
The Alignment of Leadership Development & Participatory Action Research (PAR): One Process & Product from the University Northside Partnership



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A Note to Our Readers

We encourage you to use and share the material in this handbook. When you do, please reference it as follows in your oral and written communications. Thank you!

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“A leader does not have to have all of the answers. Rather, a good leader has to make sure that all the right questions are on the table.”

Paulo Freire (Brazilian educator, 1921-1997)

Harmony: Aligning Leadership Development and Participatory Action Research

This handbook is the embodiment of two wonderful worlds: the building and nurturing of leadership in communities and the highly engaged process of participatory action research (PAR), which integrates participation, inquiry, and action to bring about change. Both are dynamic and emergent processes. In joining these worlds, we discovered that leadership and PAR share similar characteristics when they are most meaningful for everyone involved. Among these are the values of inclusion and the integration of strengths. Both are grounded in dialogue, an appreciation of multiple understandings, equity, transparency, and accountability with the goal of positive change for mutual benefit. And both leadership and PAR require willing engagement with others. Neither effective leaders nor participatory action researchers can act alone. Exchanging ideas, sharing resources, and collaborating raise the level of knowledge, innovation, and influence we bring to the management of issues.

This handbook bridges these concepts as a way of promoting meaningful change in our systems – our institutions and communities. It is based on the premise that leadership and PAR are fundamentally interconnected. They are, at the same time, reflective and active. Through the repetition of reflection and action, leaders shape the research, and the research shapes the leaders – and the systems in which they are a part.

Leadership is the continual process of recognizing and developing one's talents and learning when and how to best use them to facilitate the products, processes, and initiatives of others. It requires understanding issues and situations well enough to facilitate appropriate action, which requires asking the right questions. At the same time, change is most relevant when those who are affected by it are part of the process of defining and implementing it. Therefore, it is important for a leader to not only guide inquiry and action, but also to make sure all the right voices are heard in the process. The same principles apply in PAR.

Leadership and PAR call for radical self-care. They require that we attend not only to the “what” that we are trying to accomplish but also to the “we” in the process.

People and relationships are as important as products in this work because they ultimately create and sustain it. Neither is for the faint of heart. Both demand authenticity, patience, dedication, and a sincere commitment to finding strategies and solutions that produce benefit for all involved. We believe that not all leaders are participatory action researchers, but all participatory action researchers must be leaders. The responsibilities that accompany these roles require a serious commitment, and the potential to contribute to the greater good can provide a strong rationale for dedicating ourselves to this work.

One of the reasons this handbook exists is to be a resource for those who are or who may in the future be one of these intrepid leader-researchers. It is the outgrowth of a year-long process of leadership development and PAR initiated as part of the University Northside Partnership and the development of the first University of Minnesota Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. During this year, project leaders met regularly to support each other, to develop themselves, and to strengthen their workgroups. In the role of PAR ambassadors, this handbook is one way we are sharing what we learned.

It includes foundational material about PAR and numerous *reflection-action boxes* in which this material is applied: *Lessons Learned* provides examples from actual PAR projects; *Leadership Applications* illustrates several of the ways through which the UNP Workgroup leaders learned more about leadership and integrated the concepts into their PAR work; *Reflections* presents opportunities that can be taken alone or with your partners to deepen your awareness and appreciation of the PAR and leadership material; *Try It On* offers exercises and recommends actions to be used in planning and practice for implementation. At the very end, you will find a listing of many of the references and resources that we found helpful in our work and share to help you on your journey as well.

So, if you have a high degree of curiosity about people and processes, can tolerate some ambiguity and frustration, and appreciate the joy of discovery within yourself and with others, we invite you to enjoy this handbook. Within the pages that

follow you will find information and insights that will help you understand key components of PAR, explore the concepts in relation to leadership development of yourself and of others; and conceptualize new ideas about partnerships within and between universities and communities.

Origins: Birthing a PAR Project in North Minneapolis

To fully understand this handbook, it is helpful to briefly describe its history and how it emerged. In 2005, informal conversations between Mayor R. T. Ryback and University of Minnesota President Bob Bruininks began about how the university might join the city to tackle the complex problems facing the city's most underserved communities in North Minneapolis; this discussion coincided with the university's recruitment of Dante Cicchetti, a world-renowned expert who conducts groundbreaking work on family mental health and applies this research to help families avoid out-of-home placement of children into foster care. In North Minneapolis, out-of-home placements are at epidemic proportions. During this time Associate Vice President Geoff Maruyama and Scott McConnell, director of the Center of Early Educational Development in the College of Education and Human Development, were able to build faculty interest in the idea of the university having a stable presence in North Minneapolis. By the end of the year, they had convened more than 100 university faculty members and staff.

A year later, in 2006, an alliance of city, county, community organizations, and university faculty and staff formally embarked upon a groundbreaking partnership with the objective to improve the quality of life in North Minneapolis communities. This partnership became known as the University Northside Partnership, or the UNP. As is true in any relationship, the partnership required that a strong foundation of trust be built among the partners, especially since the history among them was riddled with misunderstandings, broken promises, fear, and mistrust. Accordingly, Darlyne Bailey, then the newly appointed dean of the College of Education and Human Development and Assistant to the President at the University, proposed that the partnership organize itself using a PAR framework. Groups from the university would join with groups from the community in an effort to more closely align resources, tasks, and projects with previously identified assets and needs in the Northside communities. These blended workgroups would allow for greater dialogue and collaboration between the university and the community and support relevant action around key priorities.

Building upon the foundation laid by McConnell and Maruyama in 2005 and the early part of 2006, members of the university and the Northside community met together in a series of forums to learn about each other, to identify the existing university-related projects affecting North Minneapolis, and to determine who had an interest in this new partnership. Workgroups formed around four core areas: education, health, economic and community development, and the arts—priorities that had been established by the community when it had agreed to accept the formation of the UNP. At least one member from the university and one from the community accepted the invitation to serve as co-leaders for each workgroup and guide its focus and activities.

Workgroup leaders agreed to meet regularly for training and professional development around both leadership and PAR. Years of previous experience with collaborative initiatives had convinced Dr. Bailey, who also had become the UNP project coordinator, that integrating PAR and leadership development would be the best way to support not only the UNP in its mission to improve the quality of life in Northside communities but also its leaders in partnering across traditional boundaries.

Leadership application: Facilitating leadership development

A leadership development facilitator can be an important support in the PAR process. The UNP project coordinator, who was a university member as well as an experienced organizational and partnership development professional, served as the leadership development facilitator for the UNP Workgroup Leadership. Modeling PAR, she managed a process that began with the co-creation of a learning agenda and moved through topics of relevance to the leaders themselves. Topics included conflict management, how to sustain leadership, building trust, creating safe spaces and cultures of equity, communicating about research, prioritizing topics, balancing creativity and boundaries, and understanding the history of North Minneapolis. Throughout the year, the

team returned to this agenda to determine if uncovered topics were still of interest, if more coverage was needed on an item, and if new topics had emerged.

The focus of these sessions was to guide leaders in developing a greater understanding of who they were and how they could best participate in and provide leadership for the UNP workgroup process. In addition to self reflection and dialogue as primary modes of learning, the project coordinator introduced tools including “Collaborative research: A practical introduction to participatory action research (PAR) for communities and scholars”, a PAR manual (Wali, 2006); force field analysis, a management resource developed by Kurt Lewin (1951) to help people understand a situation and plan for change; consensus organizing, an approach for working with communities to bring about change (Ohmer & DeMasi, 2009); the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, a work and leadership style assessment (<http://www.myersbriggs.org/index.asp>); and the Rahim Leader Power Inventory (Rahim, 1998), based on French and Raven’s (1959) sources of power, that assisted leaders in applying important concepts. UNP Workgroup Leaders found the process to be of considerable value in their work.

In much the same way, dedicating a portion of your PAR process to focusing on researchers as leaders can allow your team to use leadership concepts to support the PAR process, and the PAR process and concepts to strengthen its leadership. Leaders can individually and jointly explore topics and issues as they come up to delve deeper into key areas of knowledge that can assist them in better understanding themselves and how to they can implement PAR at that time.

The Workgroup Leadership process took on additional complexity in late 2006 as the university moved forward to establish the Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC) as a mechanism that could anchor the overall work of the university on the Northside and provide coordination for community-university research collaborations as determined through input from UNP partners and the UNP workgroups. In fall of 2007, the university received its first funding of a \$750,000 federal grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), to jumpstart UROC's programming and further develop the UNP partnership, as well as expand its reach. Under the direction of FIPSE co-PI and Associate Vice President for System Academic Administration Geoff Maruyama, the grant would establish its own FIPSE-UROC workgroups around the specifics of the funding priorities—a focus on out-of-school time, childhood obesity, and youth entrepreneurship—areas that complemented the UNP priorities of health, education, and economic development. The grant also would allow for the documentation of the formation of UROC and the development of partnerships. A true sign of the community's commitment was demonstrated by the fact that often members of the UNP workgroup also served as members of the FIPSE-UROC workgroups.

In December 2007, the university hired Irma McClaurin, an anthropologist and former program officer at the Ford Foundation in New York, as executive director for UROC; and in February, 2008, it closed on the purchase of a former commercial space that would serve uniquely as a neighborhood-based center, after extensive renovations.

The UNP Workgroups began their work in the summer of 2008. From June 2008 through June 2009, the UNP Workgroup Leadership met twice a month for joint inquiry, facilitated conversation and issue resolution, resource sharing, and reflection with the UNP project coordinator from the university, her research fellow, and an outside consultant. In order to share what they were learning beyond their own workgroups, the UNP Workgroup Leadership collaborated to develop and offer three three-hour training sessions entitled, *Foundations of Participatory Action Research*. Sponsored by the university's Office for Public Engagement, these introductory sessions were open to

university and community members. The foundations workshops and the UNP leadership trainings were designed to increase awareness of PAR within the university and the community, and the tremendous interest and enthusiasm around the topic supported the idea of creating this handbook to capture and share more about the project's process, content, and lessons learned.

Lesson learned: Working with an emergent process

The idea to document the UNP leadership and PAR sessions as a way of assisting others interested or engaged in similar work was conceived early in the process. UNP Workgroup Leaders outlined a learning agenda. However, staying true to the emergent nature of the PAR process meant the development of this handbook was far from linear. What began as documentation of lessons learned from the UNP Workgroup Leadership and PAR foundations sessions transformed into a handbook that was co-constructed by all who attended the Workgroup Leadership meetings as well as the foundations workshops – more than 180 people in total.

Modeling the PAR process, topics discussed in the first few Workgroup Leadership meetings grounded the development of the workshops, which were co-created by all within the UNP Workgroup Leadership. Discussion and feedback from each of the workshops was used to refine the workshops that followed and introduced new concepts and ideas into Workgroup Leadership conversations.

The process was dynamic. As things came up, we explored their meaning for the individual leaders and for the process of PAR and leadership. One of the hardest tasks was trying to clearly describe the multidimensional and interdependent nature of real-life, real-time PAR and commit it to paper.

The flexible, evolving process emphasized the time-consuming and somewhat ambiguous nature of collaborative, community-based work. Leaders acknowledged that our practice of regularly assessing actions to identify lessons and make refinements paralleled the way work was happening in the UNP workgroups and helped them appreciate the process more. However frustrating, the products were richer and more relevant because of the emergent design, and they reminded us that planning is important, but that good leaders and good participatory action researchers all need to know when to step aside and just let the process unfold.

Purpose: What Makes This Handbook Significant?

