



Community Foundation Assessment Tool

General Instructions: This tool is to be used in an interactive manner. Its use will have to be tailored to the local context in each situation, but the following methodology is suggested:

- Convene a group representative of the different stakeholders from within the foundation, including the executive director, senior staff and board members.
- Give a clear presentation of the process, the products and the expected outcome of this exercise.
- Insure them that this discussion is completely confidential and will be used exclusively as a resource for them and the information collected through this process will not be shared with any individual or group outside of their institution.
- Present the questions in a discussion-oriented format.
- Encourage the participants to discuss their answers and to come to a consensus about which answer is most correct and why.
- Communicate to them that there is no **correct** or **incorrect** answer to these questions. This tool is only useful if it helps them to better understand how their organization functions and where they should focus their energies to strengthen their institution.
- Present each section separately. Give them a broad overview of the section and explain why this section is important.
- Allow the group to discuss their reactions and impressions after completing each section.
- Take notes of their discussion on a flip chart and at the end of each section review the notes to follow-up any particularly interesting points.

Process: The tool is divided into two sections: a baseline data section and a self-assessment section. The baseline data section seeks primarily objective, quantitative data, whereas the self-assessment section seeks more subjective, discussion-oriented responses. The baseline data section is not included in the aggregate scoring function used in the rest of the tool.

Participants should review each of the statements in each section and select the most appropriate response: *True, Mostly True, Occasionally True, Never True* or *Don't Know*.

Scoring: The tool is designed to be used with a computer-based scoring system. In this system, each response (True/Mostly True/Occasionally True/Never True) is assigned a value, and these are aggregated and represented visually for each section. Participants can then view a complete picture of the foundation's strengths and challenges as they are perceived by the respondents.

The tool can be used directly on a computer, where the values will be automatically computed and represented in visual form. Alternatively, administrators may fill out a paper form of the tool and input the responses electronically at a later date.

Product: A report about the perceived areas of institutional strength and weakness.

Expected Outcome: A plan for addressing the priority institutional strengthening needs within the institution.

BASELINE DATA FOR COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

This section of the Community Foundation Assessment Tool seeks to collect basic quantitative information about the foundation. Responses in this section are not included in the aggregate scoring function used in the rest of the tool.

Structure of the Foundation

1. Departments or areas of the foundation (name and # of staff in each of them)	
2. Total number of foundation staff	
3. During the past year, has the foundation invested in building the capacity of its staff?	
3a. If yes, how?	
3b. If yes, how many staff members participated in capacity building activities?	

Programs

4. What programs is the foundation currently running? (Name and very brief description)	
---	--

Budget

5. What is the size of the foundation's budget?	
7. How is the budget allocated? (%)	
Administration	
Program	
Grants	
Services	
Other	

Resource Mobilization	
<i>These questions are reflected later in the diagnostic tool, section 4.3: funding sources.</i>	
8. What percentage of the foundation's total resources are mobilized from the following sources?	
From Local Sources	
Earned income/fees	
Corporate contributions	
Donations from individuals	
Income from the endowment	
Grants or contracts from the government	
Other	
9. From International Sources	
Official Development Assistance	
Corporate contributions	
Donations from individuals	
Grants from foundations	
Grants from NGOs	
Grants from bi- and multilaterals	
Other	
Endowment	
10. Size of the foundation's endowment	
Grants	
<i>These questions are reflected later in the diagnostic tool, section 2.1.2: Grantmaking policies and grants administration procedures</i>	
11. Number of grant applications received in previous year	
12. Number of grants approved in previous year	
13. Total amount given as grants in previous year	
Publications	
14. Has the foundation developed any publications during the past year? If yes, which ones?	
14a. If yes, how many were disseminated in the past year?	
Website	
15. Does the foundation have an institutional website?	
15a. If yes, how many hits did it get during the past year?	

Grantmaking	
# of grant applications received yearly	
# of grant applications approved yearly	
Amount (\$) given as grants yearly	
% of budget destined to grants	

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

1. Governance

This section is designed to address the primary issues related to the foundation's core capacities: governance, strategic planning and general operations. The questions in this section address the capacity and role of the foundation's board, the degree and effectiveness of strategic within the foundation and the basic operational capacities of the institution.

