



# **THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET: PRACTICAL TOOLS & TIPS IN CONDUCTING A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**

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## **RAISE YOUR HAND IF ...**

- **You have conducted a community assessment before?**
- **You plan to conduct a community assessment in the future?**

## **ON A SCALE OF 1-5 ...**

- **Do you feel like you have a decent grasp on how to conduct a full-scale community assessment?  
(1=No grasp, 5=I know what i'm doing!)**

# WHAT IS A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT?

“...gives organizations comprehensive information about the community’s current health status, needs, and issues. This information can help develop a community health improvement plan by justifying how and where resources should be allocated to best meet community needs.” - CDC

“A systematic process involving the community to identify and analyze community health needs and assets, prioritize those needs and then implement a plan to address significant unmet needs” - Catholic Health Association of the United States

“...to have reliable data to identify problems most detrimental to our community” - United Way

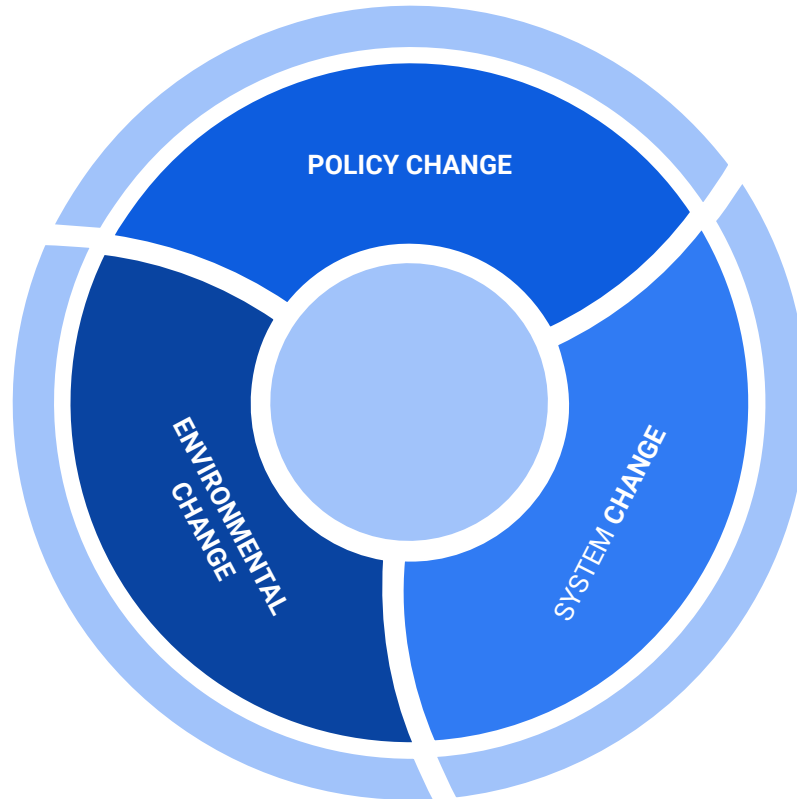
# WHAT IS A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT?

**A comprehensive review of community data, stakeholder feedback, policies, and strategies to ultimately identify positive themes within a population or community and areas for future improvement.**

## **A Note on Community Assessments:**

- Remove language around “need”
- Can be as complicated or as simple as you want them to be
- Do not let them overwhelm you
- A lesson in project management
- Do not go at it alone

# WHY IS AN ASSESSMENT IMPORTANT TO US AS EVALUATORS, RESEARCHERS, AND STORYTELLERS?



# Today's Session:

- **Icebreaker**
- **The Anatomy of a Community Assessment & Exercise**
- **A Call to Action & Sustaining the Knowledge**
- **Questions**

*\*\* Practical Tips and Tricks sprinkled throughout and noted by the large, gray box on slides and in handouts \*\**

# ACTIVE LISTENING ICEBREAKER

**Find your card match - 3 minutes per person**

- Your Name
- Your Organization
- Who is in your community?(define *community* as you see fit)
- What makes your community special to you?
- If you could change something about your community, what would it be?