This handbook is special because it reflects the ideas, questions, challenges, and discoveries of a team of participatory action researchers who have acted intentionally to understand this work and to support others who want to be a part of it. From the way it was co-created to its emphasis on inquiry and action, it mirrors PAR.

While PAR can be used in any social setting that subscribes to its basic tenets and goals, this handbook describes PAR within the relationship of a university and one of its neighboring communities. Like PAR, this handbook is designed to reflect the values of all involved. One way we have chosen to emphasize this is through the language we use to describe the partnership, alternating the order of the words “community” and “university” when talking about these partnerships.

Lesson learned: Naming the community in the partnership

The UNP Workgroup Leadership identified very clearly the importance of language in its dialogue. Words had tremendous power for us and working together many of us became more aware of our word choices. Words can conjure up intense emotions, both positive and negative, especially in situations, like PAR, where traditional power relationships are expected to be challenged. Therefore, in an effort to honor the PAR tenets of equity, transparency, mutual benefit, and shared responsibility for all, the Workgroup Leadership chose to refer to the partnership sometimes as “university-community” and other times as “community-university” in both our dialogue and written materials. Like PAR, as authors, we believe that how we use language is as important as what we say.

How can this handbook be useful for you? To begin, it offers a unique and practical integration of leadership development and PAR for community-university partnerships. Indeed, there are few texts that explicitly approach the development of PAR and leadership together for building and maintaining partnerships. While some have explored the use of PAR as a method for leadership development within a single organization or institution, few, if any, have described the integration of the two in larger-scale initiatives such as university-community partnerships.

From the outset, we hope to dispel the belief that PAR is a research tool for use only by formal institutions, such as universities or governmental health bodies. It can be embraced by everyone. Its inclusivity is part of what distinguishes PAR from other types of research, and as we will share, its use in partnerships makes it all the more powerful. Anyone who is interested can contribute – especially if they are provided the support and encouragement to do so.

While we believe that our experiences and learning are applicable to many, just as everyone's life journey is unique, so are the paths of PAR and leadership development. So, take what fits for you and your communities and be prepared to develop your own learning as well.

Reflection: Leader? Researcher? Is this really for you?

If you are interested in leadership and PAR, this handbook can help you integrate them. For those of you who do not see yourselves as researchers or leaders, you need not worry nor set this book aside.

Consider the following questions:

- *Do you like to ask “why?” and “how?” Are you stimulated by the prospect of discovering where the answers may lead?*
- *Are you are interested in knowing more about the kind of discovery that emphasizes the alignment of self development and community development or research that stresses the*

connection between gathering information and applying it in real life situations?

- *Would you like to make a positive difference in your organization or community? Are you looking for new options?*
- *Do you want to learn more about how leadership and research come together in communities and universities? Do you have ideas of your own for community-based research?*
- *Are you excited about the idea of strengthening relationships within and between universities and communities to promote meaningful change? Do you want to get more involved?*

If you answered yes to any of these questions, now may be the time to learn more. If you are intrigued or inspired about any of these areas of inquiry, this handbook can be a resource for you, and in the process of using it, do not be surprised that you find you are, in fact, both a leader and a researcher!

Reconnecting: The Energy of Research and PAR

One concern many of us encounter early on as we attempt to bring PAR to life is communicating the idea of research in an inspiring and appealing way. Varied understandings of research present a challenge. Fundamentally, research is the process of inquiry and discovery, but many do not experience it that way. Intentionally or unintentionally, it can be used to create boundaries and reinforce limitations. It also can open us up to wonder and possibility, which when combined with the spirit of connection that is fundamental to PAR, broadens our capacity to positively impact and learn from our communities.

While some relish it, research often is interpreted narrowly, sometimes negatively. Some view it solely as a realm for academic experts. Here the researcher is an objective expert who initiates the study of an issue and proceeds to plan, implement, and draw conclusions from it with limited, if any, engagement from those affected by it. Others see research as irrelevant, if not exploitative. Some have been subjects of one-sided research exchanges in which they were studied by someone in a position of research authority who formed judgments about them, which were then used to shape interventions aimed at them. In this model of research, community members become passive participants in their own lives and can lose faith in the positive, transformative power that research can have.

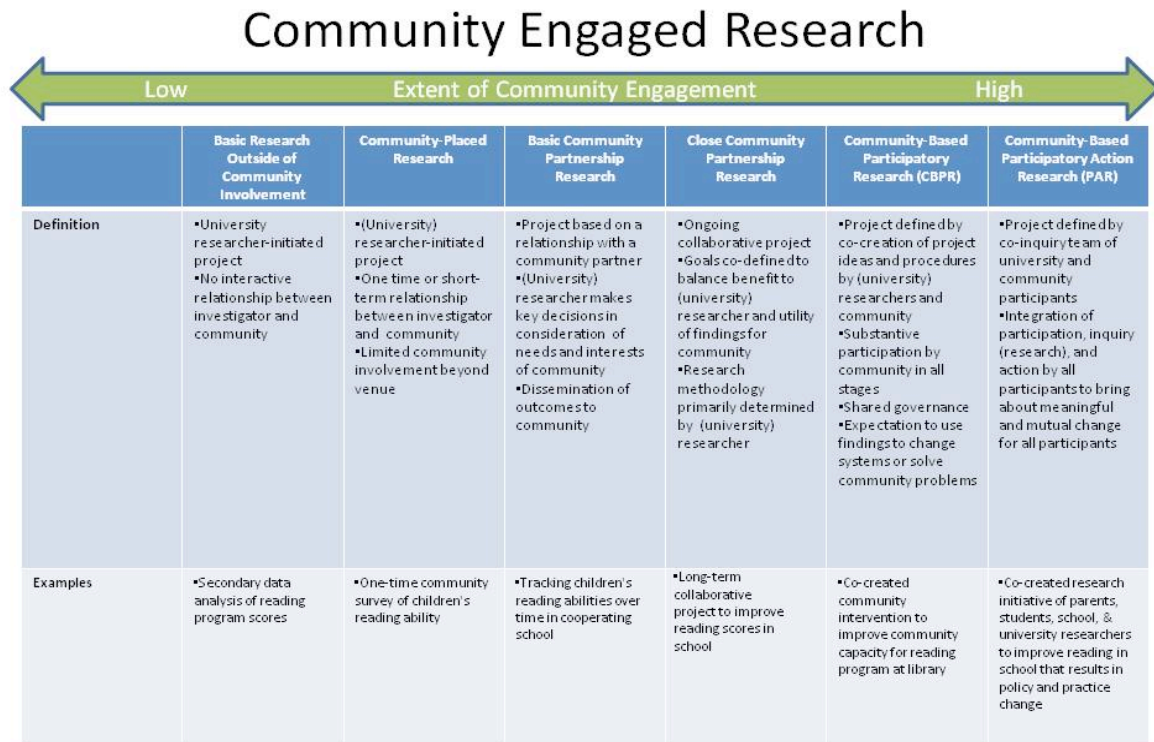
For the UNP Workgroup Leadership, it was important to reconnect with the positive power of research. As such, we chose to define research as African American anthropologist and author, Zora Neale Hurston, described it:

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with purpose. It is seeking that he who wishes may know the cosmic secrets of the world and they that dwell therein” (in Walker, 1979, p. 49).

This definition of research is more inclusive and engaging than interpretations which typically come to mind. It opens us to the idea of endless possibilities and is much more in the spirit of PAR.

PAR is the integration of participation, inquiry (research), and action. It focuses on issues of concern as defined by those experiencing them and actively involves them as partners in the entire research process from its definition and design to the delivery of its results. It builds upon the well-established principles of quality research that ensure a systematic approach to the inquiry process. It involves community and university working together to explore what is and transform it into something stronger and even better. Everyone can be a part of it.

Figure 1: Continuum of Community Engaged Research



A adapted from Appendix 1: CONTINUUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH, Report of the University of Minnesota Task Force on Community Research, 26 November 2008.

PAR is one type of research within a category that has come to be called community-based participatory research (CBPR). The aim of CBPR is to engage community participation in the process of inquiry. Not all research does or intends to do this. When research is described along a continuum of community engagement, CBPR anchors the right, or highly engaged end of the continuum, while basic research and community-placed research, which integrate very little, if any, community engagement, anchor the left (figure 1). CBPR supports bi-directional and mutually beneficial relationships between universities and communities by helping to align faculty engagement and research with community needs at the same time helping to engage communities with university resources.

Community-based PAR is viewed as especially high on the community engagement scale because university members and community members work together as researchers and they collaborate as change agents. PAR makes action a fundamental component of research and research a fundamental component of action. Advancing knowledge and understanding are important research goals, but PAR pushes the process of discovery further. It uses the knowledge generated to make a difference in people's lives and provides the opportunity to ground community action in a collective understanding that can produce data-driven change.

Reflection: Creating enthusiasm for research

Consider Zora Neale Hurston's definition of research and the definitions of community-based research and PAR. What resonates with you? What excites you about research? What makes/would make it come to life for you? What can you do today to spread enthusiasm for research, to get others to join in your excitement?

Community: Exactly Who Are We Talking About?

Who is the community? This was one of the first questions the UNP Workgroup leaders raised in their discussion of PAR. Understanding community is important in the exploration of community-university partnerships in general and PAR projects in particular. It is, in part, an issue of language and, in part, an issue of context. So let's begin to unpack the concept.

Just as research has many interpretations, so does community. A community is a group that has something in common. Communities can be defined by geography; neighborhoods are often referred to as communities. They can also represent people with the same ethnicity or cultural backgrounds. We are naturally members of some (e.g., school-age children, women). Others we choose often based on a shared interest (e.g., book club or running group) or common experience (e.g., professional societies or religious congregations).

In addressing community-university partnerships, this handbook somewhat artificially distinguishes between the two. Universities, themselves, are communities. Like all communities, they have their own identities and rules for membership. They also have within them many smaller communities whose cultures and practices may be more or less similar to the university community as a whole (e.g., social fraternities and sororities, athletic teams, discipline-based departments, and those defined by associations with specific jobs or research areas). For ease of discussion, we use the term university to represent people whose primary association, or reason for being part of the partnership, is the university. This includes faculty, staff, and students. In contrast, community describes the people, groups, and organizations that are affected by the topic or question that is the focus of the partnership.

We may be asked to participate in a partnership because we wear a particular “community hat” – university faculty, community homeowner, local agency director. However, how we identify ourselves is as important as how others see us. For example, a university staff member who is asked to represent his/her department in a PAR project also may be part of the community of focus and able to bring a unique viewpoint

to the dialogue as a result. Yet unless the staff member claims this dual identity she or he may feel conflicted in how to participate in some discussions.

Compounding this issue of identity is the understanding that just because people share the same community identity does not mean they share the same ideas or experiences. It is unrealistic to expect one person to represent the breadth of viewpoints and collective wisdom of an entire community – whether the community of focus or the university. Therefore, it is important that due time and effort be put into learning about and developing a deeper understanding of the partners with whom you will be working.

Clarifying our relevant identities as the partnership evolves enriches the process for us and for our partners. Recognizing the multiple communities to which we belong can increase our awareness of the values and expectations that we carry into our partnership and any relationship for that matter. It allows us to bring the best of who we are to each and to strengthen them through this diversity. In the same way, none of us can fully represent the broad range of perspectives that one community holds. Including multiple stakeholders from a community can bring more of its voices to the table.

