



T O O L S F O R P R A C T I C E

MEASURING COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING

A Workbook-in-Progress for
Rural Communities

VERSION 3-96



The Aspen Institute
Rural Economic Policy Program

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What is this workbook?

Do you need this workbook?

This is a workbook for community leaders and citizens who want to:

- Improve the ability of individuals, organizations, businesses and government in their community to come together, learn, make well-reasoned decisions about the community's present and future, *and* work together to carry out those decisions—that is, to *build their community's capacity*.
- Find ways to set goals as they do this work, make sure they are actually moving toward these goals, and celebrate their progress.

What is in this workbook?

This workbook can be used by groups of citizens, working either alone or assistance, to help identify:

- What *is* community capacity building?
- Why should we care about community capacity building?
- How do we know community capacity building when we see it?
- How can we measure—and celebrate—our community's growing capacity as we build it?

Which communities need to build their capacity?

Every rural community that is trying to change its current condition starts from a different place, with different problems and different opportunities. For example:

- **FULL-TILT COMMUNITIES.** Some rural communities know exactly what they want—better jobs, growing businesses, a healthier environment, a new town hall, higher quality schools,

or simply for their children to have a real option to grow up and stay (employed) in the community. But they don't know enough—or disagree—about the best way to get there. Or the same few folks do all the work, and *they* are getting tired.

- **GRIDLOCK COMMUNITIES.** Other rural communities make no decisions over many years because of stubborn, divisive, long-standing fights between opposed “camps” over what to do—how land is being used, whether more “development” is the answer or the problem, who should make the decisions, and the like.
- **TROJAN HORSE COMMUNITIES.** Some rural communities that seem prosperous are actually threatened by too much change too quickly—or by the lack of change. Perhaps an avalanche of rich, newcomer, part-time residents suddenly have too much local influence. Or maybe the local “old guard” establishment refuses to identify or tap the potential talents and contributions of younger, low-income or minority residents in determining the community's future.
- **GHOST TOWN COMMUNITIES.** Still other rural communities have given up trying to do anything because too many jobs and people have left, local energy is sapped, and nobody seems to care.

No matter if your community is on this list or if you have some other situation that frustrates your ability to keep going, you have a community capacity problem. You can only benefit if you work to build your community's capacity.

Why is it important to measure community capacity building?

This is important because when citizens work together to improve their community, it may take a lot of groundwork before you see any *tangible* results from your decisions. A lot of the steps that your citizens and organizations might take to build capacity take time, and may seem “fuzzy” and intangible to you, to other citizens in the community—and to the outside world.

And unless you can *see* and *feel* progress, folks in your community—and the people outside whom you ask to support you—may give up.

We think that the best thing this workbook has to offer is a “menu” of actual measures that groups of citizens can choose from to gauge their progress as they build their community's capacity.

The menu of measures we offer here can help make your progress *real*. You'll be able to *see, count* and *feel* community capacity *building*, celebrate it, and, thus, gain more energy to keep your momentum going.

Where did this workbook come from?

This workbook was developed by more than a dozen people from across the nation. (Our names are listed in the back of this book.) Each of us earns our living by working with communities to help them build capacity. Since 1993, we have been meeting every six months as a Community Capacity-Building Learning Cluster.* We meet to learn from each other how to do our own work better, and to develop ideas for tools and other products that we think can help more communities help themselves build capacity.

What do you think?

This workbook is the first tool we have developed. We think of it as a work-in-progress and want to constantly improve it—based on the experience that you and others have with using it. We want to add measures, change the structure, and develop stories and exercises that can help you use it better.

Please help us do this by letting us know what works and what doesn't work in this guide—that is, how this workbook helped or hindered your efforts, and how it might be improved. The final section of this workbook—*Give Us Feedback*—details several ways to contact us. (Thanks.)

*The Community Capacity-Building Learning Cluster is a project funded by the Rural Economic Policy Program of The Aspen Institute and managed by the Small Town Capacity Initiative, which is a joint project of Aspen and the National Association of Towns and Townships.

Measuring community capacity building

What is community capacity building?*

People live in communities. But the real importance of “living in community” is that people—and groups of people—develop the ways and means to care for each other, to nurture the talents and leadership that enhance the quality of community life, and to tackle the problems that threaten the community and the opportunities that can help it.

When people do these things, communities become healthy; when they do not, communities deteriorate. Communities that have the ways and means to undertake challenges demonstrate “capacity.”

Without capacity, communities are merely collections of individuals acting without concern for the common good; they are without the necessary ingredients required to develop a healthier community. Communities without capacity really are not communities in any meaningful sense, but have given way to negative conditions like apathy, poverty or ineptitude. (*See “What does a “healthy” community look like?” on page 3 of this section.*)

So what is community capacity?

Community capacity is the combined influence of a community’s commitment, resources and skills that can be deployed to build on community strengths and address community problems and opportunities.

- **COMMITMENT** refers to the communitywide will to act, based on a shared awareness of problems, opportunities and workable solutions. It refers also to heightened support in key sectors of the community to address opportunities, solve problems and strengthen community responses.

*We want to gratefully acknowledge two excellent sources for much of the material in this section. To define community capacity building, we drew heavily from the fine Chapter One of *Building Community Capacity: The Potential of Community Foundations*, by Steven E. Mayer (Minneapolis: Rainbow Research, Inc. 1994). The Healthy/Unhealthy table in this section was developed by Bruce Adams, author of *Building Healthy Communities* (Charlottesville: Pew Partnership for Civic Change. 1995). Each is used and adapted with permission.

- **RESOURCES** refers to financial, natural and human assets and the means to deploy them intelligently and fairly. It also includes having the information or guidelines that will ensure the best use of these resources.
- **SKILLS** includes all the talents and expertise of individuals and organizations that can be marshaled to address problems, seize opportunities, and to add strength to existing and emerging institutions.

Communities and the groups and institutions within them vary tremendously in capacity. Capacity is gained in degrees, sometimes slowly, other times rapidly.

All communities and community groups, even those that seem the most broken down, have capacity in some measure and, we believe, are capable of developing more. They can increase their ability to build community, to grow with opportunities, and to confront threats to the community's health and vitality.

How is community capacity built?

The three essential ingredients of community capacity—commitment, resources, and skills—don't "just happen." Rather, they are developed through effort and will, initiative and leadership.

For example, effort, will, initiative, and leadership are needed to:

- involve and educate community members, help shape opinion, and galvanize commitment to act.
- attract and collect resources, compile information, and shape ways for deploying these resources to "catalyze" change in how problems are addressed and opportunities are seized.
- organize people and work, develop skills, and coordinate or manage a sustained effort that builds up the positive qualities of community life that enable a community to address its problems and recognize and act on its opportunities.

All kinds of community groups contribute to community capacity to some degree. Communities, and the groups and institutions within them, can intentionally and strategically work to develop their capacity.

WHAT DOES A “HEALTHY” COMMUNITY LOOK LIKE?

Another way to picture community capacity is to think about what a healthy community looks like. Most people think of a place’s physical beauty or their standard of living when they are asked “Is your community healthy?” In your mind, you might see a refurbished main street, a new river walk or a cleaned-up park; or you might think of some growing businesses, new stores, or a neighbor who just got a pay raise.

These are important signs. But they are signs of what happens *if—and after—*a healthy community makes good decisions. What are the signs that a community can do this? These signs are harder to picture.

To get to a common understanding of what it means to build a healthy community and what it means to undermine a healthy community, one civic activist recently painted another kind of picture, by making his own list of the contrasts between the attributes of a healthy and unhealthy community. 

Healthy	Unhealthy
optimism	cynicism
focus on unification	focus on division
“We’re in this together.”	“Not in my backyard!”
solving problems	solution wars
reconciliation	hold grudges
consensus building	polarization
broad public interests	narrow interests
interdependence	parochialism
collaboration	confrontation
win-win solutions	win-lose solutions
tolerance and respect	mean-spiritedness
trust	questioning motives
patience	frustration
politics of substance	politics of personality
empowered citizens	apathetic citizens
diversity	exclusion
citizenship	selfishness
challenge ideas	challenge people
problem-solvers	blockers & blamers
individual responsibility	me-first
listening	attacking
healers	dividers
community discussions	zinger one-liners
focus on future	redebate the past
sharing power	hoarding power
renewal	gridlock
“We can do it!”	“Nothing works.”

The challenge for a community group or institution struggling to gain more capacity is to develop its own commitment, resources and skills. The challenge for those outside that particular group—but wishing to help—is to create opportunities appropriate for that group that can help it grow in capacity.

Why should we care about community capacity building?

Several years back, Harry Martin, a leader of the Community Development Foundation in Tupelo, Mississippi—a town that sits at the heart of one of the best-known turnaround regions in the South—said it all. “Community development,” he declared, “must precede economic development.”

Those who know the Tupelo story know that when Harry used the words, “community development,” he was talking for the most part about what we have been calling community capacity building. In fact, for more than 50 years, Tupelo and its surrounding rural Lee County have purposefully sought and built a growing *commitment* from organizations, businesses and individuals to contribute to the community; have expanded, extended and leveraged the *resources* available to invest in the community; and have invested heavily in increasing the quantity and quality of *skill* of the region’s citizens devoted to the effort.

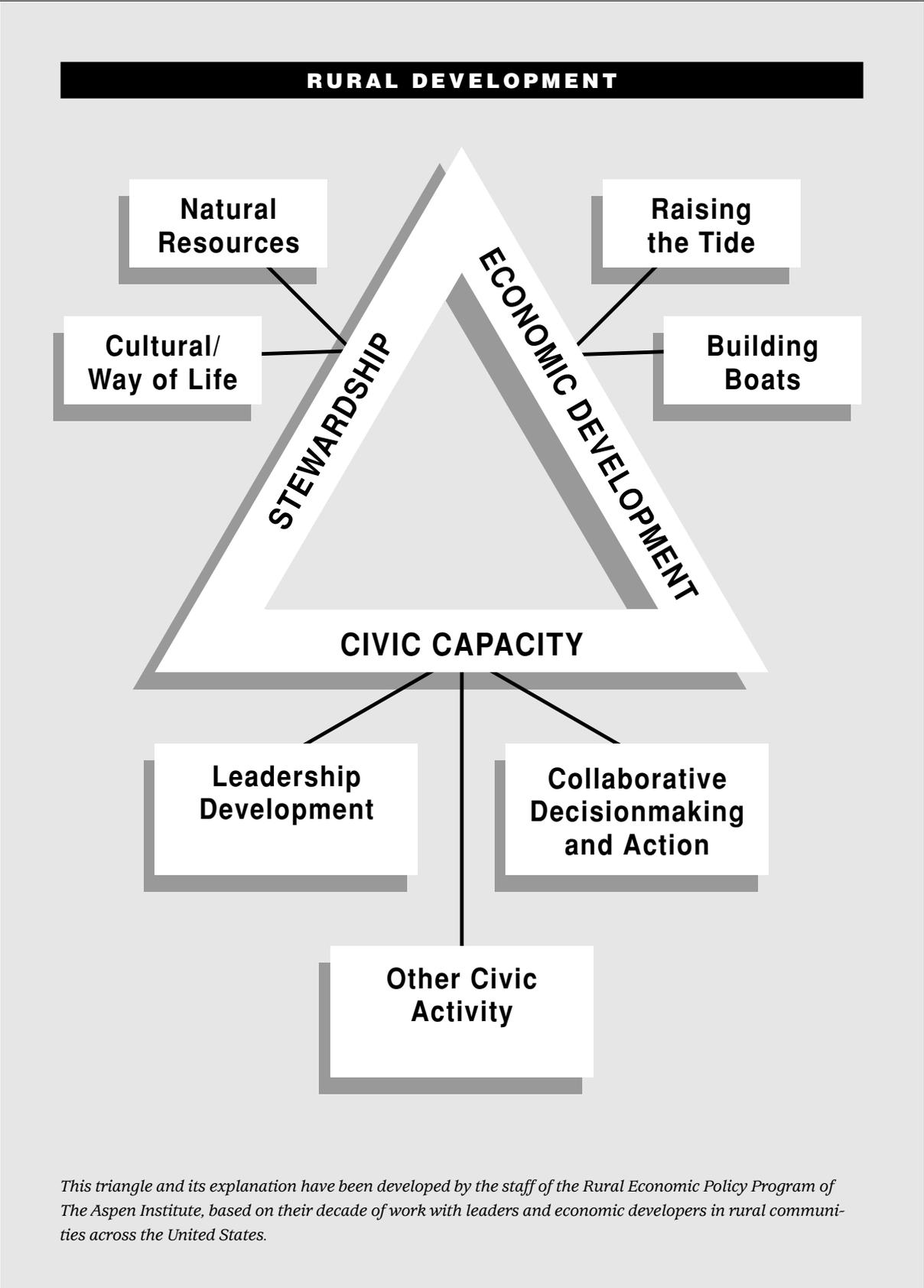
Harry’s basic point is that if Tupelo had not focused on building its community capacity, it would not have succeeded in building its economy. That, in short, is why it is worth caring about community capacity building.

The Rural Development Triangle

Actually, we think that capacity building forms the base for more than just economic development. Solid community capacity also offers a foundation for making good decisions about the stewardship of a region’s natural, human and cultural resources, so that its way of life can be maintained and improved over time.

The *Rural Development Triangle* pictured on the facing page shows these three important components of rural development, and how they relate to each other.

- **COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING.** As we will describe in even more detail in the next section, the purpose of community capacity building is to enable people in a community to work together, make well-considered and collaborative decisions, develop a vision and



strategy for the future, and act over time to make these real—all while tapping and building the individual skills and abilities of a ever-increasing quantity and diversity of participants and organizations within the community.

Community capacity building efforts can encompass a wide range of activities , from formal leadership development efforts to community-wide strategic planning to a wide variety of less formal activities that build trust and camaraderie among citizens—like church socials, girl and boy scouts, volunteer community clean-ups, or regular chamber of commerce breakfasts.

Community capacity building forms the base of the Rural Development Triangle because the better a community’s capacity, the better the decisions a community makes about its economic development or stewardship choices—and the better the community is at turning those decisions into effective action.

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.** Too often, people think that “rural development” means *nothing but* “economic development.” This misguided thinking drives the traditional view about how to build rural economies that has dominated the last half century: Rely on the ready availability of natural resources, low labor costs, and lax taxes and regulations to recruit businesses to rural areas. This approach has helped some rural areas, if only temporarily, but has left others scarred economically, socially and environmentally.

In recent years, as the economy has gone global, as the methods and technology of work have changed, and as natural resources have become more scarce and more highly prized as contributors to our quality of life, new choices for rural development have emerged. They center on growing entrepreneurs *from within* the community. They base business development strategy on the existing *core competencies* of resident people and firms—in other words, trying to take advantage of and strengthen what they are already good at. And they focus on finding and pursuing the market opportunities—that is, places to sell their existing products and skills, new ways to sell them, *and* ideas for developing new products and skills—that complement these core competencies.

- **STEWARDSHIP.** A community must steward its natural resources and way of life—and nurture its culture and people—if development is to be maintained at a healthy and sustainable level over time.

Economic development typically produces growth. Growth, however, is not always good. Sometimes it can cure what ails you; when children grow taller and stronger, they feel they can do new and better things. Other times, growth can just make a bad situation worse, like when we become overweight. For many communities, as for most people, there is a

“right size” beyond which growth will take over the way of life, deplete resources and change the standard of living of many residents—some for the better, some for the worse.

In short, economic development and stewardship are somewhat in tension, and a community that focuses on either extreme—growth at any cost versus a knee-jerk resistance to any change—will not serve residents well.

Community stewardship is made possible when rural citizens acknowledge the value of their resources and engage in civic dialogue to determine, as a community, how and which resources should be developed or preserved. Typically, dialogue and action comes when it is far too late, when unplanned development has destroyed the amenities that residents most appreciate, often the very natural and cultural resources that have the most value for the community’s long-term viability and vitality.

In general, we are coming to believe that rural leaders and communities must attend to each side of the Rural Development Triangle if they wish to achieve healthy, sustainable development, and that there is an advantage to addressing the three areas simultaneously. Nonetheless, paying attention to the base—that is, community capacity building—can only strengthen a community’s future economic development and stewardship efforts.

How do we know community capacity building when we see it?

Now we get to the main questions this workbook is meant to help answer: If community capacity building is so important,

- How do we know it when we see it?
- How can we measure our progress in capacity building?

Over the past two years, the group of people in the Community Capacity-Building Learning Cluster (we mentioned this group on page 3 of the *Preface*, and our names are listed at the back of this workbook) have been learning from each other and from experts about how to measure things like capacity building—things that seem “soft and fuzzy” and unmeasurable when you talk about them, but which really are quite important.

Measuring a community’s capacity is sort of like trying to measure a person’s “quality of life”—it can be very intangible, and very subjective. Some busy, rich and famous people may

have all the money and creature comforts you could want, but they are desperately unhappy because they really just want privacy or free time to spend with their loved ones. Their quality of life is poor. On the other hand, some subsistence farmers may enjoy a high quality of life despite the fact that they live on the economic edge, because they are doing what they most care about—living off the land.

Nonetheless, there *are* ways to measure quality of life. For example, no one truly likes to be in poor health, and we can gauge a person’s health in many ways. And most people like to have the opportunity and resources to pursue their interests; we can also measure this if we work at it carefully. So there *are* ways to measure quality of life. The same is true for community capacity building.

Measuring community capacity building: A basic vocabulary

We have learned a basic vocabulary and set of ideas that can help us measure capacity building—as well as many other things. We think it helps to start by defining our three simple measurement concepts. We have organized the rest of this workbook around these three measurement concepts or tools—*outcomes*, *indicators* and *measures*:

■ **OUTCOME**

An *outcome* is a major change—in the lives of people, their organizations and/or their community—which proves that community capacity building is happening. It is a difference for which people who are trying to build their community’s capacity are willing take responsibility.

For an example of an outcome, let’s use *quality of life* again. If you are trying to measure quality of life, one possible outcome would be *good health*.

► *IN THIS WORKBOOK:* We have come up with eight outcomes that, taken together, make up community capacity building. You will find a diagram of these eight outcomes on 13 of this section. This workbook will offer you options on how you can measure these eight outcomes—all of them, or only the ones your community cares about.