1.1 Organizational Purpose	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation has a written vision statement that articulates, broadly, what the organization seeks to achieve in the world.					Don't Know
The foundation has a written mission statement that states what the organization does, its values, and its purpose.					Don't Know
The mission has been approved by the board.					Don't Know
The mission is known and understood by the staff.					Don't Know
The mission is understood by partners, donors, and other community members.					Don't Know
The mission is communicated to the public.					Don't Know
The foundation has an up-to-date annual strategic plan.					Don't Know
The foundation's strategic plan translates the vision and mission into specific goals, objectives, and activities.					Don't Know
The strategic plan was developed with the leadership of the board, the participation of the staff, and consultations with the community.					Don't Know
The strategic plan is periodically reviewed and adjusted as needed.					Don't Know
The foundation has written goals that define what the organization is trying to achieve within a specific, limited time period.					Don't Know
The foundation's goals support the mission.					Don't Know
The foundation conducts an annual evaluation of progress in meeting its goals.					Don't Know
1.2 Board roles and capacity	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation is governed by a voluntary board of directors that meets regularly.					Don't Know
The roles and responsibilities of board members are clearly articulated and understood by the board members.					Don't Know
Board members have a clear understanding of the community foundation model.					
The role played by the board is primarily one of active leadership rather than operational management.					Don't Know
The board recruits, selects, and employs the foundation's Executive Director.					Don't Know
The board actively monitors progress toward strategic goals.					Don't Know
The board plays an active role in mobilizing financial resources for the foundation.					Don't Know
The board provides strategic feedback with regard to achieving the organization's goals.					Don't Know
Board members contribute a diverse range of skills and specializations to the foundation, including management, legal, and public relations expertise.					Don't Know
The composition of the board represents the diversity of the foundation's community.					Don't Know
The Board conducts periodic self-evaluation.					

1.3 Board systems and structures	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation's board is elected and convened according to a set of written bylaws/policies.					Don't Know
The foundation's board has adopted a written code of ethics that includes a conflict of interest policy.					Don't Know
Board members form sub-committees to focus on specific needs of the foundation (such as resource mobilization, development, grants, investment, communications etc.).					Don't Know
Term limits and nomination procedures for board members are defined and observed.					Don't Know
The foundation conducts an evaluation of out-going board members to assess their performance during their term.					Don't Know

2. Staff/Administration					
2.1 Operations and human resources	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation is managed according to an established set of policies and procedures.					Don't Know
The foundation has a full-time, paid executive director.					Don't Know
The foundation has an adequate number of paid staff and volunteers to achieve Foundation goals.					Don't Know
The foundation has adequate office space.					Don't Know
The foundation's staff possess the skills needed to meet the organization's goals.					Don't Know
The individual roles and responsibilities of staff members are articulated and understood.					Don't Know
Periodic reviews of staff performance are conducted.					Don't Know
The results of performance reviews inform staff development and professional growth plans.					Don't Know
There are frequent opportunities for staff training and development.					Don't Know
We have adequate expertise in the following areas:					
operations					Don't Know
management					Don't Know
programs					Don't Know
communications					Don't Know
finance/investment and administration					Don't Know
resource mobilization/fundraising					Don't Know
Staff and management work according to an established action plan or workplan that details what is to be done, by when, how, and by whom in order to meet the goals.					Don't Know
Discussion Questions:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants to discuss their general impressions of the foundation as a result of answering these questions. • Are there any obvious conclusions that can be drawn from the responses? • Follow-up any key comments that were made during this session. 					

