NNIP AND CIVIC TECHNOLOGY GROUPS

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The National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) is a network of local organizations in more than three-dozen cities that collect, organize, and analyze neighborhood data to tackle issues in their communities. Local NNIP organizations
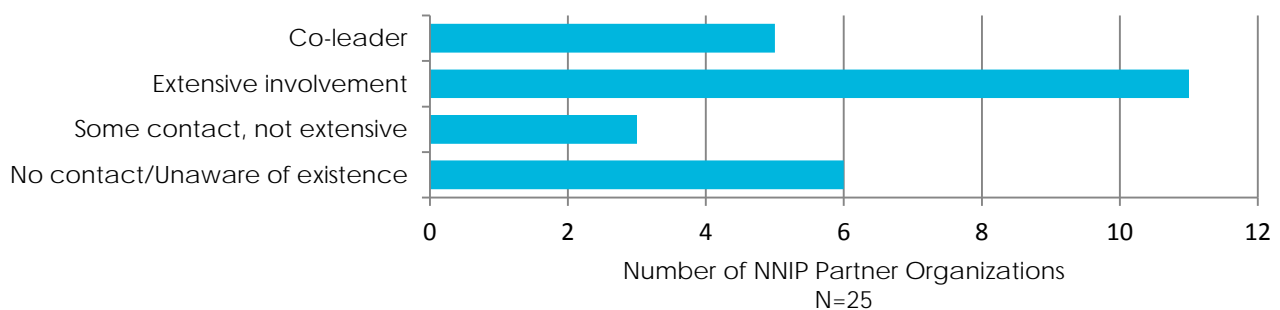
- transform data to create a valuable long-term resource for the whole community;
- translate technical information so local leaders can make effective, evidence-based decisions; and
- empower local communities to use data to have a voice in planning and decisionmaking.

Partner organizations have a long history of helping open up data in their communities, and they are gaining experience using open source tools to accomplish their goals. In the past few years, a new type of organization with goals related to those of NNIP partners has emerged.

These volunteer civic technology groups—like the Code for America Brigades, open data groups, and civic hacker meetups—advocate for and contribute to the development of new websites and mobile applications that help residents and improve governance in their cities. Through an informal survey of partner organizations in July 2014, we learned more about how NNIP partner organizations interact with civic technology groups in their cities.

As shown in the figure below, NNIP partner organizations vary greatly in their involvement with these groups. Of the 25 organizations that responded, one fifth currently lead or have previously led civic technology groups in their cities, and another two-fifths have extensive involvement with such groups. At least one staff member at these 16 NNIP organizations are active members of local civic technology groups and contribute to the groups' code-

NNIP Involvement with Local Civic Technology Groups

Number of NNIP Partner Organizations
N=25

athons and other events.

All these 16 partner organizations reported that they have provided data or other assistance to local civic tech groups. An additional three organizations have had some contact with local civic tech groups but have not been active participants.

Still, six organizations responded that they had no contact with a local civic tech group or were not aware of a group's existence in their city. Several organizations with local civic tech groups in their cities expressed a desire to build stronger relationships with the groups, but these organizations have encountered such barriers as irregular group meetings and lack of group leadership.

NNIP encourages partners who are not involved with their local civic tech groups to reach out and explore common interests. National convenings areone place where the network can highlight ways to work together. Several partner organizations have attended events, like the Sunlight Foundation's Transparency Camp, that target open government and civic technology groups. Additionally, several NNIP organizations plan to attend the Code for America Summit in September 2014.

We will continue to document examples of NNIP partners and civic technology groups collaborating to improve their communities. Examples of promising local practices for knitting together community data and technology efforts may help other cities and NNIP partners recognize the potential benefits of such relationships. The network plans to repeat this survey to track changes over time, and we expect to see stronger relationships between civic data and civic technology groups spread more widely throughout the partnership.