■ **INDICATOR**

An indicator is an actual activity or capacity that you can measure or assess in some way that shows that an outcome is being achieved. You can think of an indicator as one step

you must take—or one condition you must have in good order—if you want to claim that an outcome has been attained.

Let's push our earlier example: One indicator of *good health* could be *weight*.

► *IN THIS WORKBOOK: We have identified a varying number of indicators for each of the eight outcomes of community capacity building. Sometimes there are one or two tiers of subindicators as well. You will find all the indicators and subindicators pictured in the diagrams and listed in the eight individual sections—one for each outcome—that follow.*

■ MEASURE

A measure is the actual bean-counting, or some kind of analysis you must do in order to measure an indicator. A measure should always start with words like “Number of,” “Presence of,” “Quality of”—something that signals that you have counted or evaluated what you are measuring.

To complete our example, here are a few ideas about how you could measure a person's *weight* to determine whether or not they are in *good health*: number of pounds you weigh, percent gain in pounds in the last 12 months, number of pounds over or under the average weight for your height.

► *IN THIS WORKBOOK: In each of the eight outcome sections that follow, we offer you lists of possible measures for each indicator and subindicator of each of the eight outcomes. Some of these measures merely require you to count things; others may require more effort, like judging the quality of some service you receive, or doing a bit of research by looking some facts up.*

*We have also left spaces for you to come up with your own ideas for measures. But please share them with us so that we may add them to future editions of this workbook! You'll find a **GIVE US FEEDBACK** section at the end of the workbook that makes it easy to do just that.*

So how do we know community capacity building when we see it?

The bottom line for community capacity building is its outcomes. The work we do when we try to build our community's capacity, we believe, happens when we are succeeding at helping our community get better at one or more of these eight outcomes. *Turn the page, then, to see what the outcomes of community capacity building are.*

How can this workbook help us measure community capacity building?

How are the outcome sections organized?

In this workbook, there are eight workbook sections, one for each of the eight outcomes of community capacity building. (See facing page for a list of all eight outcomes on one page). Each is organized in the same way, as follows:

- **PAGE 1: THE OUTCOME PAGE.** This page shows the outcome in a black rectangle, and offers a one- or two-sentence explanation about why it is important to community capacity building. If you care about that outcome, continue through the section.
- **PAGE 2: THE INDICATORS PAGE.** This page shows the indicators for each outcome in an oval. If you care about any or all of these indicators, continue through the section.
- **PAGE 3+: THE SUBINDICATORS PAGE(S).** These pages show subindicators—which are just indicators broken down into bite-size pieces—in diamonds. If there is another level of sub-indicators, they get their own page, where they are shown in a white rectangle. If you care about any or all of these subindicators, continue through the section.
- **THE OUTCOME SUMMARY PAGE.** This page shows you the entire map for the outcome. At the bottom, in a black square called *Measures*, it shows you exactly what page to turn to to find potential measures for any of the things you care about.
- **THE MEASURES PAGES.** Immediately following the Outcome Summary Page are pages of measures that you can use for that outcome. The measures are all organized by indicator and subindicator.
- **WORK PAGES.** Finally, each section has a set of lined workpages which you can use to list the outcomes, indicators and measures your community cares about and plans to track over time. *{Note to Version 3/96 users: These pages will be added in future versions.}*

What types of measures are listed?

Each measure is preceded by a symbol or icon that tells you something about what kind of measure it is, and what you must do to collect it.

- ☑ This is a *yes/no* question—either you have it or you don't.

Community capacity building: Eight outcomes

OUTCOME 1

Expanding, diverse, inclusive citizen participation



In a community where capacity is being built, an ever-increasing number of people participate in all types of activities and decisions. These folks include all the different parts of the community and also represent its diversity.

OUTCOME 2

Expanding leadership base



Community leaders that bring new people into decision-making are building community capacity. But the chance to get skills and to practice and learn leadership are also important parts of the leadership base.

OUTCOME 3

Strengthened individual skills



A community that uses all kinds of resources to create opportunities for individual skill development is building community capacity in an important way. As individuals develop new skills and expertise, the level of volunteer service is raised.

OUTCOME 4

Widely shared understanding and vision



Creating a vision of the best community future is an important part of planning. But in community capacity building, the emphasis is on how widely that vision is shared. Getting to agreement on that vision is a process that builds community capacity.

OUTCOME 5

Strategic community agenda



When clubs and organizations consider changes that might come in the future and plan together, the result is a strategic community agenda. Having a response to the future already thought through communitywide is one way to understand and manage change.

OUTCOME 6

Consistent, tangible progress toward goals



A community with capacity turns plans into results. Whether it's using benchmarks to gauge progress or setting milestones to mark accomplishments, the momentum and bias for action come through as a community gets things done.

OUTCOME 7

More effective community organizations and institutions



All types of civic clubs and traditional institutions—such as churches, schools and newspapers—are the mainstay of community capacity building. If clubs and institutions are run well and efficiently, the community will be stronger.

OUTCOME 8

Better resource utilization by the community



Ideally, the community should select and use resources in the same way a smart consumer will make a purchase. Communities that balance local self-reliance with the use of outside resources can face the future with confidence.

- #** This is a *number*, something that can be counted and/or calculated by people in the community, or some data that can be found with a little bit of digging.
- %** This is a *percent* that you must calculate, based on some numbers (#) measure.
- ☰** This usually refers to a *range*—or a listing of the breadth or types of a particular activity in a community. It may require you to do some digging, some brainstorming, and possibly to ask questions of people in your community to make sure your information is accurate and complete.
- 📈** This is a rating or *quality* measure. It asks to grade whether the quality or extent of some service or activity in the community is high, medium or low.
- “** This is an *opinion* measure. It is information you can get from a survey, a poll, or some kind of feedback activity.
- ?** This is a *blank* line for you to fill in with your own ideas for measures.

Warning: Don't overdo!

The important thing to remember is that the measures we offer here—and there are lots of them!—are only a *menu* from which *you can choose*. You do not have to measure everything suggested; it would be quite ambitious, might take too much community time, and besides, your community probably doesn't need to work on every outcome, or every outcome right away.

Instead, it's probably wise to remember the old overeater's adage—*My eyes were bigger than my stomach!*—when you approach this measurement effort. You need only pick the outcomes you care about making progress on, the indicators and subindicators you care about, and the measures you care about as a community.

We offer as comprehensive a menu of measures as we can because, just as in a restaurant, we want to make sure there is something for everybody. We also want to pique your interest and imagination to try some measurement experimentation of your own.

Seven steps for getting started

So, how might a group of people in a community use this workbook to help them begin to measure—and build—capacity?

There are a lot of good methods for using materials like this with a group. Some groups can come up with their own schemes and exercises. Others benefit when they ask an outsider who is good at designing group activities to help them.

Rather than offer you a whole slew of exercises, we thought it best to start you off with some basic steps on how you might go forward to use this workbook material. You can change or adapt them to get them as simple or sophisticated as you wish.

■ **STEP 1: FORM A GROUP**

Get together with some like-minded citizens who are interested in the capacity of your community. This group may be made up of both paid staff and volunteers, but the important thing is that everyone is interested in how to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the community. A group of about a dozen is recommended to start: smaller groups may have problems if anyone drops out, and a larger group may make it difficult for everyone to be heard.

■ **STEP 2: TALK ABOUT THE WORKBOOK MATERIALS**

Whoever brings the group together might also take the responsibility for beginning the discussion of community capacity. Using the same organization as this workbook, the group can discuss:

- *What is community capacity building?* A 10-15 minute review of workbook materials might be useful here.
- *Why should we care about it?* This is a great place to talk about your community's future.
- *How do we know capacity building when we see it?* A brainstorming session on the community's strengths and weaknesses or healthy vs. unhealthy descriptions from the workbook would work well here.
- *How can we measure our community's growing capacity as we build it?* Take a look at the Eight Outcomes.

■ **STEP 3: PICK YOUR PRIORITIES**

Agree on which of the eight Outcomes is most important to your community right now. One very simple technique for getting the group to select priorities is to list the eight Outcomes on a flip chart, make sure everyone understands each one, then give each per-

son five self-stick dots to use in selecting her/his choices. Each person goes to the newsprint and selects priorities and when the group is done, those Outcomes with the greatest number of dots become the first Outcomes to focus on.

■ **STEP 4: ORGANIZE INTO SUBGROUPS**

Your group can be divided into subgroups to take a look at Indicators, Subindicators and Measures. For example, if a group of 12 decides to focus on three Outcomes, then three subgroups might form to take a look at Indicators and Measures.

■ **STEP 5: IDENTIFY INFORMATION SOURCES**

Each subgroup may want to talk together and research information sources for their Indicators and Measures. For example, if a subgroup needs information about community clubs and organizations, a community directory or telephone book might be a good source. If the subgroup can talk through the Indicators and Measures together, it makes individual research much easier.

■ **STEP 6: CREATE A TIMELINE TOGETHER**

The entire group should discuss the time needed to collect information and agree on a timeline. If six months will be needed to get all the measurements done for several Outcomes, then the group might want to meet regularly for while just to keep in touch and make sure everyone is accountable for assignments.

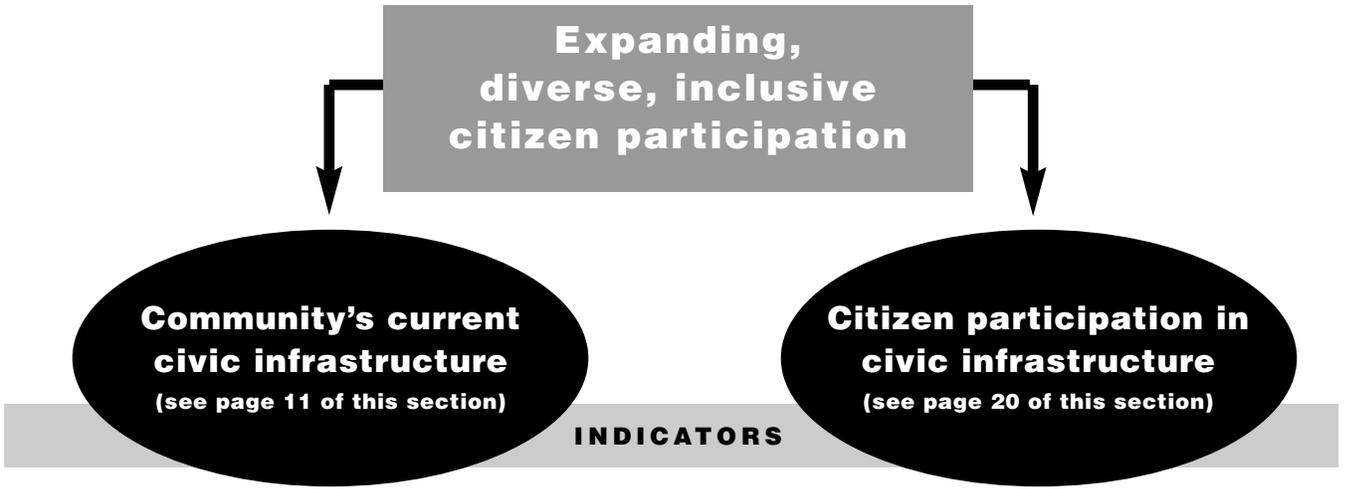
■ **STEP 7: CONSIDER PUBLICITY OPPORTUNITIES**

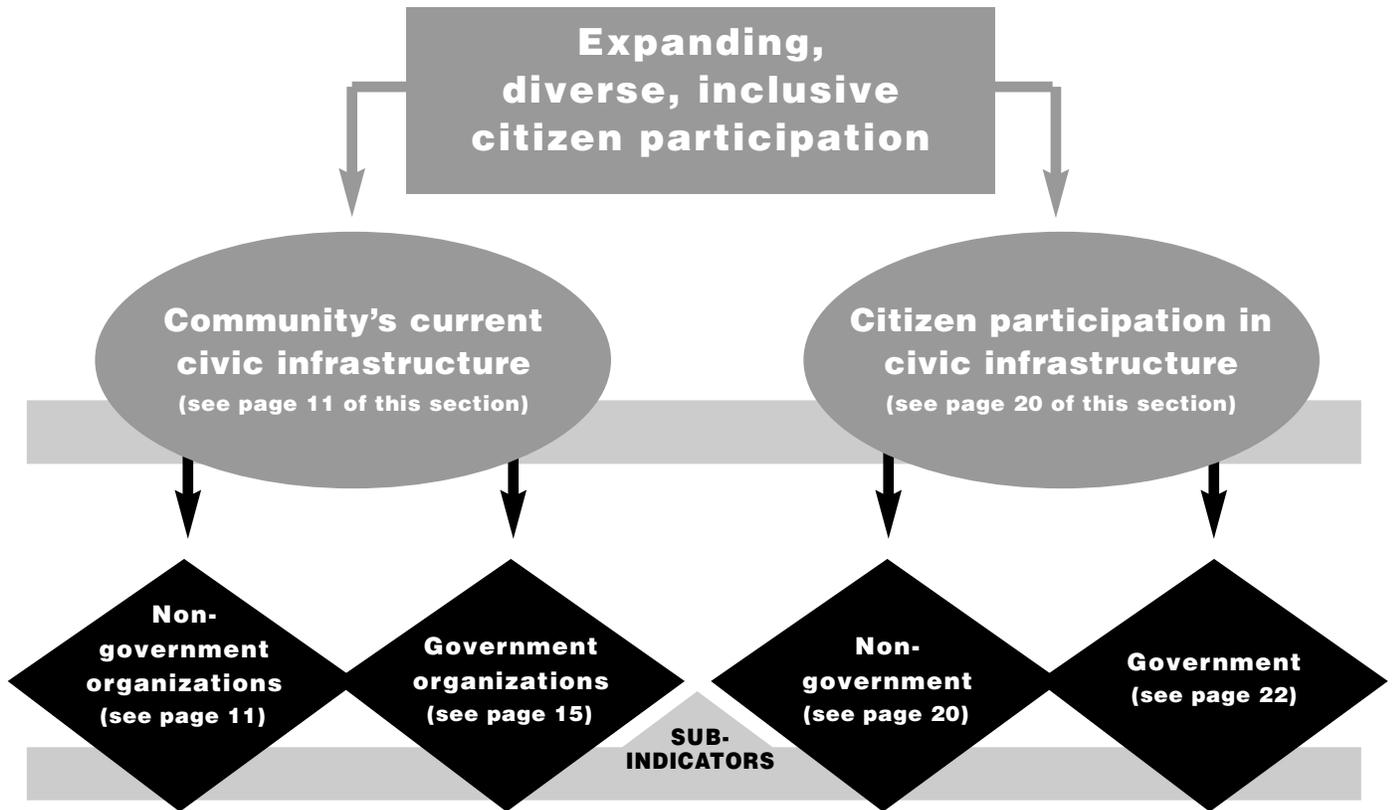
The process of selecting Outcomes and moving forward to measuring community capacities is an important undertaking and one that might be very interesting to local media. Take some time to talk together as a group about opportunities to make the process visible to the entire community, recruit help and make the most of publicity.

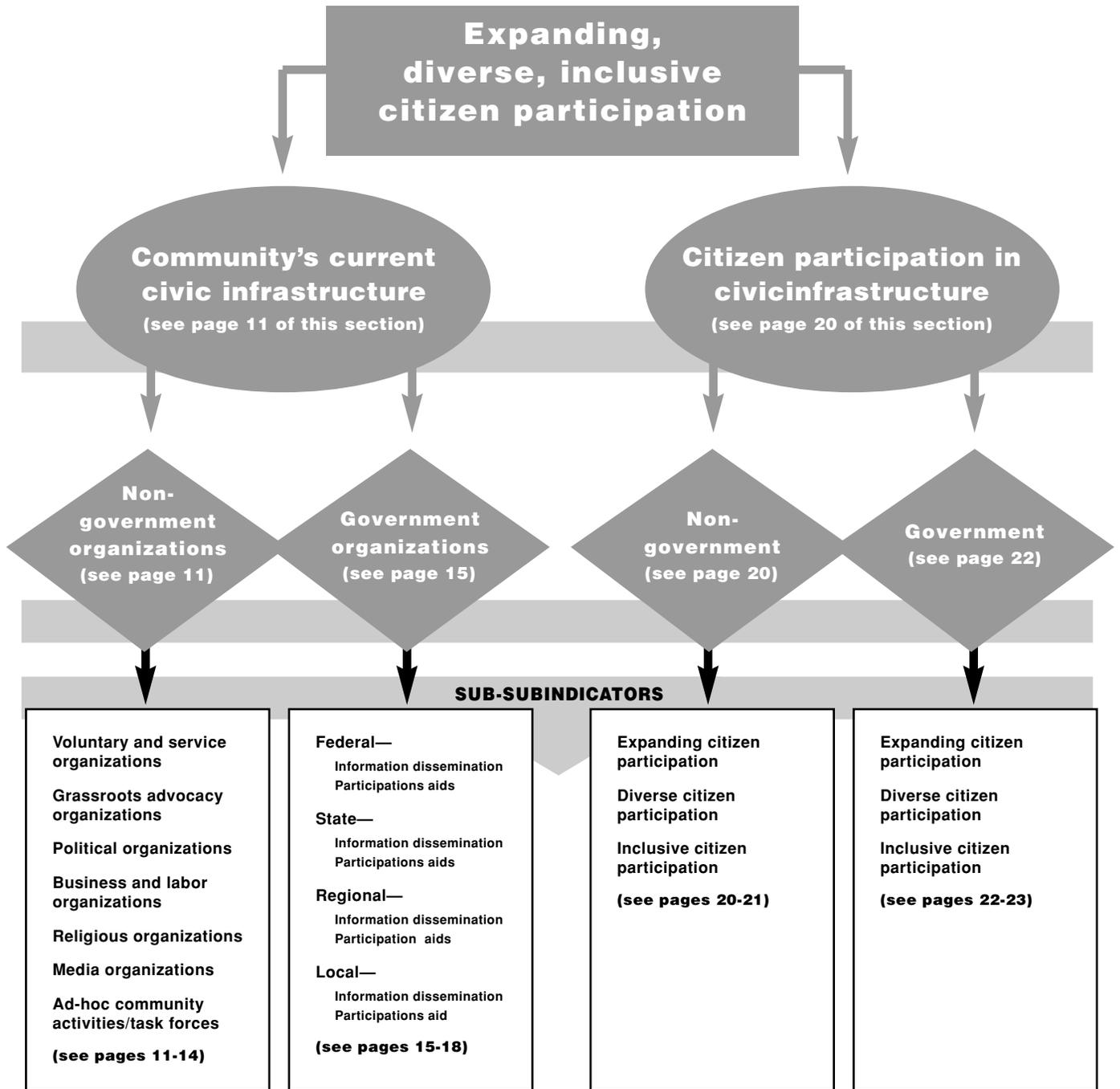
**Expanding,
diverse, inclusive
citizen participation**

In a community
where capacity is being built,
an ever-increasing number of
people participate in all types of
activities and decisions.

