

Abstract

Harnessing the power of the community voice to influence systemwide change creates an environment where collaboration is possible and increases the utility of the evaluation. Through integrating multiple participatory practices, stakeholders identify the most relevant evaluation questions, improve the accuracy of data collection, and localize the results of findings to inform adaptations or refinements to existing programs or strategies. This poster displays the results of a mixed-methods approach used across nine communities by Habitat for Humanity organizations and their coalition partners to systematically improve outcomes of place-based initiatives through a series of continuous feedback loops.

Since 2018, Habitat for Humanity organizations have partnered with neighborhood partners to systematically improve the outcomes of place-based initiatives through a variety of feedback mechanisms. The objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Garner if communities' feedback could be systematized, documented and transparent using a feedback loop process.
- Identify how technology can enhance or impede the documentation and transparency of feedback loop processes.

Methodology

A four-phase process was implemented to co-design the feedback loop prototype.

Phase 1: Design

- Conduct literature review.
- Set up communication and information sharing structure.
- Develop rubric.

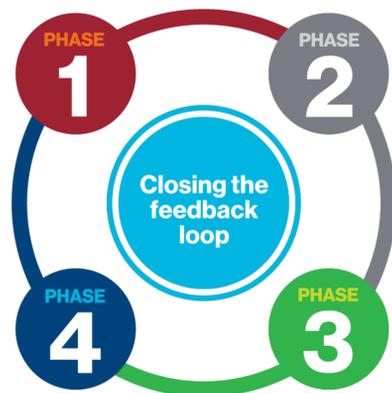
Phase 2: Implement

- Conduct key informant interviews.
- Conduct trainings.
- Set up technology.
- Create community of practice protocol.

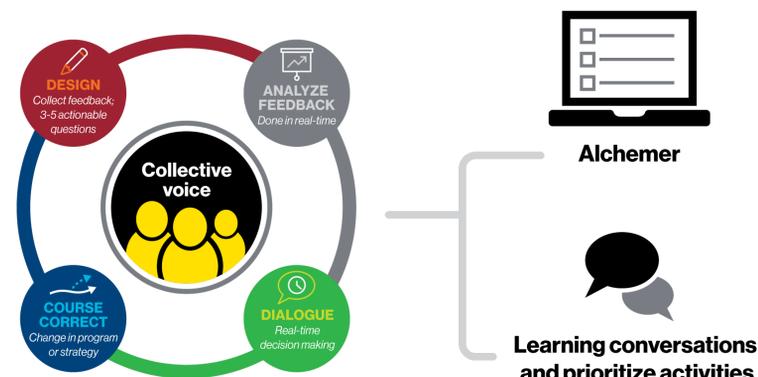
- Synthesize data.
- Create dialogue with communities.
- Co-design appropriate feedback mechanisms.

Phase 3: Monitor

- Monitor feedback loop integration and adaptations (rubric).
- Monitor the level of resident engagement.



Culturally appropriate feedback mechanisms were co-designed.



The selected technology provided the ability to provide real-time feedback and included Alcherm.

Results

Two indicators demonstrate that the feedback loop process is driving community decision-making and revitalization efforts:

- Indicator 1 — Strong core of resident participation who are helping to plan or implement place-based strategies (see Table 1).
- Indicator 2 — Change in the openness of conversations, signaling a different relationship between residents and partner agencies (see Figure 1).
- Coalitions with stronger infrastructures in place were better equipped to shift their work based on the global pandemic.¹

TABLE 1. Indicator 1 — Strong core of resident participation

Neighborhood name; city, state	Average number of residents (2018)	Average number of residents (2019)	Average number of residents (COVID, 2020)
8twelve Coalition ¹ ; Muncie, Indiana	4	10	8
Brewerytown/Sharswood; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	2	10	11
The Pride of the Glens; Dacono, Colorado	8	9	8
Larimer Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	9	—	—
McComb-Veazey Coterie Lafayette, Louisiana	—	—	—
Southwood Mobile Home Park; Charlottesville, Virginia	15	7	13
Wall Street; Berkeley County, South Carolina	13	8	5
Washington Neighborhood; Long Beach, California	13	9	8
Westside and Morningside; Pittsfield, Massachusetts	13	9	10

Since the global pandemic, many of the communities have shifted to informal feedback loop processes using multiple virtual platforms.

FIGURE 1. Indicator 2 — Change in the openness of conversations and the integration of the feedback loop methodology



Conclusion

Seven communities used the feedback loop methodology to leverage the community voice, based on culturally responsive communications and coalition capacity. As communities began to develop their processes, they created multilingual feedback mechanisms to ensure community residents could participate. Multilingual feedback mechanisms were incorporated to refine place-based work based on residents' input using the following formats:



When used effectively, feedback loops:

- Changed the power dynamic structure in the communities and moved typical community conversations toward actions based on residents' feedback. Partner agencies shifted from informing residents of programs that will occur to receiving residents' insights on what matters most to them and co-creating place-based initiatives.
- Can improve the outcomes of place-based initiatives through a series of continuous feedback loops that are culturally appropriate and data-informed.

LIMITATIONS: Staff changes, language barriers, cultural competency level, onboarding and staff training, level of trust between and among residents and partner organizations, flexibility, the global pandemic, natural disasters, and time constraints are all limitations to the process.

References

Patton, M. Q. *Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use*. Guilford Press, New York. (2010) Retrieved via http://tei.gwu.edu/courses_approaches.htm#developmental_evaluation.

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