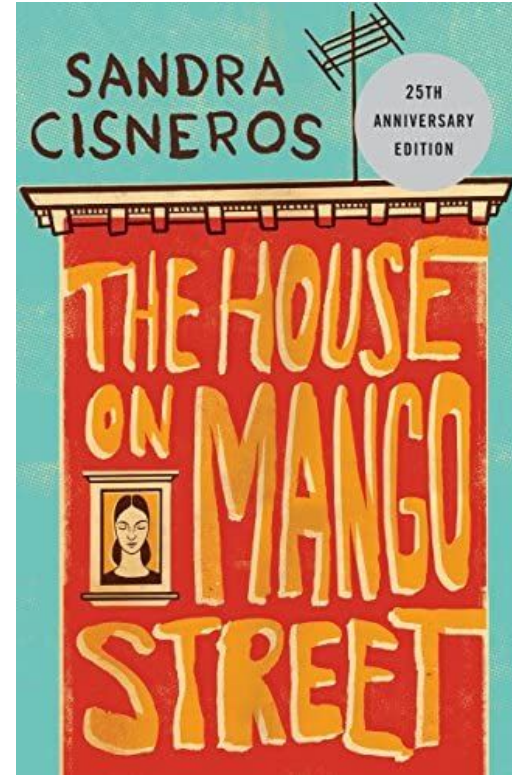
**LISTEN TO UNDERSTAND**  
**NOT TO RESPOND**

# THE ANATOMY OF A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

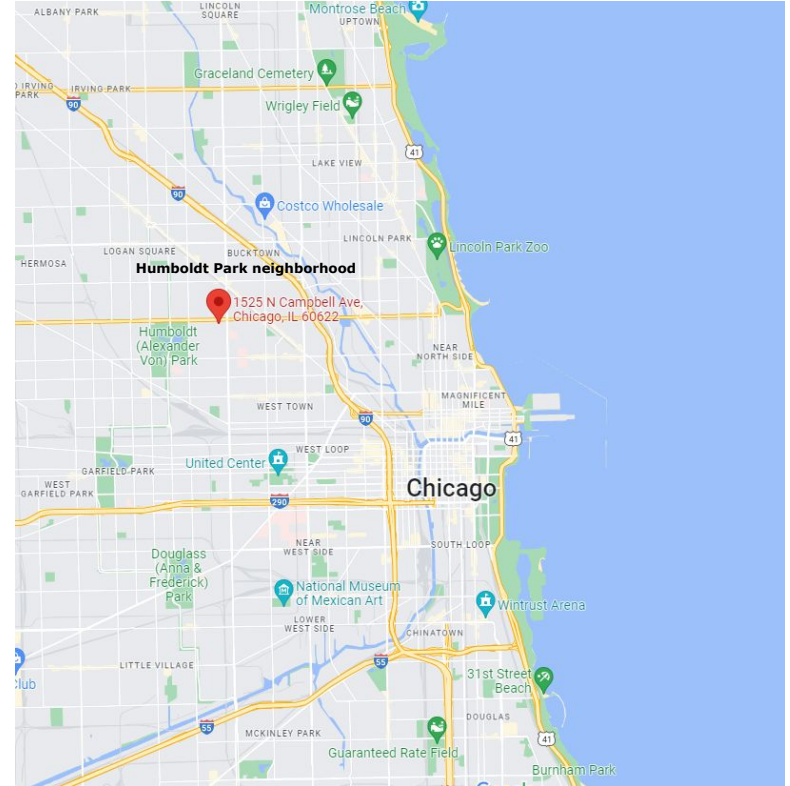


# A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT EXAMPLE: THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET BY SANDRA CISNEROS