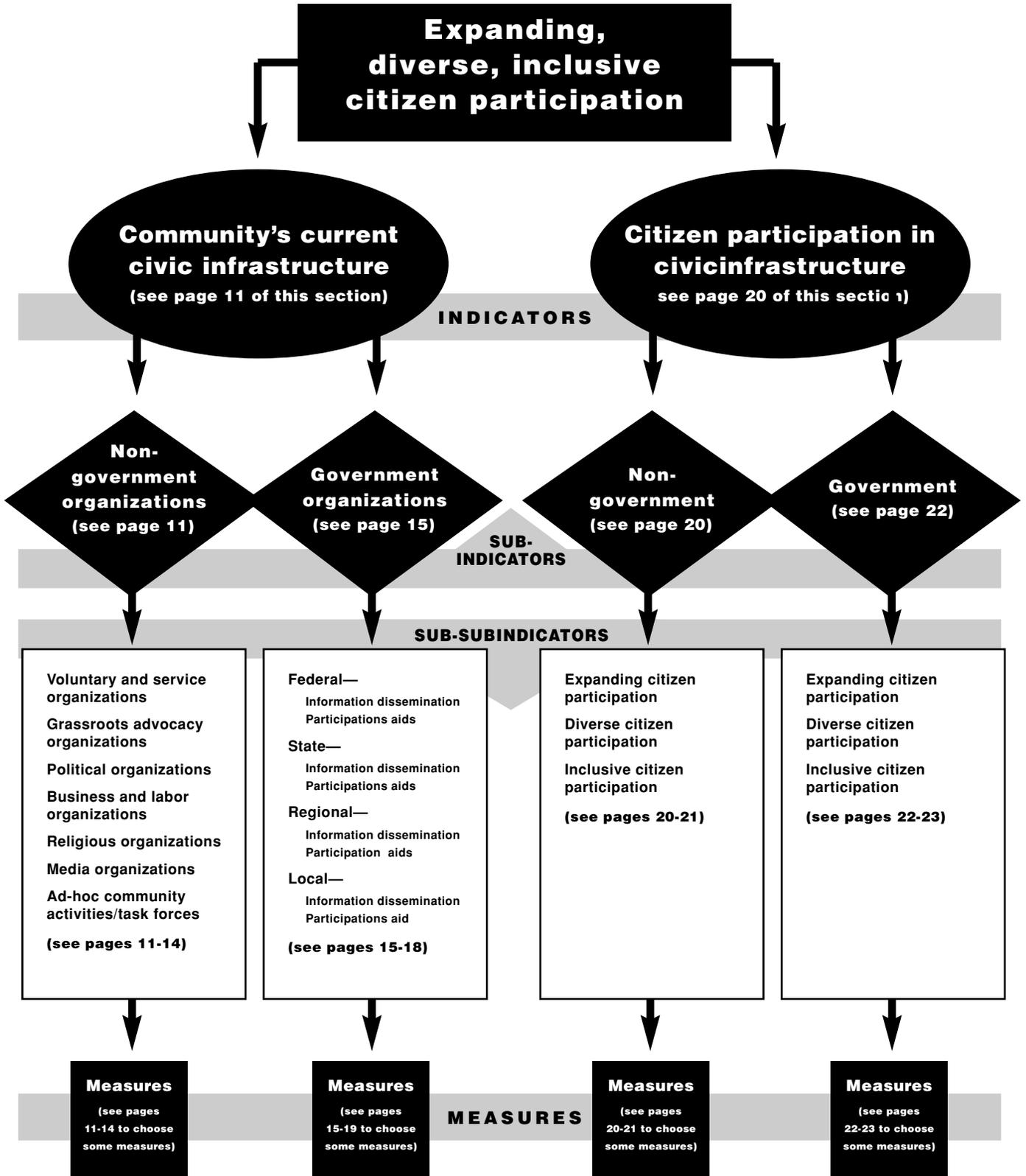
These folks include all the
different parts of the community
and also represent its diversity.







SUMMARY: OUTCOME 1



OUTCOME

Expanding diverse, inclusive citizen participation

INDICATOR

Community's current civic infrastructure



Nongovernment organizations

Voluntary and service organizations

-  number of organizations
-  range of purposes they serve
-  how well the range of purposes meets the community's needs and opportunities
-  number linked to regional, state, national organizations
-  number that participate in regional, state, national programs
-  number that participate in local events/programs
-  number that do/don't cosponsor local events/programs (e.g., "welcome wagon," volunteer clearinghouse, festivals, awards)
-  _____
-  _____

Grassroots advocacy organizations

-  number of organizations
-  range of purposes they serve
-  how well the range of purposes meets the community's needs and opportunities
-  number linked to regional, state, national organizations

 number that participate in regional, state, national programs

 number that participate in local events/programs

 number that do/don't cosponsor local events/programs (e.g., "welcome wagon," volunteer clearinghouse, festivals, awards)

 _____

 _____

Political organizations

 number of organizations

 range of purposes they serve

 how well the range of purposes meets the community's needs and opportunities

 number linked to regional, state, national organizations

 number that participate in regional, state, national programs

 number that participate in local events/programs

 number that do/don't cosponsor local events/programs (e.g., "welcome wagon," volunteer clearinghouse, festivals, awards)

 _____

 _____

Business and labor organizations

 number of organizations

 range of purposes they serve

 how well the range of purposes meets the community's needs and opportunities

 number linked to regional, state, national organizations

 number that participate in regional, state, national programs

 number that participate in local events/programs

 number that do/don't cosponsor local events/programs (e.g., "welcome wagon," volunteer clearinghouse, festivals, awards)

 _____

 _____

Religious organizations

 number of organizations/congregations

 number of religious affiliations they cover

 how well range of affiliations compare to population's religious affiliation

 range of ministries they offer

 how well the range of ministries meets the community's needs and opportunities

 number linked to regional, state, national organizations

 number that participate in regional, state, national programs

 number that participate in local events/programs

 number that do/don't cosponsor local events/programs

 _____

 _____

Media organizations

 number of organizations

 range of media-type they cover (newspaper, radio, local TV, cable)

 how well the range of purposes meets the community's needs and opportunities

 number linked to regional, state, national organizations/networks

 number that participate in local events/programs

 number that do/don't cosponsor local events/programs

 _____

 _____

Ad-hoc community activities/task forces

 number

 range of purposes they serve

 how well the range of purposes meets the community's needs and opportunities

 number linked to regional, state, national organizations

 number that participate in regional, state, national programs

 number that participate in local events/programs

 number that do/don't cosponsor local events/programs

 _____

 _____



Government organizations



Federal

Information dissemination

- # number of federal agencies with office in community
- # number of federal agencies that distribute newsletters to the community
- # number of media stories/mentions concerning federal government presence in or impact on community
- cable TV broadcast of federal forums/meetings
- # number of appearances/speeches by federal officials in community
- # number of local organizations that regularly involve federal officials in activities
- advance notice of federal meetings/events provided through various media
- meeting agendas available through various media
- ? _____
- ? _____

Participation aids

- translation/accessibility services provided
- 1-800 phone lines available
- ombudsman service available
- sufficient and convenient evening office hours

- meetings held at night
- number of “meet the public” events held by federal officials/agencies
- facilitators used at meetings
- time allotted for public comment at meetings
- alternative meeting formats used (rather than just “talking heads”)
- _____
- _____

State

Information dissemination

- number of state agencies with office in community
- number of state agencies that distribute newsletters to the community
- number of media stories/mentions concerning state government presence in or impact on community
- cable TV broadcast of state forums/meetings
- number of appearances/speeches by state officials in community
- number of local organizations that regularly involve state officials in activities
- advance notice of state meetings/events provided through various media
- meeting agendas available through various media
- _____
- _____

Participation aids

- translation/accessibility services provided
- 1-800 phone lines available
- ombudsman service available
- sufficient and convenient evening office hours
- meetings held at night
- # number of “meet the public” events held by state officials/agencies
- facilitators used at meetings
- time allotted for public comment at meetings
- alternative meeting formats used (rather than just “talking heads”)
- ? _____
- ? _____

Regional

Information dissemination

- # number of regional agencies with office in community
- # number of regional agencies that distribute newsletters to the community
- # number of media stories/mentions concerning regional government presence in or impact on community
- cable TV broadcast of regional forums/meetings
- # number of appearances/speeches by regional officials in community

- #** number of local organizations that regularly involve regional officials in activities
- advance notice of regional meetings/events provided through various media
- meeting agendas available through various media
- ?** _____
- ?** _____

Participation aids

- translation/accessibility services provided
- 1-800 phone lines available
- ombudsman service available
- sufficient and convenient evening office hours
- meetings held at night
- #** number of “meet the public” events held by regional officials/agencies
- facilitators used at meetings
- time allotted for public comment at meetings
- alternative meeting formats used (rather than just “talking heads”)
- ?** _____
- ?** _____

Local

Information dissemination

- #** number of local agencies that distribute newsletters to the community

- #** number of media stories/mentions concerning local government presence in or impact on community
- ✓** cable TV broadcast of local forums/meetings
- #** number of appearances/speeches by local officials in community
- #** number of local organizations that regularly involve local officials in activities
- ✓** advance notice of local meetings/events provided through various media
- ✓** meeting agendas available through various media
- ?** _____
- ?** _____

Participation aids

- ✓** translation/accessibility services provided
- ✓** local telephone help lines available
- ✓** ombudsman service available
- ✓** sufficient and convenient evening office hours
- ✓** meetings held at night
- #** number of “meet the public” events held by regional officials/agencies
- ✓** facilitators used at meetings
- ✓** time allotted for public comment at meetings
- ✓** alternative meeting formats used (rather than just “talking heads”)
- ?** _____
- ?** _____

INDICATOR

Citizen participation in civic infrastructure



Nongovernment

Expanding citizen participation

For individual organizations in the Community Civic Infrastructure (See Indicator A):

- # number of regular members/participants
- # number of people who attend organization activities
- # number of members of each organization that attend regional, state, national events
- # number who volunteer for organization projects
- # number of volunteer hours donated
- # average number of hours donated per person
- # number of people who donate money to organization
- # amount of money or in-kind contributions they donate
- # average contribution per person
- % ratio of the new members/participants to old members/participants
- ? _____
- ? _____

Diverse citizen participation

For individual organizations in the Community Civic Infrastructure (See Indicator A):

- % percent breakdown of participants by diversity category:

- race/ethnicity
- religion
- age
- length of residency
- neighborhood
- gender
- occupation/education/income

 comparison of diversity of organization participation to the community's diversity

 percent change (over time) in participation by diversity categories

 _____

 _____

Inclusive citizen participation

For individual organizations in the Community Civic Infrastructure (See Indicator A):

 participants' perception of who really makes the decisions

 degree to which are alternative options publicly considered

 number of activities offered to help new members

 range of new member services offered

 number of mentoring activities offered

 range of mentoring services offered

 _____

 _____



Government

Expanding citizen participation

-  number of registered voters
-  percent of registered voter who vote
-  proportion of elections that have a full ballot
-  percent of election slots that have more than one candidate per office
-  number of citizens who use (specific) government service(s)
-  proportion of citizens use who use (specific) government service(s)
-  number of people who attend public meetings
-  number of first-time attendees
-  number of petitions circulated in community
-  number of signatures collected on petitions
-  _____
-  _____

Diverse citizen participation

For individual government agency in the Community Civic Infrastructure (See Indicator A):

-  percent breakdown of service users/event participants by diversity category:
 -  race/ethnicity
 -  religion
 -  age
 -  length of residency

- neighborhood
- gender
- occupation/education/income

 comparison of diversity of use/participation to the community's diversity

 percent change (over time) in participation by diversity categories

 _____

 _____

Inclusive citizen participation

*For individual government agency in the Community Civic Infrastructure
(See Indicator A):*

 participants' perception of who really makes the decisions

 degree to which are alternative options publicly considered

 number of activities offered to help new participants/users

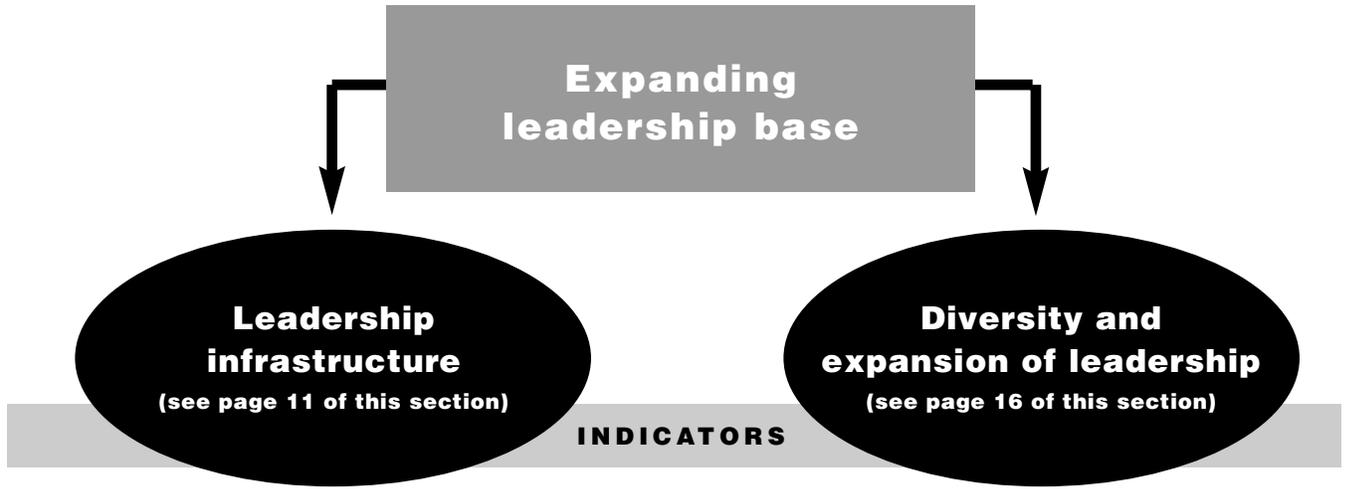
 range of new participant/user services offered

