RACE
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COMMUNITY BUILDING STRATEGIES

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Why Should I Use This Tool?

Some otherwise good community building practices can fall short of maximizing opportunity for all if not intentionally considered for how they play out around race. The practices we highlight are necessary for community building, but they may not be sufficient for producing opportunity for all and achieving racially equitable results within communities.

What Will It Accomplish?

It offers a systematic process for assessing opportunity for all in community building by walking you through key questions you should ask about planned strategies.

How Do I Use It?

■ Review the examples of common community building practices, their unexpected limitations, and how they can be corrected to promote equitable impact.

■ Then use the questions below these examples to walk through your own proposed work. The answers to these questions should produce an improved design by identifying any extra steps needed to produce equitable results.

Type of Intervention ·····▶	Example ·····▶	Limitation ·····▶	Additional Considerations: Value Added by Focus on Embedded Inequities[2]
1. Data for planning, advocacy	Local community residents collect data on the number of residents given FEMA grants for emergency assistance.	Without data disaggregation by race, there is no understanding of effects on different racial groups.	1. Disaggregate data by race and analyze outcomes for racial disparities. 2. Shape advocacy around producing racially equitable results. (See **Racial Equity Impact Analysis** tool and **How to Talk About Race**)
2. Local needs assessment and change	A local needs assessment is conducted to determine if a local workforce initiative is currently meeting the needs of a neighborhood and what other types of resources and services the initiative can provide.	In part because of the "racial-ized" nature of inner cities and suburbs, the job market is usually distributed regionally rather than locally, so a neighborhood-based needs assessment would not be adequate for maximizing labor market prospects.	1. The analysis should go beyond a local needs assessment to a regional analysis for change. 2. Issues that may not have been exposed by a purely local analysis – such as transportation needs – are now exposed as critical for workforce participation.
3. Resident engagement	Efforts to combat chronic civic disengagement have residents engaged in crime watch, beautification projects, and learning circles.	Engagement without building a power base to mobilize against disparities won't turn neighbor-hood action into the creation of opportunity for all.	1. Community organizing that builds a power base for local residents has the greatest potential to bring about equitable results. 2. Leadership development must be a central component of resident engagement, along with skills to be effective beyond the community and across diverse constituencies.
4. Organizational capacity building	Investment has been made to build the capacity of local organizations to use their Boards more effectively.	While this is a worthwhile invest-ment area, capacity building may not factor in structural barriers that limit organizational aspirations, such as possible stigma and stereotypes surrounding issues they deal with.	Organizational capacity-building must include skills that enable organizational members to participate effectively in policy advocacy and civic debate in ways that maximize the promotion of opportunity for all.

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5. Social network development	Efforts to strengthen social networks in low income communities take an assets-based approach and begin by focusing on how to access and exchange the resources neighbors possess.	Connecting people in neighborhoods to one another is good; however, connections also need to be made to resourceful external networks and decision-makers in order to produce change in policies and programs that affect communities.	1. Civic capital and the power accessed through external networks become a key focus. 2. The development of bridging capital enables residents to operate effectively beyond their neighborhoods. 3. Local officials need to acquire bridging capital to interact respectfully and competently with local residents.
6. Partnership, collaboration	Partnerships between poor communities and community foundations work to promote job creation.	These partnerships may be imbalanced by differential power of the stakeholders. As a result, community members in the project may defer to the more powerful partner.	1. Partners should be intentional in operating with equity as a principle. (See the **Organizational Self-Assessment** tool.) 2. All parties should have the cultural and intergroup competence required for respectful and effective collaboration.
7. Programmatic interventions	Programmatic interventions have made tremendous impacts on the lives of children, families and communities; such programs have changed disengaged citizens into engaged civic leaders.	A focus on programs often addresses an immediate need or problem, which may be a symptom of policy inequities. Failure to focus on policies that produce these needs or problems promises never-ending needs to be addressed.	1. Focus beyond specific projects and initiatives to the need for policy change. 2. Develop a media strategy for reframing issues from needs to barriers to opportunity. (See the **How to Talk About Race** tool.)
8. Cultural competence	Cultural competence training for family practitioners and organizations can produce culturally appropriate services.	Cultural competence is a necessary ingredient for good services, but it does not guarantee racially equitable results.	Combine racial equity approaches with cultural competence training for staff and organizations. (See the **Organizational Self-Assessment** tool.)
Add your community building strategy here.	**Give a concrete example of the strategy.**	**Conduct a Racial Equity Impact Analysis to identify limitations of the strategy.**	**Identify what additional steps must be taken to ensure opportunity for all through use of this community building strategy.**

1. Thanks to colleagues at the Aspen Roundtable on Community Change for collaboration on the initial conceptualization of this tool.

2. Embedded racial inequities are accumulated advantages for whites and accumulated disadvantages for people of color. These results come from the long-term effects of public policies and institutional practices, the differential perceptions and images of people of color and whites, and the dominant norms and values that privilege one racial group over others.

AEC

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

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701 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

PHONE 410-547-6600 ▪ FAX 410-547-6624

racematters@aecf.org