NC VISION ZERO

COMMUNITY READINESS MANUAL
TO ADDRESS ROAD DEATHS AND SERIOUS INJURIES USING A VISION ZERO APPROACH

THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA at CHAPEL HILL

This manual is an adaptation of theTri-Ethnic Center Community Readiness for Community Change. The model was originally developed by E. R. Oetting, B. A. Plested, R. W. Edwards, P. J. Thurman, K. J. Kelly, and F. Beauvais. The model was expanded by Linda R. Stanley in 2014.

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What is the community readiness model?

The Community Readiness Model:

Is a model for community change that:

- Integrates a community's culture, resources, and level of readiness to more effectively prevent road deaths and serious injuries
- Allows communities to define issues and strategies in their own contexts
- Builds cooperation among systems and individuals
- Increases capacity for reducing road deaths and implementing Vision Zero
- Encourages community investment in Vision Zero and awareness
- Can be applied in any community (geographic, issue-based, organizational)
- Can be used to address a wide range of issues
- Is a guide to the complex process of community change

What does "readiness" mean?

Readiness is the degree to which a community is prepared to take action on an issue. Readiness…

- Is very issue-specific
- Is measurable
- Is measurable across multiple dimensions
- May vary across dimensions
- May vary across different segments of a community
- Can be increased successfully
- Is essential knowledge for the development of strategies and interventions

Matching activities and coalition-building efforts to a community's level of readiness is essential for success. To maximize chances for successful Vision Zero implementation, the Community Readiness Model offers tools to measure readiness and to develop stage-appropriate strategies for engaging community partners and other Vision Zero activities.

Like individual behavior, communities are at different levels of readiness to address issues in their communities. Often community efforts to implement programs and activities to change behaviors in a community are met with:

- Little enthusiasm in the community to provide resources or cooperate in implementation efforts
- Resistance by community members and/or leadership who then erect obstacles.
- Lack of action by the community and/or by leaders to help move efforts forward
- Failure! Resources run out, volunteers burn out, the new program is ineffective

One reason for this frustration and failure may be a lack of readiness to address the issue by community members and leadership. Just like with individual change (e.g., quitting smoking), we must use appropriate actions and techniques to move our communities forward in addressing an issue, such as ending road deaths and serious injuries. Matching a community intervention to the community's level of readiness is key to achieving success. If your community is not ready for your efforts, failure is much more likely. For example, the community may deny there is a problem, and thus your efforts will meet with resistance or even hostility. The community may not understand the issue, leading your efforts to meet with indifference or little attention paid to them. Your community leaders may not be willing to provide the resources needed to effectively implement new programs or activities.

No matter the reason for this lack of readiness, your efforts will have gone for naught.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT TOOL

How does the Community Readiness Model Work?

The Community Readiness Model (CRM) measures: Attitudes, Efforts & Activities, Knowledge, Resources — of Community Members + Leadership — in order to assess a community's readiness to address an issue on 6 key dimensions:

1. Community efforts
2. Community knowledge of efforts
3. Leadership
4. Community climate
5. Community knowledge of the issue
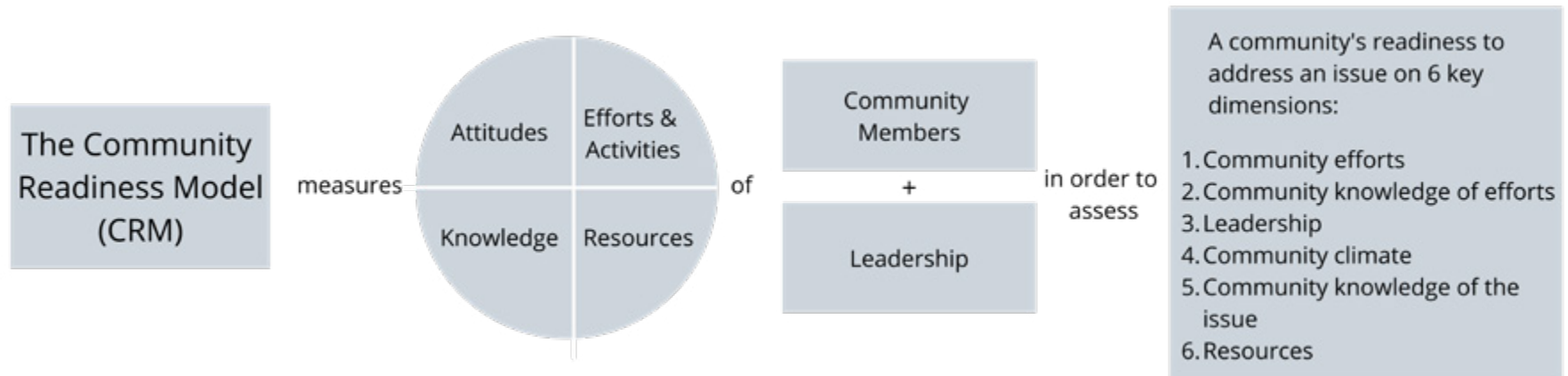6. Resources

Figure: 1

Benefits of Using the Community Readiness Model

The Community Readiness Model can help a community move forward on an issue and be more successful in its efforts to change by:

- measuring a community's readiness levels on several dimensions that will help diagnose where to focus efforts.
- helping to identify our community's weaknesses and strengths, and the obstacles we are likely to meet as we move forward.
- pointing to appropriate actions that match our community's readiness levels.
- working within our community's culture to come up with actions that are right for our community.
- aiding in securing funding, cooperating with other organizations, working with leadership, and more.