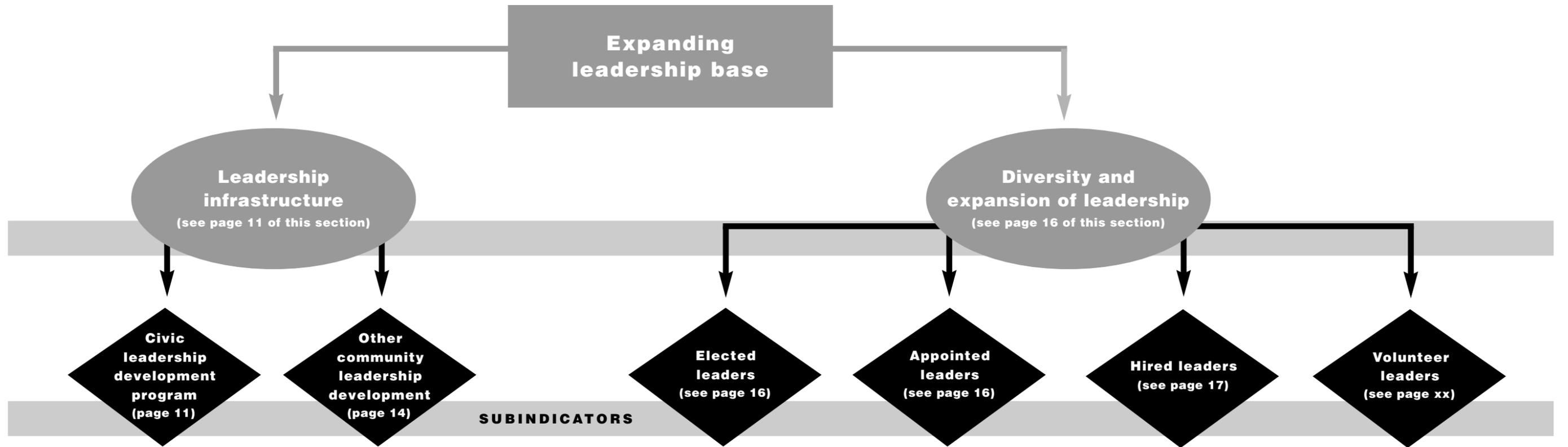
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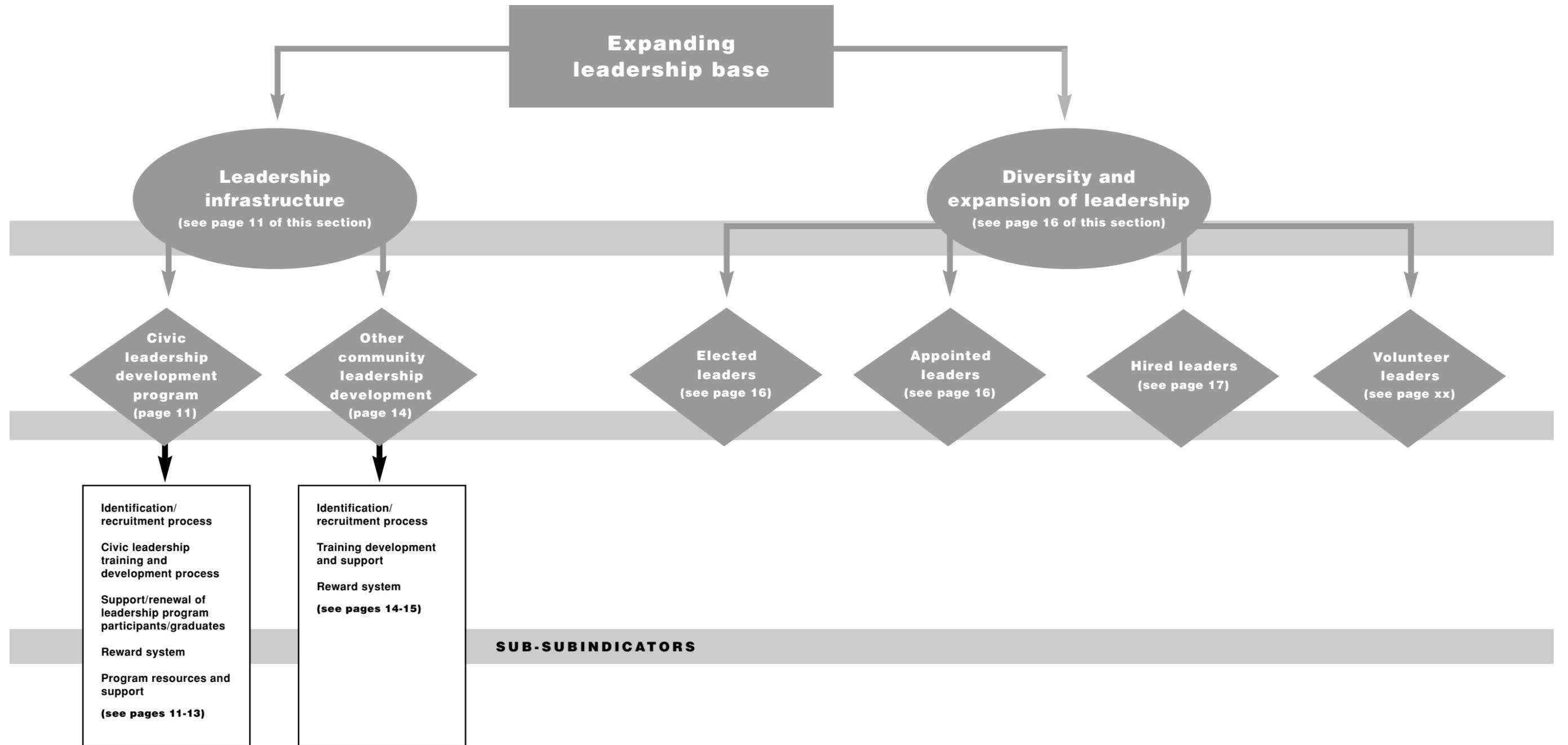
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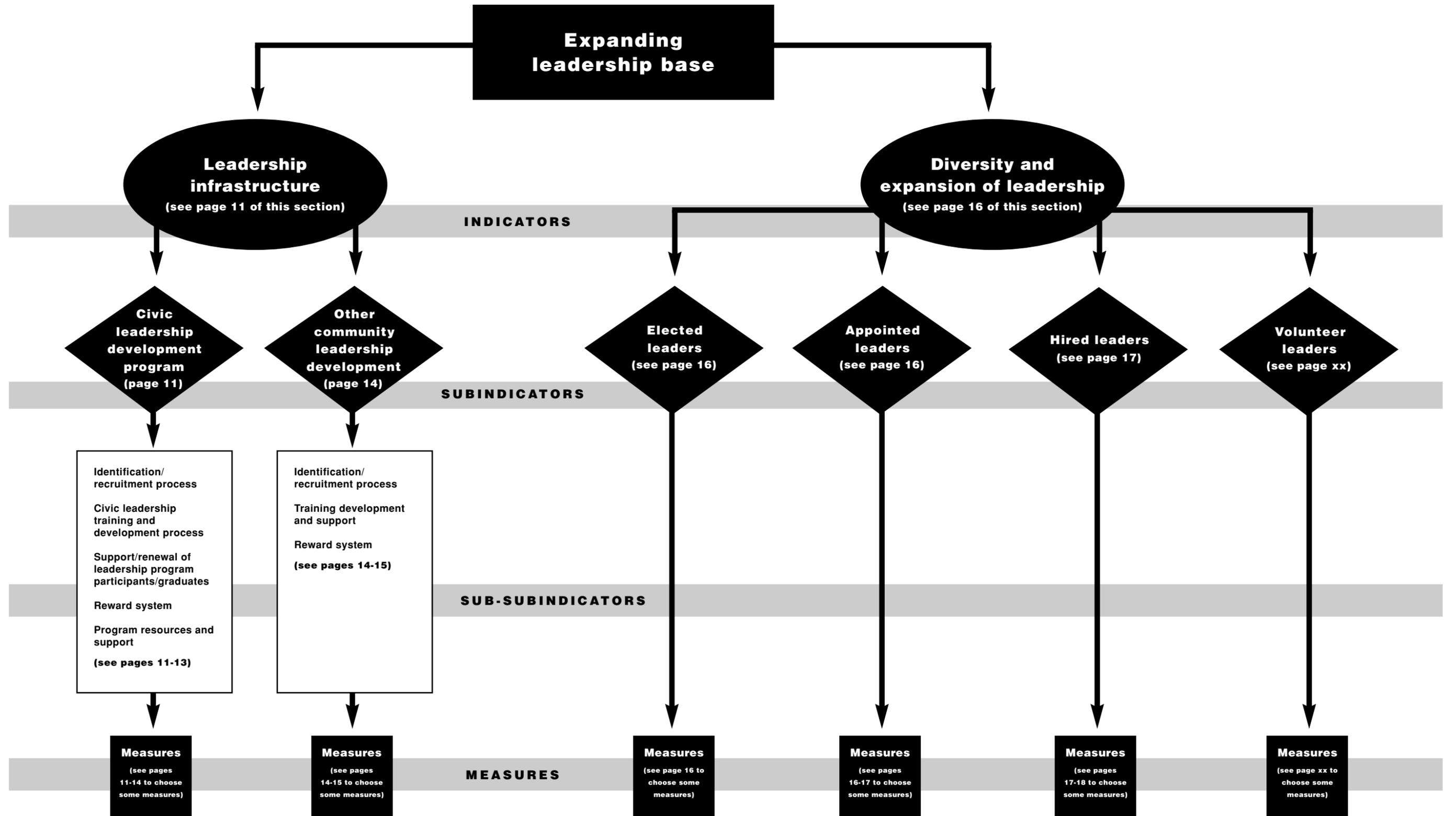
**Expanding
leadership base**

Community leaders that bring new people into decision-making are building community capacity. But the chance to get skills and to practice and learn leadership are also important parts of the leadership base.









OUTCOME

Expanding leadership base

INDICATOR

Leadership infrastructure



Civic leadership development program

For communities that have one or more formal community leadership development programs:

Identification/recruitment process

For community as a whole:



percent breakdown of leaders by diversity category:

- race/ethnicity
- religion
- age
- length of residency
- neighborhood
- gender



comparison of the diversity of leadership to the community's diversity



recruitment is targeted at underrepresented groups



number of leadership recruitment activities targeted to underrepresented groups



sensitivity/fit of recruitment activities targeted at underrepresented groups (e.g., recruitment materials well written, mailings lists/promotion reaches target audience)



number of leadership training scholarships available for underrepresented groups



amount (\$) of scholarship assistance available



amount (\$) of child care assistance available for potential trainees

number of times local, regional, state, national leadership opportunities are publicized

number of times local, regional, state, national leadership development opportunities are publicized?

? _____

? _____

Civic leadership training and development process

curriculum includes skill-building

curriculum includes community information

curriculum includes mentoring

number of citizens who graduate from the program

number of program graduates who serve as resources to the program

participants formally evaluate the program

evaluation information is used to improve the program

? _____

? _____

Support/renewal of leadership program participants/graduates

number of employers that give time off to program participants

number of employers or organizations that pay participant program fees or fund scholarships

community has a formal leadership mentoring system

number of mentoring relationships that continue after graduation

number of program alumni gatherings held

number of refresher courses/advanced skill training opportunities offered to graduates

number of people who participate in refresher/advanced training

? _____

? _____

Reward system

leadership program has a graduation ceremony (with certificates?)

number of graduates publicly recognized by their employer or organization

% percent of graduates who serve as community leaders within two years of graduation

alumni directory is published and distributed

number of media stories that highlight program participants

? _____

? _____

Program resources and support

amount (\$ and in-kind) of community support for program

% percent of leadership program budget funded by the community (not participants)

number of community organizations that help fund the program

 number of graduates who contribute to the program

 amount (\$ and in-kind) contributed by graduates

 program has a local advisory governing board?

 _____

 _____



Other community leadership development activities

Identification/recruitment process

 public nomination/application process is used for vacancies on public boards, commissions, etc.

 open nomination/application process is used for vacancies in community organization offices

 number of times open office is publicized

 range of media used to publicize an open office

 public discussion about the characteristics sought for public board, commission, leaders

 public discussion about the characteristics sought for community organization officers

 number of community organizations use a president-elect system (training one year's vice president to be the subsequent year's president)

 _____

 _____

Training development and support

- #** number of training and education opportunities related to community issues
- #** number of training and education opportunities related to new leadership skills
- #** number of people who participate in these training and education opportunities
- #** number of employers/community organizations that pay participant expenses for conferences and training
- ?** _____
- ?** _____

Reward system

- #** number of community-wide leadership recognition/award programs
- %** percent of community organizations that waive dues for officers
- %** percent of community organizations that honor departing officers
- #** number of organizations that list officers/leaders on literature
- #** number of community organizations that display photos of past and present volunteers/leaders
- #** number of media stories that feature volunteers/leaders
- ?** _____
- ?** _____

INDICATOR

Diversity and expansion of leadership



Elected leaders

For individual organizations in the Community's Civic Infrastructure (See Outcome1) and/or for the community as a whole:

-  percent breakdown of leaders by diversity category:
 -  race/ethnicity
 -  religion
 -  age
 -  length of residency
 -  neighborhood
 -  gender
-  comparison of the diversity of leadership to the community's diversity
-  percent change (over time) in leadership by diversity categories
-  percent of leaders that are new to their offices
-  percent of leaders that have never held an office before
-  number of citizens who have served as elected leaders
-  percent of election slots that have more than one candidate running for the office
-  Citizen perception: Are you represented by this leadership?
-  _____
-  _____



Appointed leaders

For individual organizations in the Community's Civic Infrastructure (See Outcome1) and/or for the community as a whole:

-  percent breakdown of leaders by diversity category:
 -  race/ethnicity

- religion
- age
- length of residency
- neighborhood
- gender

comparison of the diversity of leadership to the community's diversity

% percent change (over time) in leadership by diversity categories

% percent of leaders that are new to their offices

% percent of leaders that have never held an office before

number of citizens who have served as appointed leaders

% percent of leaders from underrepresented groups who have real decisionmaking authority (versus advisory or window-dressing roles)

“ Citizen perception: Are you represented by this leadership?

? _____

? _____



Hired leaders

For individual agencies in the Community's Civic Infrastructure (See Outcome 1) and/or for the community as a whole:

% percent breakdown of leaders by diversity category:

- race/ethnicity
- religion
- age
- length of residency
- neighborhood
- gender

comparison of the diversity of leadership to the community's diversity

% percent change (over time) in leadership by diversity categories

% percent of leaders that are new to their offices/jobs

number of local citizens who have served in hired leadership positions

“ Citizen perception: Are you served well by this leadership?

? _____

? _____



Volunteer leaders

For individual organizations or ad hoc efforts in the Community's Civic Infrastructure (See Outcome 1) and/or for the community as a whole:

% percent breakdown of leaders by diversity category:

- race/ethnicity
- religion
- age
- length of residency
- neighborhood
- gender

comparison of the diversity of leadership to the community's diversity

% percent change (over time) in leadership by diversity categories

% percent of leaders that are new to the specific activity

% percent of leaders that have never volunteered for leadership before

number of citizens who have volunteered to lead an effort

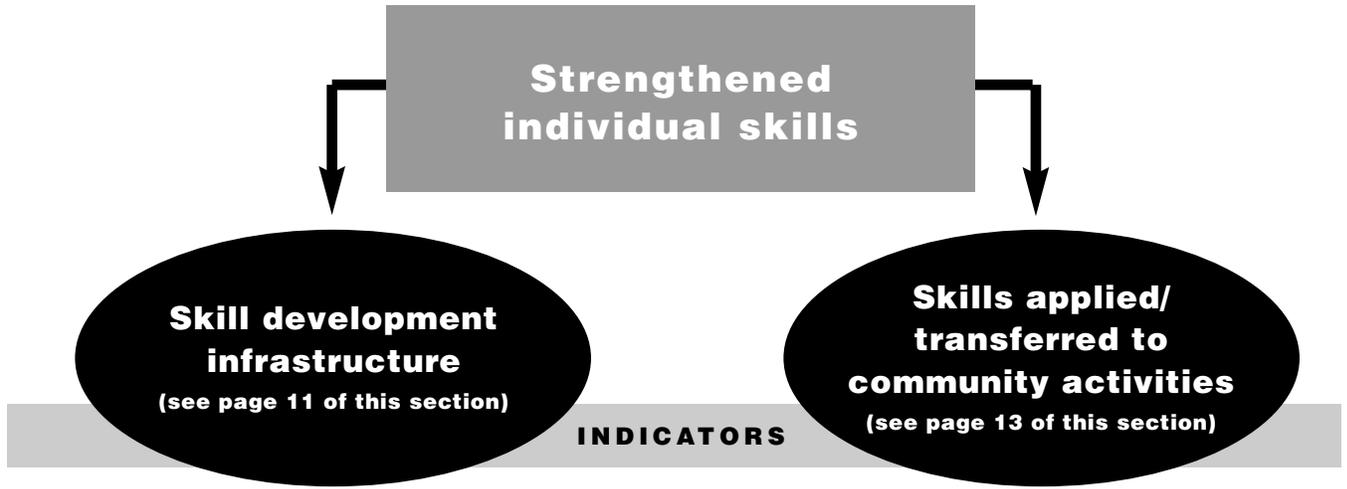
“ Citizen perception: Are you represented by this leadership?

