



ACHIEVING EQUITY THROUGH SYSTEMS CHANGE

AN ACTION
PLANNING GUIDE



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Executive Summary

About the Jackson Collaborative Network

Systems of care in the Jackson County community have long produced different results for residents based on race, place, gender, education, and other key demographics. As a community, we cannot expect to see different results until the systems that produce them are changed.

The Jackson Collaborative Network is a collective impact network of community members, organizations, and other stakeholders that are committed to working together to identify and address root causes of issues that are contributing to inequitable results for residents. As a learning community, Network Partners and staff come together for training and information sharing to help them apply new and different approaches to solving complex social problems using a variety of frameworks and models that have been found to be helpful in tackling deep-rooted, systemic issues.

To learn more, visit www.JacksonCollaborativeNetwork.org or contact a member of the team today!

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Network Values and Guiding Principles

The Jackson Collaborative Network is a distributed network of community members and people from local organizations that live, work, and play in the Jackson community. As a network, we are bound together by our shared commitment to a common vision: A safe, healthy, thriving Jackson community; and guided by our adherence to common values: Equity & Antiracism, Authentic Engagement, and Continuous Learning.

We understand that true Collective Impact¹ and collaboration requires all members to be accountable for adhering to shared values, sharing power, maintaining transparency, and ensuring that we are good stewards of resources.

Over almost two decades, folks engaged in the Network have helped define shared values and guiding principles that govern individual and collective behavior and help ensure accountability for action and results.

The descriptions contained in this section have been informed by many different trusted sources and how we apply these guiding principles and values throughout the Network. Full definitions of these and other key terms utilized throughout this guide are included in the Glossary of Terms.

Equity and Antiracism

We pursue and promote equity in all aspects of our work. We constantly seek to understand who is most disadvantaged by existing systems and why. We actively work to create a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging across all Network groups.

¹ [What Is Collective Impact - Collective Impact Forum](#)

Racism is present in every aspect of our community. Individual, institutional, and systemic racism are at the root of the policies, practices, and resource flows that produce inequitable results for residents. The inequities that are present in Jackson County disproportionately affect people of color and other traditionally marginalized populations.

Achieving equity, specifically racial equity, requires an antiracist approach. To be anti-racist is to actively oppose racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life².

Authentic Engagement

We authentically engage diverse perspectives in all aspects of our work. We understand that we must create and maintain equitable, meaningful, and welcoming opportunities for community members to be involved in identifying root causes and co-designing, evaluating, and improving solutions to systems issues throughout the community.

We actively pursue the elimination of barriers to authentic engagement, so all residents have meaningful opportunity to engage in, and inform collaborative efforts. We cannot assume we know the root causes of problems, nor can we assume we know what strategies are needed to address them. Authentic engagement requires genuine relationships. Genuine relationships require mutual trust and accountability.

Continuous Learning

The Network is a learning community that is committed to continuous learning and improvement. Together, we are on a constant learning journey to grow, develop, and strengthen collaborative work in the Jackson community. This learning journey is focused on helping to build the individual and collective capacity of Network Partners and partner organizations to lead for equity in all things.

We embed a culture of continuous improvement throughout our work, always taking time to reflect on our actions and behaviors to ensure alignment with our shared values and principles, and to help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation.

The continuous improvement approach utilized by the Network is aligned with the plan, do, study, act cycle or PDSA Cycle. This cycle is defined by [The W. Edwards Deming Institute](#) as a systemic process for gaining valuable learning and knowledge for the continual improvement of a product, process, or service.

² [Race Reporting Guide by Race Forward V1.1.pdf](#)

About this Guide

This guide was developed to help orient new and existing partners to the Network and serve as a guide for individuals and organizations committed to tackling systemic issues that contribute to inequitable results for residents.

The information and process steps detailed in this guide are adapted from a variety of source materials that have been part of the Network's learning journey. Use the links below to explore in more detail.