Lesson learned: An issue of compensation

Compensation was an early topic for the UNP Workgroup leaders. Our discussion mirrored the ongoing debate in the PAR arena about whether (and how) community members should be compensated for their participation in the PAR process. While it is an important conversation to have, it is not easily resolved. Some feel that because research is part of a university's mission, university members are to some extent compensated for their participation. So, in keeping with the PAR philosophy of "leveling the playing field", paying community representatives for their time and energy on the leadership (or co-inquiry) team may be seen as equitable.

Others argue that monetary payment is patronizing, and it sometimes is viewed as offensive by community members themselves.

Even if the partnership agrees to pay community members, deciding how and how much presents another set of challenges to negotiate. For example, should appropriate payment be consistent with university pay scales? And how will these expenses be funded? Some partnerships have given gift cards and annual non-cash gifts as tokens of appreciation to community members on their leadership teams, while others have asked the community members to determine what type of non-monetary payment they would find most valuable and provided it. Examples include access to and funding for requested trainings and conferences, reimbursement of local travel expenses, and transportation and meals at team meetings.

No set formula for the management of the compensation issue exists, but being flexible and working in partnership with community members is the strategy the UNP Leadership Workgroup found most in keeping with its interpretation of PAR. In the end, none of the UNP workgroup leaders nor members was paid for participating in the partnership. At their request, leaders received certificates of participation at the end of the year-long PAR and leadership development process. And each workgroup is addressing for itself whether and how it will compensate community members who provide their input through surveys and focus groups.

PAR is as much a way of thinking as a way of doing. When we employ it, we align with the inherent desire and capacity of individuals and systems to evolve in ways that allow them to thrive. Consistent with a core premise of positive psychology and the organizational change methodology of appreciative inquiry, it moves beyond the idea

that things are broken and need to be fixed to a belief in the transformation that occurs when we grow from our strengths.

A strengths-based approach to research acknowledges that we are not one but many things. We perform many roles in our lives. We are daughters and sons, gardeners, students, musicians, entrepreneurs, and the like. We have many interests and associations. And each role and affiliation provides us with unique viewpoints, skills, expertise, and experiences, all of which we bring to the process of inquiry and discovery. As we also bring the multiple ways in which we are similar.

Leadership application: Appreciating multiculturalism

As a PAR team, the UNP Workgroup leaders recognized the reality of our many cultures, our differences and similarities, and the importance of these to our process. We referred to this as multiculturalism. We used this word as distinct and different from diversity, which we viewed as focusing more on the differences between people. We recognized the divergent and similar ways that people process information and form opinions as well as the reality of their many identities (e.g., race and ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, language and dialect, economic and social class). We believe that the most effective leaders and PAR practitioners are the embodiment of an “us and we” not a “we and them” perspective and practice.

The universities and communities with which we work are comprised of different people with different assets and resources. Bringing all these ideas, strengths, and resources together adds more layers to our understanding of issues and expands our capacity to conceptualize and implement appropriate and positive action.

Reflection: Creating enthusiasm for research

We all belong to many communities. However, we don't often spend much time thinking about them or the skills and capacities that we learn from or contribute to them. Yet these capacities are part of what we bring to each and every experience in our lives. They are part of our resource kit.

Think about the communities with which you affiliate most closely. Name a few. Select at least one and consider: What draws you to it, what makes you want to be a part of it? What traditions, experiences, or interests do you share with the members of the community? What viewpoints, skills, resources, or other assets have you developed/do you use as a member? What can you share with others?

It can be tempting – and efficient – to oversimplify community for the purpose of research or partnership. However, the validity of the research findings and, therefore, the relevance of the related action may be compromised if our partnership does not appropriately represent the intended community of focus. Describing a community in a grant or creating one with a computer does not make it real. Identity is an important characteristic of a true community. The people that are part of it need to see themselves that way before they will engage on its behalf, and in PAR, engagement is essential for understanding and fostering desired change.

Lesson learned: Defining community

In one university-community health project, the lead organizations divided a large geographic area into 16 smaller neighborhood communities based on census tract boundaries. Meetings were held in

each of the neighborhoods to introduce the project. Large groups attended most of the neighborhood meetings. However, there were several meetings which only two or three people attended.

Follow-up conversations with people living in these areas were revealing. The conversations confirmed that people living in those areas cared deeply about health but did not necessarily know or care about the census tract boundaries that defined them as communities. Their definitions were based on history. While some had attended meetings held in communities defined by other criteria, others simply did not realize the project was interested in them.

As a result, residents of the neighborhoods themselves helped to reshape the notion of community for the project. What originally began as an effort in 16 neighborhoods defined by census tract became a partnership in 10 self-defined communities which covered roughly the same geographic area but connected directly with people's ownership of and commitment to them.

Consider how American educational philosopher and teacher, Maxine Greene (1995), described community:

“In thinking of community, we need to emphasize the process words: making, creating, weaving, saying, and the like. Community cannot be produced simply through rational formulation nor through edict. Like freedom, it has to be achieved by persons offered the space in which to discover what they recognize together and appreciate in common; they have to find ways to make inter-subjective sense. Again, it ought to be a space infused by the kind of imaginative awareness that enables those involved to imagine alternative possibilities for their own becoming and their group's becoming. Community is not only a

question of which social contracts are the most reasonable for individuals to enter. It is a question of what might contribute to the pursuit of shared goods: ways of being together, of attaining mutuality, of reaching toward some common world” (p. 39).

This expansive portrayal captures the spirit of the university-community partnerships that most effectively undertake PAR. In fact, UNP Workgroup Leaders have equated PAR with community-building. It is the philosophy and practice of collectively fostering this sense of community in which people have a safe space to envision what is possible and join together to achieve it.

Try it on: Linking research and community

Communities can be defined and represented in many ways (remember: universities are communities, too). Identify a research or action idea that interests you, something you think has the potential to bring about meaningful change for a community.

- *What capacities, strengths, and perspectives would be instructive in the exploration of this idea?*
- *What communities/universities might be most interested in or most affected by this topic? Why?*
- *Who are the major stakeholders in this issue? If you don't know, how would you find out?*
- *Who might speak for/represent these stakeholders/this community/university?*
- *How can you ensure the right people are at the table, that the identified representation is enough?*
- *Who might be excluded? What might the ramifications be?*
- *How might you connect with this community/university? What*

resources and relationships do you have that can help?

Make a plan to explore your idea with this community. Discuss it with others. Get feedback. Refine as necessary, and then take more action.

History: Roots and Influences Shaping PAR

Early applications of PAR predominated in education and community development where efforts were made to amplify previously unheard – and often purposefully silenced – voices as part of research and change efforts. A core tenet was to identify and address inequalities in power and resource distribution between systems and communities in order to promote sustainable change that was perceived as meaningful for the people living there. This meant putting partnership at the center of the work and bridging experiences and cultural contexts to generate new and more relevant knowledge that would be used to drive desired change.

The evolution of PAR can be traced back to many influential theorists. However, three of the important founding contributors were John Dewey (1859-1952), Kurt Lewin (1890-1947), and Paulo Freire (1921-1997). Each brought an essential perspective to our appreciation of learning and problem solving that ultimately culminated in what we know today as PAR.

John Dewey was an American psychologist and educator who stressed the importance of democracy in politics as well as in education. He believed in the connection of experience and education and espoused educator involvement in community problem solving along with the integration of knowledge and action.

Kurt Lewin, a German-born psychologist who is considered the father of social psychology, coined the term “action research” in 1946. Action research, as he described it, was a cyclical and iterative, or repetitive, process of problem solving. The cycle began with fact-finding, sharing the facts with those from whom they were gathered to assure accuracy (or feedback), planning, and action to be followed by more fact-finding, feedback, planning, and action based on the results of the previous actions.

Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator who was exiled from his native country for teaching peasants how to read, saw education as vital if people were to gain freedom from oppression. He understood that people can flourish when they can control their own learning and advocated the idea of individual truths, wherein each person has his/her unique perception of reality that is based on his/her own ideas and experiences

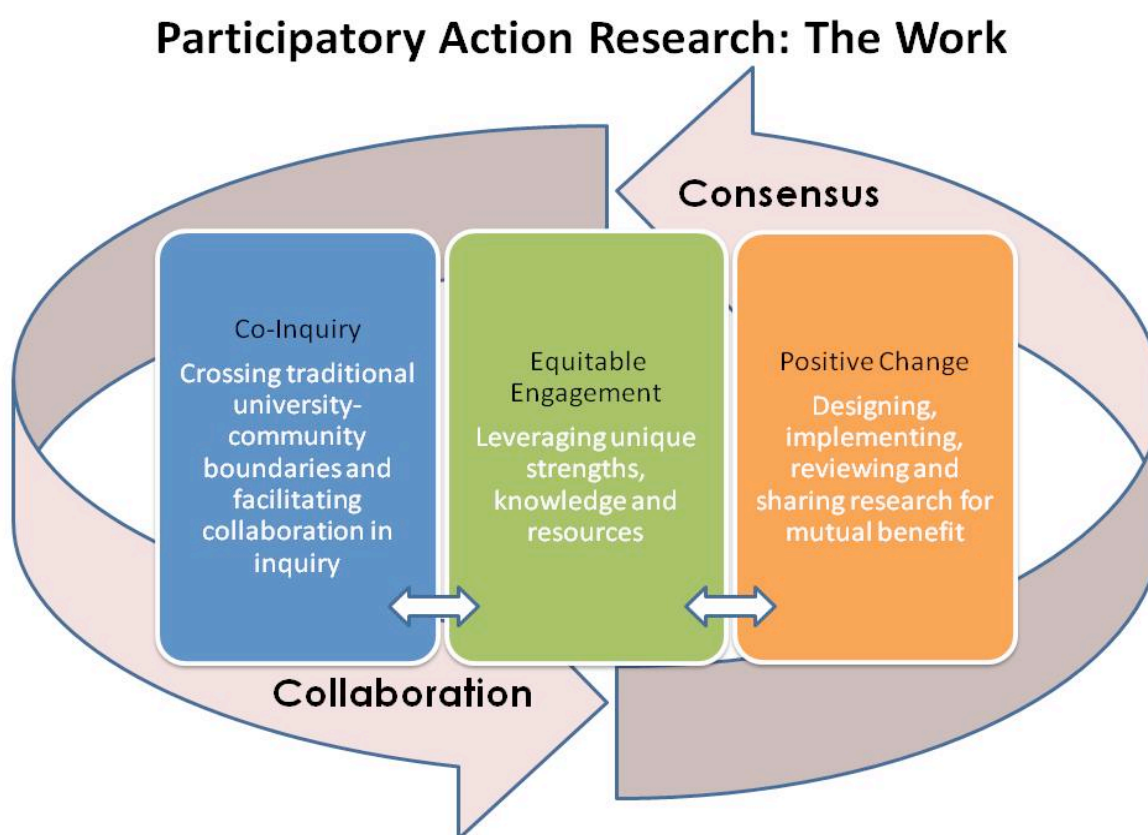
and which is fundamental to the development of knowledge. He stressed that people and communities needed to engage in real dialogue to facilitate issue understanding and resolution, a multi-faceted process that we will explore in more detail later.

In the 1980s, Patricia Maguire, American educator and community activist, added a new dimension to the understanding of PAR when she began integrating it with feminist theory. Her contribution was informed by her work with women in Gallup, New Mexico, who had experienced domestic violence. Today, PAR is used around the world in areas as diverse as women's studies, geography, health, agriculture, and community and organization development.

The Work: Conceptualizing PAR

The work of PAR can be understood as a process of interrelated components. Participation, research, and action are implemented through equitable engagement, co-inquiry, and positive change, respectively. The process is supported overall by ongoing collaboration (partnership) and consensus building (figure 2).

