

Overview of Community Resilience Models and Toolkits

Strengthening resilience, or our ability to respond and adapt to threats, is perhaps the most significant thing we can be doing. Resilience communities assess their vulnerabilities and take action to preserve well-being and prevent harm before disaster strikes. People in resilient communities are open to learning and adapting, they have “can-do” attitudes and they take care of each other. Organizations in resilient communities co-operate. They share common goals and are pro-active in engaging citizens and building capacity to advance those goals. They ensure that essential resources such as land, food and water are protected and available locally. They work to increase local control of other resources too – like community finance and infrastructure. Resilient communities take a holistic and a sustainable view of change.

Transition US is responding to demand among it’s constituent communities for a means to assess and strengthen community resilience, or the ability to be pro-active in adapting to change. A set of tools are needed that will help them engage citizens and increase awareness of the resilience strengths and weaknesses in the community. This assessment of community resilience will support a more strategic use of existing Transition and community resources in ways that will also strengthen the capacity of the community to adapt to change. TUS wants to support both the knowledge and the tools being available for transition towns and other groups to assess and then strengthen resilience in their communities.

The first stage of this project is to convene a co-lab of resilience practitioners to review existing toolkits and consider the work to be done in order to adapt one of them for this purpose. This document provides an overview of several toolkits as the basis for orienting co-lab participants to the field. A subsequent conversation will focus on what aspects of the models and processes are seen as being most useful to the TUS project. This is not intended to be a complete literature review. There are several bibliographies available that include a huge range of material. Most of the manuals or toolkits being considered here have been developed as a result of considering the field more broadly, so we start with this existing foundation of work.

Criteria for Selection of Models

1. Resilience: the definition of resilience is related to capacity to adapt to change.
2. The theoretical foundation for the tool is resilience. We excluded those that are focused on sustainability or ecosystem health only, however we are looking for tools that include sustainability as one of the conceptual foundations. We included an emergency preparedness model because of its strong focus on overall community resilience as the foundation for coping with emergencies. The Happiness Index is included because of the on-line assessment tool and its reach.
3. Resilience of what: overall community or place based resilience is the primary focus of the tool, as compared to a focus on a sector such as health, an organization or individuals such as youth.
4. Resilience to what: ideally the model will include (or be adaptable to) an assessment of vulnerability to threats such as climate change, reliance on oil and economic instability. This means that the model supports community action around essential needs being met (such as food, energy, housing and income/trade).
5. The model needs to go beyond a theoretical framework. It has to practically support communities to undertake the work themselves and to take action. Our goal is to create a tool and a process that is as user friendly as possible for community based groups to use. This includes considerations of time, human and financial resources and types of expertise. Ideally we can include an on-line assessment program that supports individual community analysis and decision-making, comparisons between communities, and over time a national pool of experience for ongoing learning and best practice.

Factors for the Model Review (see the summary table)

1. Theoretical foundations, definitions of resilience and scale of application.
2. Primary domains or dimensions of resilience considered in the model
3. Steps and tools related to the implementation of the model
4. What strengths are suggested (eg: tools or approaches or impacts related to engagement, social cohesion, mobilization, collaboration, capacity building, ease/cost of use)

Summary Table of Community Resilience Toolkits

	Community Resilience Manual (CCE/Canada, 2000) www.communityrenewal.ca	Exploring Resilience Toolkit (UK, 2011) www.fieryspirits.com	Building Resilience in Rural Communities Toolkit (AU, 2008)	Community Resilience Toolkit (Bay Area/USA, 2009) www.baylocalize.org	Communities Advancing Resilience Toolkit (Terrorism/Disaster Centre, USA, 2012) www.oumedicine.com	The Happiness Index (USA, 2011) www.happycounts.org
Conceptual Lenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community economic development, soc. justice Localization Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change Theory Localization Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resilience from more of a health and social services perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity Localization Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual life satisfaction/happiness
Definition	A resilient community is one that takes intentional action to enhance the personal and collective capacity of its citizens and institutions to respond to and influence the course of social, ecological and economic change.	Both resilience and community are relative terms with different meanings in different places and times, for different groups of people. Ultimately it doesn't matter what this work is called, what matters is that it helps people future proof their community on the basis of agreed values.	Resilience refers to the capacity of an individual or community to cope with stress, overcome adversity or adapt positively to change. (NOTE: this model targets staff of NGOs who want to integrate resilience strengthening approaches in their work)	Community resilience is a communities ability to withstand and quickly recover from difficult situations and hard times. Resilient communities use their assets to meet basic human needs, no matter what the circumstances.	Resilience can be thought of as an attribute, process or outcome associated with successful adaptation to, and recovery from, adversity. A resilient community has the ability to transform the environment through deliberate, collective action.	Happiness is synonymous with well-being, quality of life and holistic sustainability. It is satisfaction with life, including: (see domains below)
Scale of Focus	Organization or group, Community (neighbourhood being tested)		Individual, Organization or group, Community	Household, Collective, Policy	Organization or group, Community	Individual, Community
Dimensions or Domains of the Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attitudes and behaviours of people (caring) Attitudes, awareness, use of resources/infra. Local economy Leadership and planning (organizational capacity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy engaged people An inclusive culture creating a positive sense of place A localizing economy – towards sustainable food, housing, energy Strong links to other places and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social networks/support Positive outlook Learning Early experiences Environment and lifestyle Infrastructure and support services Sense of purpose Diverse and innovative economy Embracing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity Quality (of resources) Sustainability Ownership (of resources) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connection and caring Resources Transformative potential Disaster management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Material well-being Governance Environment Community Culture Learning Health Mental well-being Time balance Work