- **ABLE Change**
The ABLe Change Framework is a model designed by Drs. Pennie Foster-Fishman and Erin Watson to help communities more effectively address complex social problems and achieve transformative community change. The ABLe Change approach engages communities in an 8-step community problem-solving process. Learn more and access resources here: [ABLE Change Process for Community Systems Change](#)
- **Avoiding Racial Equity Detours | EdChange**
Article by Paul Gorski, founder of [equityliteracy.org](#) and [EdChange](#), detailing four detours that organizations often take around racial equity and how to avoid them. Read the full article here: <http://www.edchange.org/publications/Avoiding-Racial-Equity-Detours-Gorski.pdf>
- **Collective Impact | Collective Impact Forum**
Collective impact is defined by the [Collective Impact Forum](#) as a network of community members, organizations, and institutions who advance equity by learning together, aligning, and integrating their actions to achieve population and systems level change. Learn more and access additional resources here: <https://collectiveimpactforum.org/what-is-collective-impact/>.
- **Curb-Cut Effect | PolicyLink**
The Curb-Cut Effect is defined by [PolicyLink](#) as a vibrant illustration of how laws and programs designed to benefit vulnerable groups, such as the disabled or people of color, often end up benefitting all. Learn more here: <https://www.policylink.org/resources-tools/curb-cut-effect>.
- **Human-Centered Design | IDEO.org**
Human-centered design is defined by [IDEO.org](#) as a creative approach to problem solving that starts with the people you are designing for and ends with new solutions that are tailor made to suit their needs. Learn more and access additional tools and resources here: <https://www.designkit.org/human-centered-design.html>
- **Racial Equity: Getting to Results | GARE**
This resource guide published by the [Government Alliance on Race and Equity](#) was developed to assist jurisdictions to use a racial equity lens to identify a set of metrics and implement a community process to have a greater impact in their work. Access the full guide here: <https://www.racialequityalliance.org/resources/racial-equity-getting-results/>.
- **Racial Equity Toolkits | Race Forward**
[Race Forward](#) helps to operationalize strategies that drive sustainable change towards racial justice at all levels of society. They provide a wealth of information and resources through their website. Learn more and access a variety of Racial Equity Toolkits here: <https://www.raceforward.org/resources/toolkits>.

- **Systems Thinking Toolkit | FSG**

The Systems Thinking Toolkit from [FSG](https://www.fsg.org), is designed to help you put systems thinking into practice within your organization and assist you in selecting the right tools to help you do so. Access the full toolkit here: <https://www.fsg.org/resource/systems-thinking-toolkit-0/>.

- **Targeted Universalism | Othering & Belonging Institute**

Targeted Universalism is defined by the [Othering & Belonging Institute](https://belonging.berkeley.edu) as an alternative framework to design policies and implementation strategies to achieve policy goals. Targeted universalism is sensitive to structural and cultural dynamics in ways that often elude both targeted and universal strategies. As such, it is also a way of communicating, a vernacular to build support for inclusive policies. Learn more and access additional tools and resources here: <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism>

- **The Water of Systems Change | FSG**

This groundbreaking article by John Kania, Mark Kramer, and Peter Senge explores the six conditions of systems change and provides an actionable model for funders and others interested in creating systems change, particularly those who are working to advance equity. Learn more and access the article and learning exercise here: https://www.fsg.org/resource/water_of_systems_change/.

Acknowledgements

Many people have helped design, test, and refine this guide's contents over many years. We would like to acknowledge the following individuals for investing their time, energy, and talents to help make this guide possible:

Shared Measurement System (SMS) Workgroup Members

- Nichole Baker – WellWise Services Area Agency on Aging
- Rachel Fenningsdorf – Jackson District Library
- Ted Hilleary – Community Member
- Jen Holan – Jackson District Library
- Kelsea Jabkiewicz – Jackson County Intermediate School District
- Erik Lyman – Jackson Community Foundation
- Zoe Lyons – Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
- Kate Martin – Community Member, SMS Workgroup Chair
- Monica Moser – Jackson Community Foundation
- Courtney Page – Henry Ford Jackson Hospital
- Amy Schultz, MD – Henry Ford Jackson Hospital
- Kelly Sheppard – Jackson County Intermediate School District
- Salena Taylor – Partial to Girls
- Angela Wetherby – Consumers Energy Foundation
- Eboné Young – United Way of South Central Michigan

Community Engagement Team Members

In 2018, with financial support from a State Innovation Model (SIM) Grant through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the Network formed a cross-network Community Engagement Team (CET). The purpose of the CET was to create a set of tools and resources to help empower all Network members to embed authentic engagement practices throughout their work.

The team developed the following tools before concluding their work in January 2020:

- [Community Engagement Toolkit](#)
- [Community Engagement Video](#)

The list below reflects historical CET membership data. Note: Employment relationships noted below reflect what was true at the time of the CET's work from 2018 through January 2020.

