



# Regional Transformation Strategy Assessment Tool

The Regional Transformation Strategy Assessment Tool can support you and your partners in appraising your current regional strategy or one you are developing for the future.



This resource was made by The Rippel Foundation, as part of its ReThink Health Ventures project, with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

# Regional Transformation Strategy Assessment Tool

The Regional Transformation Strategy Assessment can support you and your partners in appraising your current regional strategy or one you are developing for the future. An assessment can help your team better understand strengths and areas of improvement, so you can work more effectively to make progress toward transforming your health system.

## What is a Regional Transformation Strategy?

A regional transformation strategy is a comprehensive suite of programs, policies, and practices, addressing multiple issues and involving many stakeholders, that will produce greater health and well-being for your entire region. There is a de facto strategy being enacted in your region—whether or not you have already articulated it as such. It's possible that it may be simply a cluster of individual organizational strategies, which may not be aligned or designed in pursuit of the same end goal. Often, this results in inadequate funding and competition for limited resources and attention. If this sounds familiar, you're not alone. This is what's [currently happening](#) in many regions across the country.

This tool invites you to consider how and whether all of those individual organizational strategies can start to add up to a transformation strategy for the entire region.

### A regional transformation strategy is...

- Based on a **vision of regional transformation** that is widely shared across many stakeholders
- Grounded in a comprehensive **theory of system change** that acknowledges how the many forces that shape health and well-being in a region work together as a system—and how that system tends to change, or resist change, over time. The theory articulates the key trends that need to shift in order for the system's performance to be transformed over time.

- Inclusive of a **portfolio of interventions** that translates that theory of system change into a suite of well-designed, interdependent policies, programs, and practices that produce health and well-being.

Because it requires dedication to a common vision, agreement across the region about what it will take to achieve that vision, and a collective set of interventions all working toward the same goal, a sound strategy has the potential to help regions like yours move beyond incremental improvements to truly transform the health and well-being of your region.

## Before You Begin

The Transformation Strategy Assessment Tool offers criteria by which to appraise your theory of system change and portfolio of interventions. **You can use the tool to assess the quality of your current transformation strategy or one you are developing for the future.** Whether you are assessing your current strategy or getting ready to propose a new one, the assessment can help identify strengths and areas for improvement.

You will find this exercise most useful if you are able to gather leaders who represent the many sectors that affect health in your region and who have insight into the strategy (or strategies) currently being pursued.

**Before beginning the assessment, we recommend engaging in discussions to articulate your current theory of system change and portfolio of interventions. Clarifying this information may require a series of conversations.**

### Here are questions that can guide your pre-assessment discussions:

- What are the most pressing forces shaping health and well-being that must be addressed in your region to improve system performance over time?
- What are the broad, primary strategies you are pursuing as a region that will address those issues (currently or in the future) over time? These may include addressing vital conditions in your community (such as education, jobs, stable housing, and physical activity) and/or urgent services (such as addiction treatment and recovery, income assistance, and homeless services). You can use ReThink Health's [Strategy Portfolio Exercise](#) to work through this question.
- To get more specific about the path forward, what boundaries help to define your strategy? You can think about boundaries related to:
  - Time horizon: what time frame are you considering?
  - Geography: what are the physical boundaries of your region?
  - Partners: who can dedicate resources, wield influence, or provide implementation support to advance your strategy?
  - Beneficiaries: who benefits (directly and indirectly) from your strategy?
- What programs and policies are being pursued to advance those strategies within appropriate boundaries?

## Regional Transformation Strategy Assessment

**Goal:** To assess the theory of system change and portfolio of interventions that uphold your region's transformation strategy (either current or future).

**Time:** Once the questions laid out in Before you Begin (see above) are clarified, the exercise should take roughly 2 hours in a small group, including time for individual work and discussion.

### Materials

- Copies of the worksheets on pages 3 and 5 for each participant, plus one additional of each.
- Optional: A single copy of each of the spider diagrams on pages 4 and 6. You may choose to blow up the spider diagrams to a larger poster size or mimic them on a white board so that they can be more easily seen by the group.
- Pen and paper

### Directions

#### 1. Prior to beginning:

- a. Clarify whether you are assessing your current or future transformation strategy.
- b. If needed, work through questions in the Before You Begin section above.
- c. Identify a facilitator to guide participants through the exercise.

