

The Personal Transformation Index

Measuring Heifer's Social Capital Transformation Work

Heifer believes building social capital is an integral pathway for households in our projects to improve their quality of life. To achieve this, Heifer's programs utilize various strategies to partner with households on their social capital-building journey, including the Values-Based Holistic Community Development (VBHCD) Model and Heifer's 12 Cornerstones for Just and Sustainable Development. These strategies foster personal transformation — internal shifts in mindset, confidence and agency — and community transformation rooted in the development of social capital, including stronger networks, trust and collective action.

Overview

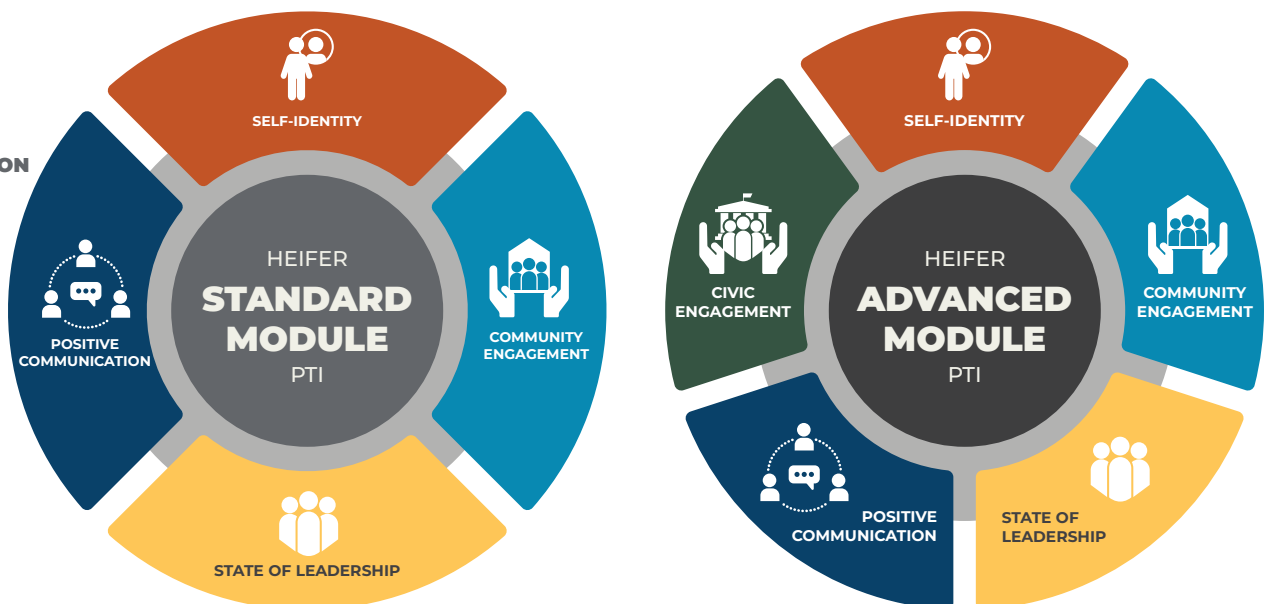
The Personal Transformation Index (PTI) measures the degree to which Heifer's project participants experience both deep personal change — such as empowerment and mindset shifts — and growth in social capital, defined as increased trust, collaboration and participation in community life. In the past four years, Heifer has partnered with a multidisciplinary team of academics from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and Old Dominion University to consider measuring the impact of social capital development within Heifer's context. The team has proposed that the transformation process involves multidimensional awareness, with project participants shifting from fixed belief systems to a broader sense of their reality. Transformation represents a reawakening — a significant change that reshapes one's beliefs, behaviors and the essence of one's being. As a result of the transformative journey, participants change the way they see themselves, become leaders in their lives, expand their communication skills and become more community-engaged.

This module captures the unique journeys of Heifer's project participants over time, aiming to measure changes in their individual social capital. Drawing on research and pilot studies conducted across Heifer's programs in Africa, Asia and the Americas, the PTI evaluates the level of change in five areas of transformation: personal identity, positive communication, community engagement, state of leadership and civic engagement.

Metrics

Heifer's approach to PTI is structured into two versions: the standard module and advanced module, which capture the four key focus areas of the transformation. The standard module — usually applied to any project that uses the VBHCD approach and/or components of the 12 cornerstones for households — comprises 15 standard questions across four sub-components. The advanced module is typically applied to projects focused on social capital intervention. It comprises 25 standard interrelated questions organized into five sub-components: self-identity, positive communication, community engagement, state of leadership and civic engagement. Both forms utilize a 4-point scale for calculations.

