



**Community  
Catalyst**

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**Trinity Health  
National Learning Institute**

# **Community Engagement to Ownership**

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# Agenda

- Welcome and Overview
- Defining Community Engagement
- The 9 Dimensions of Community Engagement
  - Group Discussion
- Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership
  - Assessing Your Collaborative on the Spectrum
- Tried and True Community Organizing Practices
- Closing

# Objectives

By the end of today's workshop, you will be able to:

1. Define at least 4 of the nine dimensions of community engagement.
2. Use the Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership to assess where your Collaborative is and how to advance along the spectrum.
3. Identify at least one community organizing practice to apply in your work to improve community engagement.

# Defining community engagement



The activities and process of working collaboratively with and through community residents, groups, and organizations who are from, led by, and/or who partner closely with the populations we seek to benefit and who are most impacted by health inequities.

# Why community engagement?

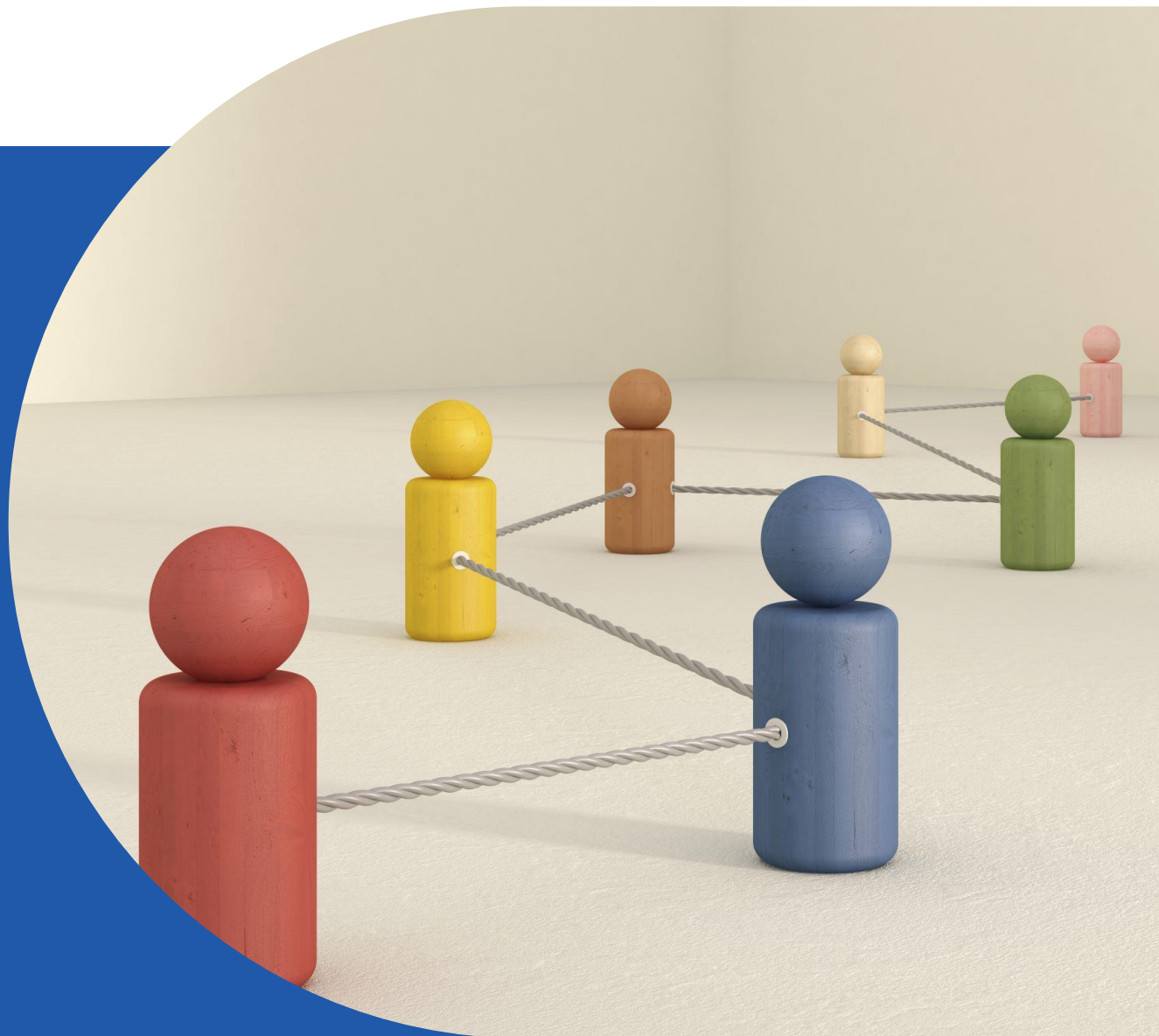
The key to creating more equitable outcomes is to deeply engage and share power with communities who are directly impacted by the issues, policies and systems we seek to change.

We need direct participation by impacted communities in the development and implementation of solutions and policy decisions that directly impact them.



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# 9 Dimensions of Community Engagement



# Authentic community engagement is:

Asset-based

Diverse and  
Inclusive

Equitable

Impactful

Integrated

Mutually  
Beneficial

Resourced and  
Compensated

Transformational  
and Restorative

Trust-based

Even well-intentioned community engagement may feel **tokenistic**, **transactional**, and **unimpactful**.

