

A PATH TO AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An equity-driven collective impact movement should seek to **disrupt and reform unequal power dynamics**. To meaningfully reform those systems requires engaging communities in the social movement itself. One of the most important roles of the collective impact table is **facilitating and supporting capacity building in communities**. The goal of this work is to nurture and leverage civic power and place it at the center of collective action and policy work. Such efforts require **an explicit discussion of race and equity and the institutionalized structures that support inequity**.

The purpose of the checklist is to keep these guiding questions in mind as you plan and implement your community engagement work. It might help you uncover blind spots you might have and begin to interrogate the unavoidable power dynamics at play. This checklist was adapted from a blog post by **RTI International: A Path Towards Community Engagement** where you can go deeper on these guiding questions.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Do we constantly interrogate power dynamics? Do we question preconceived ideas and biases towards communities?
- Do we acknowledge our limitations as an outsider?
- Do we provide authentic spaces for residents to be involved?
- Do we hire community members to serve on our backbone team?
- Do we compensate community members for their time and contributions?
- Do we cover transportation fees for community members to attend meetings?
- Do we provide childcare during meetings?
- Are all racial/ethnic groups who are affected by the policy/practice/decision at the table?
- Do we include residents in addition to professional leaders in community-based organizations?
- Do we host meetings in community spaces instead of asking community members to come to us?
- Do we regularly disseminate information and updates about plans and activities to ensure accountability and transparency? Do we do this through channels that community members utilize?
- Are we providing communities space to unpack what they want from themselves instead of putting constraints on their goals and vision?
- Do we entrust communities with genuine tasks, real resources and true leadership?
- Do we treat community members as producers and actors, rather than subjects or passive service recipients?



NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US

