

Recognition & Assessment

The recognition of diversity in a community, and the desire to be part of a more Welcoming & Inclusive Community is an important step for a municipality, organization, business, institution, or an individual. This toolkit provides several tools to help determine questions and gather information that will provide direction to understand the unique needs, and set vision, goals and action.

For smaller centres in Saskatchewan - where to begin?

To begin, ask:

- What would a diverse and growing town look like?
- What could immigrants and local Indigenous people contribute to your town?
- What are some ways to attract and welcome newcomers to your town?
- What would keep newcomers here once they arrive?
- What kind of cultural community do you envision?
- Can you imagine the kind of cultural community you want to live or work in?

Here are some questions that may help you think about your community:

- Who lives in your community right now?
- What kinds of diversity already exists?
- What kinds of relationships are established between cultural groups?
- Are the different cultural groups well organized?
- What kind of struggles between cultures exist?
- What kind of struggles within cultural groups exist?
- Are these struggles openly recognized and talked about?
- Are there efforts to build alliances and coalitions between groups?
- What issues do different cultural groups have in common?

Adapted from The Community Toolbox, University of Kansas

Why should you gather information about the problem?

Not everyone loves research. The advantages of having information at your fingertips, however, are enormous. Some of the best rationale for gathering data before, during and after any initiative include:

1. Knowledge. Reality talks. Knowing the facts is a stark way of determining the size of the gap between your vision of a healthy community and the reality in which you live. Gathering information from the time period before your organization got started (also known as baseline data) is an excellent way to show the magnitude of the problem.

2. Awareness leads to change. You can use the statistics you have found to raise community awareness of a number of things: how serious the problem is, how well (or how poorly) your community is doing in relation to other communities or to the nation as a whole, and last but not least, how well your coalition is attacking the problem at hand.

3. Credibility counts. If you are able to talk easily in a casual conversation about the exact numbers of people affected by the issue you are involved in, you come across as knowledgeable, serious and well organized. Writing down those same figures (in greater detail, of course) as part of a grant application or project summary for potential funders and evaluators says that you are a well-run group who can get the job done.

Identify possible sources of information

There are many different places where you can find relevant information, depending on your topic. Some of them include:

- Social Media and the internet
- Statistics Canada www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/start Home of the Census
- Sask Trends Monitor: It tracks social, economic, and demographic trends in Saskatchewan. www.sasktrends.ca

Diversity Lens For Assessment

The following are key areas to be considered when assessing diversity within your organization (programs, services, policy and planning).

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Awareness			
Are people aware of the organization, what it does and for whom?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
How do you know?			_____
<hr style="border-top: 1px dotted #ccc;"/>			
Perceptions			
Is this for them or for others?			_____
What is the image and reputation of the organization and those who work or volunteer for it?			_____
Is it safe, accepting, welcoming?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Is the organization willing to make changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<hr style="border-top: 1px dotted #ccc;"/>			
Access			
Can people easily access information, programs or services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Are you actively reducing barriers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<hr style="border-top: 1px dotted #ccc;"/>			
Relevancy			
Are the information, programs and services of interest, relevant and meaningful to diverse audiences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
How are you making the connection to have more diverse participation and to continue with current diversity in your customers, members and stakeholders?			_____

Engagement	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Are there opportunities for engagement and a sense of openness for involvement at all levels in your organization?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<hr/>			
Relationship and Reciprocity	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Do you consider the value of a mutually beneficial relationship?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Do you respect your role and others in this relationship?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Is there reciprocity in this relationship and does it open other doors for all involved?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<hr/>			
Contribution to Next Steps	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Can diverse participation contribute to the future of the organization?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Will diversity be reflected in programs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Will leadership be developed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Will there be ways for new people to shape the future?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Will the organization use what it learns from diversity and adapt itself as it learns?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Diversity Assessment Tool developed by Flo Frank for SaskCulture

Analysis of Assessment / Key

Ask these questions:

1. Where do you see gaps?
2. What are the strengths and limitations of these activities?
3. What are the organization’s key target areas/groups? (E.g. cultural diversity, Indigenous people, newcomers, ages, abilities, sexual diversity, etc.)

COMMENTS

The City of Yorkton worked with Jezer Paro, a newcomer from the Philippines. He was a lifeguard before moving to Canada, but needed to upgrade his credentials through \$1000 worth of training in order to be eligible to work as a lifeguard. The City of Yorkton saw this need and decided to offer financial support through a Sask Parks and Recreation Association Leadership Grant, training in flexible times at venues accessible to all the participants of the training, in the area – a perfect example of an effort to remove barriers of cost, timing and language. Twelve participants enrolled in the first course. The City of Yorkton is looking forward to welcoming Jezer as one of its lifeguard this summer (2017).

Submitted by the City of Yorkton