What is often missing is an understanding of how to create authentic partnerships between organizations and communities.

**Pair up at your table and discuss the following:**

- Which of the dimensions resonate with you the most?
- Which is most challenging for you and why?
  - What are some possible solutions to reduce the barriers to that challenge?



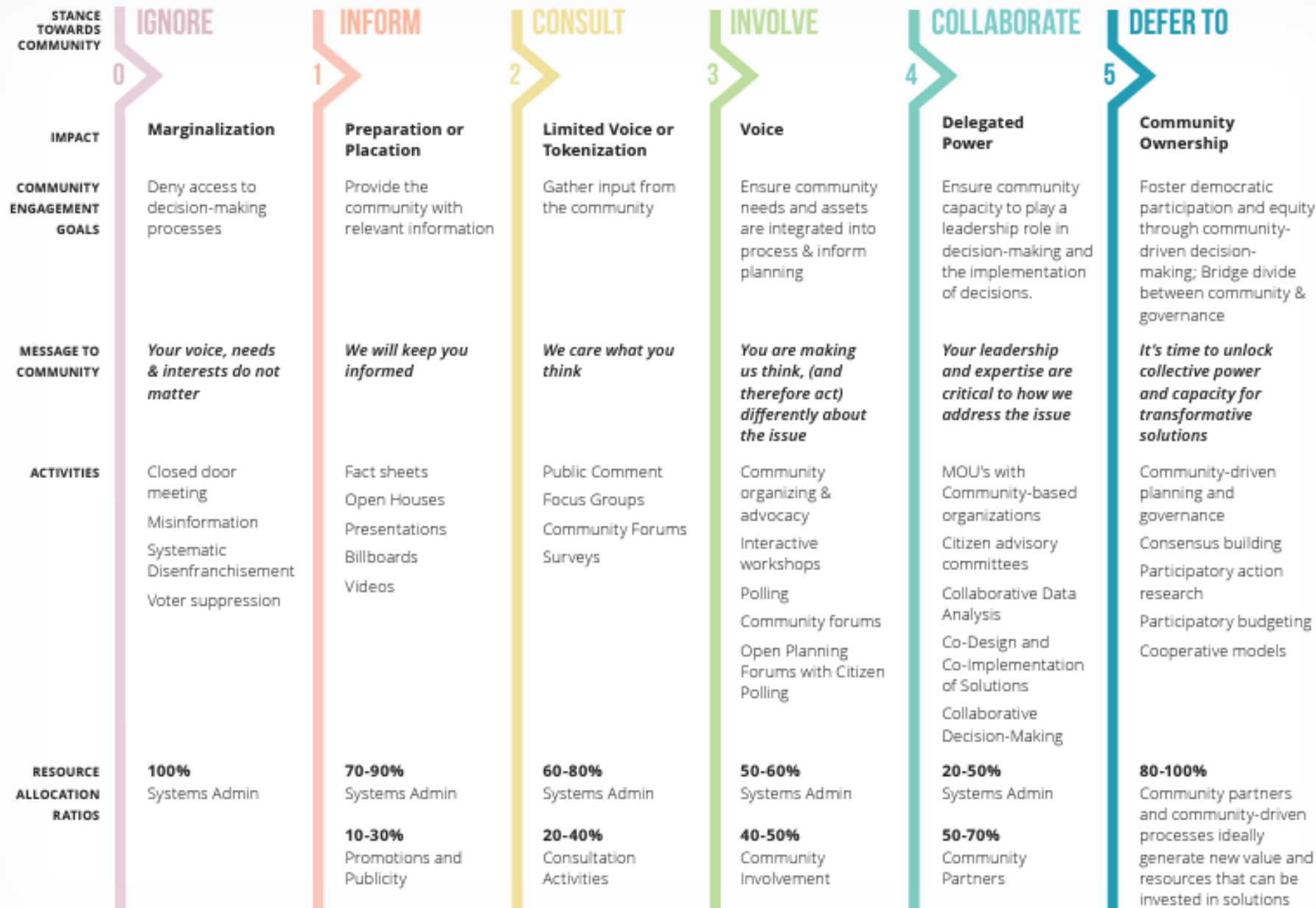
# The Spectrum of Community Engagement



The Spectrum of Community Engagement – Community Commons

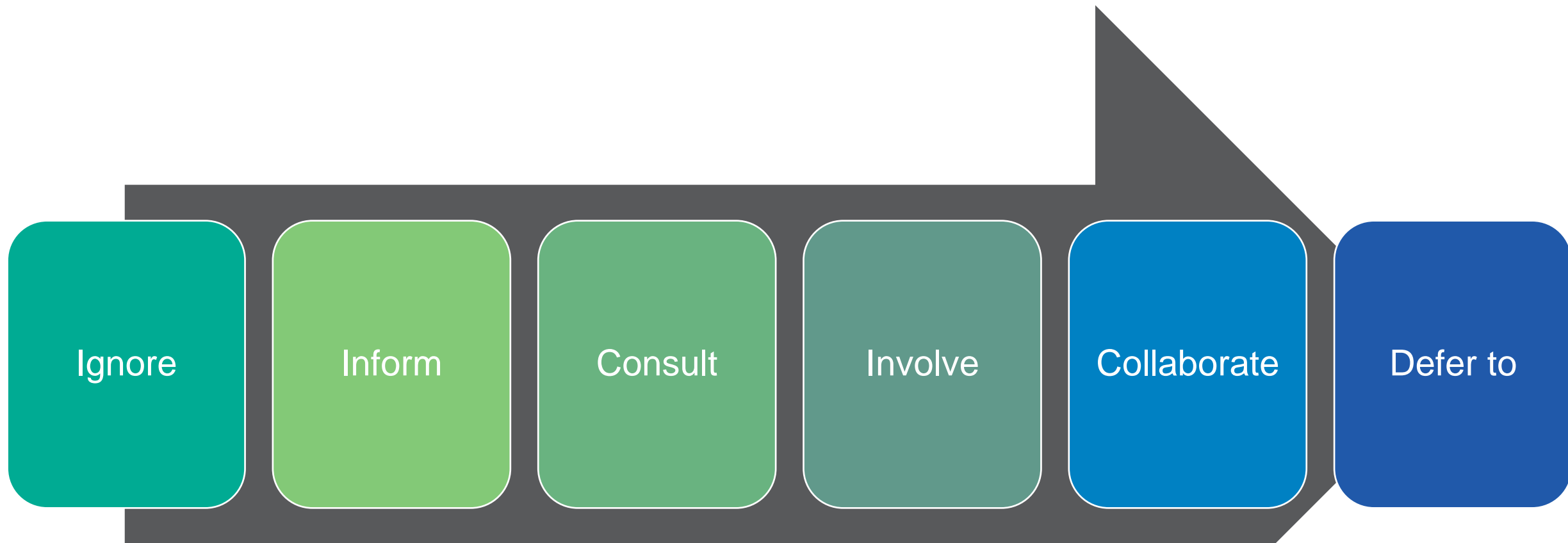
<https://www.communitycommons.org/entities/3aec405c-6908-4bae-9230-f33bef9f40e1>

▶▶▶▶▶ INCREASED EFFICIENCY IN DECISION-MAKING AND SOLUTIONS IMPLEMENTATION ▶▶▶▶▶ EQUITY



The Spectrum of Community Engagement – Community Commons  
<https://www.communitycommons.org/entities/3aec405c-6908-4bae-9230-f33bef9f40e1>

# The Spectrum of Community Engagement



# The Spectrum of Community Engagement

**The key to creating more equitable outcomes is to deeply engage and share power with communities who are directly impacted by the issues, policies and systems we seek to change.**

## Ignore

- Deny access to decision-making process

