



COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF CANADA
FONDATIONS COMMUNAUTAIRES DU CANADA
ensemble pour tous.
all for community.

Building Community Vitality

On the Brink of New Promise
Renewing Strategy

April 2009

Renewing Strategy

What is this tool?

This worksheet is intended to help you integrate the ideas you've generated with the other tools in the toolkit. It will help your organization think more broadly about the context for your work and, ideally, equip you to embrace the recommendations found in *On the Brink of New Promise*, specifically the three interconnected shifts in focus:

- From the institution to the community
- From managing financial assets to long-term leadership
- From competitive independence to coordinated impact

While the other tools in the toolkit help you separate out and think about various aspects of your community and organization, this tool helps you draw together your findings from other exercises and think about how the ideas might fit together and interact. How do the capacities and strengths of other philanthropy organizations in your community influence your choices about what strategic roles you should play? How do changing and emerging community challenges influence the issues on which you take leadership?

The worksheet can be used to consolidate what you have learned and to help you and your colleagues clarify how new opportunities and changes in your local context might influence what you do and how you relate with other organizations and with your community.

How to use this tool

With your board or staff, use this worksheet to revisit some of the key findings from other exercises. Do your findings from one tool change the way you think about another?

The tool is also helpful in keeping your thinking fresh and up-to-date: it can be used on an annual basis to check in on your progress and to incorporate new opportunities into your planning and work. Use the worksheet as an easy way to revisit many of your key assumptions. Consider how changes in one part of your environment might influence what you do or how you do it.

Who should use this tool?

Use this worksheet with members of your staff and board who have been involved in working with other tools in the toolkit. Encourage each participant to think about how the findings from one exercise might influence their conclusions from another.

It may also be helpful to try the exercise together with the leadership of other community philanthropy organizations in your area to begin a discussion about how you can tackle local issues together and coordinate effort to better serve your community.

Related Resources

The “*Building Community Vitality: A Leadership Toolkit*” area of the CFC web site has many resources on this topic that will be helpful.

This tool can also be used in connection with the other tools in the *On the Brink of New Promise* toolkit (American version). The full toolkit can be downloaded at www.communityphilanthropy.org.

Drawing from what you learned in using the **Community Change Discussion Guide**:

- What are the most important issues for your community in the next 10 years?
- Which of these issues are being adequately addressed? Which are not?
- What is the one thing that your community foundation could do in the next 10 years that would make the most difference for your community?

Drawing from the **Mapping your Community Philanthropy Environment** tool and the **Strategic Roles Assessment**:

- What strategic roles does your foundation currently play on these key issues?
- What other organizations in your community are, or could be, working on each of the issues?
- What strategic roles are now being played by each of these other organizations?
- Are there opportunities for partnership and coordinated impact?
- In the context of these opportunities, what are the most promising roles for your organization to play?
- What would you have to stop doing to take on these new roles? What would need to be reallocated?

Drawing from the **Prototyping Community Solutions** tool:

- What are the internal capacities required for you to be able to play the strategic roles you identified above? What internal capacities are currently in place?
- How might you finance the roles and activities described above?

Additional **summarizing questions**:

- In light of what you have discovered using the toolkit, how much does your community foundation need to change in the next ten years?
- What are the first steps for you to take? How long will it take you to institute the changes you need to make?
- How would the community benefit from new ways of working at your community foundation?
- How would the community foundation benefit?