Why use the Community Readiness Model for Vision Zero?

- Road deaths and serious injuries are a significant issue that may have barriers at various levels. The Community Readiness Model can help identify and address these barriers.
- It conserves valuable resources (time, money) by guiding the selection of strategies that are most likely to be successful.
- It is an efficient, inexpensive, and easy-to-use tool.
- It promotes community recognition and ownership of Vision Zero issues.

- Because of strong community ownership, it helps to ensure that strategies are culturally congruent and sustainable.
- It encourages the use of local experts and resources instead of reliance on outside experts and resources.
- The process of community change can be complex and challenging, but the model breaks down the process into a series of manageable steps.
- It creates a community vision for healthy change.

What should NOT be expected from the model?

- The model can't make people do things they don't believe in.
- Although the model is a useful diagnostic tool, it doesn't prescribe the details of exactly what to do to meet your goals. The model defines types and intensity of strategies appropriate to each stage of readiness. Each community must then determine specific strategies consistent with their community's culture and level of readiness for each dimension.

In the following sections, the foundational concepts of the Community Readiness Model are defined. These are the dimensions and stages of readiness.

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ABOUT THE COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT TOOL

The Nine Stages of Community Readiness

Stage	Description
1. No Awareness	Road trauma is not generally recognized by the community or leaders as a problem (or it may truly not be an issue).
2. Denial/Resistance	Some community members recognize that road trauma is a concern, but there is little recognition that it is occurring locally.
3. Vague Awareness	Most feel that there is local concern, but there is no immediate motivation to do anything about it.
4. Preplanning	There is clear recognition of the problem. There may even be a group addressing it, but Vision Zero efforts are not focused or detailed.
5. Preparation	Active leaders begin planning Vision Zero efforts in earnest. Community offers modest support of efforts.
6. Initiation	Enough information is available to justify efforts. Vision Zero activities are underway.
7. Stabilization	Vision Zero activities are supported by administrators or community decision makers. Staff are trained and experienced.
8. Confirmation/ Expansion	Vision Zero efforts are in place and community members support expansions. Local data are regularly obtained.
9. Community Ownership	Extensive knowledge exists about road trauma prevention. Effective evaluation guides new directions. Model is applied to other issues.

Figure: 2

Readiness levels can increase and decrease.

The time and effort it takes to move to a higher readiness level can vary. Here is a brief explanation of each stage:

Stage 1: No Awareness
- Community has no knowledge about local efforts to improve road safety.
- Leadership believes that road deaths and serious injuries are not really much of a concern.
- The community believes that road deaths and serious injuries are not a concern.
- Community members have no knowledge about prevalence or trends of road deaths and serious injuries.
- There are no resources available for dealing with road deaths and serious injuries.

"People just drive crazy."

Stage 2: Denial/Resistance
- Leadership and community members believe that road deaths and serious injuries are not a concern in their community or they think it can't or shouldn't be addressed.
- Community members have misconceptions or incorrect knowledge about current road safety efforts.

- Only a few community members have knowledge about the road deaths and serious injuries, and there may be many misconceptions among community members about the issue.
- Community members and/or leaders do not support using available resources to address road deaths and serious injuries.

"We can't do anything about it!"

Stage 3: Vague Awareness
- A few community members have at least heard about local Vision Zero efforts, but know little about them.
- Leadership and community members believe that road deaths and serious injuries may be a concern in the community. They show no immediate motivation to act.
- Community members have only vague knowledge about road deaths and serious injuries (e.g. they have some awareness that of trends and contributing factors).
- There are limited resources identified that could be used for further efforts to address the issue.

"Something should probably be done about this. The town/city (i.e., someone else) should really take responsibility."

Stage 4: Preplanning
- Some community members have at least heard about local Vision Zero efforts, but know little about them.
- Leadership and community members acknowledge that road deaths and serious injuries are a concern in the community and that something has to be done to address it.

- Community members have limited knowledge about the prevalence and trends of road deaths and serious injuries.
- There are limited resources that could be used for further efforts to address the issue.

"This is important. What can we do?"

Stage 5: Preparation
- Most community members have at least heard about local Vision Zero efforts.
- Leadership is actively supportive of continuing or improving current Vision Zero efforts or in scaling up efforts.
- The attitude in the community is—We are concerned about this and we want to do something about it.
- Community members have basic knowledge about causes and consequences.
- There are some resources identified that could be used for further efforts to address the issue; community members or leaders are actively working to change policies.

"I will bring this to the town council."