## Inform

- Provide community with relevant information

## Consult

- Gather input from the community

## Involve

- Ensure needs and assets are weaved through the process and inform planning

## Collaborate

- Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in implementation of decisions

## Defer To

- Foster democratic participation and equity by bridging the divide between community and governance, through community-driven decision-making

# How can the Spectrum of Community Engagement be used?

## To Acknowledge marginalization

- Break-down existing barriers to participation so there is not a default to marginalization.

## Assert a clear vision

- Prioritize inclusion, racial justice, and community ownership.

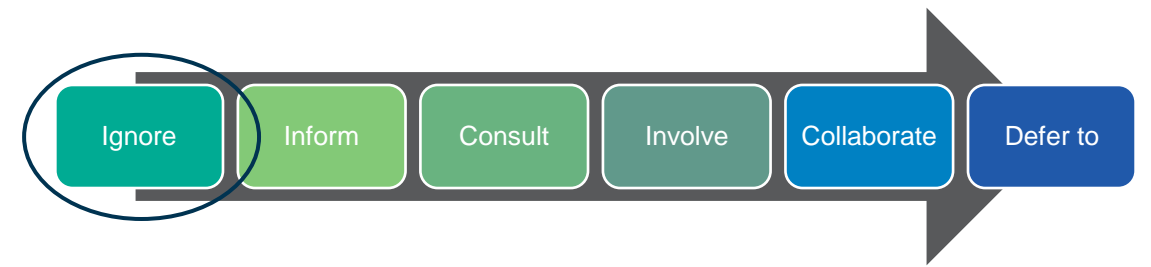
## Articulate a developmental process

- Invest in the capacity to participate as well as the capacity to break-down systems barriers to community participation

## Assess community participation efforts

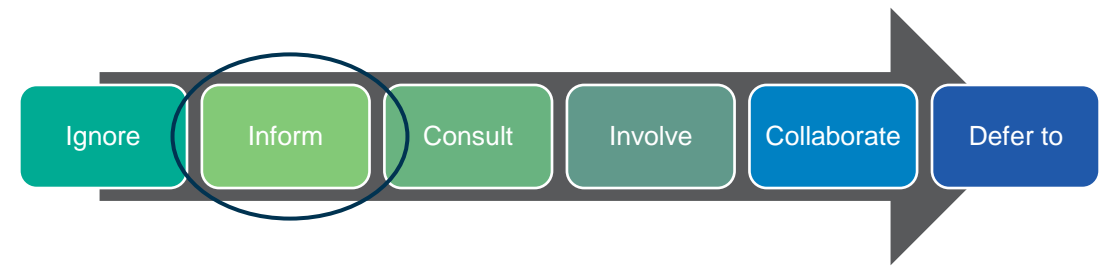
- Look meaningfully at efforts and progress toward participation and engagement goals to continually improve.