3. Programs, Grantmaking, Convening					
This section focuses on the role of the foundation as a grantmaker, as a capacity-building resource for non-governmental organizations and as a community leader.					
3.1 Community Knowledge and Outreach	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The Foundation conducts a needs/assets map within the last three years.					
The Foundation confers with local stakeholders on grant-making priorities.					
3.2 Grantmaking	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
In the past year, "grantmaking" has been a key component of the foundation's activities.					Don't Know
The grantmaking program reflects the strategic priorities of the foundation.					Don't Know
The grantmaking guidelines reflect strategic development priorities in the community.					Don't Know
The Foundation adjusts program priorities to respond to changing community needs.					Don't Know
The board is actively engaged in the decision-making process related to grantmaking.					Don't Know
Grantmaking program targets border and cross border issues					Don't Know
3.3 Grantmaking policies and grants administration procedures	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation has established clear and efficient internal financial policies and procedures pertaining to the grantmaking program.					Don't Know
The foundation has established clear financial policies and procedures pertaining to the use of granted funds.					Don't Know
The application requirements for grantees are clear and public.					Don't Know
Community leaders participate in the grant decision-making process that is transparent and public.					Don't Know
The Foundation's budget for grantmaking has increased in the past year.					
Community leaders participate in grant-making decisions.					Don't Know
3.4 Monitoring and evaluation systems and procedures	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The Community Foundation has clearly identified the goals (expected outcomes and impact) of its programs.					Don't Know
The Community foundation has clear monitoring and evaluation policies and activities of the grantmaking process.					Don't Know
The foundation has clear monitoring and evaluation policies and activities of the impact of its programs.					Don't Know
The foundation maintains clear reporting requirements for grantees.					Don't Know
The foundation's beneficiaries are actively engaged in the design, implementation and monitoring/evaluation of the Foundation's programs.					Don't Know
The foundation supports grantees in their efforts to evaluate their work.					Don't Know

Convening					
3.5 Capacity-Building for Grantees	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation has a process for identifying the capacity-building needs of its grantees.					Don't Know
The foundation has a specific financial resources dedicated to providing technical assistance to grantee organizations.					Don't Know
Training is a key component of our programs with our grantees					Don't Know
The foundation has access to a variety of technical assistance providers in the diverse areas related to the needs of our grantees.					Don't Know
The foundation has a clear and effective system for evaluating the results and impact of capacity-building activities.					Don't Know
Discussion Questions:					
• What other program areas is the foundation is implementing?					
3.6 Intersectoral relations	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation has a plan for playing a leadership role in the community.					Don't Know
The foundation is recognized as a leader in convening stakeholders from multiple sectors of society for dialogue and collaborative efforts (business/corporate, academia, government, nongovernmental, civil society)					Don't Know
The foundation possesses thorough data about the non-profit sector in its country or region.					Don't Know
The foundation maintains relationships with the media.					Don't Know
3.7 Social change	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation seeks to address root causes of social problems					Don't Know
The foundation bases its actions on a social change model.					Don't Know
The foundation has identified and built assets in the community					Don't Know

4. Financial Sustainability					
This section addresses the issues of financial planning, resource mobilization, and financial administration and accountability.					
4.1 Financial planning	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation has a written annual budget that guides the use of our financial resources.					Don't Know
The foundation has a anual financial plan for mobilization and allocation of funds.					Don't Know
There are policies in place to guide the creation, approval and review of the financial plan and budget.					Don't Know
There are systems in place to operationalize the creation, approval and review of the financial plan and budget.					Don't Know
The foundation's board of directors has a procedure and schedule for the review and approval of the budget.					Don't Know
The foundation can accurately predict income for the coming year.					Don't Know
The foundation has contingency plans in place in case projected financial resources fail to materialize.					Don't Know
The foundation has sufficient reserves to maintain operations in case of crisis (e.g. a shortfall in projected revenues or an overage in expenditures).					Don't Know
If yes, for how many months could the foundation maintain its current level of operations if it were solely dependent on these reserves?					Don't Know
The foundation is taking concrete measures to augmt its reserves.					Don't Know
4.2 Resource mobilization	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation has developed a fundraising plan that guides its resource mobilization activities.					Don't Know
The foundation's fundraising plan has clear goals, strategies and roles for staff and board members.					Don't Know
The foundation has human resources devoted specifically to fundraising.					Don't Know
The foundation's fundraising staff has the necessary skills and experience to raise the projected funds.					Don't Know
The foundation has support systems (e.g. databases...) to aid in the mobilization of resources.					Don't Know
The foundation has allocated enough financial resources to raise the projected funds.					Don't Know
The foundation's board is actively involved in mobilizing resources.					Don't Know
The board makes contributions to the foundation					Don't Know
The foundation seeks funds for border or cross-border projects					Don't Know