- Dana Ashlock – Jackson Community Foundation
- Ann Batdorf-Barnes – Population Health Partners
- Sara Benedetto – Center for Family Health
- Donita Bentley – Jackson Collaborative Network
- Kimberley Bishop – AARP
- Chrissy Blackwell – Jackson County Intermediate School District
- Janelle Buchler – Jackson County Intermediate School District
- Rhonda Farrell-Butler – Jackson District Library
- Sheri Butters – Jackson Collaborative Network
- Tashia Carter – Jackson Collaborative Network
- Wendy Clow – Habitat for Humanity
- Katrina Duling – Financial Stability Network
- Aimee Fors – Jackson County Health Department
- Traci Fowler – LifeWays
- Jennifer Ganzel – Jackson County Intermediate School District
- Angelita Gunn – Aware Shelter
- Priscilla Hardrick – Great Start Trusted Advisors
- Greg Hardrick – Great Start Trusted Advisors
- Ted Hilleary – Community Member
- Shalanda Hunt – Jackson County Department of Health and Human Services
- Kelsea Jabkiewicz – Jackson County Health Department | Jackson County Intermediate School District
- Delia Johnson – Community Member
- Myeshia Jones – American 1 Credit Union | Henry Ford Allegiance Health
- Zoe Lyons – Jackson County Department of Health and Human Services
- Daniel Mahoney – Jackson County Commissioner
- Kate Martin – Community Member
- Monica Moser – Jackson Community Foundation
- Kim Pickett – Jackson County Health Department
- Brenda Pilgrim – Community Action Agency
- Amy Schultz, MD – Henry Ford Allegiance Health
- Kelly Sheppard – Jackson County Intermediate School District
- Teresa Smith – LifeWays
- Marc Stanley – Southeast Dispute Resolution Services
- Shawna Tello – Jackson YMCA
- Alice Walker – Great Start Trusted Advisors
- Darius Williams – Jackson County Commissioner
- Eboné Young – United Way of Jackson County
- Twyla Wright – Great Start Trusted Advisors

Jackson Collaborative Network Staff

- Sheri Butters, Collaborative Network Manager
- Aimee Fors, Network Consultant
- Alexa Burgei, Data & Information Specialist

Achieving Equity Through Systems Change

The Jackson Collaborative Network is focused on creating lasting, sustainable change by focusing on addressing problems at the root to shift the way systems are built, and how they behave, to help produce more equitable results for residents. This is systems change. Systems Change is described by [FSG.org](https://www.fsg.org/) as both a process and an outcome³.

The steps outlined in this guide are designed to guide you through a simple action planning process from start to finish. There are a variety of tools and methods available to support this kind of process. Refer to the source materials list included in the [About this Guide](#) section of this document for more details.

As you move through the action planning process, remember that you are not alone. Network staff are available to help, no matter where you are in the process. Individual and group coaching and consultation are available to assist you with this work. Services are free and available on a first come, first served basis.

Reach out to any member of the staff team to explore the services and supports that are available:

- Aimee Fors, Network Consultant: Afors2@hfhs.org
- Alexa Burgei, Data & Information Specialist: ABurgei1@hfhs.org
- Sheri Butters, Network Manager: SButter2@hfhs.org

We recommend documenting your progress using this simple [Action Planning Worksheet](#).

Gather and Analyze Data to Identify Disparities

Action planning starts when an issue or problem has emerged. At this stage of the action planning process, the problem is not defined at a level that is actionable.

Examples may include things like high infant mortality rate, low high school graduation rates, lack of affordable housing, lack of quality childcare, etc.

It is time to gather available data that will help you better understand the problem and what is happening. This could include data collected within your organization or data available through an outside source, like U.S. Census data, Kids Count, or Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth (MiPHY).

Here are some important things to keep in mind as you move through this step in the action planning process:

- Focus on data that helps you understand the problem at a local level. National, state, and regional data are helpful from a comparison perspective; however, it will not help you get closer to understanding why the problem is happening and what action needs to be taken to change local conditions.
- Be intentional about finding data sources that allow you to break the data down by demographic groups (i.e.: race/ethnicity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity, income level, education level, age, geographic location, etc.)

³ [Systems Change Is a Noun and a Verb - FSG](#)

- Engage with others that work in and around the issue or problem you are exploring to help you identify what data may be available.

Make a list of the data sources, what data is available, where to find it, and make note of any data you feel is missing.

Now that the data have been gathered, it is time to disaggregate the data to identify where disparities are present. To disaggregate means to separate into component parts⁴. Disaggregating the data refers to the process of breaking data down by specific demographic groups. Disparities are defined as a noticeable and usually significant difference or dissimilarity⁵.