Figure 2: The Work of Participatory Action Research



Co-inquiry is the act of mutual discovery by members of the university and the community. It requires a partnership and the commitment to joint exploration between those who traditionally study issues and those who are affected by them (Wolfe, 1980). One of the first steps in building the partnership is to form a co-inquiry team through which community and university representatives become co-researchers, defining what

will be explored, how, and what will be done with the results. Crossing conventional boundaries and involving community members as active agents and owners of both the process and its results encourages a shift in the power dynamics previously accepted as part of research. It moves participants beyond existing worldviews and opens them up to the creation of new knowledge, ideas, and actions that might not otherwise have been possible.

Leadership application: Building community for co-inquiry

Upon first forming, the UNP Workgroup Leadership group realized that if it were to meet twice monthly for co-inquiry, members would have to be open to working and sharing together. However, the initial dynamics of the group suggested unbalanced tensions: Certain leaders tended to dominate conversations; some leaders did not seem to follow through with commitments; others made decisions and spoke on behalf of their workgroups without consulting the rest of their workgroups team members, etc.

A retreat was envisioned as an opportunity for people to build greater trust and share more together, to begin building community. The retreat did not happen, as they often do, right at the outset. With the experiences of having spent some time working with one another, leaders were more focused and more willing to listen and share with one another.

The UNP Workgroup Leadership coordinator invited a facilitator who used music as a leadership and team-building tool to design an evening that might help the group to come together. The retreat creatively incorporated the power of questioning and song to raise members' awareness of themselves and each other and to set the stage for their ongoing work.

During the retreat, the Workgroup leaders began to see

themselves and each other more clearly. They were able to share more deeply – and even sing – together, which established a foundation of safe space for future meaningful dialogue and openness with each other. Beginning with this retreat, the leaders saw more clearly that they needed to attend to themselves as leaders and to the process of their learning before they could make really meaningful progress in their projects.

Equitable engagement is the practice of meaningfully involving every member of the partnership in co-inquiry and change. Long-established power imbalances between universities as the dominant research authorities and communities as the objects of study and intervention contribute to a dynamic tension in the PAR process. Equitable engagement is fundamental to the ongoing management of this tension. It begins with the acknowledgement that each participant brings experience, skills, expertise, and other resources that will strengthen the work. It places value, for example, on academic research knowledge as well as the knowledge that comes from being part of the community.

No magic formulas exist for creating equitable engagement. It is shaped by many factors, including history, topic, and the people involved. And equitable does not necessarily mean equal or the same. Perceptions people hold about the value of particular resources, especially money, may necessitate that considerable time and creative effort be invested in finding ways to foster an overall sense of equity within the partnership so that everyone is willing to stay engaged. Each co-inquiry team must decide for itself what equitable engagement means, how resources will be balanced, and how each member will play a meaningful role.

Reflection: Resource equity?

A common challenge in community-university partnerships is the perception that universities are resource-rich relative to the communities with which they are partnering. Resources in traditional university-community partnerships have often been understood as funding secured through university grants, along with the people, materials, and time supplied by the university. For many, these resources are associated with privilege (e.g., paid time to participate in meetings) and the power that comes from controlling the resources. Expectations that accompany these perceptions can explode into divisiveness. PAR offers a distinct model of resources, recognizing that both the university and the community bring talents, people, materials, funding, and time to the partnership – no one source is automatically weighed or valued more heavily.

How can you promote equitable engagement in your partnership if money is seen as the great divider? What are the potential implications for your partnership if the university comes to the table with the traditional resources? What are the potential implications if it doesn't? How can you help reframe the traditional power dynamics? What might you do in establishing your partnership that could help prevent or minimize infighting about money and other resources? What alternatives are possible for money and resource sharing?

Succeeding in the implementation of equitable engagement supports the ultimate end of PAR: *positive change*. Positive change involves the translation of new knowledge from research into practice (action) that is aligned with the values and goals of those affected by it. It is a process of mutual benefit. The community wins because it has implemented data-driven change that improves the quality of life for its members.

University representatives win because they have access to valid research on a topic that has produced measurable results for a community of focus.

Leadership application: Managing conflict

Conflict is an inevitable and necessary component of partnership and change. Without it we are unlikely to stray beyond what it is, to push the boundaries of innovation and creativity that integrates diverse perspectives into something new. Yet, too much conflict can disrupt the development of a safe and trusting relationship where partners are able to learn with and from each other. One challenge for PAR partners is to manage conflict in a way that maintains a healthy balance between conflict and creativity.

The first step in managing conflict is to acknowledge that it is a natural and potentially productive part of any relationship and that we all have different styles of addressing it. Preparing in advance by establishing group norms for leadership, decision making, and other issues of importance to the group can reduce the magnitude of some probable conflicts. And just as dialogue is important in leadership and PAR, so it is in managing conflict. Being fully present and listening deeply, with empathy and without judgment may seem difficult to do if you are one of the parties in the conflict. However, they can reap significant benefits in the co-creation of knowledge and building of trust.

Naming the conflict can be one of the more difficult parts of conflict management, but addressing it directly and with clarity avoids the tendency toward surface-level, or artificial, collaboration that can undermine the co-inquiry process. Reflecting the principles of PAR, conflict management involves engaging with one another around values and interests rather than personalities or positions and working together to

discover solutions that are equitable and offer mutual benefit (Fisher & Ury, 1991). Approaching it from a place of honesty, authenticity, and respect supports resolution of the deeper and more fundamental issues that may not be immediately apparent. While partnerships can manage many conflicts as part of the co-inquiry process, when they escalate to the point of endangering the relationships and the work, an outside mediator may be enlisted to facilitate a constructive resolution.

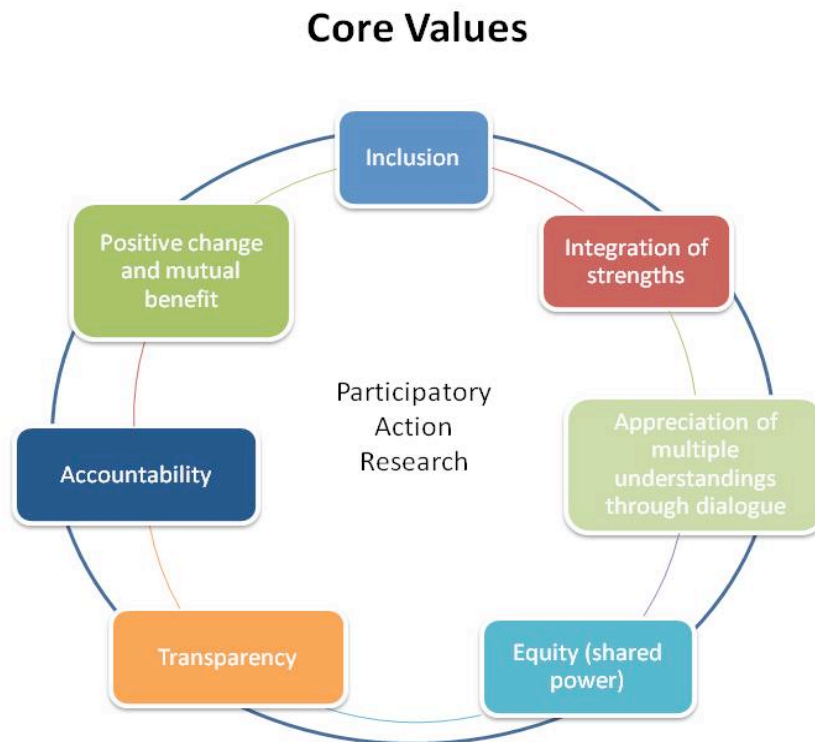
“I must try...to have the people dialogically involved as...researchers with me. If I am interested in knowing the people’s ways of thinking and levels of perception, then the people have to think about their thinking and not be only the objects of my thinking. This method of investigation which involves study – and criticism of the study – by people is at the same time a learning process. Through this process of investigation, examination, criticism, and reinvestigation, the level of critical thinking is raised among all those involved.”

Paulo Freire (Brazilian educator, 1921-1997)

Values: Setting Our Hearts Right

PAR is as much a philosophy as it is a practice. Believing in its core values is part of the authenticity of the process, part of what makes it the unique and powerful practice that it is. Understanding these values is important, and when we take the time to understand our own beliefs and how these align with the values of PAR, we can be intentional about what we do and how we do it.

Figure 3: Values Base in Participatory Action Research



Let the values and the definitions we offer serve as a guide for you and your co-inquiry team. Together they provide a basis for understanding what makes PAR what it is. However, the values that matter the most are those that you and your co-inquiry team define together. So, use the descriptions and examples that follow to frame your

own efforts and determine how you will put each of these principles, and possibly others, into practice in your partnership.

Inclusion

Inclusion goes beyond involvement, beyond making sure that the right people are at the table. When our co-inquiry team is inclusive, we hear all of their voices, and they help us shape planning and decision making in all phases. We learn about the many different ways our partners contribute and we support them toward meaningful engagement on their own terms.

Try it on: A few members are not contributing to the dialogue

Some people may feel uncomfortable talking in the group or need processing time before they speak. What can you do?

- *Periodically check in privately with these members. Do they feel their contributions are a valued part of the process? What would help them feel more valued?*
- *Send agendas in advance, especially when decisions will need to be made in a meeting. It gives people time to prepare.*
- *Build a few minutes of individual reflection into important discussions, even if it means stopping conversation on an issue that has just emerged. Allowing people to organize and record their own thoughts encourages more intentional sharing. If the group is large or a few tend to dominate, move from individual reflection to pair or small group sharing, and have each group report to the team.*
- *Take the opportunity to have members record their ideas in writing. Handing out index cards can help the process feel less intimidating. Have one person compile all the responses and*

discuss at the next meeting.

Integration of strengths

A diverse range of skills, experiences, knowledge, and capacities strengthens the work of PAR. Every person, organization, and community has strengths that they can contribute to the team. Recognizing our own assets and gaining a collective understanding of those that our partners bring builds personal confidence and promotes trust within the group. Some people can identify their strengths quickly. Others may be embarrassed to talk about themselves or may never have thought about themselves that way. For still others, discussing their strengths may not be congruent with their cultural norms. Yet giving voice to our own experiences and seeing them integrated into collective knowledge and action helps us realize we have something valuable to contribute.

Try it on: Helping your co-inquiry team identify its strengths

How can you help the co-inquiry team identify its strengths? One answer, simply, is to ask. But what if asking doesn't get deep enough?

- *Consider the following questions: 1) If we were to ask your friends what they value about you, what your greatest strengths are, what would they say? 2) Think of a time or two when you have felt a sense of pride and personal accomplishment, when you provided leadership or were part of getting something important done, when you helped make a difference. Describe those times. What role(s) did you play? What did you value most about your contribution? What strengths and assets did you utilize?*

- *Brainstorm as a team around the talents, experiences, connections, and other assets members believe the team will need to do its best possible work. Encourage creative, out-of-the-box thinking, and list everything on flipcharts. Then identify how many partners have these capacities. If there are unclaimed skills and resources that the group views as critical, identify strategies for gaining access to them.*
- *Finally, being patient and encouraging can help others share their personal experiences. Support each other in developing new skills and celebrate each other's contributions regularly.*

Appreciation of multiple understandings through dialogue

People often hold different truths, or perceptions of reality, based on their histories. When we understand these perspectives as a valuable and necessary part of the co-inquiry process, our results become more relevant for all. For example, in a partnership focused on issues of community policing, people with one type of experience might see police officers as positive and trusted members of the community, while people with different experiences may view them with fear and mistrust. These disparate realities are all true and relevant in the PAR process and have important implications for defining issues, setting priorities, and taking action. Self-reflection and dialogue help us uncover our own biases, create common meaning, and build new knowledge which we can use to strengthen our work and its results.