- Set in the 1960's, story is of Esperanza Cordero living between two cultures in a Chicago neighborhood
- Book explores themes of adolescence, identity, culture, belonging
- Esperanza's story takes place mainly in her neighborhood - the street with her friends, a back porch, a junk shop, a backyard tree, school



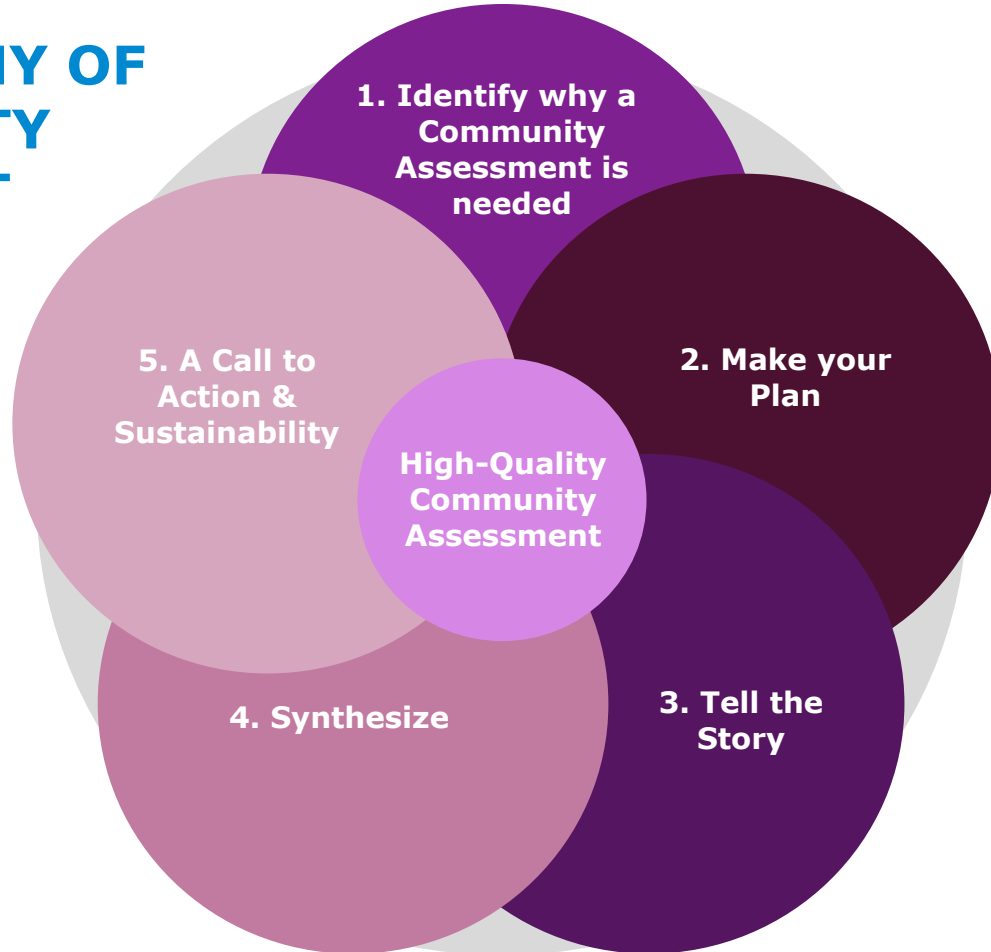
# A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT EXAMPLE: THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET BY SANDRA CISNEROS



## **EXERCISE:**

- **Identify a community you would like to assess, or are in the process of assessing**
  - Can be any community or population
- **Write your community down on your “Community Assessment Plan Protocol” document**
- **We’ll complete the different sections of this document as we go through the anatomy process**

# THE ANATOMY OF A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT



# 1. IDENTIFY WHY AN ASSESSMENT IS NEEDED

- **What is motivating the assessment?**
  - Capacity and bandwidth
  - Timing
  - Scope and reach
- **What has been discussed around assessment goals?**
- **Who are the major players?**