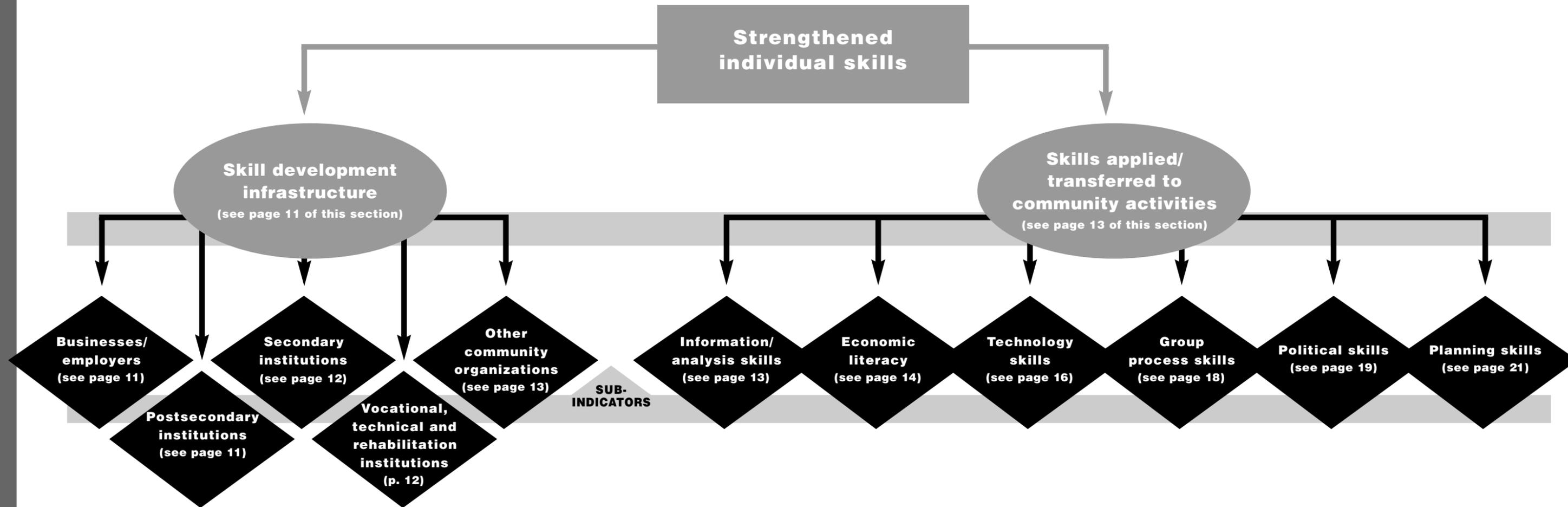
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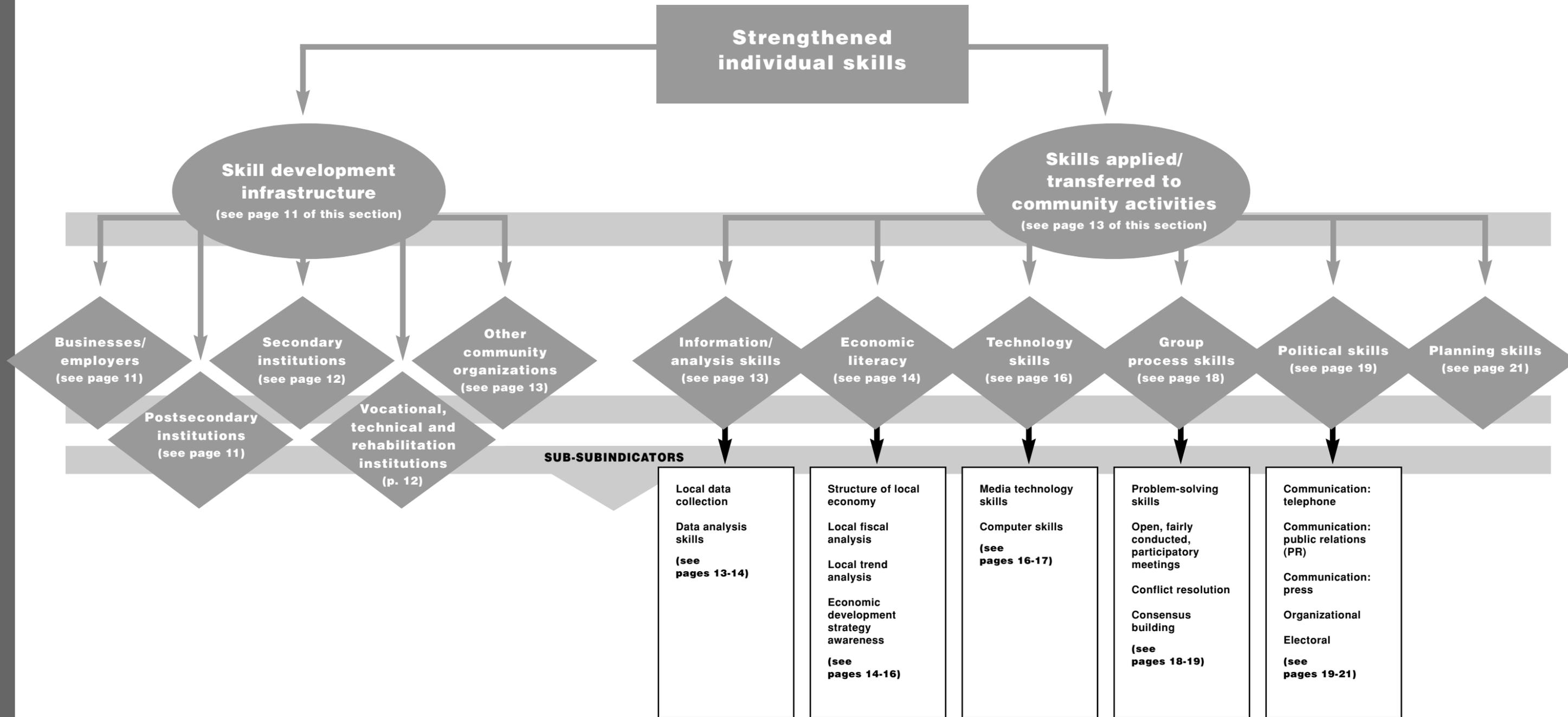
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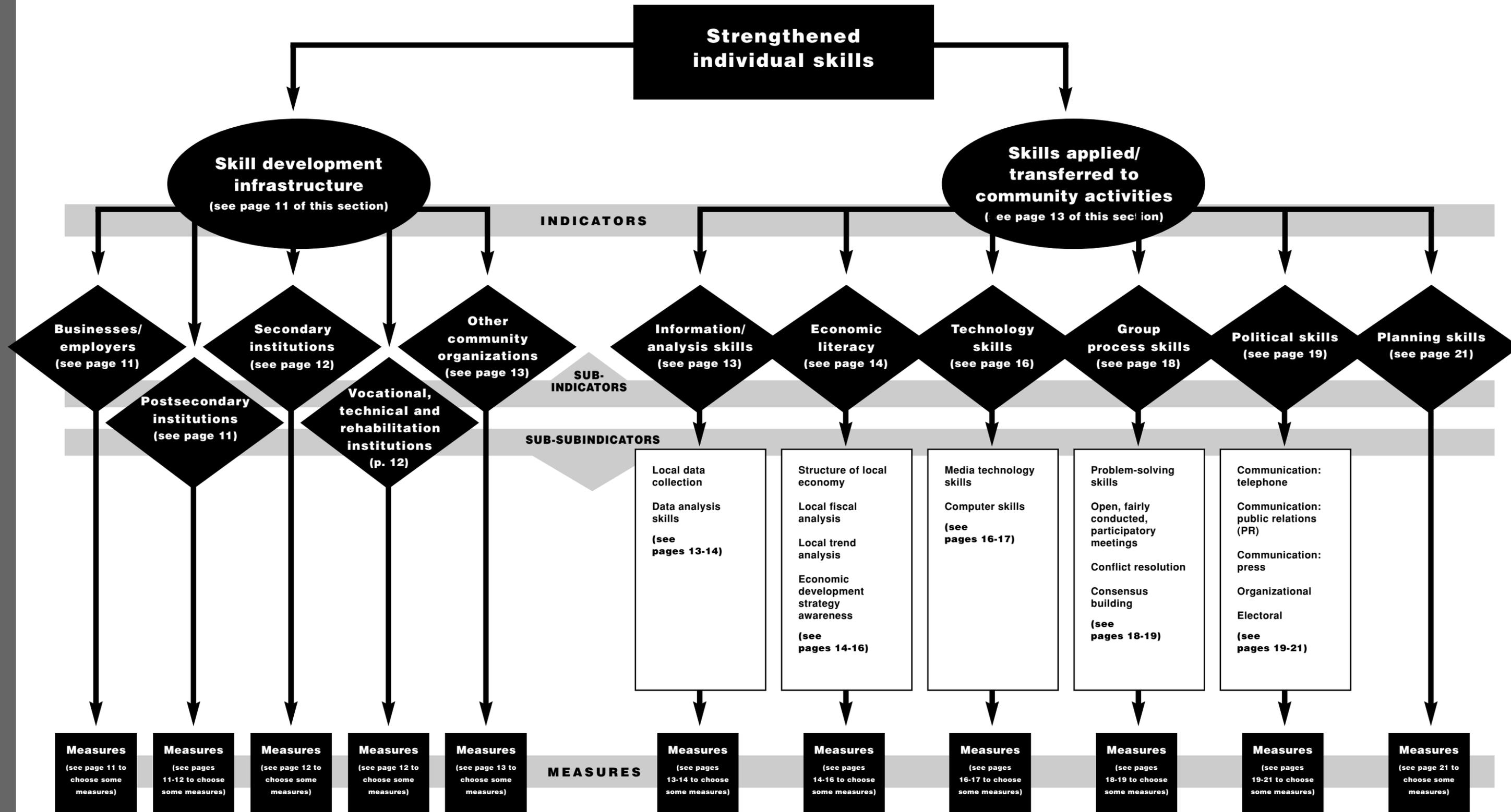
**Strengthened
individual skills**

A community that
uses all kinds of resources to
create opportunities
for individual skill development
is building community capacity
in an important way.
As individuals develop new
skills and expertise,
the level of volunteer service
is raised.









OUTCOME

Strengthened individual skills

INDICATOR

Skill development infrastructure



Businesses/employers

-  number of skill development programs/classes offered to employees
-  number of times each class is offered each year
-  range of skills covered in these programs/classes
-  number of program/class activities that directly contribute to the community
-  percent of program/class graduates who remain in the community
-  _____
-  _____



Postsecondary institutions

-  number of skill development programs/classes offered to students
-  number of times each class is offered each year
-  range of skills covered in these programs/classes
-  number of program/class activities that directly contribute to the community
-  percent of program/class graduates who remain in the community
-  _____

? _____



Secondary institutions

#

number of skill development programs/classes offered to employees

#

number of times each class is offered each year

≡

range of skills covered in these programs/classes

#

number of program/class activities that directly contribute to the community

%

percent of program/class graduates who remain in the community

? _____

? _____



Vocational, technical and rehabilitation institutions

#

number of skill development programs/classes offered to employees

#

number of times each class is offered each year

≡

range of skills covered in these programs/classes

#

number of program/class activities that directly contribute to the community

%

percent of program/class graduates who remain in the community

? _____

? _____



Other community organizations

-  number of skill development programs/classes offered to employees
-  number of times each class is offered each year
-  range of skills covered in these programs/classes
-  number of program/class activities that directly contribute to the community
-  percent of program/class graduates who remain in the community
-  _____
-  _____
-  _____



Skills applied/transferred to community activities



Information/analysis skills



Local data collection

-  number of requests made by citizens to regional, state, national data centers in the course of their organization/community work
-  number of polls citizens conduct in community as part of their organization/community work
-  number of citizens involved in creating and administering community polls
-  number of citizens who have access to regional, state, national data via on-line services and the Internet

 public library has a community data reference section

 _____

 _____

Data analysis skills

 community polls collect data that are useful to community decisionmaking

 usefulness of data collected in community polls to community decisionmaking

 number of government initiatives that collect, analyze and share community data before making decisions

 number of civic initiatives that collect, analyze and share community data before making decisions

 _____

 _____

Economic literacy

Structure of local economy

 studies of the local economy are conducted periodically

 number of local citizens involved in conducting the studies

 number of times local media cites studies

 community has an economic fact sheet (covering employment, income, businesses, etc.)

 number of times local decisionmaking bodies consult economic data before making decisions

number of questions raised about local economy at public/civic meetings

? _____

? _____

Local fiscal analysis

financial data for community/organizations are broken out into meaningful, useful categories

number of government/civic financial reports that use graphics to present budget and fiscal data

number of questions raised about financial/budget reports at public,civic meetings

? _____

? _____

Local trend analysis

studies of the local economy show how conditions change from year to year

number of published and media reports that use graphics to present economic trend data

number of media references to economic trends

number of references to economic trends in community organizations' (government and civic) meeting minutes

number of questions raised about economy trends at public/civic meetings

? _____

? _____

Economic development strategy awareness

-  number of times development alternatives are discussed at public/civic meetings
-  range of development alternatives considered at public/civic meetings
-  number of citizens who contribute to the meeting discussion
-  depth/quality of development strategy debate at public/civic meetings
-  number of times development alternatives discussed in the media
-  range of development alternatives considered in the media
-  number of citizens who contribute to the media discussion (letters to the editor, etc.)
-  depth/quality of development strategy debate in media
-  _____
-  _____



Technology skills

Media technology skills

-  number of organizations that regularly produce press releases
-  number of press releases produced about local activities for regional, state, national media
-  number of audiovisual productions produced locally
-  quality of audiovisual productions produced locally
-  number of media presentations produced about the community

 cable access TV is used to promote citizen awareness and participation

 number of public service announcements for community activities produced

 number of times public service announcements are broadcast

 _____

 _____

Computer skills

 number of citizens with access to a personal computer

 number of citizens who know how to use a:

-  computer game
-  word processing program
-  spreadsheet program
-  database program
-  communications program
-  desktop publishing program
-  multimedia program

 number of posters, brochures, newsletters, and other print media are produced locally on computer

 number of community organizations that maintain computerized mailing lists

 number of community organizations that maintain financial information on computerized spreadsheets

 number of citizens with on-line service and Internet access

 _____

 _____



Group process skills

Problem-solving skills

number of organizations that use techniques like brainstorming, force field analysis, or storyboarding to help solve problems

 problem-solving techniques used appropriately and well

number of times facilitators are used for local problem solving

? _____

? _____

Open, fairly conducted, participatory meetings

number of community organizations that use alternative to parliamentary procedure in their meetings

number of community organizations that regularly use small group activities at their meetings

% percent of attendees who speak at community/organization meetings

? _____

? _____

Conflict resolution

number of meetings held on controversial issues

number of letters to the editor written/printed on controversial issues

number of times government/civic organizations use mediators

✓ issues are reconsidered by community/organizations after decision has been made

? _____

 _____

Consensus building

 number of new collaborations in the community

 number of new organizations/participants involved in collaborations in the community

 _____

 _____



Political skills

Communication: telephone

 number of community organizations have/use telephone trees

 number of telephone surveys conducted

 _____

 _____

Communication: public relations (PR)

 number of community organizations with brochures

 number of community organizations with logos

 number of community organizations with a designated PR/media contact

 _____

 _____

Communication: press

-  number of community organizations that regularly produce press releases
-  number of media stories produced per press release
-  number of civic events are covered by the local media
-  quality/extent of this coverage
-  number of civic events covered by nonlocal media
-  quality/extent of this coverage
-  number of news conferences held locally
-  number of regional, state, national media events held in the community (e.g., a statewide announcement made in the community by the governor)
-  _____
-  _____

Organizational

-  number of new advocacy groups/efforts that are formed
-  percent change in advocacy group membership
-  number of local ballot initiatives started
-  number of petitions circulated
-  number of recalls initiated
-  number of chapters of regional, state, national groups in the community
-  _____

 _____

Electoral

(See Outcome 1 as well)



number of registered voters



percent of registered voters who turnout to vote



number of citizens running for office



number of campaign volunteers



number of candidate forums held



number of people who attend candidate forums

 _____

 _____



Planning skills



number of organizations that set annual priorities



number of organizations that have strategic plan



number of community organizations that have a multiyear plan of work



number of community organizations that regularly evaluate progress on their plans



evaluation information is used to update plans

 _____

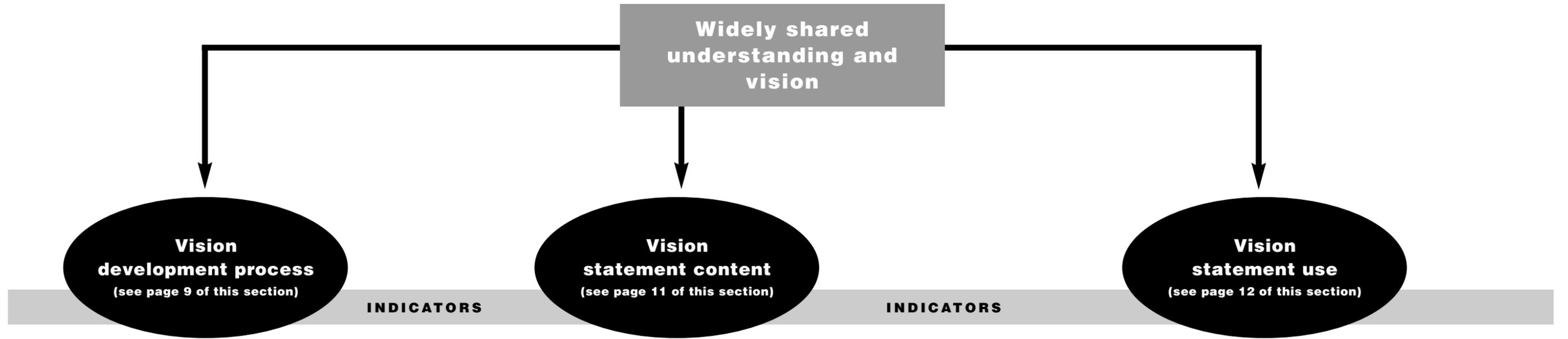
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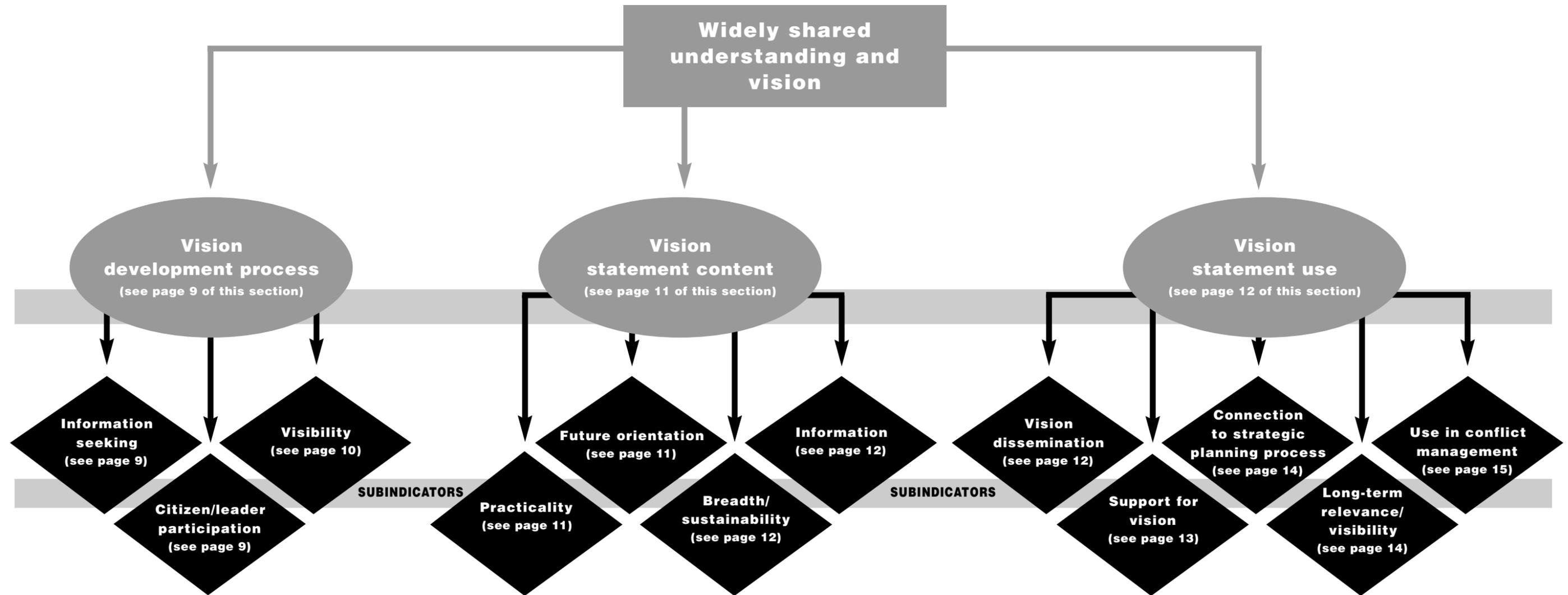
**Widely shared
understanding and
vision**