			<p>differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs • Leadership 			
Steps in resilience assessment and planning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Steering group representing community Assess resilience – interviews/survey/data Portrait of Resilience Community Analysis and Priority setting Community Action Planning 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Read about the resilience concept Ask yourself some questions about it Review ideas for how to strengthen it at individual, group, community levels Read the case examples and community stories for more ideas 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Form planning group Introductory workshop Assessment workshop Planning workshop 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Generate Comm. Profile – survey/interviews/data Community Analysis and Refine Profile – conversations, mapping, SWOTs, etc. Community groups develop Strategic Plan Implement the plan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a team Define the initiative Survey/collect data Happiness report card Town meetings Action planning Happy City report/plan
Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to CED and Strategic Planning • Forming the Steering Committee • Data collection framework • Introduction to indicator types and selection • Organization map table • Survey/interview guide • Focus group guide • Sample portrait and tips for analysis • Town Hall Meet. Fac guide • Workshop guides: priority setting/action planning • Ranking priorities worksheet 		<p>This is not an assessment tool per say. (It assumes that professionals will have their client or community needs assessed already.) Each section describes the domain, questions to ask and ideas. This is followed by case examples and stories of how other communities have strengthened it. Sections also include literature reviews.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop fac. guide • Handouts and resources for peak oil, localization, resilience, equity • Sector Fact sheets • Assessment worksheets • Action menus • Force field analysis worksheet • Setting goals and objectives and measuring impact handouts • Some interesting games and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment survey • Interview guide • Data collection framework • Conversation guide • Mapping guides • Stakeholder analysis • SWOT analysis • Capacity and Vulnerability assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line survey, analysis and comparisons • Guide has suggestions for activities • They indicate they will help with presentation and town hall design/materials
Strengths (increased awareness of resilience; engagement and analysis across whole community; strengthening cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages a wide cross section of community • The characteristics such as pride and “can do” attitude increase awareness of the relationship between attitudes, actions and 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like the “Ideas for Action” and the Case studies – many of these are focused on the use of a tool – such as a Community Asset Map, or a specific project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging for groups – more focused on learning and process than on indicators and data collection effort • Three workshops seems quite reasonable for groups to tackle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey is largely perceptual (“People in my community look out for each other” “People in my community have hope for the future”) linking attitudes to coping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line survey and analysis resource is simple and a great help for communities.