Stage 6: Initiation
- Most community members have at least basic knowledge of local Vision Zero efforts.
- Leadership plays a key role in planning, developing and/or implementing new, modified, or increased Vision Zero efforts.
- The attitude in the community is—This is our responsibility, and some community members are involved in addressing road deaths and serious injuries.

- Community members have basic knowledge about the issue and are concerned about local road deaths and injuries.
- Resources have been obtained and/or allocated to support further Vision Zero efforts to address road deaths and serious injuries.

"This is our responsibility; we are now beginning to do something to address this issue."

Stage 7: Stabilization
- Most community members have more than basic knowledge of local Vision Zero efforts, including project sites, education campaigns, and purposes of specific efforts, target audiences, and other specific information.
- Leadership is actively involved in ensuring or improving the long-term viability of the Vision Zero efforts to address road deaths and serious injuries.
- The attitude in the community is—We have taken responsibility. There is ongoing community involvement in addressing road deaths and serious injuries.
- Community members have more than basic knowledge about the road deaths and serious injuries.
- Stakeholders have allocated resources and updated policies in support of Vision Zero efforts and are expected to provide continuous support.

"We have taken responsibility"

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT TOOL

Stage 8: Confirmation/Expansion
- Most community members have considerable knowledge of local Vision Zero efforts, including the outcomes.
- Leadership plays a key role in expanding and improving Vision Zero efforts.
- The majority of the community strongly supports Vision Zero efforts or the need for road safety efforts.
- Community members have more than basic knowledge about the issue and have significant knowledge about local prevalence and local consequences.
- A considerable part of allocated resources are expected to provide continuous support.
- Community members are looking into additional support to expand Vision Zero efforts.

"How well are our current projects working and how can we expand/make them better?"

Stage 9: High Level of Community Ownership
- Most community members have considerable and detailed knowledge of local efforts.
- Leadership is continually reviewing evaluation results of the efforts and is modifying financial support and local policies accordingly.
- Most major segments of the community are highly supportive and actively involved.
- Community members have detailed knowledge

about road deaths and serious injuries and have significant knowledge about local prevalence and local consequences.
- Diversified resources and funds are secured, and efforts are expected to be ongoing.

"We truly are a Vision Zero community."

Dimensions of readiness for Vision Zero

Note in the statements describing the stages above that there are several important dimensions of community readiness addressed, e.g. leadership and attitude in the community. Community readiness is composed of six dimensions or aspects that can help guide the community in moving their readiness levels forward.

These dimensions are:

A. Community efforts: To what extent are there efforts, programs, and policies that address road deaths and serious injuries?

B. Community knowledge of efforts: How much does the community know about Vision Zero and road safety efforts? Are the efforts serving all segments of the community?

C. Leadership: What is leadership's attitude and involvement with Vision Zero?

D. Community climate: What is the prevailing attitude of the community toward ending

road deaths and serious injuries? Is it one of helplessness or one of responsibility and empowerment?

E. Community knowledge about the issue: To what extent do community members know about or have access to information on road deaths and serious injuries, consequences, and understand how it impacts the community?

F. Resources related to the issue: To what extent are local resources (people, time, money, space) available to support Vision Zero?

Each dimension will receive a community readiness score. Thus, each dimension can be at a different readiness level.

Next is a brief overview of how the Community Readiness Model may be applied to address road deaths and serious injuries in your community.

HOW TO CONDUCT A COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT

Conducting a Community Readiness Assessment is the key to determining your community's readiness by dimension (key factors influencing your community's preparedness) and by overall stage (Figure 2).
1. Identify and clearly define your issue.
2. Identify and clearly define your community.
3. Prepare your interview questions.
4. Choose your key respondents.
5. Conduct and transcribe your interviews
6. Score the interviews across the dimensions
7. Take action on readiness-appropriate Vision Zero strategies

Step 1:
Identify and clearly define your issue.
Readiness assessments are issue-specific. This manual is written with the issue of eliminating road and traffic deaths and serious injuries in mind. Focus on this issue will not only provide you with valuable insight into your community's perspective on road safety and a Vision Zero approach, but will also provide information on related issues such as transit, community health, and access to alternative transportation.

A note on terms:
Community members may or may not be aware of branded initiatives like Vision Zero. Allow respondents to describe what efforts they are familiar with in their own concrete terms (e.g., red light cameras). At the conclusion of the interview, you can offer to share more about the Vision Zero project in your community. You might want to practice describing it to someone outside your field, such as a friend. Here is one possible definition:

> **Vision Zero** is based on the belief that people have the right to move through their communities without the risk of death or serious injury. It's an approach that accounts for the fact that humans make mistakes, transferring more of the responsibility of safety onto road designers and policy makers than has been done in the past. Vision Zero strategies include designing roads and transportation systems in a way that prevents human error from resulting in death or serious injury. Strategies include systems level change and collaboration between diverse stakeholders, using data to inform interventions, prioritizing equity and community involvement, managing speed, and promoting alternative transportation

"The problem" you want to find out about in interviews refers to deaths and serious injuries on roads. However, there are many other social costs of road deaths and disabling injury you can emphasize. This includes, for example, the estimated 5 people per individual directly affected in some substantive way by the death/injury; PTSD among crash survivors and witnesses of severe crashes. Thus, you can make it clear that "the problem" includes proximal death and injury, intermediate financial and emotional damage to families/close friends, as well as more distal mental health impacts of severe crash events.