4.3 Funding sources	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation raises funds from the following sources (please write "yes" or "no" beside each source type and answer "true," "mostly true," "occasionally," or "never" for each category):					
Individual Donors: Local (); regional (); national (); international ()					Don't Know
National foundations					Don't Know
International foundations					Don't Know
Government: Local (); State (); Federal ()					
Private sector organizations: Local (); national (); international ()					Don't Know
Multilateral Agencies					Don't Know
Other					
The number of donors in each of these categories has increased since last year.					Don't Know
The foundation has experience with:					
Direct mail					Don't Know
Special event fundraising					Don't Know
Earned income					Don't Know
Grantwriting					Don't Know
The foundation's institutional viability IS NOT dependent upon the continued support of a few large donors.					Don't Know
In the past year the foundation has taken measures to diversify its funding sources.					Don't Know
The foundation has taken measures to increase sources from the community					
If yes, these measures have been successful.					Don't Know
The foundation carries out systematic research on potential donors.					Don't Know
4.4 Cost-benefit analysis of fundraising	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation invests in fundraising.					Don't Know
The foundation carries out a thorough analysis of the costs of fundraising.					Don't Know
The costs of conducting fundraising are taken into account when developing a fundraising plan.					Don't Know
4.5 Financial transparency and accountability	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation has written operational procedures addressing financial management and accounting.					Don't Know
Accounting records are kept up to date and balanced on a monthly basis.					Don't Know
The foundation has a bookkeeping and accounting system that tracks all movements of funds.					Don't Know
The foundation has staff members that are knowledgeable and trained on the bookkeeping and accounting system.					Don't Know
The foundation prepares and makes available an annual report that includes financial, programmatic and service information.					Don't Know
The board regularly monitors the foundation finances.					Don't Know
The board is aware of the finance responsibility					
The foundation's financial statements are audited annually by an independent professional.					Don't Know
The foundation's board reviews and formally approves the auditor's report and ensures that the management acts on any recommendations.					Don't Know

4.6 Endowment building & management	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation has an endowment fund.					Don't Know
The foundation has an endowment building plan.					Don't Know
The foundation's endowment building plan includes prospect identification, cultivation and solicitation strategies, responsibilities and timelines.					Don't Know
The foundation has trained and experienced human resources to plan and run its endowment building campaign.					Don't Know
The foundation's board is actively involved in the endowment building process.					Don't Know
Our board participates in publicizing the endowment campaign.					Don't Know
The foundation has internal policies and procedures in place to manage and invest the endowment.					Don't Know
The foundation has staff members with the skills needed to manage the endowment.					Don't Know
The foundation has board members with skills in endowment building investment and management.					Don't Know
4.7 Donor services	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation understands the emphasis on serving donors.					Don't Know
The foundation helps donors to articulate the values and priorities that are important to them and design grantmaking / investment processes that satisfy those goals.					Don't Know
The foundation helps families pass their philanthropic commitment from one generation to the next					Don't Know
The foundation presents flexible options to donors, including various types of funds, ways in which gifts can be made, and degrees of involvement.					Don't Know
The foundation provides donors with the degree of public recognition (as far as possible) or anonymity that they desire.					Don't Know
The foundation communicates regularly with donors about their funds and gifts.					Don't Know
The foundation develops policies and procedures (such as gift acceptance) that are readily available to donors and the public.					Don't Know
The foundation maintains appropriate records of every gift received.					Don't Know
The foundation conducts evaluations of donor satisfaction.					Don't Know