Reflection: Self reflection and dialogue

Paulo Freire conceptualized dialogue as an exchange that goes beyond a mere conversation, more than just talking. Indeed, he defined

dialogue as an act of creation – a process in which two or more people discuss an issue by sharing their individual opinions while genuinely opening themselves to the others’ thoughts and opinions. It requires positive regard for self and other, trust in self and other, and unconditional caring of self and other (Bailey, et al., 2008). Dialogue has the potential to produce something new: new information on a subject, a new way of doing things, or even new information about you. For many of us, we are still building the capacity for dialogue. Like most new talents, the possibility for really knowing how to engage in dialogue is greatest when we start from a place of self-awareness and openness to change.

Think about a time when you talked with someone and felt really understood, when you experienced someone genuinely hearing you. How did you feel? What did the person do or say that helped you know you were being heard? How did you respond? What was the outcome? What changes did you notice in the other person as a result?

Equity and shared power

As we have previously discussed, PAR intentionally challenges traditional power dynamics in research and action. Our goal as participatory action researchers is to level the playing field in the research relationship so we can create a true partnership for change. The research process, grounded in the core values we have been discussing, supports practices that facilitate people defining and taking control of the issues that affect them and using the knowledge they create as part of the process to make their own change which promotes self empowerment.

Lesson learned: Sharing power

The early UNP Workgroup Leadership meetings were held in the morning in a university conference room. Parking expenses were reimbursed for Workgroup leaders who did not have passes at the university, but for many, the time and location of the meetings still took several hours out of their other professional and community commitments. However, it took a significant change in one person's schedule for the leaders to reconsider the meeting times.

After reaching consensus about the issue, the leadership group moved half of the meetings to the dinner hour so as to minimize workday disruptions. And each was scheduled as a potluck and hosted on a rotating basis in a member's home. This seemingly small change made a big difference for leaders in terms of changing the power dynamic of the meetings. Away from the university, meetings were more relaxed, more personal, and even more candid, allowing leaders to work with each other in a more equitably way as people, beyond being university or community representatives.

Transparency

Communication within and outside the co-inquiry team is at the heart of transparency. Information creates knowledge which feeds power and, ultimately, drives change. We have all seen evidence in our own lives of what can happen in the absence of information. Rumors and blatant mistruths can sabotage even the best efforts. Just as inclusion is a core value of PAR, so, too, is the openness that fosters inclusion. When we provide regular updates to the universities, organizations, and the broader communities that are parties to the research and seek their input where appropriate, we make great strides toward an honest process that can strengthen our outcomes.

Lesson learned: Establishing a transparent process

The UNP Workgroup Leadership kept minutes of all its meetings. These minutes documented key steps in their development as leaders and participatory action researchers. They provided an internal record for team members and became an important way to share the process and learning with the university and the community. The UNP is redeveloping its university-based Web site where it will post the Workgroup Leadership minutes and share other information about its work to allow anyone who is interested in the process to have greater access to it, promoting transparency.

Accountability

Accountability closely parallels transparency. While it is important to let people know what you are doing, it is equally important to do what you say you are going to do. In PAR, follow-through and commitment over the long-term can be important, both at the co-inquiry team level and to the stakeholders of the partnership, in particular, the community. The knowledge created as part of the co-inquiry process is co-owned by the community, and co-inquiry team members are accountable for its appropriate use. Given that the aim of generating the knowledge is to produce meaningful change for a community, accountability ultimately means keeping the question, “What’s best for the community?” at the forefront of planning and decision-making efforts.

Lessons learned: Publishing

Early in the UNP Workgroup Leadership meetings, while the workgroups were still being formed, leaders had emotional discussions about the potential for publishing based on the PAR projects. The use of

results in many research projects lies solely at the discretion of the principal investigator, who is usually a university representative. Reports can be issued and articles published, often without the study participants knowing about them, let alone seeing them.

The concern among Workgroup leaders was that community members rarely get credit in published materials for their research contributions, and in most cases, the research could not have happened without them. They considered co-ownership of the results by the community and the university to be important in their implementation of PAR. In fact, some have suggested that results should be controlled outright by the community.

In the end, UNP Workgroup leaders agreed that all public dissemination of research findings would be discussed with the appropriate team or workgroup, and authorship would be determined by the group as a whole, with members being able to opt out if they desired. Workgroup leaders have relied on this protocol in the development and dissemination of the foundations workshops, the year-end progress report, and this handbook and have found it to be equitable. Any and all future dissemination of this research will be handled the same way.

Positive change and mutual benefit

Positive change can involve education, advocacy, program development, and other approaches relevant to the issue and the community. The important thing is that it is perceived to be meaningful by the community. This is a primary goal in PAR. However, in keeping with the idea of shared power, shared, or mutual, benefit is a complementary goal. The expectations, agendas, and benefits for the university, the community, and the individual members of the co-inquiry team may vary widely and can seem incongruent at times. It can take concerted effort to balance them, especially as

challenges related to project implementation and other aspects of the process continue to arise. However, understanding and finding ways to create a favorable benefit-challenge ratio for all the partners is important to the project's overall success.

Lessons learned: Benefits and challenges

The UNP Workgroup Leadership acknowledged many benefits for undertaking this work, and they identified plenty of challenges. The following were listed at the top of the overall benefits they hoped to achieve: 1) a partnership that leads to more respectful, productive, and equitable engagement between the university and the community and strengthens the research process; 2) findings and corresponding actions from PAR that relate more directly to the needs of the community and meet a broad range of university goals; and 3) joint participation in all phases of the research that promotes greater ownership of issues and resolutions, heightening the possibility for long-term sustainability.

The individual partners and the groups that they represented also brought distinct expectations of benefits from their participation. Examples included the university's desire to produce research, a community desire to access visible university resources (e.g., funding), a university member's desire to publish based on this work, another's goal to demonstrate academic leadership, and a community member's desire to improve health outcomes for the neighborhood.

Similarly, group members identified various challenges which resonated differently with different people. These included the presence of a rocky university-community history and low levels of trust and respect among partners; the priority often given to money above other resources; the emergent, ambiguous, and time intensive process of PAR; the messy and permeable boundaries that permitted the movement of

people in and out of the process; the need for skills in both research and partnership building; the difficulty of negotiating the dynamic tension between inclusiveness and decisiveness; the unclear and unrealistic expectations of all involved; the frequent inadequate communication; and concerns about managing conflict.

By sharing and thinking through these benefits and challenges together in dialogue, Workgroup leaders have supported each other in balancing them throughout the process. In fact, surprising many, the bimonthly meetings have become an anticipated and constructive forum for self care and sustenance, confirming the value of integrating ongoing leadership and participatory action research training.

While such a leadership team structure may not be appropriate for all co-inquiry teams that are not part of a larger initiative, there are other ways to reap comparable benefits. As discussed earlier, similar discussions can take place within any co-inquiry team through the integration of a facilitated leadership development process. In addition, joining or establishing a PAR networking and mentoring group in your area can provide opportunities to learn with peers doing this work. If a local networking group is not possible, consider joining an online research community. One excellent resource is the Community Based Participatory Research listserv, established as part of a partnership between Community-Campus Partnerships for Health and the Wellesley Institute. For more information, to subscribe, and to view archives visit: <https://mailman2.u.washington.edu/mailman/listinfo/cbpr>.

You may note that trust was not identified as a core value of PAR despite its importance in the development and success of partnerships. The reality is that committing to these values is critical to building trust. Continuing to act with integrity

consistent with these core values over time can help overcome negative histories, misunderstandings, and fear. That said, it is essential that each of us considering involvement in PAR determine honestly, for ourselves, how this type of work fits for us at this time. If we have competing interests that might preclude us from fully committing to the philosophy and practice of PAR, we have the potential to undermine the work. This type of research may not be for us – today. But that’s fine. We will know it is there as an option tomorrow.

Reflection: Reaping maximum benefit from the work

While the benefits and challenges identified through the UNP Workgroup Leadership are illustrative and to some extent representative of others’ experiences in PAR, each partnership is unique. It is important to spend time early in the partnership building process to define your own expectations and agendas, to get a sense of the collective goals and wishes of the team, and to understand where potential conflicts may occur. Understanding candidly how each member approaches the partnership sets the stage for authentic participation and can assist us in determining how to structure your work.

Think about your partnership/PAR process in which you are/hope to be involved. What three wishes do you have for the partnership/PAR process? What benefits do you hope to see for you/your work? What challenges might you face in realizing them? How might they impact the partnership? How can the partnership best support you for success? How can you best support your partners and the partnerships?

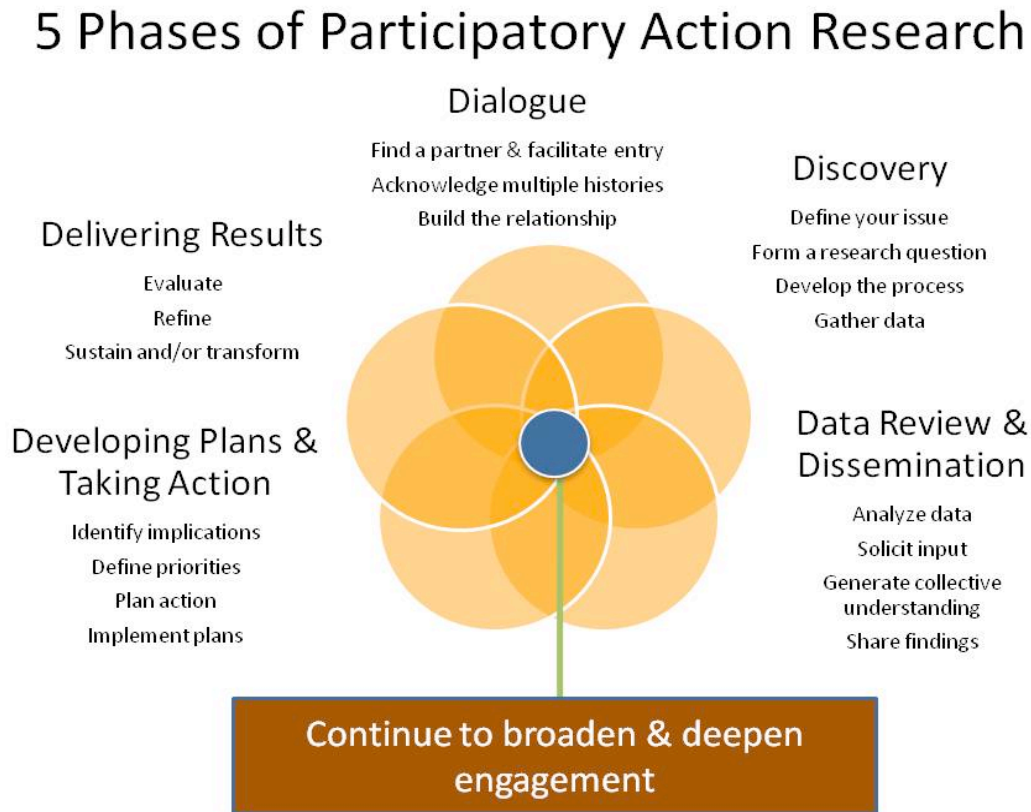
Revisit these questions periodically. Consider what you are learning from your experience and what refinements may need to be made to move closer to mutual benefit.