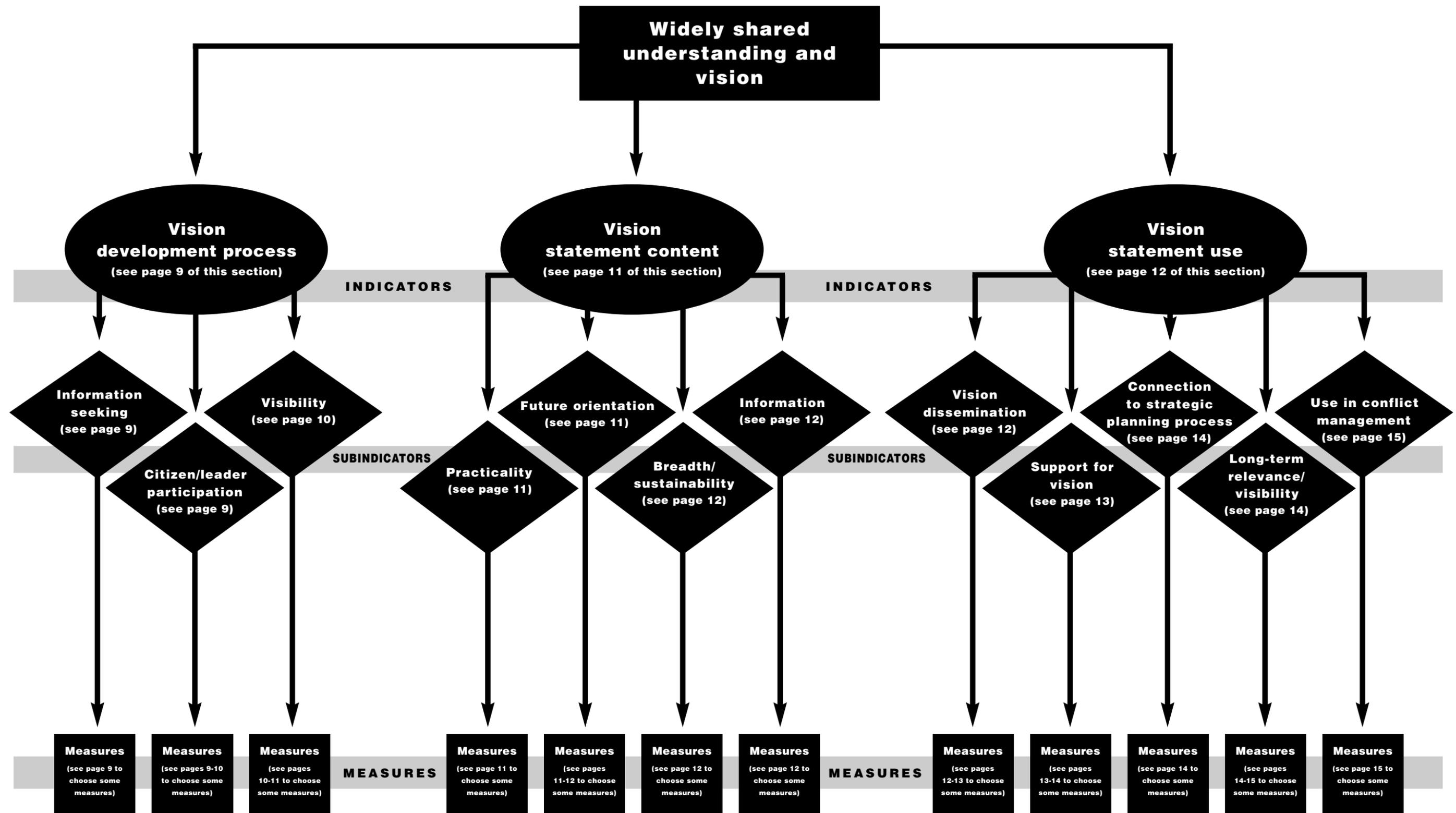
Creating a vision
of the best community future
is an important part of planning.

But in community capacity
building, the emphasis is on
how widely that vision is shared.

Getting to agreement
on that vision is a process that
builds community capacity.







OUTCOME

Widely shared understanding and vision

INDICATOR

Vision development process



Information seeking

- other communities' vision statements reviewed
- number of site visits made to other communities
- trends identified and considered
- number of consultations or interviews held with experts
- _____
- _____



Citizen/leader participation

For both community leaders and regular folk:

- number of people who participate in person at vision development meetings/events
- percent breakdown of leaders by diversity category:
 - race/ethnicity
 - religion
 - age
 - length of residency
 - neighborhood
 - gender
- comparison of diversity of organization participation to the community's diversity
- change in number of participants during the process

-  number of people who provide input through other means (polls, interviews, etc.)
-  number of ways people's input is gathered
-  percent breakdown/community comparison of these people by diversity category
-  number of organizations that cosponsor the vision development process
-  range of organizations that cosponsor (broad or narrow?)
-  key leaders and organizations participate in the process
-  number of opportunities for people to review draft vision statement
-  number of comments offered
-  _____
-  _____



Visibility

-  time line for producing vision is publicized
-  range of formal media that promote the process (e.g., radio, newspaper, etc.)
-  number of formal media mentions
-  range of informal media that promote the process (e.g., church bulletins, posters, etc.)
-  number of informal media announcements/placements/flyers distributed
-  number of media stories about the vision development process
-  number of special events held to promote the process

-  number of speeches that refer to the process
-  number of vision development sessions attended by elected officials
-  number of elected officials that attend vision development sessions
-  number of progress reports made to government organizations
-  number of progress reports made to civic organizations
-  number of progress reports made to the media
-  _____
-  _____

INDICATOR

Vision statement content



Practicality

-  length of statement (number of pages/paragraphs)
-  readability level of statement (high, medium, low)
-  statement lacks jargon
-  _____
-  _____



Future orientation

-  vision describes a desired future state of affairs
-  vision refers to the needs of future generations
-  vision clearly states a future direction
-  _____

? _____



Breadth/sustainability

- vision addresses economic considerations
- vision addresses environmental considerations
- vision addresses human resource considerations
- vision recognizes connection to areas beyond the community's political boundaries
- vision includes limiting details

? _____

? _____



Information based

- #** number of links between the vision statement and information gathered in the vision development process
- statement does not contradict valid information gathered in the vision development process
- #** number of links between the statement and citizen input gathered in the development process

? _____

? _____

INDICATOR

Vision statement use



Vision dissemination

- media event/press conference held to announce vision

- # range of formal media that cover the vision
- # number of times vision statement is published/broadcast by the formal media
- # range of informal media that cover the vision (church bulletins, organization newsletters, etc.)
- # number of times vision statement is published/broadcast by the informal media
- # number of organizational programs/presentations on the vision
- # number of speeches that refer to the vision
- ✓ community has a new slogan or motto tied to the vision
- # number of different items produced to spread the slogan/motto (t-shirts, bumper stickers, mugs, etc.)
- ? _____
- ? _____



Support for vision

- # number of people who participate in dissemination activities
- % percent breakdown/community comparison of participants by diversity category
- # number of organizations that endorse or pass resolutions of support for the the vision
- ≡ range of community organizations that endorse the vision
- # number of community organizations that participate in dissemination activities
- ≡ range of community organizations that participate in dissemination activities

 amount (\$/in-kind) devoted to produce and disseminate the vision statement

 number of letters to the editor (positive and negative) written/printed about the vision

 percent of positive/negative letters to editor/public comments about vision

 number of vision statement posters that are framed and hung

 _____

 _____



Connection to strategic planning process

(See Outcome 5)

 vision is reflected in the community's strategic plan

 percent of strategic plan's goal statements that relate to the vision

 time elapsed between development of the vision statement and the plan

 _____

 _____



Long-term relevance/visibility

 number of references to the vision in the formal media over a two-year period

 number of references to the vision in community organizations' meeting minutes over a two-year period

 an anniversary celebration revisits the vision

 vision is updated regularly

 _____

? _____



Use in conflict management

#

number of media references to vision during a community controversy

#

number references to the vision made by community organizations during a community controversy

#

number of references to vision made in letters to the editor during a community controversy

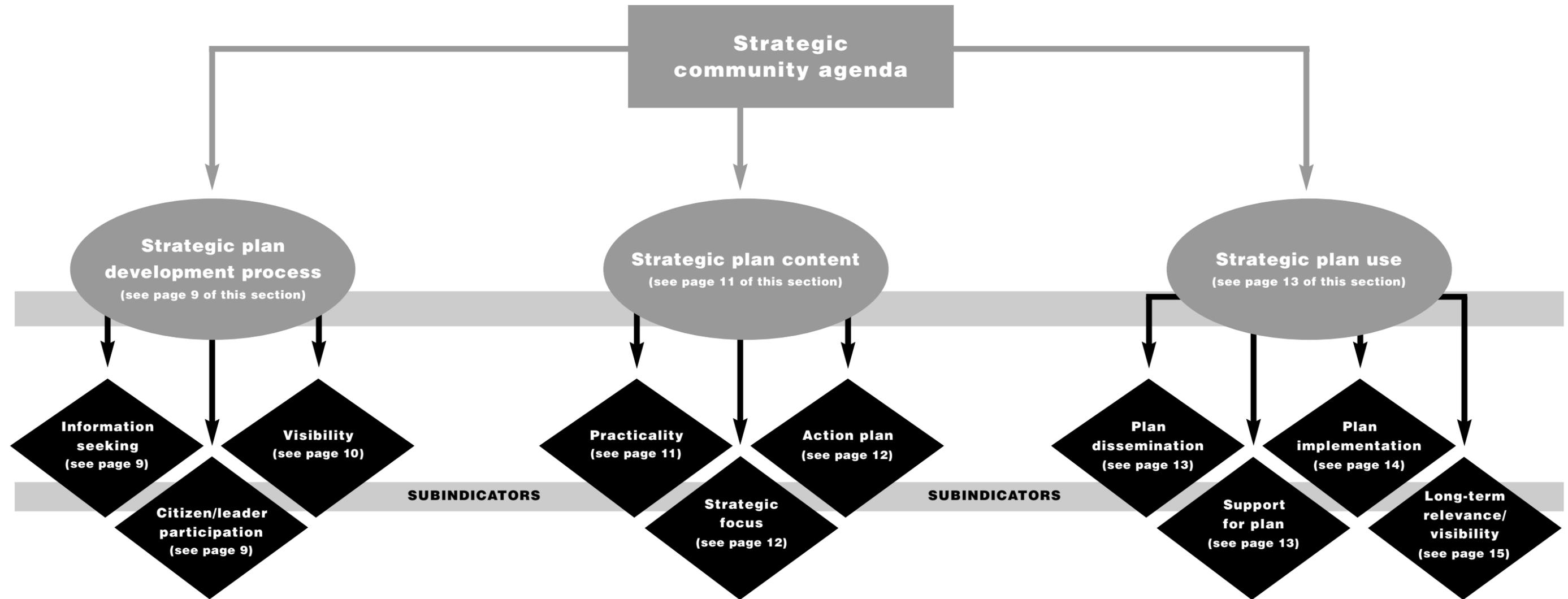
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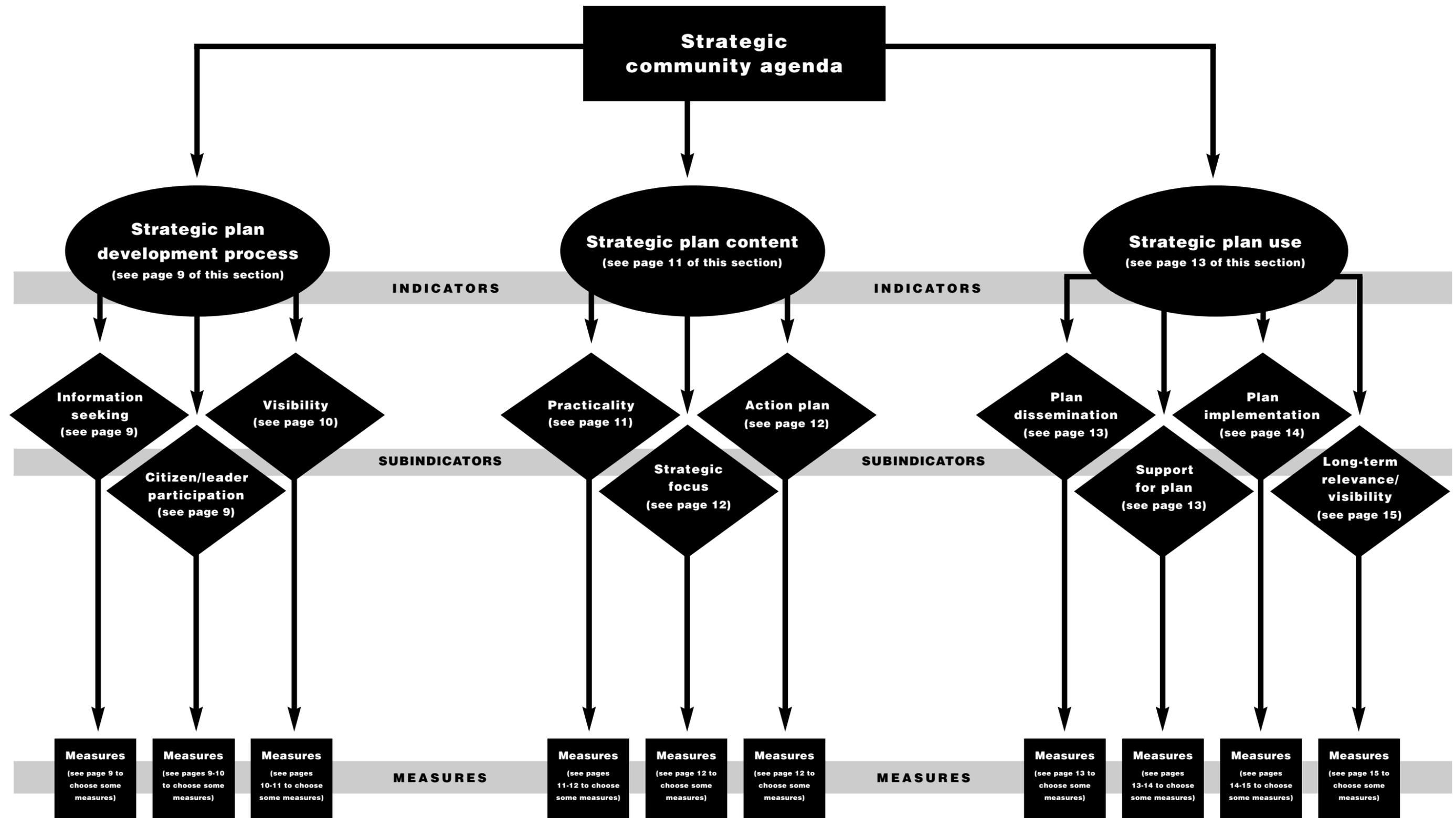
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**Strategic community
agenda**

When clubs and organizations consider changes that might come in the future and plan *together*, the result is a strategic community agenda. Having a response to the future already thought through communitywide is one way to understand and manage change.







OUTCOME

Strategic community agenda

INDICATOR

Strategic plan development process



Information seeking

- # number of information-gathering activities used in process
- # number of existing data sources used
- ✓ other communities' strategic agendas and models are reviewed
- # number of site visits made to other communities
- # number of consultations or interviews conducted with experts
- # number of outside consultants/agencies used for technical assistance
- ? _____
- ? _____



Citizen/leader participation

For both community leaders and regular folk:

- # number of people who participate in-person in plan development study groups, task forces, committees, meetings, etc.
- % percent breakdown of leaders by diversity category:
 - race/ethnicity
 - religion
 - age
 - length of residency
 - neighborhood
 - gender

-  comparison of the diversity of leadership to the community's diversity
-  number of people who go on site visits
-  change in number of participants during the process
-  number of people who provide input through other means (polls, interviews, etc.)
-  number of ways people's input is gathered
-  percent breakdown/community comparison of these people by diversity category
-  number of organizations that cosponsor the strategic plan development process
-  range of organizations that cosponsor (broad or narrow?)
-  key leaders and organizations participate in the process
-  number of opportunities for people to review draft plan
-  number of comments offered
-  _____
-  _____



Visibility

-  materials explaining the planning process are available
-  a plan development timeline is publicized
-  range of formal media that promote the process (e.g., radio, newspaper, etc.)
-  number of formal media mentions
-  range of informal media that promote the process (e.g., church bulletins, posters, etc.)

-  number of informal media announcements/placements/flyers distributed
-  number of media stories about the plan development process
-  number of special events held to promote the process
-  number of speeches that refer to the process
-  number of plan development sessions attended by elected officials
-  number of elected officials that attend plan development sessions
-  number of progress reports made to government organizations
-  number of progress reports made to civic organizations
-  number of progress reports made to the media
-  _____
-  _____

INDICATOR Strategic plan content

 **Practicality**

-  length of plan (number of pages/paragraphs)
-  readability level of plan (high, medium, low)
-  plan lacks jargon
-  plan is organized in a logical, simple manner
-  plan is user friendly (Does it have an index, definitions, useful graphics and layout, etc.?)
-  _____





Strategic focus

-  number of priorities detailed in the plan (Fewer is better.)
 -  the plan identifies the community's advantages, assets and strengths
 -  number of links between the plan and regional and global conditions and trends
 -  plan has goals concerning key issues (infrastructure, workforce development, education, quality of life, business development, etc.)?
 -  number of community interests (youth, arts, elderly, etc.) addressed in the plan
 -  range of community interests addressed in the plan
 - 
 - 
-
-



Action plan

-  plan includes an action step chart that displays:
 -  who is responsible/accountable
 -  for what
 -  by when
 -  what resources are needed
 -  plan has built-in progress checkpoints
 -  number of community organizations assigned responsibility in implementation plan
 - 
 - 
-
-



Strategic plan use



Plan dissemination

- # number of copies of the plan printed
- # number of copies of plan distributed
- # number of copies of plan requested
- # number of copies of plan on public display
- ✓ media event/press conference held to announce plan
- # range of formal media that cover the plan
- # number of times plan excerpts are published/broadcast by the formal media
- # range of informal media that cover the plan (church bulletins, organization newsletters, etc.)
- # number of times plan excerpts is published/broadcast by the informal media
- # number of organizational programs/presentations on the plan
- # number of speeches that refer to the plan
- ? _____
- ? _____



Support for plan

- # number of people who participate in dissemination activities
- % percent breakdown/community comparison of participants by diversity category

 number of organizations that endorse or pass resolutions of support for the plan

 range of community organizations that endorse the plan

 number of community organizations that participate in dissemination activities

 range of community organizations that participate in dissemination activities

 amount (\$/in-kind) devoted to produce and disseminate the plan

 number of letters to the editor (positive and negative) written/printed about the plan

 percent of positive/negative letters to editor/public comments about plan

 _____

 _____



Plan implementation

 percent of plan's action steps completed according to the original time line

 amount (\$/in-kind) devoted to implementing the plan

 number of people participating in implementation activities

 percent breakdown of leaders by diversity category:

- race/ethnicity
- religion
- age
- length of residency
- neighborhood
- gender

comparison of the diversity of leadership to the community's diversity

number of community organizations that participate in implementation activities

≡ range of community organizations that participate

number of times over a five-year period has the plan is reviewed or updated

number of progress reports were made to government organizations

number of progress reports were made to civic organizations

number of progress reports made to the media

? _____

? _____



Long-term relevance/visibility

number of references to the plan in the formal media over a two-year period

number of references to the plan in community organizations' meeting minutes over a two-year period

% percent of community organizations that have tied their mission directly to the plan

✓ an anniversary celebration revisits the plan

✓ plan is updated regularly

? _____

? _____

**Consistent,
tangible progress
toward goals**

A community with capacity
turns plans into results.
Whether it's using benchmarks
to gauge progress
or setting milestones to
mark accomplishments,
the momentum and bias for action
come through as a community
gets things done.