5. Communications					
	True (4)	Mostly True (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Don't Know
The foundation has a clearly articulated mission statement.					Don't Know
The foundation's niche within the community is clearly understood by the public.					Don't Know
The foundation is perceived by the community to have important and impactful programs.					Don't Know
The foundation is perceived as a critical resource within the community.					Don't Know
The foundation conducts outreach to the following constituencies:					
Individual Donors: Local (); regional (); national (); international ()					Don't Know
National foundations					Don't Know
International foundations					Don't Know
Government: Local (); State (); Federal ()					Don't Know
Private sector organizations: Local (); national (); international ()					Don't Know
Multilateral Agencies					
Other					Don't Know
The foundation's communications strategies, tools and activities are designed:					
To increase the visibility of the foundation, its mission, its programs					Don't Know
To raise funds					Don't Know
To increase philanthropy					Don't Know
To promote the activities/mission of the foundation					Don't Know
The foundation has a recognized logo.					Don't Know
The foundation has trained communications staff.					Don't Know
The foundation has a written communications plan.					Don't Know
The foundation produces the following communications materials:					
Annual Report					Don't Know
Brochures					Don't Know
Bulletins					Don't Know
Newsletters					Don't Know
Website					Don't Know
The foundation has a strategy for distributing these materials.					Don't Know
In the past year, foundation staff has participated in regional, national and/or international conferences.					Don't Know
In the past year, foundation staff has played a featured role in regional, national and/or international conferences.					Don't Know
In the past year, foundation staff has participated in meetings related to philanthropy and social development.					Don't Know
The foundation maintains relationships with print and broadcast media.					Don't Know
The foundation actively participates in coalitions and alliances (inter-sectoral, sectoral).					
The foundation shares knowledge with other foundations.					Don't Know

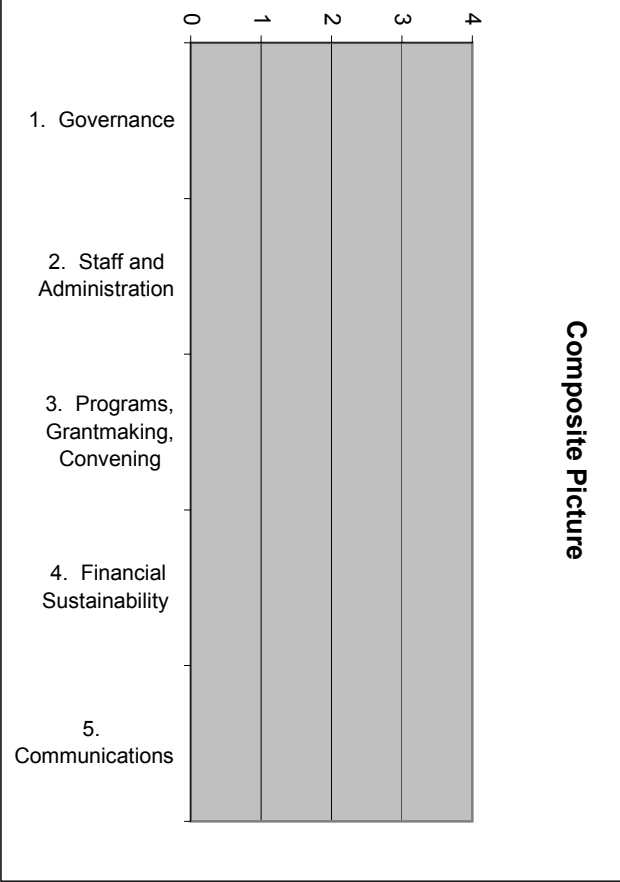
	Average	Total	# Boxes
1. Governance			
1.1 Organizational Purpose			
1.2 Board roles and capacity			
1.3 Board systems and structures			
2. Staff and Administration			
2.1 Operations and human resources			
3. Programs, Grantmaking, Convening			
3.1 Community Knowledge and Outreach			
3.2 Grantmaking			
3.3 Grantmaking Policies/Procedures			
3.4 Monitoring & Evaluation			
3.5 Capacity Building for Grantees			
3.6 Intersectoral Relations			
3.7 Social Change			
4. Financial Sustainability			
4.1 Financial planning			
4.2 Resource mobilization			
4.3 Funding sources			
4.4 Cost-benefit analysis of fundraising			
4.5 Financial transparency and accountability			
4.6 Endowment building & management			
4.7 Donor services			
5. Communications			

