as investor goals.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Are you beginning to refine how you frame your social services and integration work not just from the perspective of ameliorating the consequences of inequity, but also from the perspective of identifying and interrupting the root causes of the inequities? Is there a difference in the data you track and the value proposition you make for how you present your work for grant funding versus impact investing?
- Have you explored how your nonprofit organization can develop a social venture? Are there aspects of your work that warrant the infusion of loan capital through the very supportive terms offered by a program-related investment or mission-related investment from a foundation?

- Have you empowered and supported refugee community organizations and leaders to develop and communicate data about themselves in the context of broader social problems and systems solutions? Are you developing research and evaluation that simultaneously supports your work from a systems perspective, addresses the needs of investors for data specific to their investment goals, and lifts up the voice of those individuals and communities most impacted by the investment?

## **7. COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH.**

The Invest Platform is the place to go beyond the minimum required data collection, or data that reflects community collaborations, and look at new ways to describe and analyze program progress using data. Also as discussed in the context of impact investment, integration practitioners can bring to an impact investment or collective impact table a relatively priceless asset, which is the profound trust and understanding that they have already established with their refugee and immigrant communities. Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) is an excellent and cost-effective way to translate this trust into research, to respect all participants in a collaboration, and to ask important questions about collaborations and their impacts on individuals and communities. Many universities have CBPR practitioners who could become partners in new research and evaluation projects.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Have you explored local options, most likely through a local university, to partner for Community-Based Participatory Research? As a particularly important but underutilized community of practice, have you networked with colleagues in other organizations who have an interest in or practice of research to learn about other CBPR projects?

- Has consensus been achieved among key community partners, and especially including refugees, about the core questions that can and should be answered through research, and the strategic purposes for which this research will be used (knowing that these will likely be modified as the CBPR process is launched)?
- Can you raise funding for CBPR as part of an impact investment, or through a foundation as the learning necessary to subsequently leverage an impact investment?

**8. COMMUNITY DASHBOARDS.** A community dashboard is a collection of socioeconomic measures, ideally developed through a community engagement process (such as the one described in this Toolkit), which provide an overview of the health and well-being of a community. In some communities, a community dashboard will be the result of the community's participation in the federal Healthy People 2020 program through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or of the community's development of a Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan (as required under the Affordable Care Act), or of the community's development of a civic health index. By tracking the measures of the dashboard over time, a community can identify areas where collective success has been achieved and can be celebrated, and areas where more resources and actions are needed. Having issues of concern to arriving communities included in what gets measured for a community dashboard, and having data specific to refugees and immigrants included in the data collection process of the community dashboard, should be seen as a capstone project for the Invest Platform, and might be one of many good proxy measures for the achievement of integration. Arriving community organizations should include in their communication materials (especially websites) a selection of dashboard measures most relevant to their community members, and should compare refugee and immigrant data with broader community-wide data. Among the many communities with community dashboards for adaptation are: San Francisco/San Francisco County, CA;

Nashville/Davidson County, TN; Louisville/Jefferson County, KY; Fairfax and Falls Church/Fairfax, VA; Austin/Travis County, TX.

#### *Getting Started:*

- Have you reviewed the community dashboards in other cities to determine if developing one for your community would warrant the investment of resources, and would be consistent with some of the dominant frameworks operating in your community? Would having a community dashboard that included data relevant to refugees, and even specific to refugees, help you achieve your overarching community goal?
- Is your data collection sophisticated enough to add data points to a community dashboard, or influence the development of new data points?
- Because developing a community dashboard, or even modifying an existing community dashboard, is a complex community engagement project of its own, could you develop a small-scale dashboard specific just to your own refugee and integration work that would still track progress towards goals and provide a basis for celebrating success?

**There are several common tactics** to all three of the platforms. Two of them are discussed below: building communities of practice, and building leadership and organizational capacity.

**BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE.** Communities of practice<sup>11</sup> are formed by people who share a desire to learn how to improve what they do, and who engage in a scheduled process of collective learning in a shared domain in order to apply that learning to their work. The domain is mutually agreed upon and narrowly focused, with an emphasis on depth rather than breadth of learning. A community of

<sup>11</sup> Communities of practice are part of the modern field of knowledge management, as most prominently developed by Etienne Wenger. Wenger, Etienne (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-0-521-66363-2.