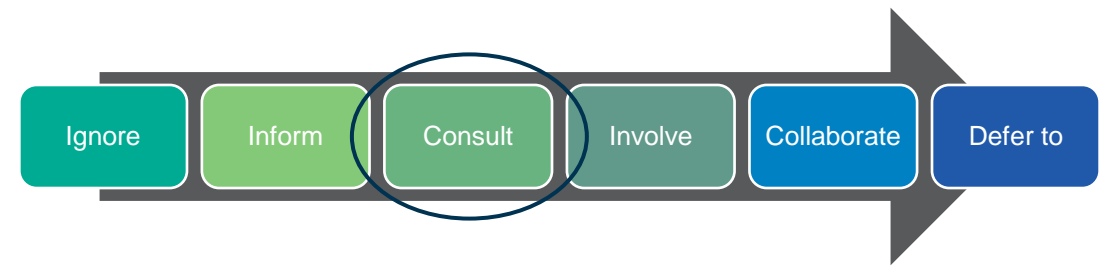


Ignore

Stance Towards Community	Ignore
Impact	Marginalization
Community Engagement Goals	Deny Access to Decision-Making Processes
Message to Community	Your voice, needs, and interests do not matter
Common Activities	Closed door meetings, misinformation, systematic
How/where Time is Spent	100% Systems Admin



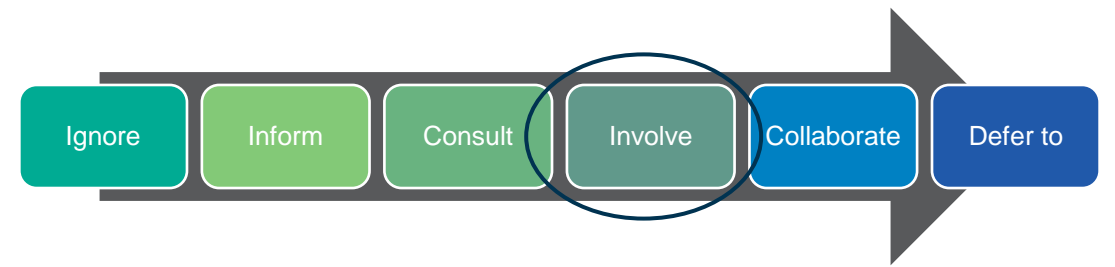
Stance Towards Community	Inform
Impact	Placation
Community Engagement Goals	Provide the community with relevant information
Message to Community	We will keep you informed
Common Activities	Fact sheets, open houses, presentations, billboards, videos
How/where Time is Spent	70-90% Systems Admin, 10-30% Promotions and Publicity



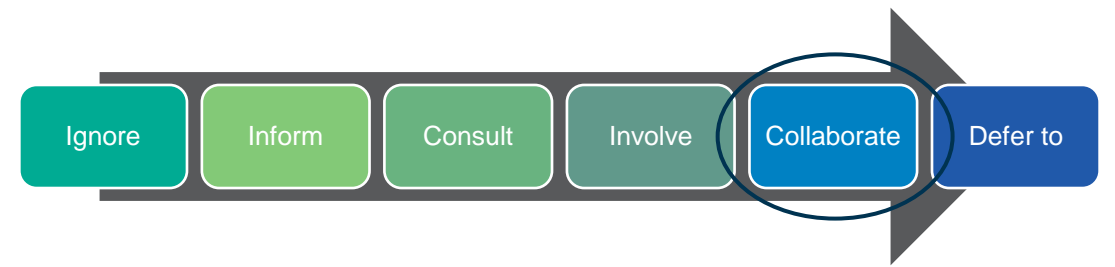
# Consult

Stance Towards Community	Consult
Impact	Tokenism
Community Engagement Goals	Gather input from the community
Message to Community	We care about what you think
Common Activities	Public comment, focus groups, community forums, surveys
How/where Time is Spent	60-80% Systems Admin, 20-40% Consultation Activities



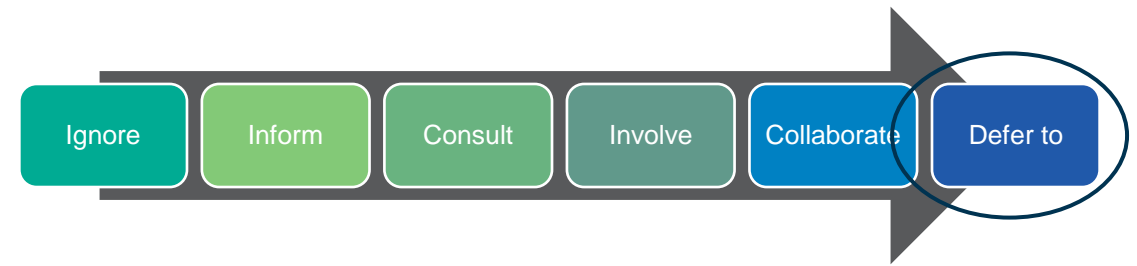


Involve	Stance Towards Community	Involve
	Impact	Voice
	Community Engagement Goals	Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into process and inform planning
	Message to Community	You are making us think, (and therefore, act) differently about the issue
	Common Activities	Community organizing and advocacy, house meetings, workshops, polling, community forums
	How/where Time is Spent	50-60% Systems Admin, 40-50% Community Involvement