Step 2: Identify and clearly define your community.
Identify the community whose readiness you are assessing. Many Vision Zero initiatives are specific to a defined geographical area, such as a town, city, region or transportation network. However, Vision Zero readiness can also be assessed for a smaller subset of a community including:
- Geographic community – a city, a county, an area enclosed by certain boundaries, etc.
- Subgroup of a geographical community defined by ethnicity, age, etc.
- Occupation group such as law enforcement, engineers, medical/emergency professionals, etc.
- Organizations or departments of organizations (e.g. , a university, a school district).

Note: Consider how your initiative defines "community" and how you would describe this to others (e.g., the city and surrounding suburbs of [city]). Keep in mind that the person you're interviewing might describe or represent a smaller community, such as a particular neighborhood.

## Step 3: Prepare for your interviews

- Read through the instructions and questions in the accompanying **"Interview Guide and Scoring Sheet"** excel document to familiarize yourself with the script and questions.
- Add any questions of your own and modify any language that needs to be clarified for your audience.
- Pilot test the interview with at least one person.
- *Note: If translating questions from English into another language, ask a person who is very familiar with the language and culture to translate. Then, have the translated version "back-translated" into English by another person to ensure that the original content of the questions was captured.

Step 4: Choose your key respondents

Some community surveys rely on a random sample of the community's population, and they ask each individual about their personal attitudes toward the issue. The Community Readiness Model, instead, uses **key respondents** to answer the interview questions and provide information about how the community views the issue.

Key respondent interviews are qualitative interviews with people who know what is going on in the community. The purpose of using key respondents is to collect information from a wide range of people—including community leaders, professionals, or residents—who have firsthand knowledge about the community. These individuals, with their particular knowledge and understanding, can provide insight on the nature of the issue.

Think of the large bold circle below as your community. It is made up of a number of different sectors. Here we show six different sectors – law, business, education, government, health, and other involved citizens. If we interview a key respondent from each sector that can answer for at least that sector, we should obtain a relatively accurate picture of our community's attitudes and knowledge, without having to survey a large number of citizens.
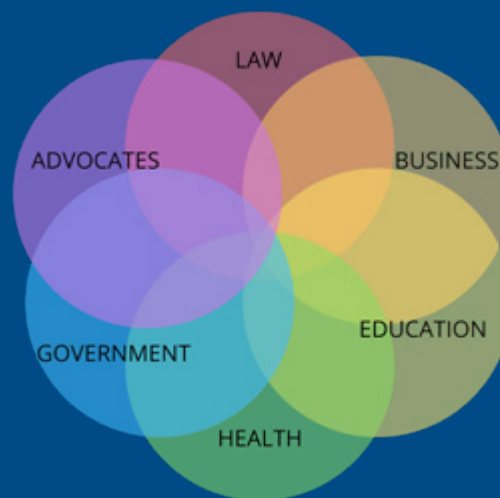
Who should be chosen as a key respondent?
As noted above, key respondents should be involved in the community and know what is going on. They are likely to also have information about the issue. Thus, the choice of key respondents will depend on the identified issue and community. In the case of Vision Zero, consider individuals in your community who might be connected to road safety or are disproportionately affected by road deaths and serious injuries. Try to find a variety of people who represent different segments of your community and know the community well.

Individuals may represent:
- Public health
- Emergency services
- Advocacy groups/nonprofits
  - Affordable housing
  - Alternative transportation (e.g., bicycle advocates)
  - Families of victims of traffic violence
- Transit
- Schools or universities
- City/county/tribal government
- Law enforcement
- Vulnerable road users
  - Low income
  - Elderly
  - Youth
  - Racial minorities

HOW TO CONDUCT A COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT

How many interviews should be done?
Conduct at least 6 key respondent interviews in your community. Some communities may require more interviews in order to get a more complete picture of the community. However, in our experience, 6 – 12 interviews are often sufficient. When the community is very small or very homogenous, even 4 interviews may be sufficient.
When doing follow-up or post-test readiness assessments, use the same key respondents, if possible. Use the table below to identify and track potential key respondents:

Step 5: Conduct and transcribe the interviews.

1. Contact the people you have identified and ask if they would be willing to discuss the issue. Remember, each interview will take about 30 to 60 minutes. (See Appendices A-C for email and phone script templates).

   *Tip: When scheduling interviews, block off half an hour after each interview to give yourself time to score the interview immediately afterwards.