**Consistent,
tangible progress
toward goals**

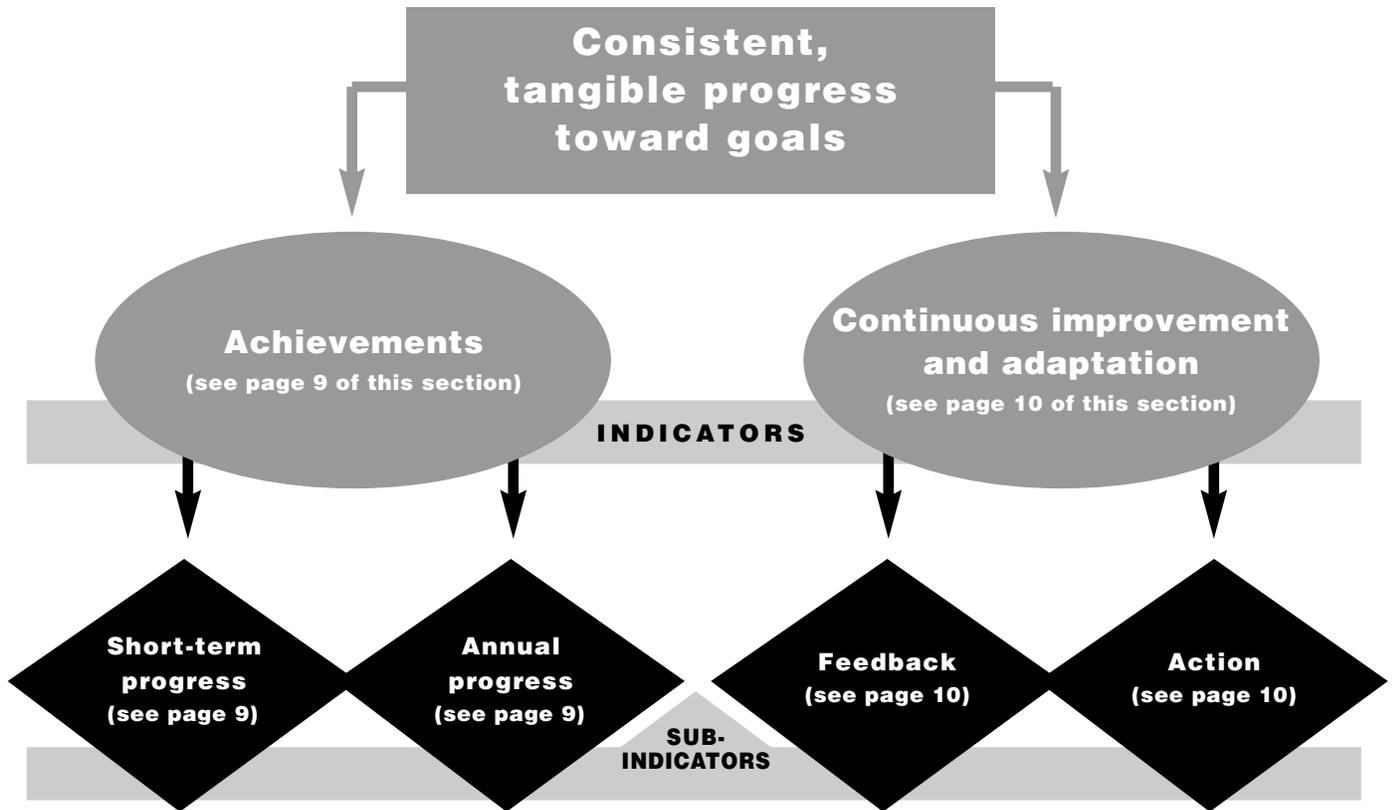
Achievements

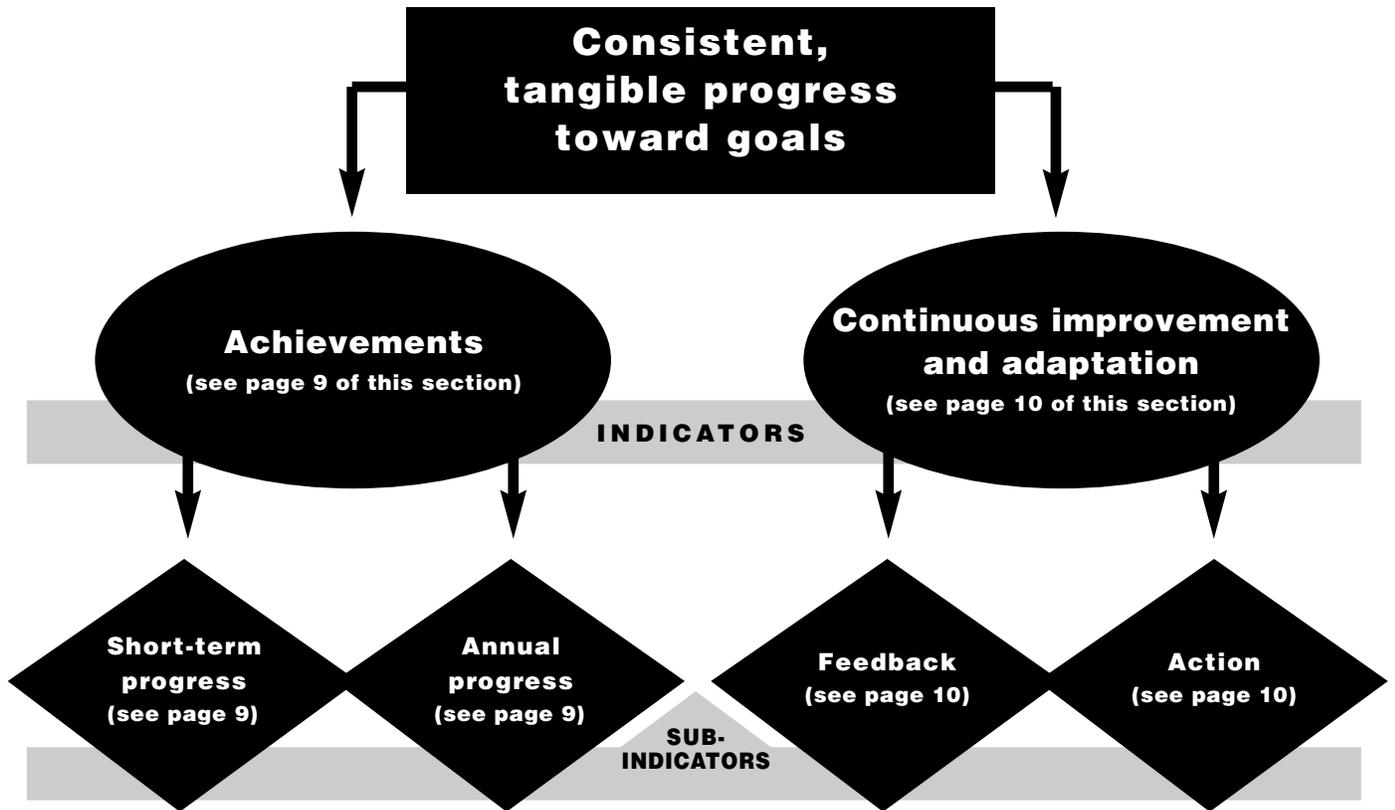
(see page 9 of this section)

**Continuous improvement
and adaptation**

(see page 10 of this section)

INDICATORS





OUTCOME

Consistent, tangible progress toward goals

INDICATOR

Achievements

For community's strategic plan or for individual community organization's plans:



Short-term progress

✓ short-term (three- or six-month) milestones are -term efforts/goals in plan

number of short-term milestones set

number of short-term milestones reached

% percent of short-term milestones reached

? _____

? _____



Annual progress

number of projects completed

% percent of projects completed

number of applications submitted for funding/certification

amount (\$) raised

number of community certifications received/applications granted

number of recognitions received from outside the community

number of community achievement celebrations held

 percent increase in citizen participation/new leadership/citizen skills, etc. (See Outcomes 1-3.)

 _____

 _____

INDICATOR

Continuous improvement and adaptation

For community's strategic plan or for individual community organization's plans:



Feedback

-  community suggestion line/box available
-  number of citizen suggestions received
-  citizens are surveyed to determine their level of satisfaction
-  community assessments conducted regularly
-  number of community organizations that regularly evaluate their activities
-  results of evaluations are being used to improve projects
-  number of organizations that hold retreats each year
-  _____
-  _____



Action

-  number of civic leaders (elected, appointed, hired, and volunteer) that receive leadership training
-  number of outside consultants/agencies used for technical assistance

number of changes made to strategic plan in the past two years

number of changes made in the tactics used to implement the strategic plan

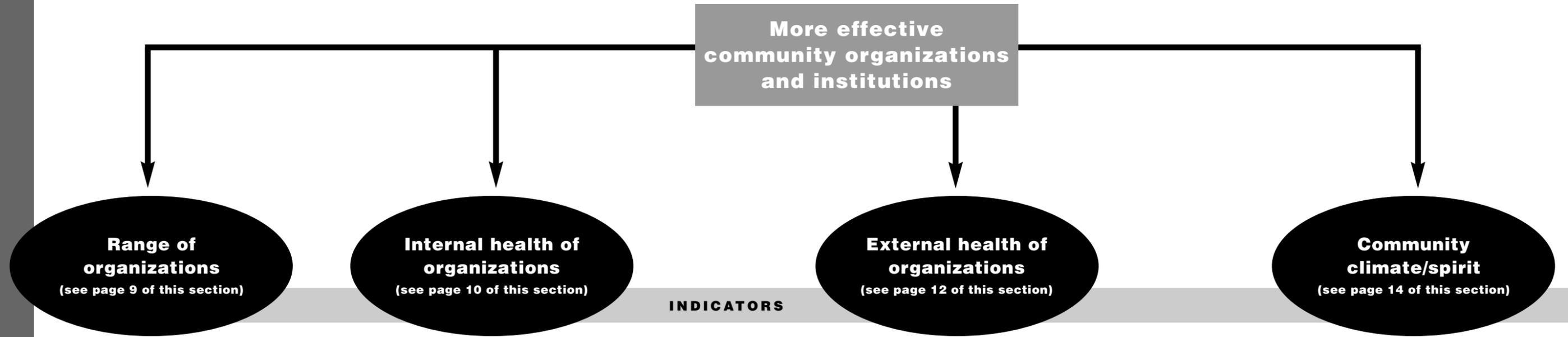
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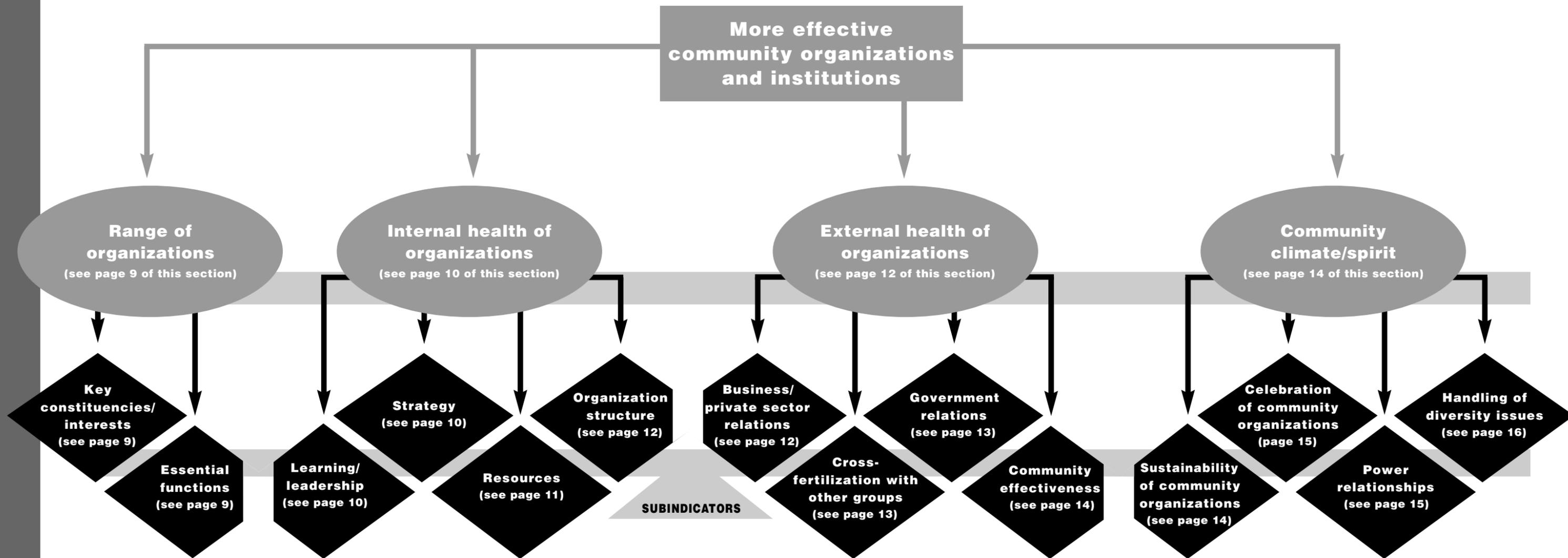
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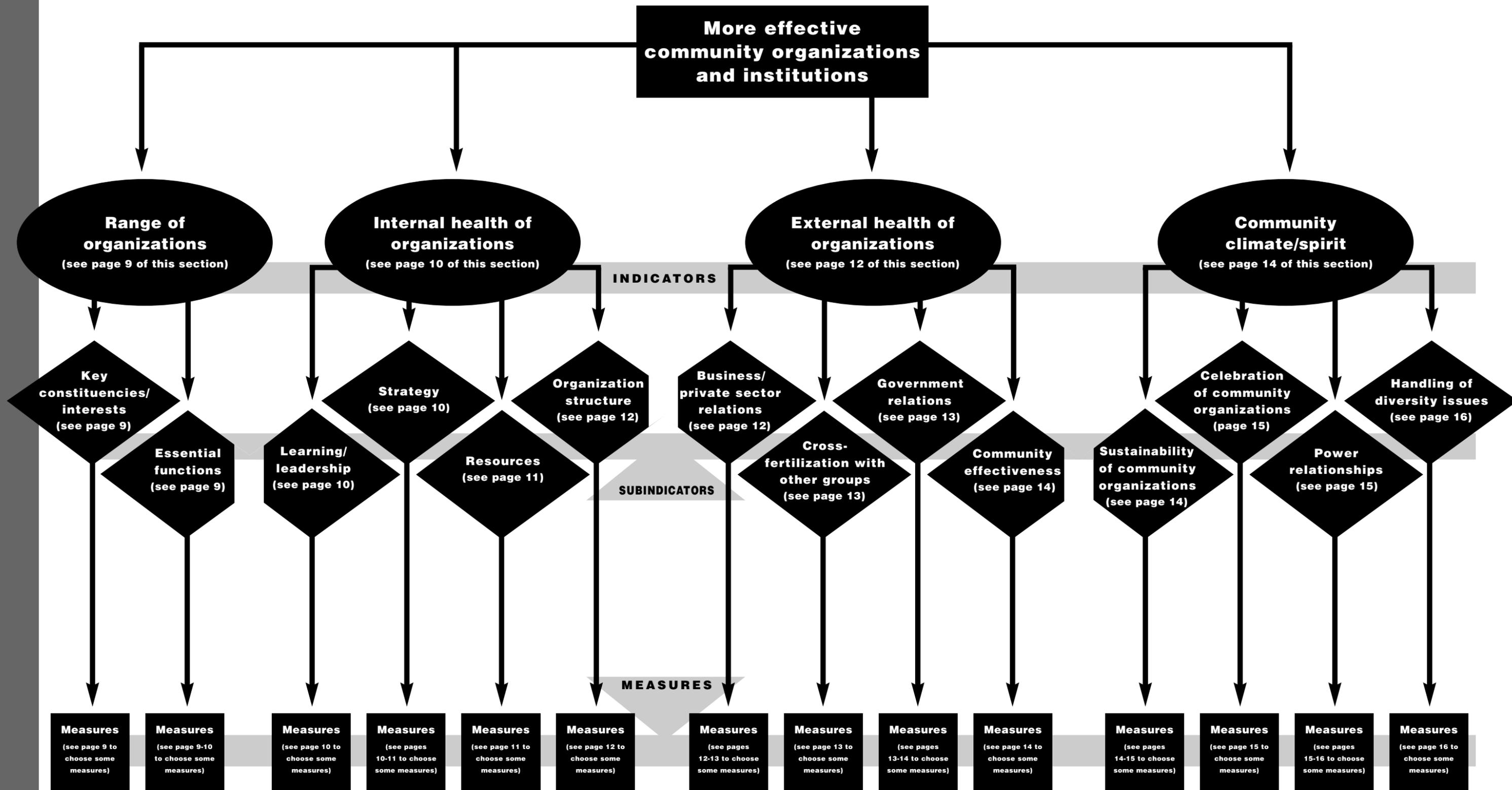
**More effective
community organizations
and institutions**

All types of civic clubs
and traditional institutions—
such as churches, schools and
newspapers—are the mainstay of
community capacity building.