# Collaborate

Stance Towards Community	Collaborate
Impact	Delegated Power
Community Engagement Goals	Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in implementation of decisions
Message to Community	Your leadership and expertise are critical to how we address this issue
Common Activities	MOUs with Community-based Organizations, community organizing, citizen advisory committees, open planning forums with citizen polling
How/where Time is Spent	20-50% Systems Admin, 50-70% Community Partners



# Defer to

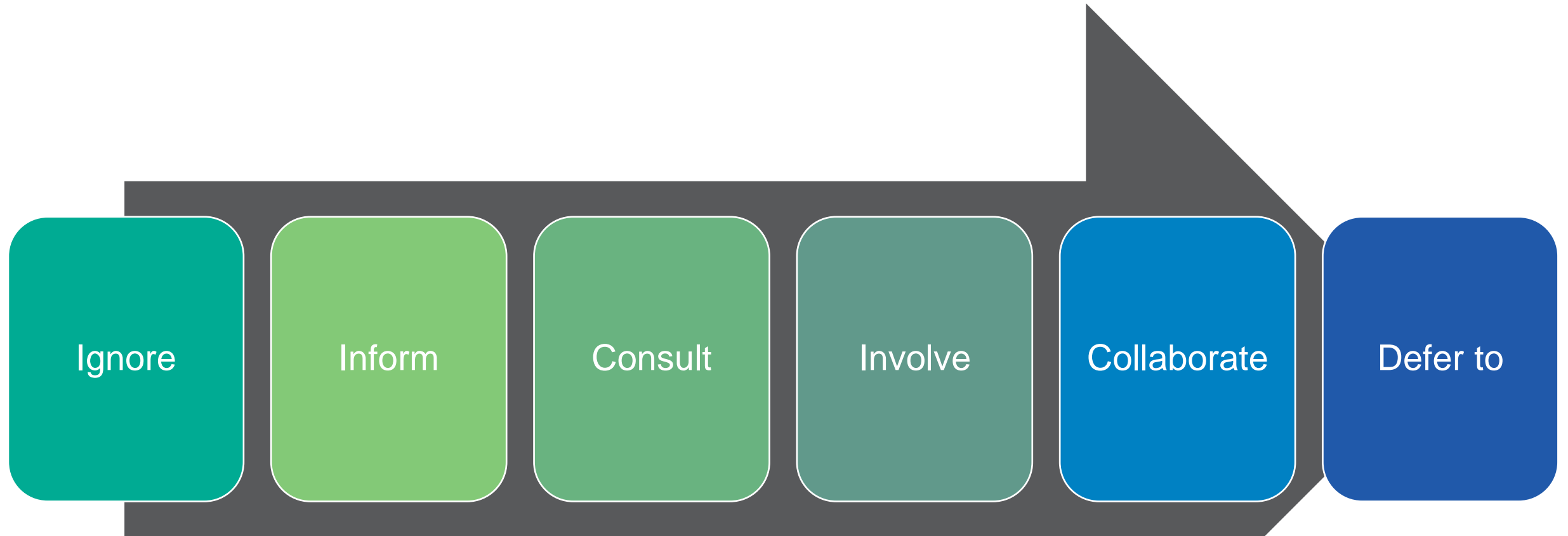
Stance Towards Community	Defer to
Impact	Community Ownership
Community Engagement Goals	Foster democratic participation and equity through community-driven decision making, Bridge divide between community and governance
Message to Community	It's time to unlock collective power and capacity for transformative solutions
Common Activities	Community-driven planning, consensus building, participatory action research, participatory budgeting, cooperatives
How/where Time is Spent	80-100% Community partners and community-driven processes ideally generate new value and resources that be invested in solutions



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# Small Group Activity

# Where does your Collaborative operate on the spectrum most of the time?



# Small Group Discussion: Advancing on the Spectrum

**What will it take  
for your  
Collaborative to  
advance on the  
Spectrum?**



**What are the  
actions that  
need to be  
taken?**

# Applying Community Organizing Practices

How are you  
utilizing community  
organizing  
practices?

One on ones - intentional relational meetings

Understanding your self-interest - and how this plays into community work and action

Cultural humility

Understanding power -  
institutional/systemic racism/discrimination

Grassroots leading



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# Thank you

- Alheli Herrera
- Laurie Call, IPHI



- Additional slides we may refer to or participants can use as a resource for group discussion with their TCI Collaboratives.

# Roles in Community Engagement

## CBOs

**Cultivating community capacity** to **participate** in and lead decision-making processes that meet community needs and leverage strengths

## Staff, Govt, Elected Officials

Help to **facilitate systems change** to increase community voice and decrease disproportionate harms

## Funders, Philanthropy

Partnering with impacted communities to **balance uneven power dynamics** and ensure adequate resourcing

## Facilitators and Evaluators

Help **cultivate the conditions for collaboration and participation across sectors**, while assessing and documenting progress towards goals and community solutions.