2. Follow the scripts and questions included in the **Interview Guide and Scoring Sheet** and record the conversation if/when they give explicit permission.
3. Follow the interview question prompts in order and write responses as they are given into the designated cells.
4. Avoid discussion with interviewees (in order to get as unbiased an answer as possible) but ask for clarification when needed and use prompts as designated. Try not to add your own interpretation or second guess what the interviewee meant.
5. Record or write responses as they are given. If you record the conversation (e.g., via Zoom functions), make sure to ask the interviewee first if this is acceptable to them. If they are not comfortable with recording, then rely on note taking.
6. Pose questions in a way that is neutral and does not lead participants. Do not respond in a way that indicates that you, as the interviewer, approve or disapprove of their answers.

Step 6: Score the interviews and calculate your average dimension scores.
After you have conducted the interviews, follow the directions for scoring in the **Interview Guide and Scoring Sheet.**

Step 7: Take action on readiness-appropriate Vision Zero strategies
Review the next section to identify strategies for increasing readiness for Vision Zero in your community.

Tip: The interview scores will automatically populate on the Final Scoring tab in the Scoring Sheet. You may have to adjust formulas to get the correct average, depending how many interviews are completed.

HOW TO USE THE COMPLETED ASSESSMENT

Using the assessment to develop strategies

Once you have completed and scored all the interviews, you're now ready to develop strategies that will be appropriate for your community using the information you've gained in terms of dimensions and overall readiness. This may be done in a small group or community workshop format.

The first thing to do is explore the distribution of scores across the dimensions. Are they all about the same? Are some lower than others?

If you have one or more dimensions with lower scores than the others, focus your efforts on strategies that will increase the community's readiness on that dimension or those dimensions first. Make certain the intensity level of the intervention or strategy is consistent with, or lower than, the stage score for that dimension. To be successful, any effort toward making change within a community must begin with strategies appropriate to its stage of readiness.

On the next pages, you will find a list of strategies appropriate for each stage of readiness to guide you in developing strategies for your community.

Goals and general strategies appropriate for each stage

1. No Awareness

Goals:

1. Raise awareness of the issue.
2. Begin making connections with potential coalition partners.
   - Make one-on-one visits with community leaders, stakeholders, and community members.
   - Visit existing and established small groups to share information with them about local road fatality/serious injury statistics and the Vision Zero approach.
   - Make one-on-one phone calls to friends and potential supporters.
   - Identify and make note of community leaders whose interests align with the goals of Vision Zero.

2. Denial/Resistance

Goals:

1. Raise awareness that the problem or issue exists in this community.
2. Initiate meetings with local stakeholders to begin planning activities.

- Continue one-on-one visits and identify how the goals of the individuals and organizations you've talked with align with the goals of Vision Zero and eliminating road deaths.
- Approach and engage local educational or health outreach programs and advocacy groups to begin meeting to discuss strategies.
- Present information about local statistics and the success of other Vision Zero initiatives to local community groups, particularly those most affected by road deaths/serious injuries.
- Prepare and submit articles on road deaths and/or Vision Zero for local news outlets, newsletters, church bulletins, etc.
- Identify the current gatekeepers for transportation policy changes in the community.

3. Vague Awareness

Goals:

1. Raise awareness that the community can do something.
2. Formation of coalition core group, initiate community engagement, expand coalition to involve broader, more diverse interests and representation.
   - Get on meeting agendas and present information on road deaths/serious injuries

and Vision Zero at local community events and to other community groups.

- Form a core working group that is committed to Vision Zero and begin to meet on a regular basis.
- Continue to identify individuals and organizations in the community to join the coalition.
- As a coalition, organize community events and use those opportunities to engage community members about their perceptions and concerns related to road safety in their communities.
- Begin to engage with political leadership and key influencers on the issue.
- Conduct informal local surveys and interviews with community people by phone or door-to-door about attitudes and perceptions related to road safety in their community. Use tools such as opportunity mapping.
- Publish newspaper editorials and other articles with general information and local implications.

4.Preplanning
Goals:
1. Raise awareness with concrete ideas.
2. Build the credibility, functioning, and collaboration of the coalition.

- Introduce information about Vision Zero strategies through presentations and media. Focus on raising general awareness.
- Implement temporary, pop-up strategies based on community feedback and suggestions.

- Invite community gatekeepers to join the coalition.
- Establish formalized coalition practices to improve group functioning and collaboration (e.g., bylaws, meeting minutes, shared goal/vision for the group).
- Consider developing memorandum of agreements with coalition members to formalize the coalition structure.
- Review existing Vision Zero efforts at the state or national level, engage with experts for technical assistance.
- Conduct local focus groups to discuss Vision Zero and seek feedback on proposed strategies.
- Increase media exposure by participating in national events, such as the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims.

5.Preparation
Goals:
1. Gather existing information with which to plan more specific strategies.
2. Implement comprehensive assessment and planning strategies.

- Draft Vision Zero plan utilizing a safe systems approach with an equity lens, local data sources and community feedback. The plan should include metrics and an evaluation plan.
- Identify the high injury network.
- Conduct more formal community surveys.
- Identify or sponsor a community event to kick off the Vision Zero effort.
- Conduct public forums to develop strategies from the grassroots level.

6.Initiation
Goals:
1. Provide community-specific information.
2. Secure necessary resources for implementing Vision Zero initiative.

