



Community Resilience Framework

Project planning and evaluation tool



in partnership with



evaluated by

BRIGHTPURPOSE

About the Community Resilience Framework

Background

- Mind, SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health), Inspire and the Co-op - “the Partnership” - worked in partnership to bring communities together to improve mental wellbeing.
- This included delivery of a Community Resilience Grants Programme across the UK. [Brightpurpose](#) were commissioned to evaluate these services.
- The mixed-methods evaluation ran from June 2021 to April 2023. To read the evaluation report or for queries about the evaluation, please contact research@mind.org.uk.
- As part of the evaluation, Brightpurpose worked with the Partnership to develop an innovative new tool to measure change in community level resilience - the Community Resilience Framework (CRF). To the Partnerships’ knowledge, no such tool existed at the time of this evaluation.

Development

- The CRF was informed by [research](#) to understand how resilience can be developed, supported, and maintained in communities across the UK. This research was conducted by Traverse and Leeds Beckett University.
- Brightpurpose then worked with the Partnership including representatives from Community Resilience Grants Programme services, to transform the research insights into a practical community resilience measurement tool.
- By community resilience we mean, “How and why some communities and groups of people respond to and recover from challenging circumstances that impact on their mental health and wellbeing”



About the tool

- Six dimensions (or factors) were identified that make up a 'resilient community'. These are:

Community hubs

Supporting each other

Community participation in public spaces

Open dialogue about mental health and wellbeing in all spaces

Mental health positive youth spaces

Vibrant Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE)

- These six dimensions were described along a scale of 'just getting started' (1) to 'really doing well' (5).
- This formed a 'rubric' (or maturity model) which is the basis of the CRF.
- The rubric design means community projects can measure change in each of the six dimensions. It provides an objective and quantitative framework for backing up qualitative observations.





Using the Community Resilience Framework

Overview

- The CRF can be used as both a project development/planning tool and an evaluation tool.
- The tool can be used by an individual or a group of people, but is most effective when multiple people feed into the process (e.g., a project team).
- While the tool was developed and tested with organisations focusing on improving mental health outcomes, the tool can be used by any group/organisation/individual focusing on building community resilience.

CRF completion workshop

- Whether you are using the CRF as a development/planning tool or an evaluation tool, facilitating a workshop can be a helpful way to complete the CRF before and after a project.
- A CRF completion workshop provides a space to come together to score the CRF, discuss your scores, and reach a group consensus.
- To help you facilitate a workshop, we've put together some guidance notes.

Workshop facilitation guidance

Attendees

Identify key stakeholders to complete the CRF.

Arrange a time and place to come together to score the CRF (in person, virtual, hybrid).

Stakeholders could include staff, volunteers or partners working on the project, and representatives from your target audience.

It's most effective when stakeholders include people with different demographics, and different connections to the project, enabling multiple opinions.

Preparation

Provide attendees with the information they need in advance of the workshop.

Key information to share includes this guidance document, and any relevant information about your project and community to aid in CRF completion.

Appoint workshop facilitators and ensure they have clear roles.

Key activities

Recapping/Introducing the purpose of the session.

Recapping/Introducing the CRF and how it is used.

Providing examples of each CRF dimension that are relevant to your community/ context.

Scoring your community on the CRF and having group discussions to reach a consensus (see step-by-step guide to completing the CRF).

Finishing up

Record your scores on the score sheet, including examples of why you have chosen that score.

Agree on a time to come together to rescore your community (i.e., to complete your follow-up scores). This is usually once the project has come to an end.

Ask individuals to keep a copy of their scores to refer to during the next workshop, and ensure you circulate a copy of the joint scores to all stakeholders.

Top tips!

- To break up the workshop, you might decide to individually score one dimension, then come together as a group to discuss and agree a mutual score for that dimension, rather than individually scoring all dimensions in one go.
- If your project is not directly supporting children and young people, you don't need to score dimension five 'mental health positive youth spaces'.

Step-by-step guide: Using the CRF as an evaluation tool

This step-by-step guide outlines how to use the CRF as an evaluation tool for your project, whether doing this by yourself, or as part of a group in a CRF workshop.

Step 1: Define your community

It's important to define the community you are assessing. There are several ways your community can be defined for example, geographically, demographically or as a community of interest. It's important to ensure all stakeholders have a mutual understanding of the community being assessed.

Step 2: Get familiar with the CRF

Take some time to read through the CRF to understand the six dimensions and what a score of 1-5 in each of these looks like. If working as a group, ensure all stakeholders do this too, prior to the workshop.