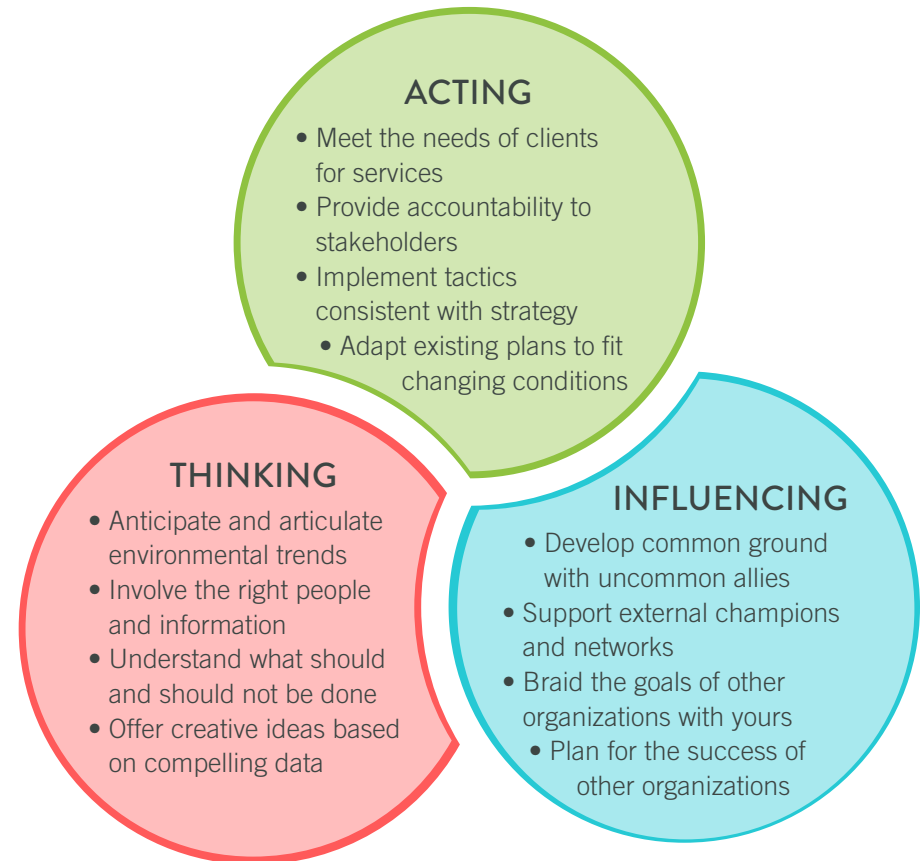
practice is more than a community of interest. Its members are practitioners who develop and adapt for their own needs a shared repertoire of resources (tools, data, and experiences for solving problems). Developing and sustaining a community of practice requires time and relationship building, and generally requires the efforts of a trusted convener. The benefit of establishing and participating in a community of practice is the exposure to different and potentially better (more efficient and more effective) ways to apply experience to practice. Almost any of the tactics discussed in this Toolkit could form the basis for establishing a community of practice, such as mapping local social networks, braiding resources and conducting a Lean process review, or developing investment theses relative to integration that would attract impact investments.

**BUILDING LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY** are important tactics in this Toolkit for all three community engagement platforms. Three core competencies of effective leadership are outlined below. Organizations should ensure that position descriptions for staff they have for working on any of the platforms reflect these competencies relative to implementing the tactics for the desired platform.

Community engagement between arriving and receiving communities remains an emerging area of practice. While there are wonderful examples of what seems to work locally, there are few frameworks and even less research to identify community engagement programs that are replicable between locations or scalable within a location. If this Toolkit provides a useful framework for a more nuanced consideration of community engagement, it might then contribute to developing research questions for subsequent explorations. As discussed as Toolkit tactics, identifying trusted conveners is an important component of the work of every platform in community engagement, and one potential important role of these conveners is to support communities of practice.

It is equally hoped that local communities will provide to Welcoming America examples of the programs they already have in place or that they develop that reflect the community engagement framework of this

## Leadership Competencies



Toolkit. Welcoming America will feature these examples in a searchable community engagement section on their website, using a template similar to that seen in the examples in the Appendix of this report. A national repository of such exemplary programs can further strengthen local dialogues and program adaptation, and can further refine this Toolkit for subsequent iterations.

## APPENDIX 1—INFORM PLATFORM

### Seeking Refuge: Forced to Flee—A Refugee Camp Simulation

Catholic Charities of Louisville, Inc.

<https://cclou.org/flee>

Contact: Mark Bouchard, MBouchard@archlou.org

#### FFY 2009-2016:

- Refugee camp simulation guide distributed to 48 different sites across the U.S. and Canada.
- 4,400 students and community members have participated in 87 camps.
- Catholic Charities of Louisville has seen an increase of 6% in donations.
- The percentage of agency volunteers involved with refugee resettlement increased by 4%.

Catholic Charities of Louisville's Seeking Refuge: Forced to Flee is a participatory simulation in which learners gain insight into the challenges associated with seeking refuge in a refugee camp. Participants engage in an experiential process that also fosters a sense of humility, grace-filled charity, and solidarity. The agency is affiliated with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Migration and Refugee Services department.