Doing the Work: PAR in 5 phases

Understanding the philosophy of PAR can be the easy part. Doing it takes more work. All you need is the interest to get started. But then where do you go?

The UNP Workgroup Leadership considered PAR in five phases: Dialogue, Discovery, Data Review and Dissemination, Developing Plans and Taking Action, and Delivering Results (Figure 4). As many do, they struggled initially with the fact that the phases are not linear. They are overlapping, sometimes concurrent, and iterative. From Discovery you may be just as likely to move back to Dialogue as you are to move to Data Review and Dissemination. Or you may find your team working in both at once. All the phases build on and inform each other. Changes in one affect the others, and all are equally important.

Figure 4: The Process of Participatory Action Research



One of the strengths of PAR is that each phase includes many decision points, and each decision point provides the co-inquiry team an opportunity to determine how it will partner. It is at these points that the co-inquiry team consciously and collectively determines who will participate and how doing so will maintain the values and integrity of the process. There are no set rules. Options fall along a continuum of engagement, from community-led to university-led, with many variations in between. For example, one partnership may decide that the university representatives will collect the data. In another, community members will do it. And a third may decide a subgroup representative of both community and university representatives will share that responsibility. What matters is that the co-inquiry team feels that engagement is equitable and will produce the best results for the community in the end.

Another important and defining aspect of the PAR process is the ongoing act of broadening and deepening engagement. This occurs within the co-inquiry team and outside of it. Within the team, reflection and evaluation are instrumental to success, and we will discuss them separately later in this handbook. Outside the co-inquiry team, broadening and deepening engagement may mean hosting community information sessions to keep the broader community informed, providing updates about the project at department staff meetings, sending written updates to current and potential funders, adding new members to the team, and finding other innovative ways to include input and feedback from more people in the process. The goal is to build confidence in the process and long-term support for sustainability.

Reflection: Fertilizing the soil within the co-inquiry team

Figure 4 depicts the PAR process as a flower growing from the ground of engagement. The healthier the soil, the healthier the process will be. Within the co-inquiry team this involves self reflection, regular assessment of the partnership, and refinement for improvement.

Think about a partnership/process in which you are involved and consider the following questions (or consider a potential partnership and project them forward). How do your contributions add value? Is the process effective? Is it accountable? Is what's best for the community at the center of the work? How do you know (i.e., what makes you experience it this way)? What could you do more of or differently to strengthen the process? The product?

Dialogue

PAR begins in dialogue. While dialogue is essential throughout the PAR process, this is one of the only times when it is the primary focus of what we do. In this early phase, we are not collecting data or changing laws, we are engaging in mutual exchange and developing shared understandings that will ground the rest of our work. We are building relationship.

Both communities and universities can initiate participatory action research partnerships. In a community-initiated partnership, universities often facilitate access to resources that support research and add value to traditional action. For example, a community development association partners with a university to explore the disproportionately high number of foreclosures occurring in its neighborhoods. The university provides, among other things, new data on foreclosure trends and students to assist in data gathering. In the short-term, findings from the community-based research inform the development of pre-foreclosure supports that are viewed as valuable to the community. Ultimately, the work leads to policy changes that dramatically reduce the number of foreclosures in the community.

A university-driven partnership often begins with the university's desire to work with a particular community, the interest of a faculty or staff member in a particular research area, or even a grant opportunity. A community partnership links the research more closely with the community's needs and desires. In this way the resulting action

adds value to traditional research. For example, in a project investigating disparities in health outcomes, improving access to healthcare was identified as a priority. However, university members' suggestions to increase transportation options were disregarded by community members. Working more closely with the community to better understand the issue revealed that the neighborhood was so dangerous that people were reluctant to leave their homes for anything but the gravest emergency. Conventional recommendations for action were replaced with more immediate work to improve community safety. University involvement added another level of credibility to discussions with elected officials, and several well-respected community members volunteered to lead the effort.

Finding your initial partner may be as easy as making a phone call or it may take more work. However, once that is done the question of representation arises. Who will represent the university? Who will represent the community? Even within one university there may be several faculty members or departments that would be interested and could support the work. Within the departments, representation can come from staff, faculty, and students. Community representation can come from individuals and from groups or organizations who participate on behalf of individuals and who in later phases of the project (e.g., Discovery) facilitate access to community members who are interested in engaging. As we will continue to say throughout the discussion of the PAR process, there is no one right answer to these questions except to say that the decision most likely to be supported and sustained by the community is the standard by which to measure all other considerations.

As you begin developing your partnership, it can be useful and instructive to begin with a dialogue about each partner's strengths and opportunities. This conversation lays a common foundation of value and possibility from which you can build to more challenging issues. Unexpected issues and important questions can and do arise. History and representation are two areas of significance. It is not enough to envision a change and expect that we can make it happen without considering the context in which the work will occur. Understanding the context means understanding

the history of the partners – the individuals, institutions, and communities – and the previous relationships they have had or about which they are aware.

Communities and universities each have their own histories that shape what they are. As is true for our personal histories, how they became what they are influences how their members think about and act on issues. Sharing these histories in the process of relationship building is one way to better understand each other as partners and build a common foundation on which the partnership can grow.

Leadership application: Storytelling as bridge building

UNP Workgroup leaders recognized early that to be effective in their roles, they needed to establish a common base of understanding not only about the university but most especially about the North Minneapolis community, where the action of the workgroups was targeted. Through their regular leadership meetings, they were learning about each other, as individuals, and about the constituencies that each represented. These discussions, in addition to their workgroup conversations, highlighted the differing perceptions about the university, the community, and the relationship between them. It was particularly apparent that university representatives had varying degrees of familiarity with the Northside community. Even leaders who lived and worked there felt they had more to learn about the community and its rich history. To this end, they invited two respected elders and storytellers from the community to a leadership workgroup meeting to share their stories about the history of the Northside.

Storytelling is an ancient method of information exchange. It is more than a recitation of facts. Like a good book or movie, a good story captivates and engages. It transplants us to a different place and time. Storytelling is a reflection of the human experience, shared from one

person to another, that invites the listener to be part of the experience. It has the power to increase awareness, influence attitudes, build connection, and foster change in diverse and unfamiliar environments.

Storytelling increased appreciation of the history of North Minneapolis among Workgroup leaders. For some university representatives, it increased their ties to the community. For some who lived there, the devotion of a meeting to the understanding of their community was a sign of respect that built greater trust between the partners.

Many communities and universities have had past experiences with each other that shape how they relate in the present. Some have certainly been positive. Building on these positive experiences can raise the level of trust in a university-community project and help it gain support. However, when these experiences have been mostly negative, they can take time and patience to overcome. For example, if a university has a track record of denying admission to people from a particular community, that record becomes part of any future relationship between the two. Or if community protests over a university construction project result in vandalism or, worse, violence, it is recorded negatively in the collective history.

So, how do we deal with these negative experiences? Giving people a forum to express their perceptions and feelings of past experiences can help surface and then transform negative energy that might otherwise haunt the partnership. Not everyone will share the same perspectives, but devoting time for people to relate their experiences can build trust in the process. This is not an opportunity for debate. Rather it is an invitation for people to be heard on an issue – without being challenged – and to have their feelings acknowledged. Recognizing the importance of historical events and, where possible, publicly committing to work toward a more positive relationship through the partnership is another important step. Finally, it is helpful to admit up front

that no one is perfect. When misunderstandings or missteps happen (and they will!), accepting responsibility for our role and working honestly with our partners to address them helps to maximize the potential benefit for the partnership and the work.

Lesson learned: Facing negative parts of the past

The relationship between a community, through one of its schools, and a university, through one researcher, seemed to be developing smoothly. The university researcher was conducting surveys as part of a health assessment. The surveys, which had been approved for use in the school by the university, contained questions which were considered by the students and their families to be culturally insensitive. However, no one spoke up clearly or directly to the researcher or the university while the research was in process. The experience lingered as a negative one with the school, the families, and the community.

It wasn't until a subsequent project was being initiated between the university and the same community that the truth of the experience was revealed. In candid discussions, a few community members in the new partnership relayed the experience. When university members asked why the research had not been stopped, they learned that in some communities, universities are ascribed a high degree of power and treated with deference based on the value the community places on education and the level of knowledge they are presumed to possess. The university representatives from the new project acknowledged the challenge and committed to partnering with the community in all phases of the research, including survey development, to more appropriately demonstrate respect for the community and address multicultural differences that might exist. This commitment also was likely to improve the validity of the data and the relevance of the research

recommendations which would benefit both the university and the community.

As you learn more about each other, continuing to build the relationship throughout the PAR process requires skills in partnership building that are not frequently taught. If you and your partners feel inadequately equipped to handle this aspect of the PAR project, we recommend you engage a facilitator either as part of your leadership development work or for a focused session or two on the topic. This may be a community member, university member, or another individual with expertise in group dynamics who can assist in this process and help you build the capacity to facilitate. Without the partnership, there is no PAR.

Leadership application: Developing the partnership

The element of partnership adds a special dimension to PAR projects, one which its leaders are often unprepared to handle. Many people have been part of collaborations and partnerships, but few fully understand how to help them thrive. Nevertheless, co-inquiry teams must balance attention to the research process with the nurturing of effective collaboration in order to promote its success.

Bailey and Koney (2000) have outlined eight components, or benchmarks, for partnership development. What follows are a series of questions tailoring these components to the co-inquiry process. Considering them as part of your team's planning efforts can help you better define your partnership. Revisiting them periodically can help you gauge how well the team is functioning and what changes, if any, are needed to perform even better.

- *Leadership: Who will lead the co-inquiry team? Will leadership be assigned to one person? Shared between a community member and a university representative? Will it rotate among members? What expectations does the team have for its leaders and their support for its success?*
- *Membership: Who will be part of the co-inquiry team? Will it be inclusive of all the members of the partnership? Will it be a representative working group that engages a larger group for review and feedback at various points in the process? What, if any, membership protocols will be established? What supports will be available to assist members in participating fully?*
- *Linkages: With what organizations and individuals can the co-inquiry team establish relationships to support its ongoing work? Who does the team need to keep informed of its work? How will the team stay connected with external constituencies such as university administrators, community organizations, funders, and other potential stakeholders?*
- *Purpose: Why does the co-inquiry team exist? What issue is it exploring? What research question guides its work? What does it hope to change? What are its shared values? How will accomplishing its purpose benefit co-inquiry team members? How will it benefit the community?*
- *Strategy: What methods will the co-inquiry team employ to conduct its research (e.g., observation, surveys)? What means of change will be targeted (e.g., new or modified service delivery, policy change)?*
- *Structure: How will the co-inquiry team organize its work? Where and when will meetings be held? What roles will co-*

inquiry team members play in each phases of the process?

- *Systems: How will decisions be made? What funding and other resources are needed? How will they be secured? How will money be allocated and managed? How will the team communicate with its members and its external constituencies? How will conflicts be managed? How will power imbalances be addressed? How will the process and product be evaluated?*
- *Tasks: What actions will be taken in each phase of the process? Who will do what? By when?*

Discovery

The process of discovery goes hand-in-hand with dialogue. In fact, dialogue is an important element in the work of discovery, especially in PAR where the exchange of information and ideas is influenced by the level of trust among the parties.

The Discovery phase of PAR emphasizes continued learning: continuing to get new information about our partners and further our understanding of the issue that is the subject of the inquiry from the community's perspective. The central tasks are issue clarification and data collection. While the issue to be investigated by the partnership was initially identified as partners were coming together in Dialogue, clarification may be needed as research methods are outlined and partners negotiate how to balance each other's expectations for the process with what's best for the community.