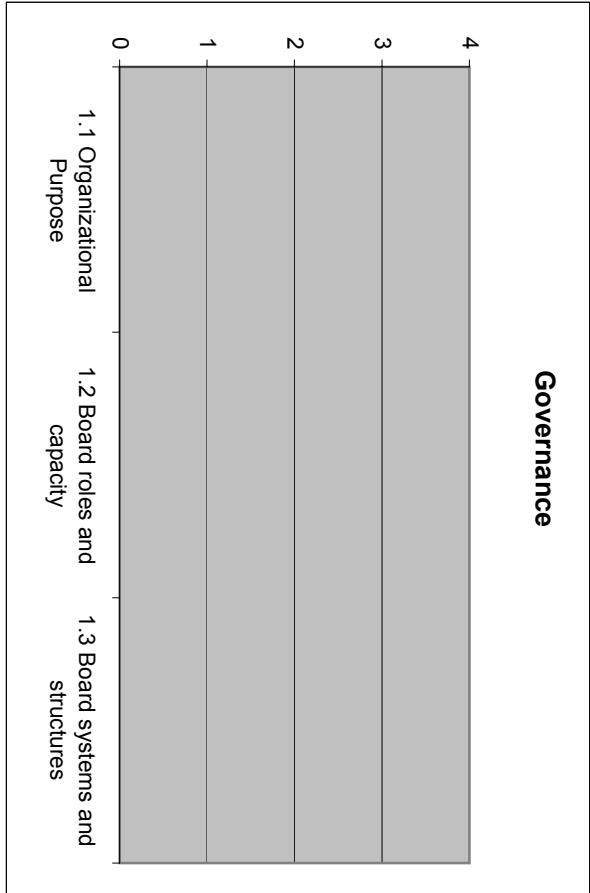
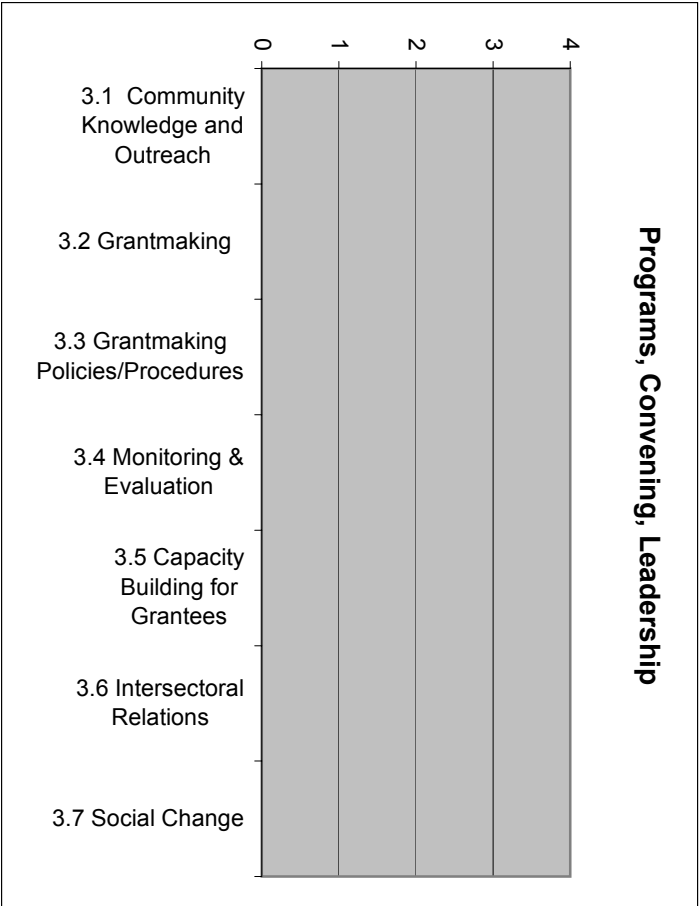
- 1. Governance**
- 2. Staff and Administration**
- 3. Programs, Grantmaking, Convening**
- 4. Financial Sustainability**
- 5. Communications**