**FIGURE 1:
STANDARD AND
ADVANCED
MODULE
PERSONAL
TRANSFORMATION
INDICES**



The Five Dimensions of Individual Social Capital

- 1. Self-Identity** reflects internal changes in self-confidence, capability, self-control and learning orientation. As individuals transform, they experience a substantial positive shift in how they see themselves and in their belief in what they can achieve. This strengthened self-concept is foundational for engaging effectively within their communities and building meaningful social connections.
- 2. Positive Communication** encompasses an individual's ability to communicate effectively, assertively and empathetically. As individuals grow, their enhanced communication builds key components of social capital, including mutual understanding, interpersonal relationships and trust.
- 3. Community Engagement** highlights collaboration among individuals, groups and authorities to pursue a sustainable community future. This dimension is a direct expression of social capital, emphasizing collective action, shared responsibility and the strengthening of community ties through mutual support and involvement.
- 4. State of Leadership** describes the evolution of individuals into purpose-driven self-directed leaders who remain open to diverse perspectives and act with integrity. Effective leadership contributes to social capital by inspiring participation, facilitating collaboration and cultivating trust and accountability within communities.
- 5. Civic Engagement** involves taking actions that benefit the broader public with a focus on improving community conditions and reinforcing trust. This dimension is both a product and a driver of social capital as it deepens individuals' connections to their communities and promotes a culture of mutual care and collective well-being.

Rationale and Module Scoring

The PTI facilitates the systematic collection of data on participants' personal transformation and the development of distinctive social capital. It tracks internal growth and its external manifestations through sustained community engagement and leadership over the duration of the project.

Key features of the index include:

- ▶ Establishing a standardized method for measuring the impact of Heifer's programs on an individual's social capital.
- ▶ Enabling discussions about social capital progress within each project and across the organization, specifically within the overall PTI framework and its sub-components.
- ▶ Enhancing the interpretability of results allows project teams to assess whether social capital is increasing or if reinforcement is needed within specific PTI sub-components.
- ▶ Integrating social capital training with measurement, ensuring that if reinforcement is necessary, Heifer has pre-identified tools available to support project participants within the PTI sub-components.

The PTI provides a comprehensive perspective on how internal transformation (self-identity and communication) contributes to and is reinforced by external social capital growth (community engagement, leadership and civic involvement). It serves as a valuable tool for Heifer's projects to monitor progress at both individual and project levels, from baseline through the project's duration. This enables projects to assess advancements within each component, identify gaps and adjust programming to partner with households to achieve high levels of social capital.

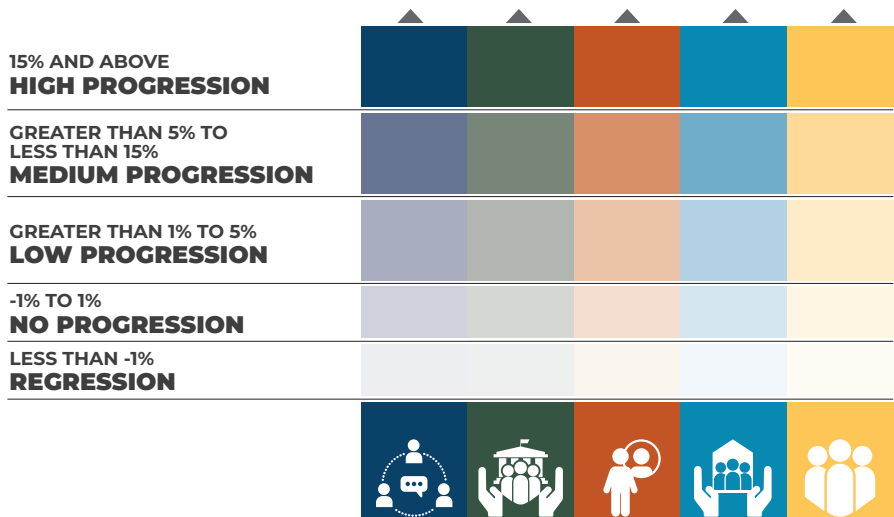


FIGURE 2 : THE PTI SCORING MATRIX allows Heifer to assess progress toward the goal of high social capital attainment. The index categorizes participants as: Regression (<-1%); No Progression (-1% to 1%); Low Progression (>1% to 5%); Medium Progression (>5% to <15%); and High Progression (>15%)

For inquiries or follow-up, please contact:
The Global MERLS Team: MERL@Heifer.org
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