COMMUNITY NETWORK MAPPING MODULE

Community Resilience Toolkit Workbook Section

PURPOSE

This module equips community leaders, Extension professionals, and partners with a practical, step-by-step process for identifying, understanding, and activating existing community networks to strengthen overall community resilience.

Outcome: Participants will leave with a clear map of local relationships, key influencers, and an actionable engagement strategy.

HOW TO USE THIS MODULE

- Ideal for: Workshops (60–120 minutes) or planning sessions
- Group size: 5–25 participants
- Materials needed:
    - Printed worksheets (included below)
    - Sticky notes or index cards
    - Markers
    - Large poster paper or whiteboard

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY NETWORKS

Key Concept

Strong community resilience efforts build on **existing trust networks**, not just formal organizations.

Types of Networks to Identify

- Formal organizations (government, nonprofits, businesses)
- Informal networks (neighborhood leaders, faith groups, volunteers)
- Influencers (people others listen to)
- Connectors (people who link groups together)

SECTION 2: FACILITATED ACTIVITY – NETWORK MAPPING

Activity Overview

Participants will collaboratively map organizations, individuals, and relationships in their community.

Step 1: Brainstorm Community Assets (15 minutes)

Facilitator Instructions: - Ask participants: “Who is already contributing to community well-being, preparedness, problem-solving, or resilience?” - Have each participant write one organization or group per sticky note. - Encourage inclusion of non-obvious actors (e.g., churches, small businesses, civic clubs).

Prompt Questions: - Who do people trust in this community? - Who brings people together? - Who responds during emergencies?

Step 2: Identify Key Individuals (10 minutes)

Facilitator Instructions: - Ask participants to identify individuals within those organizations who have influence. - Add names to the map near each organization.

Prompt Questions: - Who makes decisions? - Who do people listen to? - Who connects different groups?

Step 3: Map Relationships (20 minutes)

Facilitator Instructions: - Draw lines between organizations and individuals who collaborate or communicate. - Use different line types: - Solid line = strong relationship - Dashed line = weak or occasional connection

Facilitator Tip: Look for clusters and isolated groups—these reveal opportunities and gaps.

Step 4: Identify Influence & Gaps (15 minutes)

Facilitator Instructions: - Ask participants to categorize stakeholders using the grid below.

WORKSHEET 1: STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE GRID

Stakeholder Name	Influence (High/Med/Low)	Interest (High/Med/Low)	Role in Community	Notes

Facilitator Guidance: - High Influence + High Interest → **Core Partners** –High Influence + Low Interest → **Strategic Outreach Targets** - Low Influence + High Interest → **Community Champions** - Low Influence + Low Interest → **Monitor**

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY NETWORK INVENTORY

WORKSHEET 2: ORGANIZATION & PARTNER MAPPING

Organization	Mission/Focus	Population Served	Geography	Existing Partnerships	Influence Level

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WORKSHEET 3: KEY INDIVIDUALS & INFLUENCERS

Name	Organization	Role	Trusted By	Influence Level	Connection Opportunities

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SECTION 4: RELATIONSHIP ANALYSIS

WORKSHEET 4: CONNECTION MAPPING

Answer the following:

1. Which organizations collaborate frequently?

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2. Which groups are isolated or disconnected?

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3. Where are there missed partnership opportunities?

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4. Who acts as a bridge between groups?

SECTION 5: ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

WORKSHEET 5: STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Stakeholder	Why They Matter	Engagement Approach	Who Can Introduce You	Value You Offer

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FACILITATOR GUIDANCE: WHAT ACTUALLY WORKS

Do This:

- Start with existing meetings instead of creating new ones
- Use warm introductions whenever possible
- Listen before proposing solutions
- Show immediate value to partners

Avoid This:

- Leading with technical information that does not connect to local priorities
- Assuming formal leaders are the most influential
- Overbuilding complex maps no one uses

SECTION 6: FROM MAPPING TO ACTION

Reflection Questions

- What surprised you about your community network?
- Who is missing from this map?
- What is one relationship you can build in the next 30 days?

ACTION COMMITMENT

Within the next 30 days, I will:

SECTION 7: SCALING FOR BROADER IMPACT

For regional or statewide efforts:

- Standardize this mapping process across communities
- Collect and compare top partners and gaps
- Build a shared network database
- Identify opportunities for cross-community collaboration

FINAL NOTE

Effective community resilience work is not about building new networks, it is about strengthening and connecting the ones that already exist.

Your role is to **identify trust, build relationships, and activate collaboration.**

SECTION 8: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Network Mapping & Community Assets

- Asset-Based Community Development Institute
  https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute
  Strength-based approach to identifying community assets

- Community Toolbox (University of Kansas)
  https://ctb.ku.edu
  Guidance on building partnerships and community networks

Network Visualization & Tools

- Kumu
  https://kumu.io
  Visual mapping of relationships and systems

- Participatory Methods
  https://www.participatorymethods.org
  Tools for inclusive stakeholder mapping

Community Resilience Networks

(End of Module)