Step 3: Score your community (baseline)

Score your community on the scale of 1-5 in each of the dimensions. Your community should be scored based on the descriptor that best describes your community at the current point in time - not where you aspire to be. If completing the CRF as a group, allow time for everyone to score the CRF as an individual first, then come back together to discuss your scores. If scores differ, hold discussions to agree mutual scores. It's important to make notes about why you chose the score you did, to refer to later.

Step 4: Score your community (follow-up)

At an agreed timepoint (e.g., 1 month later, 6 months later), come back together as a group (or individually) and rescore your community on each of the dimensions based on the current point in time. Again, if working as a group, come to a consensus on the scores through discussion, after first scoring as an individual.



Step 5: Measure change/Analyse scores

Once you have your follow-up scores, compare these to your baseline scores in each of the six dimensions to see how community resilience has changed. The scores may be the same, may have changed slightly in one dimension, or may have changed a lot in several dimensions. It's important to remember that change takes time, especially at a community level. If you don't see the changes you'd hoped to see straight away, that's completely normal.

Top tips!

When analysing your scores in step 5, the below questions might be useful to think about:

- What has changed?
- Which changes have resulted directly from project activities?
- Which changes have resulted indirectly from project activities?
- What changes have happened because of other factors?
- What were these? Have they complemented, duplicated, or worked against the work of the project?



Step-by-step guide: Using the CRF as a planning tool

This step-by-step guide outlines how to use the CRF as a planning tool for your project, whether doing this by yourself, or as part of a group in a CRF workshop.

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Step 4: Identifying dimensions

Reflect on the scores in each dimension and identify the dimensions that if developed, would help improve community resilience. Once identified, decide if those dimensions are ones your project can improve.

Step 5: Planning

Once you use the descriptors in the CRF to identify activities that will lead to improvement, plan the work to achieve the change.

Step 6: Monitor and refine the plan

Monitor the progress of identified activities. If things are on track, great. If they aren't, review the plan to ensure it's fit for purpose, and if not, refine the plan and implement the new plan.

Step 7: Score your community (follow-up)

At an agreed timepoint (e.g., 1 month later, 6 months later), come back together as a group (or individually) and rescore your community on each of the six dimensions based on the current point in time. Again, if working as a group, come to a consensus on the scores through discussion, after first scoring as an individual.

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Once you have your follow-up scores, compare these to your baseline scores in each of the six dimensions to see how community resilience has changed. The scores may be the same, may have changed slightly in one dimension, or may have changed a lot in several dimensions. It's important to remember that change takes time, especially at a community level. If you don't see the changes you'd hoped to see straight away, that's completely normal.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Where should scores be recorded?

At the end of the CRF (see [Appendix A](#)) you'll find a table where you can record your scores and the reasons you chose them. You can use these as a reminder when you come to review your scores at follow-up to see how things have changed.

What's the benefit of scoring our community on the CRF?

The CRF can be used as both a planning and evaluation tool and can help you:

- Demonstrate the impact of your project in terms of improvements to community resilience (e.g. changes in scores).
- Identify areas for improvement, including dimensions to focus on in future (e.g. areas where less change/no change has been observed).
- Understand how and why you have achieved change in your community if you have (e.g. referring to your notes on why you have moved from a 1 to a 3 in community hubs).

Do we have to work through the CRF dimensions in order?

Not at all! Start with the dimension that is easiest to understand or discuss in relation to your project/community. Some of the dimensions might not be as easily understood as others at first glance. We'd recommend sharing the CRF in advance of any scoring workshops, to give people time to understand the CRF and its dimensions.

Top tip!

Using examples specific to your community when discussing each dimension (e.g. within a workshop) can help develop a shared understanding of each dimension.

We're working as a group, but we can't reach a consensus on our scores. Do we have to?

We'd recommend facilitating discussions to come to a group consensus on where your community should score on each dimension. This might take some time, but it's an important step. In some cases, where there are different perspectives (e.g. young people and adults), it might be beneficial to record two scores, one reflective of the young people's perspectives, and one of the adults.

We've completed our follow-up scoring and there isn't any movement in our scores. Should we worry?

Not at all! Community change takes a long time and it's normal to see small changes in some areas, or no changes at all. While you might not see a change in your score, you might see some positive change in the dimension being assessed. For example, your project might first score a 2 on community hubs, but *just* score a 2. When you score it at follow-up, it might feel like a more solid 2, and you might have some written examples in your notes of why this is. It is important for projects to remember the change they are trying to achieve takes time and that small movement in only one or two dimensions can still represent meaningful change.

Can external factors affect our scores?

Yes. It's possible to notice change in your scores that are impacted by external factors. It's still possible that activity conducted by your project has contributed to this change, but it's important to explore which external factors might have contributed and make this clear in any reporting/analysis.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Do I have to score all dimensions?