- Plan publicity efforts associated with start-up of activity or efforts.
- Attend meetings to provide updates on progress of the effort.
- Conduct community focus groups and events to identify service gaps and improve existing services.
- Identify local policies and practices that need to change in order to successfully implement Vision Zero.
- Begin evaluation efforts.
- Identify upcoming funding opportunities (e.g., local and municipal transportation plans) to coordinate efforts and secure resources for Vision Zero Plan activities.
- Brainstorm on arrangements to pool resources among coalition members
- Meet with political leaders to discuss early wins and progress and ways to facilitate future wins (e.g., policy changes, funding, programs).
- Share results from community feedback surveys with community leaders.

HOW TO USE THE COMPLETED ASSESSMENT

7. Stabilization

Goals:

1. Stabilize efforts and programs.
2. Formalize coalition rules, roles, structures, and procedures.
- Plan community events to maintain support for Vision Zero efforts.
- Introduce your program evaluation results through press releases and websites.
- Conduct quarterly meetings to review progress and modify strategies.
- Create a shared and formalized decision-making procedure.
- Conduct outreach and community engagement events to discuss strategy modification, as needed.
- Hold recognition events for coalition members, local supporters, and volunteers.
- Prepare and submit newspaper articles detailing progress and future plans.
- Utilize coalition members who are key leaders and influential people to speak to groups and participate in local radio and television shows to gain support.
- Regularly revisit funding and sustainability plans (draft a sustainability plan if the group does not have one).
- Train coalition members in skills for managing conflict and leadership.

8. Confirmation/Expansion

Goals:

1. Enhance and expand services.
2. Grow the coalition.
- Maintain a comprehensive database/Vision Zero dashboard available to the public with a few of current efforts, local data, and evaluation results.
- Initiate policy change through support of local city officials.
- Conduct media outreach on specific data trends related to road deaths, such as high-risk factors.
- Utilize evaluation data to modify efforts.
- Mentor neighboring communities on Vision Zero efforts.
- Recruit new coalition members from diverse sectors, businesses, and community leadership.

9. High Level of Community Ownership

Goals:

1. Maintain momentum and continue growth.
2. Secure funding for paid Vision Zero initiative positions.
- Maintain local business community support and solicit financial support from them.

- Continue re-assessment of issue and progress made.
- Utilize external evaluation and use feedback for program modification.
- Track outcome data for use with future grant requests.
- Continue progress reports for benefit of community leaders and local sponsorship. At this level the community has ownership of the efforts and will invest themselves in maintaining the efforts.
- Engage in advocacy at higher structural levels (e.g., statewide policy).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE MODEL

Important points about using the model

Keep in mind that dimension scores provide the essence of the community diagnostic, which is an important tool for strategizing. If your Community Readiness Assessment scores reveal that readiness in one dimension is much lower than readiness in others, you will need to focus your efforts on improving readiness in that dimension. For instance, if the community seems to have resources to support efforts but lacks committed leadership to harness those resources, strategies might include one-on-one contacts with key leaders to obtain their support.

As another example, if a community has a moderate level of existing efforts but very little community knowledge of those efforts, one strategy may be to increase public awareness of those efforts through personal contacts and carefully chosen media consistent with the readiness stage.

Remember: "Best practices" are only best for your community if they are congruent with your stage of readiness and are culturally appropriate for your community.

Note on how to do a brief assessment

Although it is preferable to do a complete assessment, sometimes there is insufficient time or resources for a full assessment, but it is critical to develop an understanding of where your "community" is on each dimension before making plans for efforts.

If there is a group of people representative of the community, such as a coalition, the assessment can be done in the group, with discussion targeted toward building consensus for scoring for each dimension.

For such an assessment, one person should serve as facilitator. Each participant should have a copy of the anchored rating scales for each dimension.

The facilitator should start with the first dimension and read the questions under that dimension. The facilitator should then ask the group to refer to the anchored rating scale for that dimension and using their responses to the questions asked, look at the first statement and see if they feel they can confidently say that their community meets and goes beyond the first statement.

The facilitator should then lead the group through the statements until one is reached that even just one member cannot agree that the community has attained that level. Everyone's input is important. Don't try and talk someone out of their opinion—they may represent a different constituency than other group members. A score between the previous statement where there was consensus and the one where consensus cannot be attained should be assigned for that dimension.

Remember, it is the dimension scores which provide the community diagnostic to serve as the "roadmap"—showing you where efforts need to be expended before attempting advancement to strategies for the next stage.

Ways the community readiness model can be used

Program Evaluation: The evaluation of multi-component, community-wide efforts can be challenging because it is difficult to measure complex change over time. The Community Readiness Assessment offers an easy-to-use tool that can help assess the overall effectiveness of efforts. It can give insight into key outcomes (such as shifts in community norms, support of local leadership) in ways that traditional evaluation methods may not bring to light.