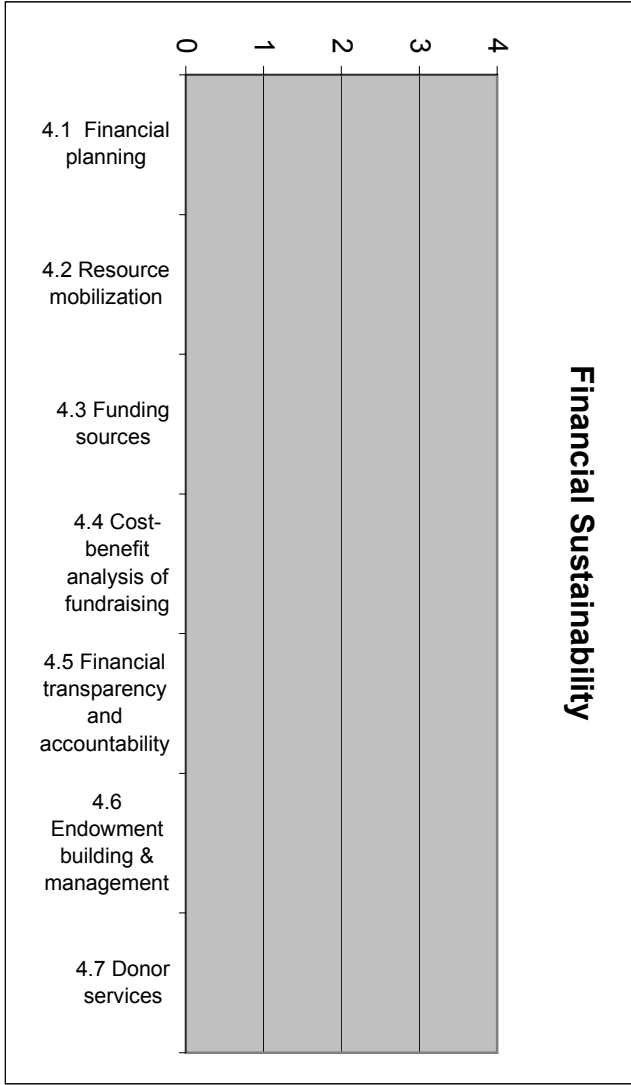
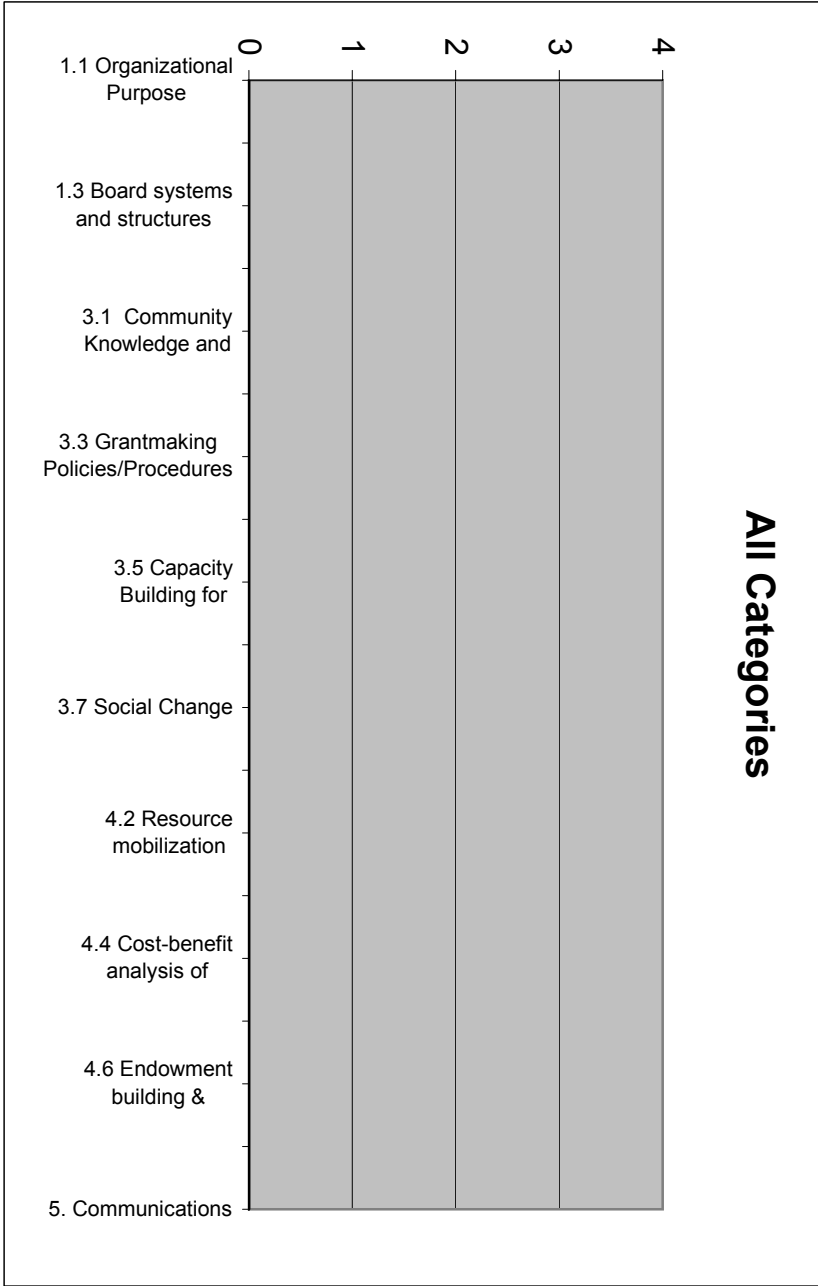
- 1.1 Organizational Purpose**
- 1.2 Board roles and capacity**
- 1.3 Board systems and structures**
- 2.1 Operations and human resources**
- 3.1 Community Knowledge and Outreach**
- 3.2 Grantmaking**
- 3.3 Grantmaking Policies/Procedures**
- 3.4 Monitoring & Evaluation**
- 3.5 Capacity Building for Grantees**
- 3.6 Intersectoral Relations**
- 3.7 Social Change**
- 4.1 Financial planning**
- 4.2 Resource mobilization**
- 4.3 Funding sources**
- 4.4 Cost-benefit analysis of fundraising**
- 4.5 Financial transparency and accountability**
- 4.6 Endowment building & management**
- 4.7 Donor services**
- 5. Communications**