The framework identifies six dimensions that contribute to the development of a resilient community. It's important to score all factors, to get the full picture of your community and project. It might be that a certain dimension isn't a focus for your project for a valid reason, and it's ok to explain this and provide some context around this in your scoring. For example, if your service is not for children and young people, you may not need to complete Dimension 5: Mental health-positive youth spaces.

Can I share the framework?

Of course! If sharing the framework with colleagues or other organisations, please share this guidance document in full.

1. This will ensure people are using the framework consistently.
2. Anyone using the tool can get in touch with us at research@mind.org.uk

Who can I contact if I have questions about the framework?

If you have any questions about the framework, please contact the Evaluation team at Mind, and we'll be more than happy to help you with your query: research@mind.org.uk.

Can I edit the framework?

The CRF is evidence-based and has been piloted in its current form. To ensure its validity, please do not edit the framework. When talking about the CRF, for example during scoring discussions, it's fine to bring in relevant examples to help people develop a joint understanding of what each dimension means in the context of your community/project. If you have feedback about the framework, including how it could be improved, or what works well, please get in touch with us at: research@mind.org.uk.

Is the framework free to use?

Yes! The framework is free to use, with reference/attribution to: Community Resilience Framework. (2023). Developed by Brightpurpose in partnership with the Co-op, Mind, SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health) and Inspire.



Community Resilience Framework (CRF)

Dimension	Description	Scoring				
		1 (Just getting started)	2	3	4	5 (Doing well)
Community hubs	<p>Places and spaces* that bring people together, that are open and accessible to all, enabling people to socialise and participate, whilst helping to promote a sense of good wellbeing.</p> <p>Places where people can access or find out about mental health and wellbeing support.</p> <p>* Can be mobile or fixed.</p>	There are a few community spaces where people can come together for shared activities and interests, but don't necessarily feel accessible to all parts of the community.	There are lots of different places and spaces in the community that act as community hubs i.e., places where people come together for shared activities and interests. From sports clubs to faith groups to pubs to community centres.	<p>Community hubs create opportunities for people to get involved and participate more actively in the community e.g., volunteering and community action.</p> <p>Information about mental health and wellbeing, and signposting is present in most community hubs.</p>	<p>People who use community hubs look out for each other and others in the community.</p> <p>When someone is struggling, they rally round to help.</p> <p>Hub leaders receive training in mental health and wellbeing issues and local support. They can offer informal support and signpost to other services.</p>	<p>Community hubs provide a safe space to talk about challenges and mental health issues with friends.</p> <p>Community hubs are spaces that support people to understand and look after their mental health and wellbeing.</p>

Dimension	Description	Scoring				
		1 (Just getting started)	2	3	4	5 (Doing well)
Supporting each other	Neighbourliness, volunteering, getting involved formally or informally, community organising.	<p>If people want to get involved in supporting their community, there are some opportunities for formal volunteering.</p> <p>They can be hard to find, or you find them by accident.</p> <p>A few people volunteer, but it's often the same faces.</p>	<p>There is a local organisation that helps people who want to get involved to find volunteering and involvement opportunities.</p> <p>The range of volunteering opportunities is limited.</p> <p>Opportunities to get involved more informally are also limited.</p>	<p>Community organisations see offering/promoting opportunities to get involved as part of their role in supporting the community.</p> <p>Community organisations encourage and support local people to self-organise and act on things that matter to them.</p>	<p>People help each other out and pull together when there are difficulties.</p> <p>There are active mutual aid/ community action organisations.</p> <p>Community organisations help connect people with common interests and desire to get involved.</p> <p>There is a good level of volunteering, but some groups are under-represented.</p>	<p>If local people see a need, they get together to see what they can do to address that need.</p> <p>Informal groups bubble up when a need emerges, drawing in local people to get involved in helping each other.</p> <p>A wide range of local people get involved in supporting their local community or volunteering.</p>

Dimension	Description	Scoring				
		1 (Just getting started)	2	3	4	5 (Doing well)
Community participation in public spaces	Local people empowered to get involved in using and improving public spaces, so they are safe, accessible, and inclusive for everyone and reflect local needs.	People tend to avoid shared public spaces or pass through them quickly without lingering or connecting with others in the space.	<p>Some people use shared public spaces, but access may be limited to certain parts of the community or organised clubs.</p> <p>People nod or say hello to others when passing through or using shared public spaces.</p>	<p>Local groups and organisations try to make shared spaces feel safe and accessible and make efforts to attract people from all parts of the community to use the space.</p> <p>Shared public spaces are easy to access when people want to use them.</p>	<p>Local groups develop inclusive community activities to improve shared public spaces and bring people together from across the community.</p> <p>People connect with each other in shared public spaces. Shared places feel inclusive, busy, and “buzzy”.</p>	There is organised community-led action to develop new and existing public spaces to meet local needs.