Numerous programs have utilized the Community Readiness Assessment for evaluation of community-wide efforts. As an example, a project involving ten counties in Oklahoma developed a planning program to improve services to Native American children with serious emotional disturbances and their families. The Community Readiness Assessment offered not only an accurate way to measure readiness before and after program implementation, but also essential qualitative data to help guide program development. Based on information from the baseline Community Readiness Assessment, community members were able to identify strengths and resources and to gain public support. Another assessment conducted 2 years later showed that all counties had moved ahead in their stages of readiness. The community support for this project continues to be overwhelming.

Funding Organizations: As stewards of funds, grant making organizations need to utilize their resources in the most efficient way possible. They recognize that good projects often fail because the efforts are more advanced than what some communities are prepared to accept. Because of this, some funding organizations have used the model to quickly assess whether or not proposed projects stand a chance of success in a given community based on the readiness of the community to address the issue. Many times, they recommend that the grantee use the model to develop the infrastructure and support that will make it possible to implement projects successfully.

Validity and reliability of the Community Readiness Model Assessment tool

The Community Readiness Model Assessment tool provides an assessment of the nature and extent of knowledge and support within a community to address an issue at a given point in time. Both "the community" and "the issue" change from application to application, so standard techniques for establishing validity are not easily followed. In establishing validity of a measure, it is customary to find another measure that has similar intent that is well documented and accepted and see if, with the same group of people, results on the new measure agree with results on the more established measure. It is difficult to apply this methodology to the Community Readiness Assessment tool since each application is unique and the constructs or ideas that the tool is measuring have not been addressed by other measures. There are, however, still ways validity can be established.

Establishing Construct Validity. The theory of the Community Readiness Model is a "broad scale theory." A broad scale theory deals with a large number of different phenomena, such as facts or opinions and a very large number of possible relationships among those phenomena. Although it is not possible to have a single test to establish construct validity for a broad scale theory, it is possible to test hypotheses that derive from the theory and if the hypotheses prove to be accurate, then the underlying theory and the instrument used to assess the theory are likely to be valid (Oetting & Edwards). This approach has been taken over the course of development of the Community Readiness Model and construct validity for

the model has been demonstrated. An explication of the hypotheses tested and results are presented in the Oetting & Edwards article.

Acceptance of the Model. Although it is not a scientific demonstration of validity, the widespread acceptance and the breadth of application of the Community Readiness Model, lends credence to its validity. Literally hundreds of workshops have been conducted by TriEthnic Center staff and colleagues presenting the Community Readiness Model and they have been enthusiastically received. Further, from simply reading about the model on our website or in a publication, many individuals and groups request handbooks and apply the model to their own issues in their own communities without assistance. In the first 6 months this handbook was available on our website, over 150 requests were made for free, downloadable copies of the handbook. These requests came from all over the United States and Canada, as well as from other countries around the world. This level of adoption occurs because people see the value of the assessment in giving them information that accurately assesses their community's readiness to address a particular issue and, even more important, gives them a model that offers guidance to them in taking action.

As with measures of validity, the Community Readiness Assessment tool does not lend itself well to traditional measures of reliability. For many types of measures, the best evidence for 48 reliability may be test-retest reliability. That type of methodology assumes that whatever is being measured doesn't change and if the instrument is reliable, it will obtain very similar

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE MODEL

results from the same respondent at two points in time. Readiness levels are rarely static, although they may remain at approximately the same level for very low stages and very high stages for some time. Once an issue is recognized as a problem in a community (stage 3, vague awareness or stage 4, preplanning), there is almost always some movement, often resulting in some efforts getting underway (stage 6, initiation) and likely becoming part of an ongoing program (stage 7, stabilization) or beyond. This movement from stage to stage can take place in a relatively short period of time depending on circumstances in the community and movement can occur at different rates on the different dimensions. For this reason, calculating a test-retest reliability is inappropriate.

Consistent Patterns. We have, however, taken a careful look at changes in community readiness over time, and there are consistent patterns that reflect on reliability. In one of those studies, for example, communities that were assessed as being low in readiness to deal with methamphetamine abuse were also assessed as being low in readiness over the next 3 years. In contrast, communities that were above stage 4, preplanning, were likely to change in readiness. For this pattern to occur, the measures of readiness had to be reasonably consistent over time.

An aspect of reliability that is highly important in determining how useful this model can be is inter-rater reliability. There are two ways of looking at this type of reliability for the Community Readiness Model— consistency among respondents and inter-rater reliability in scoring.

Consistency Among Respondents. One aspect of inter-rater reliability is the level of consistency among the respondents who are interviewed about readiness in their community. We have calculated consistency across respondents, and it is generally very high. We improve accuracy by restricting respondents to persons who have been in the community for a year or more, which generally results in a valid interview—an interview that accurately reflects what is actually happening in the community.

At the same time, we do not expect or want to obtain exactly the same information from each respondent— that is why we select respondents with different community roles and community connections. Each respondent is expected to have a unique perspective and their responses will reflect that perspective. The information that is collected through the interviews is never "right" or "wrong," it simply reflects the understanding of the respondent about what is going

on in the community. There are, of course, occasions when respondents do not agree; when they have radically different views of what is going on in their community. If one respondent gives responses vastly different from the others in the same community, we add further interviews to determine what is actually occurring in that community. The very high level of agreement among respondents is, therefore, enhanced because of these methods that we use to assure that we are getting an accurate picture of the community.