<p>sector collaboration; social cohesion; practical resources for action planning; cost/ease of use)</p>	<p>community. The interviews & focus groups introduce resilience thinking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus on group or organizational stakeholders, mandates and roles as change agents/leaders/collaborators is useful. • The workshop models respect for diversity and debate of ideas as the means to increase openness and find solutions. • Priority setting criteria and process is helpful. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some good quotes in the descriptive pages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers impacts and responses in key sectors and areas of resilience: food, water, energy, transportation, housing, economy, civic role/preparations and neighbour connections. • The analysis worksheets/tools and action menu are useful 	<p>with disaster. Clear and direct question formation here that we might be able to use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a better look at the vulnerability assessment – may be something helpful there 	
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Original Community Resilience Manual (CRM): 2000	DRAFT Adapted CRM: 2009	Neighbourhood Version: 2012 (current pilot)
Attitudes and Behaviours of People	Attitudes of People	Attitudes and Behaviours of Citizens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Elected leadership is diversified ○ Elected leadership is visionary, shares power ○ Community is involved in decisions ○ Community feels a sense of pride ○ People are optimistic about the future of community ○ There is mutual assistance in community ○ People are attached to community ○ Community is self-reliant ○ There is support for education at all levels ○ There is concern for ecosystem health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People are accepting of people from different cultures. ○ People believe they can influence future of the community ○ People co-operate to ensure local needs are met ○ People have a sense of belonging ○ Learning and innovation is valued ○ Community has access to outside programs/services/expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Neighbourhood is inclusive of all populations/perspectives ○ There is a spirit of mutual assistance ○ There is positive regard for each other and neighbourhood ○ Neighbourhood has a “can do” attitude ○ There is support for learning/skills development at all levels ○ People demonstrate respect for ecological limits ○ <i>We have identified the need to add a characteristic focused on neighbour to neighbour conviviality or sharing</i>
Attitudes and Behaviours of Organizations	Care in the Community	Localized Economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organizations in the community have clear mandates such that important services related to: infrastructure, training/ed, planning/research, access to credit & equity are well served. ○ Organizations in the community have developed partnerships and collaborative working relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The community is planning for the critical healthcare needs of citizens. ○ There is a high value given to the well-being of vulnerable populations in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is collaboration to ensure citizens basic needs are met ○ Employers, assets and sources of finance are locally owned ○ There is ongoing effort to diversify the local economy ○ There is openness to informal types of exchange. ○ Neighbourhood looks outside itself to collaborate and secure strategic resources, policies
Awareness and Use of Resources	Resources	Infrastructure and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Major employers in the community are locally owned ○ The community has a strategy for increasing local ownership ○ There is openness to alternative forms of economic activity (such as multiple jobs, barter, farmers markets, co-operatives) ○ The community looks outside itself to seek and secure resources that will address identified areas of weakness ○ The community is aware of its competitive position in the broader economy ○ The community understands the importance of maintaining the health of the local environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The community actively works to diversify its economic base. ○ The community enhances the knowledge and skills of its people. ○ There are locally controlled sources of finance ○ The community has access to outside policy, programs and expertise relevant to strengthening its resilience. ○ Land use planning considers longer-term risks and needs. ○ The community is planning for long-term viability of its infrastructure. ○ The community places high value on the health of natural eco-systems. ○ Energy is used wisely. ○ Water management practices are in place to meet local needs. ○ The community works to strengthen long-term access to food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community gathering spaces exist and are well used ○ There is attention paid to creating an accessible village core and essential services ○ There is a plan to ensure land uses and tenures to provide affordable housing ○ Healthy ecosystems and greenspace are valued and accessible ○ There is a plan for conserving energy and increasing renewable energy. ○ There is a plan to ensure neighbourhood food supply needs.
Community Process	Planning and Action	Leadership and Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The community has a comprehensive community plan ○ Citizens are involved in the creation and implementation of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The community assesses significant risks to its well being. ○ Leadership is intentionally cultivated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is a neighbourhood vision and goals. ○ Citizens are involved in planning and action around the goals

<p>community vision and goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is on-going action towards achieving the goals ○ There is regular evaluation of progress towards the community's goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local governments intentionally share power and seek consensus. ○ There is co-operation between levels of govern. ○ The community is aware of its relative position in the economy. ○ Citizens are involved in visioning and planning the community's future ○ There is co-operation and collaboration between organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is pro-active leadership recruitment and development ○ There is co-operation and collaboration between organizations ○ There is a sense of experimentation that contributes to a culture of continuous learning.
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Bay Localize Resilience Toolkit				
	Equity	Quality	Sustainability	Ownership
Food	Residents have enough to eat	Healthy, organic food is convenient & affordable	Local & regional food is grown sustainably	Our community has a strategy to ensure food supply
Water	Residents have enough water to meet basic needs	Our water is clean & safe	Our water comes from a local watershed & we conserve it	Our community owns our water rights & can guarantee access
Energy	Residents have enough energy to meet basic needs	Our energy supply is stable & consistent & can withstand disasters	Our community conserves energy & gets the rest from local renewable sources	Our community controls where our energy comes from & how it is distributed
Transportation & Housing	Those who wish to live in our community can find quality affordable housing near jobs & schools.	Neighborhoods have access to jobs, schools, open space, fresh produce, & key services via walking, biking, and public transit	Our transportation is powered by renewable energy sources	Our community has adequate political control over our transportation & housing systems to keep them affordable
Local jobs & Economy	Residents of our community have access to sufficient income to sustain a household	Our schools and training programs prepare students to secure or create work locally.	Our community's economy is based on sustainable use and re-use of our region's resources.	Our community has effective public strategies to secure local employment opportunities.
Social Services & Civic Preparedness	Neighbors in our community are well organized to help each other in times of need.	Our local government is adequately prepared for climate change, rising costs, and natural disasters.	Our local government services are funded from sources that are sustainable (as energy prices rise)	Our local government responds effectively to community needs

20 CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL

(Heartland – 1998 – one of the influences of our original version)

1.

Evidence of Community Pride:

Successful communities are often showplaces of care, attention, history and heritage.

2. Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:

People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.

3. Willingness to Invest in the Future:

In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.

4. Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:

Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.

5. Cooperative Community Spirit:

The stress is on working together toward a common goal, and the focus is on positive results.

6. Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:

Successful communities have learned how to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.

7. Awareness of Competitive Positioning:

Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.

8. Knowledge of the Physical Environment:

Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.

9. Active Economic Development Program:

There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.

10. Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders:

People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.

11. Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:

Women are elected officials, plant managers, and entrepreneurial developers.

12. Strong Belief in and Support for Education: Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.

13. Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care: Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.

14. Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation:

The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.

15. Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life:

Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.

16. Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:

Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.

17. Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:

Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.

18. Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:

Leaders access information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.

19. Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:

People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.

20. Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself:

Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.