Catholic Charities has also published *Seeking Refuge: Forced to Flee, a Refugee Camp Simulation Curriculum Guide* which allows for replication in other receiving communities. Students participating in the



refugee camp immersion project walk through a simulated camp, station to station, to get an idea of what life in a refugee camp is like. The simulation project is intended to raise awareness for the refugee cause and recruit future donors and volunteers.

Facilitators of the program will help participants to understand that they can imagine, but not truly know, the depths of suffering and experiences that refugees live each day in the world. Successful participation requires learners to role-play. In doing so, a temporary reality is created by stepping into the shoes of another. It is essential that the plight of the refugee be presented as an ongoing reality that immediately impacts lives, classrooms, parishes, and neighborhoods. Refugees live amongst us now.

## APPENDIX 2 – INVOLVE PLATFORM

### Parishes Organized to Welcome Refugees (POWR) Program

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Migration and Refugee Services (MRS)

<http://tinyurl.com/z28bubr>

Contact: Daniel Sturm, [dsturm@uscceb.org](mailto:dsturm@uscceb.org)

#### FFY 2010-2016:

- Number of volunteers recruited: 14,500.
- Number of parishes and other groups (faith-based, schools, college, and nonprofit groups) recruited for resettlement work: 1,065.
- Average volunteer contribution (in hours): 21.
- Cash and in-kind donations (in million \$): 5.9.
- USCCB/MRS expense (in million \$): 1.5.
- Number of refugees who have benefited from POWR: 31,000.

**M**RS launched POWR in the midst of the great recession, seeking to strengthen the ability of local churches to recruit and utilize volunteers to mentor and provide other needed support to newly arrived refugees. With job growth low and unemployment high as a result of recession, the program placed a special focus on building parish collaborations that could help refugees build their social capital and networks for finding jobs.



Small seed grants continue to be provided to local parishes through the program for the development of volunteer-led efforts to meet a range of resettlement needs, including transportation, English language learning, employment mentoring, and more generally navigating U.S. systems.

The initiative has spurred the development of innovative projects and social enterprises. With POWR support, Catholic Charities of Louisville, for example, utilized funds to create an in-house woodworking shop, where it can manufacture furniture items at low cost and high quality. To pick another example of this program’s empowering impact, Catholic Charities of Jacksonville, Florida, produced a documentary film to intensify its volunteer recruitment efforts. Testimonials underscore the social impact of volunteerism on resettlement. “We are thrilled with POWR’s positive contributions,” reports one program manager. “It has allowed us to be more visible, to recruit more volunteers and provide better services to refugees in need.”

## APPENDIX 3 – INVEST PLATFORM

### City of Aurora Office of International and Immigrant Affairs

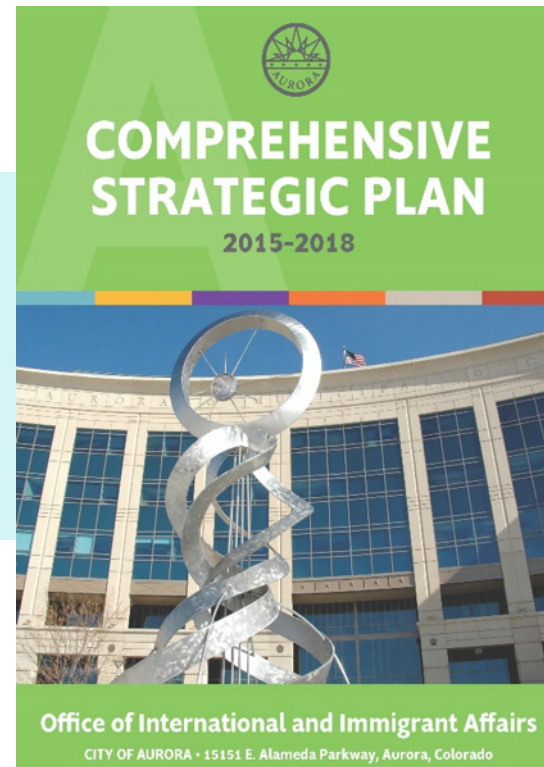
[www.auroragov.org/city\\_hall/international\\_\\_\\_immigrant\\_affair](http://www.auroragov.org/city_hall/international___immigrant_affair)

Contact: Ricardo Gambetta, [rgambett@auroragov.org](mailto:rgambett@auroragov.org)

- 8 organizations co-located at the Aurora Welcome Center to provide wraparound services for refugees and immigrants.
- More than 9,000 people attended the 2016 Global Fest, the city's celebration of its immigrants and refugees.
- The Aurora Natural Helpers Program trained more than 60 local immigrant and refugee volunteers from more than 25 different countries.