If the issue was defined generally at first, a specific research question(s) may need to be articulated. If the partnership began with a research question, it may need to be reviewed and refined by the community in this phase to ensure the creation of a research protocol that aligns the question with the community's definition of the desired change. For example, an academic researcher who is conducting research on the impact of the school environment on children, partners with a school that is interested in improving child health. As they plan the research, they might decide to collaborate on

a healthy eating and behaviors program in which teachers and administrators make lifestyle changes that they model for the children in the classroom and in action. The research question and the change desired by the school may not have seemed that similar at first, but their openness to the goals of the other helped them craft a project that met everyone's needs.

The question of what is best for the community remains salient as the co-inquiry team defines its data collection methods and proceeds to collect the data. Will you use qualitative or quantitative methods? Or is a combination of the two most appropriate for your work? Questionnaires, focus groups, interviews, observations, and other forms of data collection each have advantages and drawbacks. Which method maximizes the benefits for your community and your project? Regardless of the method selected, it is important to get community feedback on the instruments before they are implemented to ensure they are culturally appropriate and are measuring what they are intended to measure.

If it wasn't already decided as part of role definition in Dialogue, the team also must determine who will collect the data – the co-inquiry team, community members, students, others? And based on that decision, what training and resources are needed to support those who will be collecting the data? Finally, once data collection begins, it can be helpful to conduct preliminary reviews to be sure you are getting the information you need. If not, refinements to the process may be required. Overall, decisions about data collection and methodology need to be consistent with the values and philosophies of PAR for the project to succeed.

Lesson learned: Balancing process and product

In one project exploring HIV/AIDS services, the co-inquiry team began with an optimistic timeline for completing the initial data gathering phase of its research. The possibility of funding for actions that might result from its work was a strong incentive to move forward

quickly.

The co-inquiry team was a diverse group whose community members represented a local HIV/AIDS service organizations (ASO), which had initiated the project; members of the gay/lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community, and people whose lives had been affected by HIV/AIDS. For confidentiality reasons, no overt attempt was made to identify if any of the co-inquiry members were themselves HIV-positive or living with AIDS. However, interviews and focus groups conducted by staff from the ASO who were trusted and respected in the community would include them directly.

Once the goals of the project were determined, the co-inquiry team moved quickly to develop their data collection methods and instruments. The team easily agreed to use written questionnaires, in-person interviews, and focus groups as the primary means for gathering data.

The process of creating the questions took significantly more time. The summer time-frame and the team's decision-making protocol that required a minimum number and composition of team members be present made scheduling an issue. As members began to talk about potential survey questions, the sessions unexpectedly took on an educational function as they shared information with each other about issues and perspectives they felt were important for the field. Members began broadening their understanding of the issues and each other as a result of these exchanges.

The process of developing the instruments took months, not weeks as originally hoped, but it strengthened trust and ownership in the process to the point that all members of the team wanted to be involved in collecting the data, something that had not been envisioned initially.

The team wholeheartedly supported this approach, despite the fact that training those with limited experience in administering surveys or conducting focus groups would add a month or more to the process. They agreed that the value of having all the members involved in the data collection process was worth the additional investment of time. A relationship of such camaraderie had developed that the team agreed to hold its survey protocol practice sessions as co-inquiry meetings so that all members might attend, learn more, and support each other.

One special consideration in the Discovery phase is protecting participants in the research process. Universities, medical institutions, and others require a formal review of all research projects involving people to be conducted by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The main principles of the IRB that focus on ethical behaviors – respecting people and giving them control over their participation (informed consent), maximizing benefits and doing no harm, and promoting fairness and justice in the process – align with the principles underlying PAR. However, the conventional IRB protocols were developed for biomedical research and can seem particularly cumbersome for community change projects using PAR.

Consulting the IRB before and during your preparations for review can make the process somewhat easier to navigate. Specific training requirements may apply to researchers, such as participation in the *Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Course in the Protection of Human Research Subjects* (<https://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp?language=english>). While some may view such requirements as constraining and punitive, they are designed to be positive and protective. Because everyone on the co-inquiry team is a researcher in PAR, providing the opportunity for mutual learning about the rights and responsibilities of researchers helps all PAR leaders knowledgably and actively share these responsibilities. A second reason for working closely with your IRB is to influence change. Many PAR practitioners

have been successful in educating the IRB about the unique needs of the PAR process and changing university protocols so PAR-specific considerations are appropriately reflected as part of the review process.

One final note about IRB: For grant-funded projects, especially those initiated by universities, IRB approval often precedes development of the formal PAR partnership. In these cases, reviewing the protocol, especially the informed consent form, with the community once the partnership is established; identifying their concerns about protections; and making refinements where needed (even if it means returning to the IRB to have the project reviewed again) can help redistribute some of the power held by universities in traditional research relationships.

Lesson learned: Institutional Review Boards (IRB)

When the UNP Workgroup Leadership first began to meet for leadership development and PAR trainings, they realized that they were undertaking a new process that they hoped to document and share with others. In fact, they approached their work together as a form of research – of formalized inquiry and discovery. Because the university was part of this process and because they were interacting with each other in ways that would capture some personal information, they chose to seek Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for their project.

Initially, several partners from the community did not know what the IRB was – and those that had heard about it primarily associated it with having condoned harmful research on the community – and a few partners from the University were not familiar with it, had not used it, or had only experienced the negative, limiting aspects of it. Indeed, the IRB is often considered a distant body with inflexible guidelines and timelines that hinder community engaged research.

Nevertheless, when the Workgroup Leadership understood that

the fundamental intention of the IRB was to protect people who participated in research, they wanted to find out more about it and how PAR could work with the IRB. Workgroup leaders candidly discussed the process and who the co-investigators would be. Consensus was reached to allow each leader to determine whether she or he wanted to be a co-investigator – and most did. Leaders requested digital copies of the “CITI Course in the Protection of Human Research Subjects” from the IRB so that everyone could participate in the training. The project coordinator reserved the university computer lab after a meeting for that purpose, making access to the material and the technology needed to participate much easier.

In addition, Workgroup leaders invited a representative from the IRB Office to attend one of their leadership development meetings in order to explain the IRB process and how the group could best proceed with applying for IRB approval of its PAR projects. During their discussion with the IRB officer, they learned that the IRB, at least at the University of Minnesota, understood that it had not initially been designed to handle the flexibility required in community-engaged research. However, it was working to change this. The representative also emphasized that the best way to mitigate problems or concerns about applications was through a direct conversation with the IRB Office.

These encounters with IRB were fundamentally encouraging to the UNP Workgroup Leadership, for not only did they demystify the IRB process and break down assumptions, but they modeled the values and philosophy of PAR, which encourage learning and change through dialogue. It gave leaders affirmation that other areas of the university institution were willing and excited to support community-engaged research. Finally, by going through the IRB process together as a team,

the Workgroup Leadership realized that the process was not an insurmountable barrier and that this initial experience would serve as good practice for the future.

Data Review and Dissemination

Data review and dissemination involves analyzing the data and working in partnership with community members to solicit as much input as is needed to generate a comprehensive and collective understanding of it. The findings from the data review form the basis for defining the action. So, it is crucial to allow plenty of time to disseminate the data and get feedback from community members with diverse perspectives. A thoughtful approach to identifying who will be involved, and how, will help to broaden and deepen community engagement and investment in the data and the results.

Once the data are collected, someone needs to compile them into an organized summary that can serve as the source for review and discussion. In even the most collaborative PAR projects, this task often is assigned to a student or a university member, although there is no requirement to do so. More engagement then takes place around interpretation and sense-making. Again, different partnerships may choose to handle data analysis in different ways with some being fully collaborative, some turning over the initial analysis and review to the university members or others with traditional research expertise, and some agreeing to more comprehensive analysis by university representatives.

Regardless of the data analysis decision made in your partnership, positive perceptions of equitable engagement are paramount in Data Review and Dissemination. If anything less than full collaboration was elected, documenting the discussion and clearly articulating why that particular decision was made can help mitigate potential challenges to the findings in the future. Fear is often the reason less experienced members can be reluctant to press for

inclusion in data analysis. To level the playing field, you can validate fear as a normal part of the process and provide training on understanding and working with data during regular co-inquiry meetings.

Once the co-inquiry team has at least a basic understanding of the data, it is time to share your work with the larger community. Dissemination may be done as a way of keeping people informed or it may be a precursor to larger-scale community sense-making forums. Either way, each partnership will want to distribute the findings to a larger audience to build greater ownership for its upcoming work. Who needs to know about your work? Who might try to undermine your actions? Who can support you? You may include potential funders, elected officials, university administrators, and others interested or invested in the work.

Lesson learned: Building ownership through communication

The co-inquiry team for a county-wide project exploring collaboration among family support agencies was intentionally small and narrowly defined, in part to facilitate expeditious decision making. However, the team recognized early that concerted efforts would need to be made to reach out to the community beyond initial data collection – to broaden and deepen engagement – for the results to have credibility. They established a communications and engagement plan, the aim of which was to keep the community informed and involve them in planning and decision making throughout the process.

The team hosted several community forums as part of the plan. In one, community members reviewed a summary of the data that had been collected and jointly engaged in a process of analysis and sense-making. The co-inquiry team integrated the themes and recommendations identified by the community into the final report, which was shared with

forum participants and the project mailing list and made available to others who requested it. The team held a subsequent forum in which they briefly reviewed the findings and recommendations in the final report and led the community members through a priority setting and action planning process that culminated in dozens of community members (both individuals and staff representing local agencies) volunteering to work on implementation committees.

The co-inquiry team, themselves mostly community members and local agency representatives, essentially served as data collector and coordinator for the project. By initiating regular communication with a broader cross section of community members, offering them meaningful opportunities to provide input into the research and planning process, and integrating that input in a way that was obvious to those who participated, the co-inquiry team deepened ownership for the change process. The plan was accepted by the community, laying the foundation for its long-term sustainability.

One important consideration in this phase is who controls the data. Who can disseminate data and findings? Whose names are on the reports? Who writes the reports, how are they prepared, and how are they approved? Will presentations and publishing be done based on the partnership's work? If so, how will that process work so that it is perceived to be equitable? Research clearly has an academic function, but the credibility of a paper or presentation is more likely to be enhanced than it is to suffer if it is produced through, or at the very least informed by, the partnership, rather than by a single member of the team.

To maintain accountability, it is important to continue disseminating as new data are gathered, actions are taken, and results are produced. Using a

variety of methods such as media, internet (e-mail), posters, community meetings, brochures, and word of mouth can assist in reaching as many new audiences as possible.

Developing Plans and Taking Action

For many, Developing Plans and Taking Action is the part of the process on which they have been waiting. This is the time when you begin to translate your research into meaningful change with and for the community. It begins with identifying implications from the research findings and then turning them into actionable propositions with clear goals, plans, and accountability measures.

This phase involves some dreaming: Based on what we know now about the issue and the community's strengths, what is possible? And, again, community input is critical here. The community members may be the ones to implement the actions, and they most certainly will be the ones to sustain it. So, if the action is not something feasible in this community or at this time, it is not a meaningful action. However, if the community is involved in visioning and implementing plans, it can stimulate hope and excitement for new opportunities.

It is important to reiterate at this point that Developing Plans and Taking Action may be going on concurrently with more data collection, data analysis or other PAR tasks. And it is likely that as actions begin to be implemented, more information or interpretation will be needed to assess its relevance for the community. This is another point at which reaching broadly enough and deeply enough into the community can increase the likelihood of positive outcomes.