#### 2. At the outset of the meeting (:15)

With all participants, review the elements of your current or proposed theory of system change and portfolio of interventions.

#### 3. Individually (:15)

Using the worksheets on pages 3 and 5, consider how well your theory of system change and portfolio of interventions meets the assessment criteria. Record any strengths or weaknesses that you see and rate on a scale of 1 to 10 (weak to strong).

#### 4. As a group (:60)

- a. Ask each participant to relay their ratings and the reasoning behind them. Reach consensus on ratings for each of the criteria, using a new version of the worksheet to record your decisions.
- b. Optional: Using the spider diagram on pages 4 and 6, draw a dot on the corresponding line for each criterion. For example, if your group rated your theory of system change as a 5, draw a dot on the fifth line from the center of the spider web. Once you have drawn dots for each criteria, connect them with lines to form a circular shape. The resulting diagram should help you visualize areas where your current theory of change is strongest and weakest.

#### 5. As a group (:30)

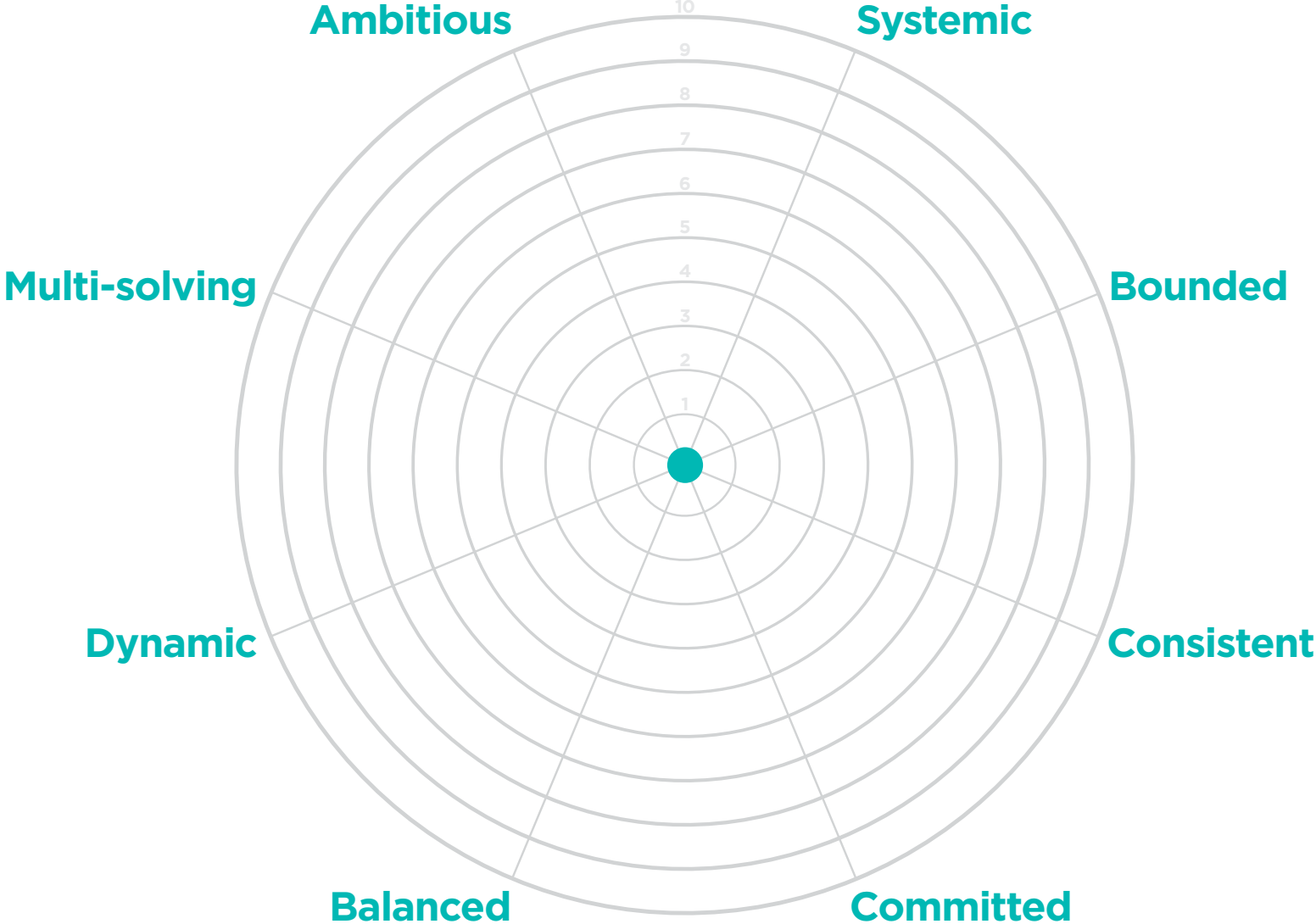
Debrief the results of your assessment, identifying strengths of your overall transformation strategy and areas of improvement.