- 1.1 Organizational Purpose**
- 1.2 Board roles and capacity**
- 1.3 Board systems and structures**
- 1.4 Operations and human resources**
- 2.1.0 Grantmaking**
- 2.1.1 Sources of Grantmaking Funds**
- 2.1.2 Grantmaking policies / grants administration**
- 2.1.3 Monitoring & evaluation systems**
- 2.2 Capacity-Building for Grantees**
- 3.1 Intersectoral relations**
- 3.2 Social change**
- 4.1 Financial planning**
- 4.2 Resource mobilization**
- 4.3 Funding sources**
- 4.4 Cost-benefit analysis of fundraising**
- 4.5 Financial transparency and accountability**
- 4.6 Endowment building & management**
- 4.7 Donor services**
- 5. Communications**

|







REFERENCES

The Community Foundation Assessment Tool was created by a team of Synergos program staff members who drew from a number of rich resources on self-assessment and evaluation . These included:

- Self-Assessment Workbook: Organizational Standards, Volume One. Consuelo Zobel Alger Foundation, 2000.
- Effective Capacity Building in Nonprofit Organizations. Venture Philanthropy Partners, 2001.
- Discussion-Oriented Self-Assessment (DOSAs). Beryl Levinger and Evan Bloom, 1997.
- Reflections: Assessing Community Foundation Practice (Draft Version). Community Foundations of Canada, 2002.