The Office of International and Immigrant Affairs was created to facilitate the successful integration of immigrants and refugees into Aurora's civic, economic, and cultural life. The office oversees the development and implementation of a strategic citywide plan that engages all departments of city government regarding policy, programs, and initiatives toward the local immigrant and refugee populations. This office oversees the Aurora Immigrant and Refugee Commission, Aurora International Roundtable, Aurora Global Fest, and the Aurora International Cabinet.

Aurora is the only city in the state of Colorado and one of the very few in the country with a comprehensive strategic immigrant integration plan. The Comprehensive Strategic Plan 2015-2018 establishes nine goals to be undertaken by the city related to successful integration, which maximize resources, develop innovative efforts, and avoid duplication of



programs and services. Each goal is described and assigned a lead agency, proposed key partners for implementation, and activities to achieve the specific goal. Rather than a constellation of related and at times disparate activities, the comprehensive plan organizes the city's immigrant and refugee efforts toward one goal: integration.

As part of implementing this strategic plan, especially the goal area of integrating through economic and financial

growth, the City of Aurora participates in the Wells Fargo/U.S. Conference of Mayors CommunityWINS (Working/Investing in Neighborhood Stabilization) Grant Program, which focuses on neighborhood stabilization, economic development, and job creation. For 2016 and 2017, the City selected as its partner and nominee for this award Community Enterprise Development Services (CEDs), an asset development program for refugees and immigrants, because of CEDs' ability to help the City achieve citywide strategic goals.



## APPENDIX 4

### Resources for DATA-DRIVEN Community Engagement<sup>11</sup>

#### **The Asset-Based Community Development Institute**

A global network of people who work to build local assets that will enable residents to solve community problems. Source for the classic book *Building Communities from the Inside Out*. [www.abcdinstitute.org](http://www.abcdinstitute.org)

#### **Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development**

A registry (funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation) of evidence-based programs that promote the health and well-being of young people. [www.blueprintsprograms.com](http://www.blueprintsprograms.com)

#### **Center for Theory of Change**

An organization established to promote quality standards and best practice for the development and implementation of Theory of Change. [www.theoryofchange.org](http://www.theoryofchange.org)

#### **The Center for Victims of Torture**

An organization that rebuilds the lives and restores the hope of people who survive torture and war atrocities, with a range of online tactics for human rights defenders to use in their work. [www.cvt.org/what-we-do/training/new-tactics-human-rights](http://www.cvt.org/what-we-do/training/new-tactics-human-rights)

#### **Collective Impact Forum**

An online resource center and learning network for people around the world who are implementing collective impact efforts. [www.collectiveimpactforum.org](http://www.collectiveimpactforum.org)

#### **The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation**

An organization that teaches and inspires leaders to change how people work together in communities. [www.theharwoodinstitute.org](http://www.theharwoodinstitute.org)

#### **Interaction Institute for Social Change**

An organization that provides training, facilitation, and network building to communities, organizations, and movements. [www.interactioninstitute.org](http://www.interactioninstitute.org)

#### **Living Cities**

An organization that works with leaders in multiple sectors to develop urban practices that will improve the economic well-being of low-income people. [www.livingcities.org](http://www.livingcities.org)

#### **Movement Strategy Center**

An intermediary that works with local and national groups to respond to community needs, advance policy solutions, and build leadership. [www.movementstrategy.org](http://www.movementstrategy.org)

#### **National Center on Secondary Education and Transition**

A research center funded by the U.S. Department of Education focused on youth with disabilities and their families, which has published reports on community resource mapping. [www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/mapping/default.asp](http://www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/mapping/default.asp)

#### **PolicyLink**

A research and advocacy group that works with local residents and organizations to advance economic and social equity. [www.policylink.org](http://www.policylink.org)

#### **Results for America**

A research and advocacy group that works to shift public resources toward evidence-based, results-driven solutions. [www.results4america.org](http://www.results4america.org)

#### **Tamarack Institute**

An organization that provides tools and training that help people to collaborate and to achieve collective impact on complex community issues. [www.tamarackcommunity.ca](http://www.tamarackcommunity.ca)

#### **Welcoming America**

An organization leading a national movement of inclusive communities becoming more prosperous by making everyone who lives there feel like they belong. [www.welcomingamerica.org](http://www.welcomingamerica.org)

<sup>11</sup> Expanded from a list provided at: Melody Barnes, and Paul Schmitz. "Community Engagement Matters (Now More Than Ever)." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. Spring 2016. [http://ssir.org/articles/entry/community\\_engagement\\_matters\\_now\\_more\\_than\\_ever](http://ssir.org/articles/entry/community_engagement_matters_now_more_than_ever)