Tool 1.1: Participatory Action Research Terms and Definitions

Terms (Underlined) and Definitions (Italicized) (terms are in chronological order)

1. Organizing Goal: the overall change that you seek through your organizing work.

2. Research Questions: A set of broad, overarching, questions that you seek to answer through your research.

3. Sample: The specific set of people that you will talk to in order to answer your research questions.

4. Quantitative Data: Data that can be measured and is presented in numbers. Usually collected through surveys.

5. Qualitative Data: Data that can be observed but not measured and is presented as stories or descriptions. Usually collected through interviews or focus groups.

6. Secondary Data: Data that has already been collected and analyzed by somebody for some other reason other than your current study.

7. Data Collection: process of gathering information (through surveys, focus groups, etc) in order to answer your research questions.

8. Data Entry: process of entering data that is collected by researchers.

9. Data Analysis: The process of systematically reviewing the data you collect through surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc in order to develop research findings and recommendations for your report.

10. Data Report Back: Process of presenting data you collected and analyzed back to the community or people you surveyed, interviewed, etc. to get their feedback.

11. Research Findings: The conclusions you draw from your data collection and analysis.

12. Policy Recommendations: The suggestions you make to elected officials, or people in power to fix the problems that you uncover with your research.


14. Report Release: The way in which you make your research public. This could be a policy briefing, a press conference or by circulating your report online.