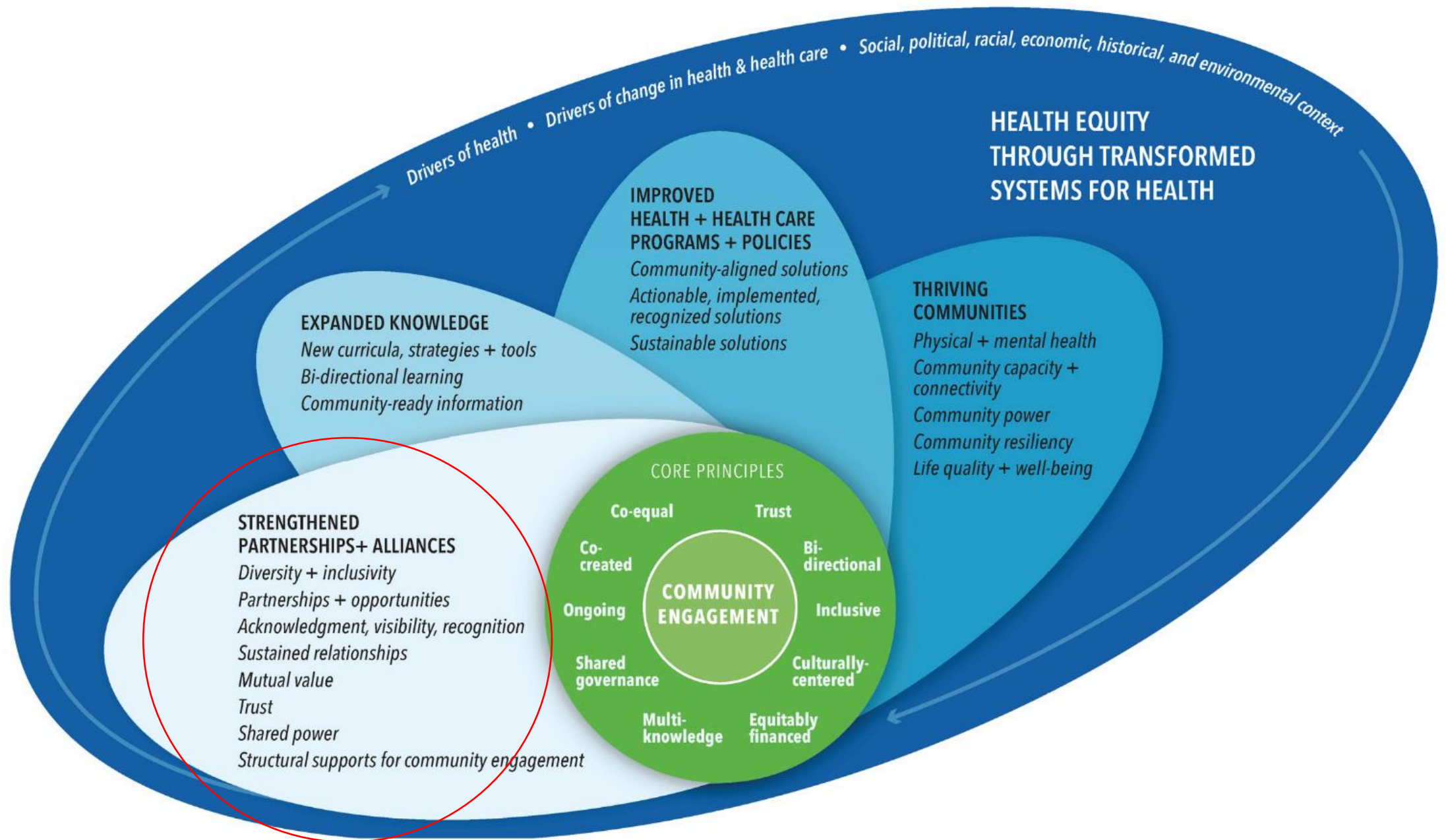
# Core Principles of Community Engagement

- Ongoing
- Co-created
- Trustworthy
- Bi-directional
- Shared governance
- Multi-knowledge
- Equitably financed
- Culturally-centered
- Inclusive