## Theory of System Change Assessment

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	RATING*
<b>Ambitious</b>	Does it strive to make a <b>real and lasting difference</b> on important issues?			
<b>Multi-solving</b>	Does it have the potential to <b>improve the metrics for multiple factors influencing</b> health and well-being (including but not limited to cost, quality of care, equity, productivity, and population health)?			
<b>Dynamic</b>	Does it build on your region's understanding of <b>past trends</b> ? Does it encompass the <b>key drivers</b> of (or barriers to) health and well-being in your region?			
<b>Balanced</b>	Does it focus on both <b>vital conditions and urgent services**</b> ? Does it consider impacts over the <b>short term</b> (2-3 years) and <b>long term</b> (15-20 years)?			
<b>Systemic</b>	Is it grounded in a big picture, <b>comprehensive view of the system</b> , rather than a disconnected set of isolated efforts?			
<b>Bounded</b>	Does it reflect <b>agreement on key system boundaries</b> , including geographic scope, time horizon, and beneficiaries?			
<b>Consistent</b>	Is it logically consistent with your <b>vision</b> for a transformed region?			
<b>Committed</b>	Are a broad range of <b>stakeholders</b> engaged and committed to it?			

\* For the rating, 1 = weak; 10 = strong (or you may list as unknown)

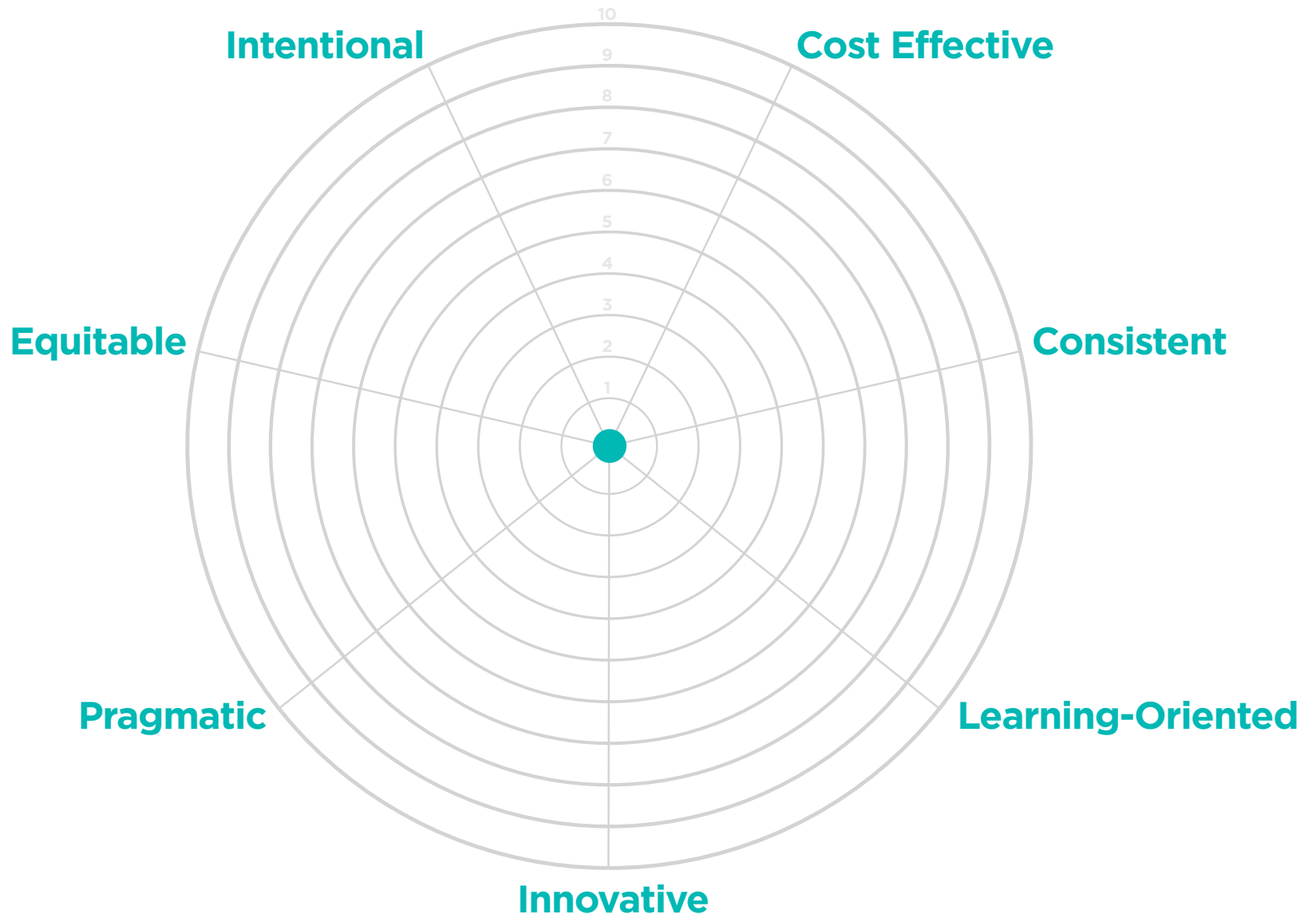
\*\* Vital conditions are properties (such as housing and reliable transportation) of places and institutions that all people need, all the time, to be healthy and well; urgent services are services (such as addiction and recovery services and food assistance) that anyone under adversity may need temporarily to regain or restore health and well-being.