Inter-rater Reliability in Scoring. Transcripts of interviews with community respondents are scored independently by two scorers to obtain the level of community readiness on each dimension. We have tested inter-rater reliability on over 120 interviews by checking the agreement between scores given for each interview by the two raters. The two scorers, working independently, gave the exact same score when rating dimensions on an interview 92% of the time. This is an exceptionally high level of agreement and speaks to the effectiveness of the anchored rating scales in guiding appropriate assignment of scores.

It is part of the scoring protocol that after scoring independently, scorers meet to discuss their scores on each interview and agree on a final consensus score.

We interviewed the scorers following this process and for nearly all of the 8% of the time they disagreed, it was because one scorer overlooked a statement in the interview that would have indicated a higher or lower level of readiness and that person subsequently altered their original score accordingly.

The inter-rater reliability is, in a sense, also evidence for validity of the measure in that it reflects that each of the two persons reading the transcript of the same interview, were able to extract information leading them to conclude that the community was at the same level of readiness. If the assessment scales were not well grounded in the theory, we would expect to see much more individual interpretation and much less agreement.

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APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT SCRIPT-PHONE

Hello, I'm **[your name]** with **[your organization]**. I'm calling today about a project we are working on to better understand the issue of road fatalities and serious injuries locally in our community. We are currently part of **[local Vision Zero initiative, if applicable]** and are specifically shaping efforts for **[city/county/community]**. Vision Zero seeks to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries on our roads and increase safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.

I am contacting key people and groups in our community that represent a wide range of community-based organizations and community members. The purpose of this interview is to evaluate our community's readiness to address road safety through Vision Zero and to identify opportunities to strengthen future road safety work. Each interview will last about 30 to 60 minutes, is completely voluntary, and individual names will not be associated with interviews. The questions will cover six dimensions, including: community knowledge about efforts, leadership, community climate, knowledge about the problem, and resources for prevention efforts. Your participation will help directly inform next steps for **[city/county/community]**.

If you choose to participate in this project, the information collected from your responses will contribute to new knowledge that may improve local efforts to prevent road fatalities and serious injuries. If you are willing to participate, are there days and times that work best for you? **[Look at calendar availability for preferred days/times and schedule interview]**.

Do you have any questions for me?

If you have more questions or if you need to contact me about participation, I may be reached at **[phone number/email address]**.

Thank you so much for your time today.

IF ABLE TO LEAVE MESSAGE WITH A PERSON OR LEAVE A MESSAGE ON A VOICEMAIL, SAY:

Hello, I'm **[your name]** with **[your organization]**. I'm calling today about a project we are working on to better understand the issue of road fatalities and serious injuries locally in our community. I'm calling to invite you to take part in an interview to learn more about perceptions in the community related to road safety and any known efforts to address road fatalities and serious injuries. Your participation will help directly inform next steps for **[city/county/community]**.

If you choose to participate in this project, you will complete a 30-60-minute interview at a date and time of your choosing. The information collected from your responses will contribute to new knowledge that may improve local efforts. Your participation is completely voluntary.

If you are willing to participate, I may be reached at **[your phone number]** or by e-mail me at **[your email]**.

Thank you so much for your time today.

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear **[insert name]**,

My name is **[your name]** and I am working with **[local Vision Zero initiative, if applicable]**. I am writing you about a project we are working on to better understand the issue of road fatalities and serious injuries locally in our community. We are currently shaping Vision Zero efforts for **[city/county/community]**. Vision Zero seeks to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries on our roads and increase safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.

I am contacting key people and groups in our community that represent a wide range of community-based organizations and community members. The purpose of this interview is to evaluate our community's readiness to address road safety through a Vision Zero initiative and to identify opportunities to strengthen future road safety work in our community. Each interview will last about 30 to 60 minutes, is completely voluntary, and individual names will not be associated with interviews. The interview questions will cover six dimensions, including: community knowledge of efforts, leadership, community climate, knowledge about the problem, and resources for efforts. Your participation will help directly inform next steps for **[city/county/community]**.

Please reply to this email or call me at [your number] to let me know if you would like more information or would be willing to participate in an interview. If you are interested in participating, please let me know when you are generally available.

Kind regards,

[your name and contact information]

APPENDIX C: FOLLOW-UP RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear **[insert name]**,

I am following up from my email below sent one week ago. We are currently seeking to interview key people and groups in our community that represent a wide range of community-based organizations and community members. The purpose of this interview is to evaluate our community's readiness to address road safety through a Vision Zero initiative and to strengthen our community's road safety efforts.

If you choose to participate in this project, you will complete a 30-60-minute interview at a date and time of your choosing. The information collected from your responses will contribute to new knowledge that may improve local efforts to prevent road fatalities and serious injuries. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Please reply to this email or call me at [your number] to let me know if you would like more information or would be willing to participate in an interview. If you are interested in participating, please let me know when you are generally available.

Kind regards,

[your name and contact information]