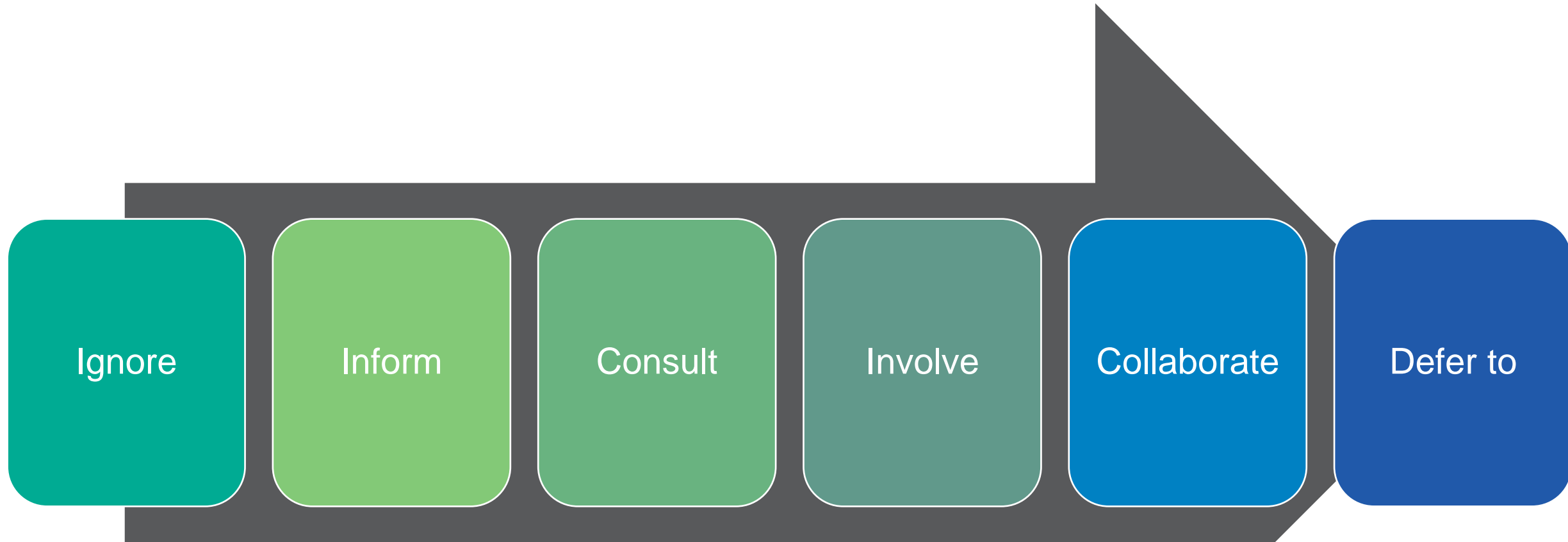
Organizing Committee for Assessing Meaningful Community Engagement in Health & Health Care Programs & Policies. 2022. Assessing Meaningful Community Engagement: A Conceptual Model to Advance Health Equity through Transformed Systems for Health. *NAM Perspectives*. Commentary, National Academy of Medicine, Washington, DC. <https://nam.edu/assessing-meaningful-community-engagement-a-conceptual-model-to-advance-health-equity-through-transformed-systems-for-health/>



# Why is community engagement important in advancing racial and health equity?



# The Spectrum of Community Engagement



## Break-out Group Discussion

See pages 6-7 of the  
Spectrum of  
Community  
Engagement to  
Ownership

- Each breakout group is assigned a facilitator who will also take notes or ask someone in the group to take notes.
- Each group will be assigned 1 phase and will read the description for the phase and answer the discussion questions.
- Each group will need 1 person assigned to briefly report back to the large group what you learned and discussed.



## Group 1: Marginalization

1. What are the roots of systemic marginalization in your community?
  - How is political exclusion related to local economic factors?
2. How does the legacy of political exclusion based on race and class persist today?
  - What forms does it currently take on in your community?

Marginalization represents the status quo, given current systems have been historically designed to exclude certain populations. If concerted efforts are not made to break-down existing barriers to participation, then by default, marginalization occurs. The history of the United States can be understood as generations of social movements striving to extend the rights of democracy to groups that have been previously excluded. The health of our democracy AND our economies depend on our capacity to recognize and address marginalization and exclusion. There is a direct connection between economic exclusion (slavery, taking land by force, taxation, without representation, exploitation of labor, etc.) and political exclusion (Denying citizenship and voting rights, top-down decision-making practices, etc.)





## Group 2: Inform

1. What does information flow look like for impacted communities?
  - What is contributing to information flow?
  - What is hindering it?
2. Thinking about existing community assets, what will it take for impacted communities to have equitable access to information about the issues that directly impact them?