Reflection: Facilitating change one step at a time

Now that you have reviewed the results of the research, consider all the great things about this community, the things that excite you and make you most proud. What three wishes do you have for this community? What one small step can you take today to move closer to achieving your wishes? What larger step might you consider for the future?

Now, imagine that you have left the community. You have been gone 10 years. All your wishes have come true, and the ideas and actions the community was exploring when you left have made a visible and meaningful difference. Describe the difference. What do you notice first? What is happening? How have things improved? What most surprises you? And what one thing would you be happy to see that has stayed just as it was?

Delivering Results

The intention to undertake a PAR project guarantees results. So does conducting research and taking action. However, neither necessarily guarantees the results that were envisioned. Delivering results first requires that the co-inquiry team know what it is trying to achieve. The team needs to have clear goals, define specific outcomes, and know how it will measure them. Then the co-inquiry team needs to go about the business of documenting and measuring them, even as they are continuing with research and action. When things are going well, celebrate! If things are not proceeding as planned, dig a little deeper, try to understand why they are different than expected, and, if appropriate, change how you are operating or what you are doing. In short, evaluate.

Lesson learned: Evaluating the partnership

When funding for a multi-year health initiative mandated community involvement in planning and decision making, leaders decided to integrate PAR into its design. Project members requested that two existing committees, each with a different focus (inter-organizational partnership building and community development), serve as co-inquiry teams rather than creating separate teams for that purpose.

Two university representatives working with the project recommended a two-part evaluation plan to document the planning and decision making processes (formative evaluation) and to assess effectiveness and accountability (summative evaluation), with particular attention to collaboration and community involvement. The co-inquiry teams, themselves community-university partnerships, approved the plan, provided input for the development of survey instruments and focus group protocols, participated in data collection, and regularly reviewed

the data after it had been compiled by the university team.

However, the primary role of the co-inquiry teams after the first year was to assist in the development and implementation of action plans to address issues revealed in the ongoing evaluation and to celebrate successes. These teams met at least four times a year. Because the evaluation began in the first year of the project and included ongoing data collection and regular analysis, the co-inquiry teams were able to facilitate numerous changes in such areas as project structure, staff and partnership development, and support for community volunteers that strengthened the overall effectiveness and accountability of the project.

Evaluation emphasizes reflection and refinement of the research process and its products. This means measuring the success of the partnership as well as the project's outcomes. Because the partnership typically precedes community action by months or more, process evaluation usually begins first. The broad goal of this evaluation is to document the partnership process and make adjustments as needed so it remains vital, committed, and effective. Self-reflection, including journaling, is a particularly useful tool in the process evaluation.

Leadership application: Journaling

UNP Workgroup leaders spent portions of several meetings considering how they would evaluate their process. They had four goals for the documentation: 1) to share the process with the community, 2) to capture it in enough detail that others could replicate it, 3) to record lessons learned for public education (i.e., co-creation of the workshops and handbook), and 4) to provide timely feedback to strengthen their

work. They determined that process recordings in the form of minutes taken and disseminated by the research fellow were an important way to journal and each was given a composition book to capture more of their individual reflections.

They discussed the idea of journaling at length and decided it could be an informative addition. It would offer a subjective record of personally meaningful events, ideas, questions, feelings, and revelations in contrast with the fact-based and more objective minutes. Journaling would give leaders the opportunity to learn more about themselves as they reflected on their roles within the project and how they were changing through it. It might help with problem-solving, allowing them to work out on paper things that they were struggling with in their minds. Finally, journaling had the potential to help them relax – it is often recommended as a means of reducing stress and working through negative situations – something most of us would agree we could use.

Some admitted that they had struggled with journaling in the past because it felt forced. Others were concerned about how the journals would be used. In response, they set few parameters, encouraging each other to journal as often as they felt moved to do so and about whatever was on their minds. They agreed to keep the journals confidential, except for what each elected to share. Once in a while, they reflected on specific questions (e.g., challenges or lessons learned). Time was provided on a few agendas for sharing from the journals, but much of the sharing occurred spontaneously.

By the end of the year, leaders were appreciative of the power of journaling as a tool in their ongoing development and the lessons they had learned from it. Not only that, but data from the journals were used to shape the content of this workbook, their annual progress report, and

the proposals for next steps in the UNP workgroup process.

Having a dedicated person who coordinates administrative functions for the co-inquiry team also can be a valuable asset in the process. This person can take minutes, documenting topics and major discussion points, decisions and commitments that were made, actions that were taken, and emerging issues. In many co-inquiry teams, this person may also manage communications such as sending agendas and updates to members in between meetings, maintaining the mailing list, and making sure minutes and other relevant information are on the Web site or otherwise available to the public. These responsibilities may be split or rotate among members as well.

The most effective partnerships regularly assess member satisfaction on the degree to which they are upholding their values. They may define expected behaviors or outcomes and survey members about the partnership's level of effectiveness on each. Examples of these behaviors include defining members' roles and responsibilities in each phase of the research process in a clear and equitable manner, providing appropriate training and support so all members feel competent in collecting and analyzing data, and emphasizing community goals while balancing the mutual benefit for partnership members.

Planning the outcome evaluation often coincides with defining priorities and implementing plans. The outcome evaluation may be as simple or complex as appropriate for your project, as long as it tracks changes that have occurred in the community – and within the university – as a result of the project. Setting short, medium, *and* long-term goals can be helpful because it not only documents the long-term vision, but it provides greater opportunity to make mid-course corrections and to celebrate successes.

Celebrating successes is important throughout the project. It builds momentum and keeps members motivated. When you can build in opportunities to celebrate

successes publicly, especially with proper recognition aimed at the audience, it can help broaden and deepen engagement within the university and the community.

So, how do you know when you are done? Ongoing assessment continues to bring new data into the partnership and often helps to identify emerging issues that require us to collect more. The regular reflection-refinement cycle lets us test ideas, build on our successes, and learn from our mistakes so we can make the necessary improvements to produce the best possible result for the community. However, at some point, most co-inquiry teams will reach a point where they have to decide what to do next. In most situations, the options are to transition, transform, or move on (end). Such a decision may come early in the process if a respected leader must unexpectedly leave the group or if anticipated funding does not materialize. Or it may come later when action implementation has been assumed by the community or when all your outcomes have been achieved.

In all of these cases, it is important to revisit your project goals and the commitments you made to the university and the community. If your goals and commitments have been met, it may be relatively easy to move on. However, in some situations the co-inquiry team has worked so well together and built up so much momentum that it may transform, directing its work toward another community issue.

If your goals and commitments have not been met, the decision may be more difficult. In the case of a leader leaving the team, while it may be a short-term challenge for the partnership, transitioning can be effective. Whether or not a new leader is recruited, it is important to take time to reflect on the change as a group, acknowledging that it can have significant implications for group dynamics and the engagement of other members. Collectively determining the best way to adapt and continue the work reintroduces a sense of control to the process and helps smooth the transition.

When the co-inquiry team is unsure about its next steps, it can be helpful to consult with other members of its constituent groups. The groups its members represent may have ideas or resources to offer that make continuing more feasible.

However, if the decision is made to terminate the project or partnership and move on, one of the most important parts of the termination process is maintaining transparency. By communicating the decision and the reasons for it as clearly and candidly as possible, the partnership may be able to preserve a level of trust that can serve as a good foundation for future work.

Reflection: Gaining strength for the future

As we have continued to emphasize, reflection is an important part of PAR and leadership. Continuing to ask questions of ourselves and each other helps us take responsibility for our own part of the mutual benefit equation. As you move forward in leadership and participatory action research, consider some of the questions UNP leaders have pondered: What lessons have I learned? What would I like to pass on to others? What questions have surfaced for me? What has been most meaningful? What has helped me thrive? What challenges have I faced? How did I deal with them? How would I address them in the future? What actions can I take to strengthen myself in this work?

Transformation: The Power to Change

As we said at the outset of this handbook, this work is not for the faint of heart. However, with courage, dedication, and perseverance, it is transformative. The knowledge generated when university and community members engage as partners in understanding issues will influence leadership, partnership building, and transformative change within and beyond university-community projects. It offers communities and universities an equity-based approach to research and social change. It strengthens research, thereby making results more meaningful, and engages community members as active agents in their own lives.

Uniting universities and communities through participatory action research brings the assets of both to the exploration and promotion of human flourishing. It is not easy. It may mean connecting people and institutions that often have distinctly different priorities and approaches. In many cases it means confronting stereotypes, negative histories, politics, competition and misunderstandings around money, and other obstacles that people encounter when they come together around a common goal. And it always means developing ourselves.

For the UNP Workgroup Leadership, the wide range of skills and experiences, the collective wisdom, and the possibilities that have surfaced for us to-date made continuing this work essential for those we serve and ourselves. We look forward to joining with you as leader-researchers on this exciting adventure!

Leadership application: Developing ourselves as leaders

Leaders typically know that to be successful they must pay attention to the hard skills of leadership like budgeting, resource development, benchmarking, and strategic planning. At the same time, they often overlook attributes of leadership that could be used to enhance these skills and ensure a more balanced and holistic enactment of

leadership – and PAR. Bailey, Koney, McNish, Powers, and Uhly (2008) explore eight components that can guide us in finding this balance: authenticity, humility, courage, compassion, empathy, love, faith, and patience. Dedicating ourselves to developing in each of these areas can strengthen our leadership and support us in fostering the same among our PAR partners. Here are some suggestions:

- Authenticity and humility: We are each so much more than our titles and the groups and organizations we represent. Learn more about who you are. Explore your gifts. Discover your passions as well as the activities and skills in which you would like to become even better. Determine what grounds you. Envision who you want to be, and live as if you are already there.
- Courage and compassion: Courage and compassion act to balance and enrich each other. Reflect on your most courageous moments and your most compassionate ones. Explore how they strengthen each other. Consider the details and the big picture. Notice the effect one has on the other. Find ways to maximize both.
- Empathy and love: People are inherently connected with one another. Explore what connects you with others. Open your mind and your heart to them. Discover ways to care about people simply because they exist. Dream together. Co-create a future with others and set about to make it real.
- Faith and patience: Consider faith and uncertainty as two ends of a continuum. Become more comfortable with uncertainty. Believe because you can. Look for the lessons in life. Learn from them. And allow your dreams to be realized in their own time.

“To put the world in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must cultivate our personal life; and to cultivate our personal life, we must first set our hearts right.”

Confucius (Chinese philosopher, 551 BC-479 BC)

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Internet Resources

The Asset-Based Community Development Institute:

<http://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/abcd>

The Building Capacity for Community Engagement Institutional Self-Assessment for higher education institutions:

http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/self-assessment-copyright.pdf

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative: <https://www.citiprogram.org>

Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) listserve:

<https://mailman2.u.washington.edu/mailman/listinfo/cbpr>

The Community-Engaged Scholarship (CES) Toolkit:

<http://www.communityengagedscholarship.info>

The Community Toolbox: <http://ctb.ku.edu>, search for “participatory action research”

Myers-Briggs Foundation: <http://www.myersbriggs.org>

The Research University Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN) online toolkit on engaged scholarship: <http://tiny.cc/Tn1gG>

The Toronto Community-Based Research Network (TCBRN): <http://torontocbr.ning.com>

The UNP Workgroup Leadership recommends the 30-minute video entitled, "For Us, By Us: Peer Research 101" featuring community members who have been active as peer researchers on community based research projects in the Toronto area (video directly accessible at <http://www.vimeo.com/2780761>)

University Northside Partnership: <http://www.unpmn.org>