If clubs and institutions
are run well and efficiently,
the community will be stronger.







OUTCOME

More effective community organizations and institutions

INDICATOR

Range of organizations



Key constituencies/Interests

-  list the community's key constituencies (e.g., youth, elderly, business, low-income, religious, minorities)
-  number of organizations serve the needs of these key constituencies
-  number of constituencies not served
-  list the activities of significant interest to community residents (e.g., recreational, cultural, arts, political, hobby)
-  number of organizations/activities that serve the needs of these key
-  number of significant interest activities not served
-  _____
-  _____



Essential functions

-  list the specific essential functions community citizens and organizations need to maintain/build their capacity (e.g., specific social services, fundraising, economic development, cultural development)
-  number of functions being provided by some organization (s)
-  quality of service for each function
-  number of organizations providing each function

responsibility for providing essential functions is spread fairly evenly among organizations

number of essential functions are not being provided

INDICATOR

Internal health of organizations

For individual organizations in Community Civic Infrastructure (detailed in Outcome 1):



Learning/leadership

there are orientation programs for new members

there is ongoing staff/member training

there is a leadership transition process in place

the organization has a method for regular self-assessment



Strategy

there a clear process for developing strategy and priorities

there is a strategic plan

number of priorities in the organization's plan (fewer is better)

number of links between the organization's strategic plan and the community strategic plan

number of times over a five-year period the organization's strategic agenda plan is reviewed or updated

? _____

? _____



Resources

number of members

% percent increase in membership

number of members who are on the advisory boards of funders

size (\$) of organization budget

% percent increase in budget

amount (\$) of organization budget raised from local sources

% percent of budget raised from local sources

number of grant proposals submitted

number (# and \$) of grant proposals funded

% percent of proposals funded

number of special fundraising events held

amount (\$) raised through event(s)

% percent change in \$ raised at event(s)

? _____

? _____



Organization structure

-  organization has bylaws
-  organization has a board of directors
-  bylaws ensure that organization's leadership is changed/rotated regularly
-  organization has known committees/task forces/special groups that reflect its priorities
-  number members' satisfaction with the organization
-  _____
-  _____

INDICATOR

External health of organizations



Business/private sector relations

For non-business organizations:

-  local firms and business organizations provide support (\$, in-kind, endorsements, etc.) to the organization
-  amount of support
-  length of time support has been present
-  percent increase in business support
-  number of collaborative projects with local business groups
-  percent increase in collaborations
-  quality of collaboration

 number of organization members who serve on boards of business organizations

 citizens donate time and money to the organization

 amount (\$,#, time) of support

 percent increase in citizen support

 _____

 _____



Cross-fertilization with other groups

For all organizations in community:

 new, diverse partnerships are being formed among organizations

 number of collaborative projects among organizations

 number of organizations involved in collaborative projects

 percent of organizations involved in collaborations

 increase in collaborations

 quality of collaboration

 number of groups newly involved in ongoing community projects

 _____

 _____



Government relations

 number of community collaborative projects involving government agencies

 number of government agencies involved in community collaborations

-  increase in collaborations
-  quality of collaboration
-  ways in which government offers technical assistance to community efforts
-  number of times government provides technical assistance
-  quality of government's technical assistance
-  _____
-  _____



Community effectiveness

For each organization:

-  number of citizens who recognize name of organization
-  percent of the citizens who know the organization's mission/how it relates to the community's agenda
-  citizen's perception of how good or effective the organization is for the community
-  organization is recognized by the community for its service
-  _____
-  _____

INDICATOR

Community climate/spirit



Sustainability of community organizations

-  percent of organizations with intergenerational participation/leadership

 age of organizations

 membership is increasing

 other participation is increasing

 percent of organizations whose membership is increasing

 _____

 _____



Celebration of community organizations

 number of positive/negative media stories that cover community organization activities

 number of cultural/community festivals held

 number of organizations that hold anniversary celebrations

 _____

 _____



Power relationships

 list of “gatekeepers” in the community—public opinion maker/people/organizations with heavy influence on decisions or community outcomes (e.g., both Mr. Potter and Jimmy Stewart are gatekeepers in *It’s a Wonderful Life*)

 gatekeepers retaliate for divergent views/activity

 level at which gatekeepers do good or ill for community spirit/outcomes

 proportion of vertical (equal) to horizontal (big fish tell little fish what to do) relationships among community organizations

 quality/level of communication among organizations (open vs. closed, frequent vs. irregular, complete vs. inadequate)

organizations undermine the work of other organizations







Handling of diversity Issues

 number of generational/racial/cultural conflict incidents in the community

 percent change in incidents

 number of media stories that cover diversity issues

schools, businesses, and/or other organizations offer diversity training

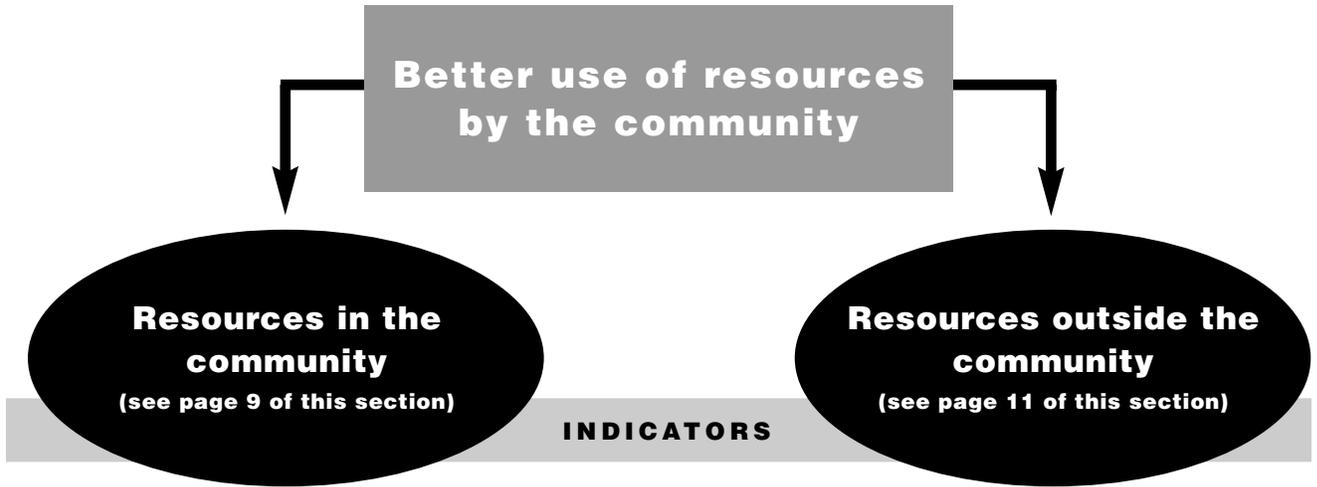


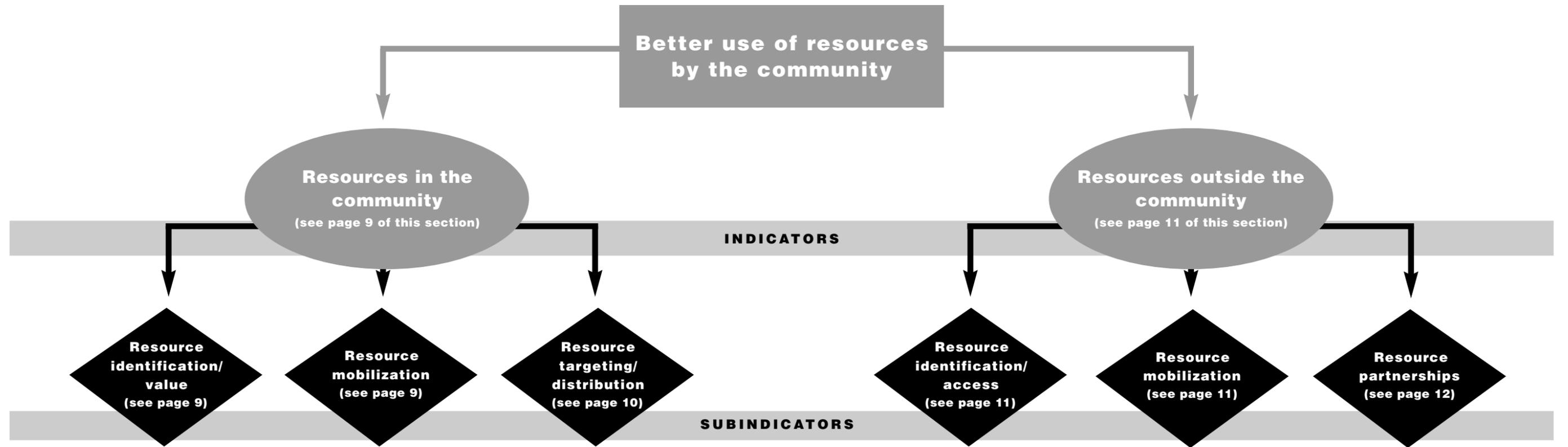


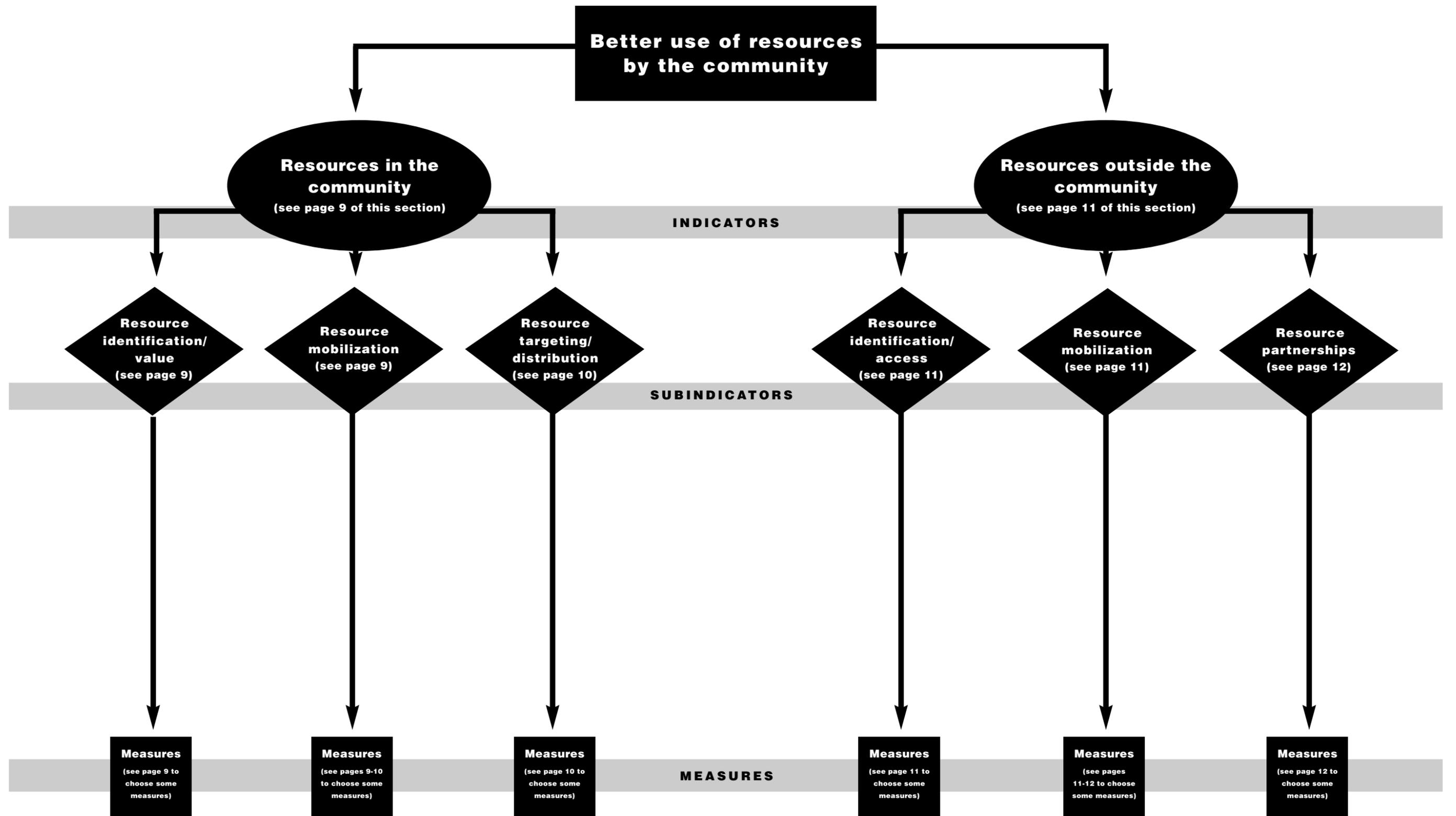
**Better
resource utilization
by the community**

Ideally, the community should select and use resources in the same way a smart consumer will make a purchase.

Communities that balance local self-reliance with the use of outside resources can face the future with confidence.







OUTCOME

Better use of resources by the community

INDICATOR

Resources in the community



Resource identification/value

- community has an inventory of community resources (\$, skills, organizations, available services) and assets
- there is a resource clearinghouse
- there is a community organization/resource directory
- # number (# and \$) of local funding resources available
- % percent increase in local funding available
- # number (#) of skill resources available
- quality of skill resources available
- # number (#, value) of other (specify) resources available
- quality of those resources
- ? _____
- ? _____



Resource mobilization

- # amount (\$) local charitable giving contributed to community projects
- % percent of local charitable giving \$ that benefit community (as opposed to those that go outside the community)
- % percent of residents that give charitable dollars to local causes

-  number of people are involved in community projects
-  percent of bank deposits lent locally
-  number of successful local bond issues
-  dollar value of bond issues
-  number of successful economic development initiatives
-  dollar value of these initiatives
-  number of businesses owned locally
-  number of community residents who own shares in local businesses
-  percent of community residents who own shares in local businesses
-  _____
-  _____



Resource targeting/distribution

-  community has process in place for prioritizing community needs/opportunities
-  community has set targets for deploying its resources based on this process
-  number of participants from target populations who are involved in decisionmaking
-  \$ value of resources that reach target priorities/populations
-  percent of family income spent on local taxes (by income level)
-  _____
-  _____



Resources outside the community



Resource identification/access

-  level of community's knowledge about outside resources (high, medium, low)
-  community has an inventory of outside resources (funding, information, technical assistance, professional and government services) potentially available to the community
-  there is an outside resource clearinghouse
-  there is an outside resource directory
-  number of citizens who belong to regional, state, national associations
-  number of citizens who attend conferences of regional, state, national associations
-  number of contacts community have with external resources (e.g., agencies, funders)
-  _____
-  _____



Resource mobilization

-  leverage: ratio of community to outside resources (\$) that support community projects
-  amount (\$) charitable giving from outside the community contributed to community projects
-  percent of organization budgets raised from outside the community
-  amount (\$) raised from outside community for local development projects

-  number of organization funding proposals submitted to outside funders
-  ratio of grants awarded to grant proposals submitted
-  number of regional, state, national programs sited in community (e.g., Main Street)
-  value (\$) of regional, state, national programs sited in community
-  _____
-  _____



Resource partnerships

-  number of local services that draw on external resources
-  number of local services that are requested from outside the community
-  number of agreements with nearby localities
-  number of regional compacts/organizations
-  _____
-  _____

Go forward— and give us feedback!

As we said earlier, the menu of measures we offer here can help make your progress *real*. We hope these measures will help you be able to *see*, *count* and *feel* the capacity building in your community, to celebrate it, and to keep your momentum going.

But we need to make progress too! That's why we have called this guide a "Workbook-in-Progress"—and it's why we have designed it so that we can easily and constantly make improvements.

And we need your help to make that progress!

So please tell us about your experience with using this workbook and/or some other method you have used to measure community capacity building. Listed on the feedback form on the next page are some specific questions we'd like you to answer. We're interested in what you have to say or have learned about *all* of them, but we're happy to get your feedback on *any*—so address as many as you wish or have the time to answer.

Please share your feedback with us in one of three ways:

- *e-mail* us with your answers and ideas
- *fax* us your filled-out feedback form
- send us your filled-out feedback form by *regular mail*

The addresses you need are all on the feedback form on the next page. We're also willing to talk with you on the telephone or in person about your reactions and suggestions, but because our staff time is scarce, we'd prefer it if you give us written feedback first. Nonetheless, if telephone is the only way we'll hear from you, please give us a call at 202-736-5848 and leave a message. (Warning: It might take us a few days to get back to you!)

Thanks!

Feedback form

Please fill out this form or use your own paper/computer file to answer the following questions. Then send it to us in one of the following three ways:

- *e-mail* us with your answers to the questions. Use this e-mail address:

hn0435@handsnet.org

- *fax* us your filled-out feedback form. Use this fax number and address:

202-467-0790

The Aspen Institute/REPP

ATTN: Janet Topolsky

- *mail* us your filled-out feedback form. Use this address:

Janet Topolsky

The Aspen Institute/REPP

1333 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Suite 1070

Washington, DC 20036

-
1. Are you currently—or have you recently been—involved in an effort to measure community capacity building? Yes No
 2. If yes, name the community or communities:
 3. If yes, briefly describe your effort. For example, who is sponsoring/coordinating the effort? What and how many groups/people are involved? How long has it been underway or will it last? What sparked the effort? Any other details you wish to share?
 4. Did you use or are you using this workbook? Yes No

5. If not, what did you use?

6. If you did use this workbook, please briefly describe how it was used. For example, who used it, during which stage of the process, and so forth.

7. What has been most helpful about using this workbook?

8. What has been least helpful about this workbook or could use the most improvement?

9. Please indicate which of the eight outcomes of community capacity building you are trying or have tried to measure: ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8

10. Please list any specific measures in this workbook that you have found particularly challenging to collect information about. If you can, briefly tell us why.

11. Please offer any new measures that you have come up with. If at all possible, please let us know which outcome and indicator each could help measure.

12. Please offer any other feedback—good, bad or indifferent—or suggestions concerning this workbook. Or suggest another tool that might help you measure community capacity building.

NAME _____ POSITION/TITLE _____

ORGANIZATION _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ FAX _____

E-MAIL _____