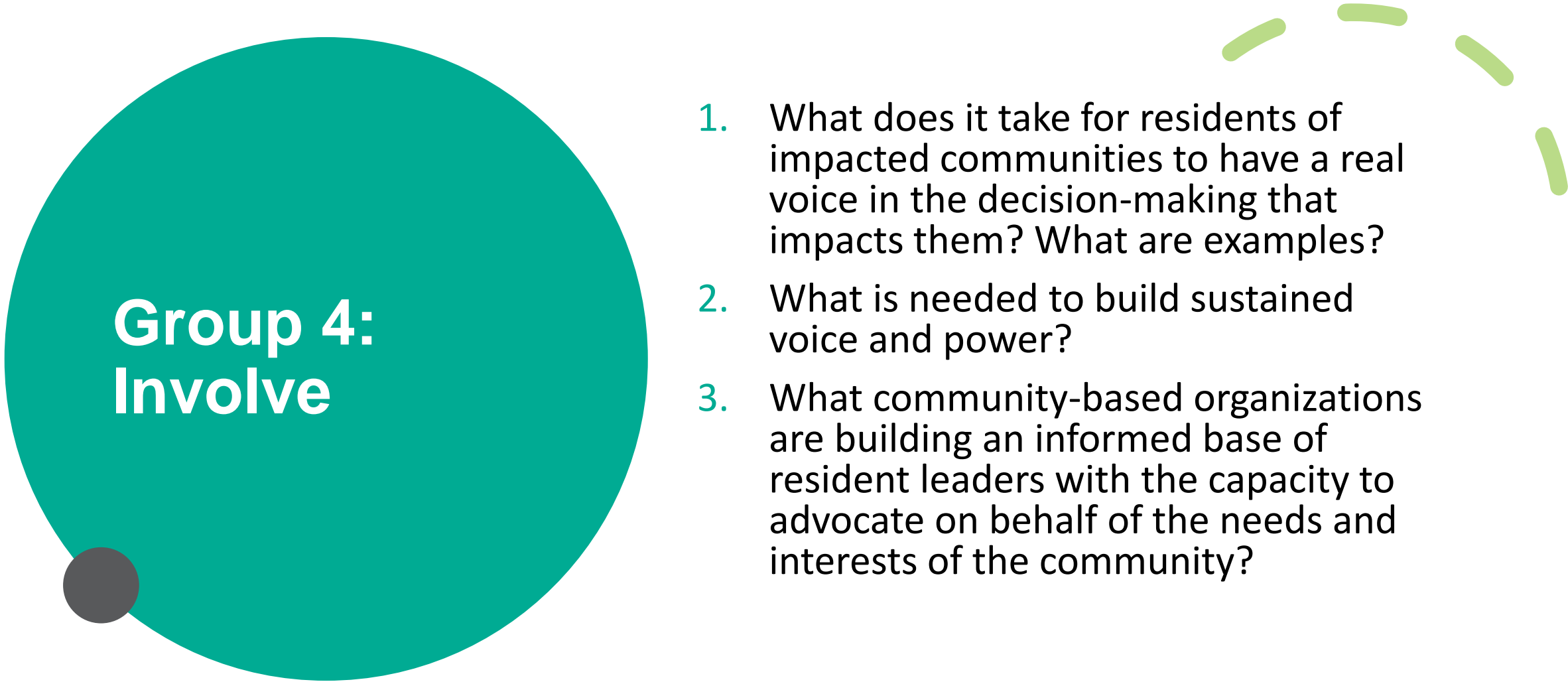
Information is the foundation for taking action towards real solutions to the threats we face. As the saying goes, knowledge is power. If, however, community engagement efforts remain at the level of one-way information sharing, such efforts result in placation. The role of community is reduced to absorbing information from those with more potential power; meanwhile, the idea that every day people can actually shape solutions is stifled. CBOs can play a key role in ensuring access to information about issues, services, solutions, etc. in ways that are culturally rooted and relevant.



## Group 3: Consult

1. When is it appropriate for impacted communities to be in a consultation role?
  - What should our impacted communities in Waterbury be consulted on?
2. Where, in your experience of community engagement, does it feel like consultation can be a trap?
3. What is needed to move beyond consultation and get to solutions that benefit from the genuine involvement of impacted communities?

The most common form of 'community engagement' among mainstream institutions is consultation, usually in the form of semi-interactive meetings in which members of the community have the chance to offer input into pre-baked plans. This is of course a step up from one-way information sharing; a two-way is initiated. The biggest critique of this form of engagement is that decisions are often already made; the community input period simply serves to check a box. What's more, if the people participating have not had a chance to develop a shared analysis of the problem or articulate a shared vision, values, and priorities, with their peers, then they don't actually represent a 'community,' they are participating as individuals, and therefore are only 'tokens' of the community they are supposed to represent. This is the trap of consultation.



## Group 4: Involve

1. What does it take for residents of impacted communities to have a real voice in the decision-making that impacts them? What are examples?
2. What is needed to build sustained voice and power?
3. What community-based organizations are building an informed base of resident leaders with the capacity to advocate on behalf of the needs and interests of the community?

Community organizing and power building is needed to bring community engagement out of tokenization and into true involvement of impacted residents in the decisions that impact them. Community organizing offers vital elements to local democracies: 1) Community power puts needed pressure on local systems to make change; 2) Education and leadership development supports residents to make informed decisions that reflect the needs and interests of their communities; 3) Organizing builds the public will to develop, advocate for, and implement viable solutions; 4) Community organizing can also balance uneven power dynamics so that communities can effectively collaborate among sectors with more institutional power.



## Group 5: Collaborate

1. Where are the opportunities for meaningful collaboration between impacted communities, the TCI Collaborative and local government to co-develop solutions?
2. To what extent have impacted communities built an informed base of community members with the power and influence to achieve policy and systems change?
3. What culture shift and system changes are needed for authentic collaboration between institutions and impacted communities?

As a culture of systems change develops through community organizing, advocacy, and relationship building, the limits of local systems to carry out changes on their own becomes apparent. At this point, the opportunity to collaborate across sectors emerges and makes culture shifts possible. Through the leadership and delegated power of community leaders, structures of partnership can be made more accessible and culturally relevant to groups that have been historically excluded. In turn, collaboration requires and makes possible more trusting relationships and the healing of old divides within systems that tend to be more transactional. Collaboration also brings together unique strengths, assets, and capacities essential to enacting needed solutions, and that unconsciously go untapped.

**Ponder on these questions before we meet again and dig into the Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership document.**



**Defer to**

1. What role will community ownership play in closing equity gaps?
2. What is our collective vision for local community ownership?
3. What can we be doing now to lay the groundwork for community ownership?
4. What infrastructure for community ownership is needed that we can start building now?

We are building to community ownership to ensure communities have a direct say over what is needed to survive and thrive. Throughout each of the developmental phases, we must be consciously building the capacity for communities currently impacted by poverty and political disenfranchisement to have increasingly more control over the resources needed to live such as food, housing, water, and energy. Strengthening local democracies is about ending dependency and restoring dignity.



## Large Group Report Back

- Share highlights from your group's discussion.
  - What did you discuss?
  - What did you learn?