Dimension	Description	Scoring				
		1 (Just getting started)	2	3	4	5 (Doing well)
Open dialogue about mental health and wellbeing in all spaces	<p>Normalise talking about mental health and wellbeing in all local spaces, sharing experiences as it affects everyone - reducing stigma.</p> <p>Supporting people of all ages to understand and look after mental health and wellbeing and know when and how to seek support.</p>	Many people don't talk to anyone about their mental health and wellbeing issues and try to manage on their own.	People tend to keep discussions about mental health and wellbeing issues within their close circle (close family and friends).	There are some spaces and groups where people can meet and connect with others with similar experiences e.g., social media, local sports clubs, men's sheds, knit and natter, walking groups, community gardens - but they don't necessarily cater to all groups in the community.	<p>Local activities and campaigns proactively raise awareness about mental health and wellbeing issues, how to look after mental health and wellbeing and what local support is available.</p> <p>There are lots of different groups and spaces where people can meet and connect, reflecting the different needs of groups in the community.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers in community groups /spaces receive mental health and wellbeing awareness training, and information about local support services.</p>	Spaces and groups actively encourage people to talk and share experiences of mental health and wellbeing issues with others in the community.

Dimension	Description	Scoring				
		1 (Just getting started)	2	3	4	5 (Doing well)
Mental health-positive youth spaces	<p>Supporting children and young people to understand and look after mental health and wellbeing and know when and how to seek support.</p> <p>Trusted adults (not just professionals) normalise talking about mental health and wellbeing with children and young people.</p> <p>Children and young people talk about mental health and wellbeing with peers and support each other.</p>	<p>Mental health and wellbeing are covered as part of the PSHE curriculum.</p> <p>Children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing support is available as part of specialist clinical services.</p>	<p>Mental health and wellbeing is prioritised in schools and colleges.</p> <p>Youth workers have confidence and skills to spot, engage and help children and young people experiencing mental health and wellbeing challenges to access appropriate support.</p> <p>Community youth groups provide children and young people informal support and space to talk.</p>	<p>Schools and colleges have supporting mental health and wellbeing as part of their ethos.</p> <p>Teachers have confidence and skills to spot, engage and help children and young people experiencing mental health and wellbeing challenges to access appropriate support.</p> <p>Trusted adults in the community have confidence and skills to support children and young people experiencing mental health and wellbeing challenges.</p>	<p>Schools, colleges, and youth/ community spaces encourage children and young people to be open about their mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Children and young people can access support from peers who have been trained to provide peer support.</p>	<p>Schools, colleges, and other youth/ community settings are spaces that support children and young people to understand and look after their mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Children and young people talk comfortably about mental health and wellbeing and look out for each other, providing peer support naturally.</p> <p>Children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing support is available and accessible within the community as well as in clinical service provision.</p>

Dimension	Description	Scoring				
		1 (Just getting started)	2	3	4	5 (Doing well)
Vibrant VCSE* network *Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise.	VCSE organisations collaborating, and sharing resources, assets, and knowledge. Actively partnering with statutory organisations in convening and co-production as well as service delivery.	VCSE organisations operate individually and sometimes in competition with each other. They may refer clients to other VCSE organisations if they know of them.	There are forums that bring VCSE groups together to discuss areas of common interest. Some VCSE orgs work together on specific projects, such as consortium bids or delivering specific services. Information sharing and collaboration is limited to those specific projects. The statutory sector engages with VCSE organisations as a commissioner/ funder.	VCSE organisations talk to each other and share local intelligence, often in relation to a shared community of interest (e.g., homelessness, mental health, youth work etc). There is some cross referral between organisations, again usually within the context of a shared interest. Local link worker/ navigator roles help people access VCSE and statutory services. VCSE forums engage with the statutory sector to share insights and convene around communities of shared interest.	There is an inclusive network of all local VCSE organisations, sharing information and cross referring. Organisations help clients access the support they need from across the network. The statutory sector engages with the network to co-produce services and identify local service needs.	VCSE organisations and statutory sector proactively work together as a network, sharing resources, assets, and knowledge. They plan new services together to meet identified needs in the community.

Appendix A - CRF scoring sheet

Remember, there are no right, wrong, or 'perfect' scores. Every community is a work in progress, so be honest and think about where your community is right now. That's also the springboard for thinking about where you want to go in the future.

Our community:		
Dimension	Score	Why I/we scored it this way (use examples where you can)
Community hubs		
Supporting each other		
Community participation in public spaces		
Open dialogue about mental health and wellbeing in all spaces		
Mental health-positive youth spaces		
Vibrant VCSE network		