

Community and Neighborhood Strengths

Key informants (n=63) and household respondents (n=370) were asked to identify community and neighborhood strengths – the extent to which they felt connected to and trusted their neighbors, felt welcomed in their neighborhood, and that community leaders worked together to solve community problems.

Key informants were split on their agreement regarding the following community characteristics:

- “Your community is one that actively promotes positive relations among people from all races, genders, ages, and cultures” (60% agree vs. 40% disagree);
- “Your community is one where people and organizations from all geographic regions get together to address mutual concerns” (49.2% agree vs. 50.8% disagree);
- “Your community is one where all religious groups come together to address pressing social concerns” (44.2% agree vs. 39.3% disagree);
- “Your community is one where associations in neighborhoods from various parts of the community share strategies and work together” (42.7% agree vs. 47.6% disagree);
- “Your community is one in which there exists a great deal of mutual respect among all leaders from all sectors of the community” (55.7% agree vs. 42.6% disagree)
- “Your community is one where leaders from all sectors of the community share vision for the community” (47.5% agree vs. 49.2%)

The greatest agreement on community strengths were in two areas –

- Seventy-one percent of key informants agreed that “Your community is one where leaders from business, labor, government, education, religious, neighborhoods, nonprofit and all other sectors come together and work productively to address critical issues.”
- Seventy percent of the key informants agreed that “Your community is one that actively supports and strengthens connections between families, neighborhoods, and the whole community.”

Household respondents were also asked to comment on the strengths of their community and neighborhood. Table 3 shows the percent of respondents who agreed and disagreed about the strengths of their neighborhood and community.

Table 3. Household Respondent's Perception of Neighborhood and Community Strengths

Neighborhoods and Community Strengths	Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
People in your <i>neighborhood</i> gather together formally and informally (for example at picnics or meetings).	136	37.0	203	55.2	29	7.9
People in your <i>community</i> gather together formally and informally (for example at picnics or meetings)	229	63.3	101	27.9	32	8.8
People in your <i>neighborhood</i> consider the same things important.	203	54.9	83	23.4	84	22.7
People in your <i>community</i> consider the same things important.	173	47.8	132	36.5	57	15.7
People in your <i>neighborhood</i> come together to work on common goals.	132	26.9	187	50.8	49	13.3
People in your <i>community</i> come together to work on common goals.	201	55.8	123	34.2	36	10.0
People and groups in your <i>neighborhood</i> come together to help each other out when they have a problem.	204	55.3	127	34.4	38	10.3
People and groups in your <i>community</i> come together to help each other out when they have a problem.	215	59.6	104	28.8	42	11.6
People in your <i>neighborhood</i> trust each other.	212	57.5	107	29.0	50	13.6
People in your <i>community</i> trust each other.	152	42.1	152	42.1	57	15.8
People who are different from one another (e.g. young and old, established residents and newcomers, black and white, etc.) participate together in <i>neighborhood</i> activities.	137	37.2	179	48.6	52	14.1
People who are different from one another (e.g. young and old, established residents and newcomers, black and white, etc.) participate together in <i>community</i> activities.	182	50.6	137	37.1	41	11.4

Household respondents reported a more positive sense of community vs. neighborhood with regard to:

- People who are different from one another participate together in *community* activities
- People in your *community* come together to work on common goals;
- People in your *community* gather together formally and informally (for example at picnics or meetings)

There was a more positive sense of neighborhood (vs. community) with regard to:

- People in your *neighborhood* trust each other;
- People in your *neighborhood* consider the same things important.

A high percentage of people felt that communities and neighbors come together to help each other out when they have a problem.

Household respondents were also asked to indicate how much opportunity they had to affect how things happen in their neighborhood and community. Fifty-three percent of respondents said they had little or no opportunity to affect how things happen in their neighborhood and community.

The next section of this report discusses the each of the nine economic and social issues assessed in this study.

Household respondents and key informants were asked to indicate if a wide variety of social, environmental, and economic issues were not an issue, a minor issue, a moderate issue, a major issue in their neighborhood or community. In addition, household respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they or someone in their household were challenged by various social and economic issues. Nine topics were addressed in this assessment – 1) economic issues, 2) educational issues, 3) environmental issues, 4) health issues, 5) housing issues, 6) leisure issues, 7) safety issues, 8) social issues, and 9) transportation issues.

Each issue is discussed by first reporting secondary data available on the topic from such sources as the US Census, followed by the findings of what respondents thought were community and household concerns.