## **EXERCISE: IDENTIFY WHY AN ASSESSMENT IS NEEDED**

- **What community and why?**
- **What is motivating the assessment?**
- **What has been discussed around assessment goals?**

## HOUSE ON MANGO STREET EXAMPLE: IDENTIFY WHY AN ASSESSMENT IS NEEDED

- **Community:** Humboldt Park, Chicago, IL
- **What is motivating the assessment?**
  - Violence in Esperanza's community
- **What has been discussed around assessment goals?**
  - None
- **Who are the major players?**
  - None identified thus far

## 2. MAKE YOUR PLAN

- **Outline Assessment Goals**
  - 3 goals is an ideal number, however you may have more or less
- **Identify your Scope**
  - Community: Geographically, but could also be a specific population
- **Anticipated barriers, limitations**
- **Identify your Stakeholders**
  - Internal to your organization
  - External to your organization
- **Prepare a Timeline for Deliverables**

**TIP:** Your stakeholders are possibly the most important component to this process! Do not underestimate the stakeholders who are or will become a part of this process.



## EXERCISE: MAKE YOUR PLAN

- **Outline Assessment Goals**

- 3 goals is an ideal number, however you may have more or less

## HOUSE ON MANGO STREET EXAMPLE: MAKE YOUR PLAN

- **Outline Assessment Goals**
  - Identify geographical areas of high violence in HP community
  - Identify current strategies for decreasing community violence
  - Identify areas for improvement in decreasing community violence, specifically in *hot spot* areas
- **Identify your Scope**
  - Humboldt Park geographical area only
  - Focus on violence

### 3. TELL THE STORY

- **Mine the knowledge of your stakeholders**
- **Primary Data Collection**
  - Surveys
  - Focus Groups
  - Key Stakeholder Interviews
- **Secondary Data Collection**
  - Reports
  - Local non-profits and other stakeholders in the community or whom work closely with the assessment population
- **Other Collection Methods:**
  - Observational data

**TIP:** Make sub-plans for each data collection / storytelling component

# TELL YOUR STORY: RESOURCES

## Publicly Available Data Sources:

- [CMAP](#)
- [Chicago Health Atlas](#), [Heartland Alliance Chicago Community Portal](#)
- [American Community Survey](#)
- [Statistical Atlas](#)
- [Chapin Hall Chicago Needs Assessment Tool](#)
- Y-USA Community Insight Tool

## Survey Creation & Data Viz Tools (all free):

- [Hemingway Editor](#) - 8th grade reading level preferred, 5th grade ideal
- [Google Forms Add-ons](#) (for those without a paid survey software)
- [Google Data Studio for Data Visualization](#)

## Equitable Evaluation / Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Tools for Interviews and Focus Groups:

- [TIC Checklist](#)

## 4. SYNTHESIZE

- Always revisit your timeline of deliverables - will reduce feelings of overwhelmingness, adjust as needed
- Create a draft report with the different sections laid out
  - Populate as you go (if you can)
- Identify a Primary and Secondary

**TIP:** If possible, synthesize data as you go through the process instead of waiting until the end. Additionally, community assessments are perfect opportunities for interns or students to be a part of.

**A CALL TO ACTION &  
SUSTAINING OUR  
KNOWLEDGE**

## 5. A CALL TO ACTION & SUSTAINABILITY

### A CALL TO ACTION

*(Part I: Immediately after the assessment)*

- If you could go before the strongest leader of your community, what would you want them to know?
- What would you want them to do?
- Who would you most want them to impact?

### SUSTAINING KNOWLEDGE

*(Part II: 1-12 months post assessment, dependent on assessment type)*

- Is this process one that needs to be revisited? If yes, what cadence?
- Who can be your eyes / ears when you are not fully immersed in the community?
- How can your organization / influence positively impact the community?

# THANK YOU

# QUESTIONS?

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