## Portfolio of Interventions Assessment

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	RATING*
<b>Intentional</b>	Do <b>clear priorities</b> emerge across the full portfolio? Does it account for <b>how policies and programs might interact</b> ?			
<b>Equitable</b>	Does each element of the portfolio, and the portfolio as a whole, consider who may disproportionately benefit and who may be burdened? How does it impact historically <b>advantaged</b> and <b>disadvantaged</b> groups?			
<b>Pragmatic</b>	Is it <b>feasible</b> to put in place with the resources and organizations at the table in your region?			
<b>Innovative</b>	Does it build on <b>established</b> programs and policies while also considering new and <b>innovative</b> approaches?			
<b>Cost Effective</b>	Does it reflect an effective and efficient <b>mix of resources</b> ?			
<b>Consistent</b>	Is it logically consistent with your region's <b>vision</b> ? Will it advance your <b>theory of system change</b> ?			
<b>Learning-Oriented</b>	Is it <b>evidence-based</b> and grounded in <b>experience</b> in your region? Do you have ways to <b>measure and chart progress</b> over time?			

\* For the rating, 1 = weak; 10 = strong (or you may list as unknown)



This work may be used, photocopied, and distributed for educational purposes only and as long as the copyright notice remains intact. For use on a website or social media platform, link directly to the work on our website. Unless prior written permission is given by The Rippel Foundation, this material may not be (i) used or distributed for monetary purposes (i.e., do not sell our work), and (ii) edited or changed in any way.

Please email requests or questions to: [info@rippelfoundation.org](mailto:info@rippelfoundation.org)

©2018 THE RIPPEL FOUNDATION.