In this step, you are disaggregating the data to identify who is most affected by the problem you have identified. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What disparities exist between racial groups? Which racial groups?
- What disparities are tied to where people live?
- What disparities exist between other groups? (gender identity, socio-economic status, education, etc.)
- What do these disparities reveal about who is most affected by this issue or problem?

Now you are ready to look closer into why these disparities are present.

Understand Root Causes

Once you have identified who is most affected, it is time to explore why. Understanding the ‘why’ is critical to being able to design powerful strategies that will create lasting change in the community.

There are many approaches to conducting root cause analysis. One of the most effective ways you can better understand why an issue or problem is happening is to engage with those that are experiencing it.

To understand the root cause, it is important to ‘see’ the issue or problem from as many perspectives as possible. For this part of the action planning process, we will focus on gathering qualitative data from those that are working in and around the problem, and most importantly – those that are experiencing the problem.

Here are some questions to help you identify who may be able to help you better understand the disparities that are present:

- What groups or individuals are experiencing the greatest disparities? Be as specific as possible.
- Who do you know from this group or focus population that you could talk to?
- Who do you know that works closely with this population?

Once you have a list of folks identified, it is time to plan how you will engage with them to gather qualitative data that helps you better understand root causes. There are a variety of methods you can use to collect qualitative data. This guide is designed to provide you with some simple, easy to use

⁴[Disaggregate Definition - Merriam-Webster](#)

⁵[Disparity Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster](#)

options. Refer to the Qualitative Data Process Guide document included in the Appendices for more detailed information to help you decide which may be best suited to your needs.

It is important to choose a qualitative data collection method or engagement approach that seems best aligned with your focus population and the information that you hope to gather.

Here are some methods to consider:

- **One on One Interview**

The best and most effective way to learn about someone's experience is to talk with them about it. An interview provides a more private setting for conversation which may help participants feel comfortable sharing their personal experience, however this may also feel intimidating for some individuals. Who leads the interview, and how, is an important consideration in helping to create a welcoming, safe, and inclusive space.

- **Listening Session or Focus Group**

These methods gather individuals who have a similar experience, behavior, or characteristic together to have a facilitated conversation that helps you gather information about a specific topic. For example, to understand an issue with your service delivery, you might gather individuals that have received services from your organization in the past six months.

This type of group setting may help participants feel more comfortable; however, you may not be able to get in-depth on each person's individual experiences using this approach.

- **System Scan**

A system scan is a method that is part of the ABL e Change Process. It is a method to "systematically gather information from diverse stakeholders about the community system conditions affecting your Shared Vision goals, and possible solutions. A system scan can be used to identify systemic root causes to target for change, assets to use within your efforts, and ways to support implementation" ([ABLE Change Process](#)). Refer to this [ABLE Change Process](#) document to learn more and access tools to help you design and implement a system scan.

- **Touchpoint at Service Delivery**

This approach focuses on engaging with individuals at the point of service to gather information about a specific topic. A touchpoint can be a quick, efficient, and cost-effective way to gather data on your organization's clients. This method is normally used in addition to a process your organization is already doing such as adding in a few questions to a check-in/out process for appointments or new client intakes.

- **Surveys**

A survey is a set of questions aimed at gathering information about a specific issue or problem. Surveys can be conducted in numerous ways including phone, mail, email, or even in-person. This data collection method can be used to reach large groups of people and can be very accessible, depending on the method used. This method is limited in the depth of information it can gather from respondents and may feel impersonal to participants. A survey is not recommended when trying to understand the individual experiences and perspectives of individuals, but it may be helpful as part of a more focused engagement approach.

As you prepare for your engagement activity, plan how it will be implemented and supported and how you will follow up with participants as you move through the action planning process.

Do not forget to consider the tools, resources, and supplies that may be needed, including things like:

- Honorariums or stipends for participants
- Food and refreshments for in person engagement activities
- Templates for notetaking
- Printed lists of questions and/or talking points to assist with facilitation

Once you have completed your engagement activity or session, it is time to analyze the data to better understand what is contributing to the disparities. There are a variety of methods you can use to make sense of qualitative data. Refer to the Qualitative Data Process Guide included in the Appendices for more details.

Here is a basic process you can use to help you make sense of qualitative data:

- Check back with the participants of the engagement activity or session and share the notes/information collected. Focus on whether there is information misrepresented, something needs to be added or if any information was not captured accurately.
- Sort and theme the data. This can be done individually or with a small group of people. Refer to the Qualitative Data Collection Guide for more step-by-step instructions.
- Themes that emerge during this process will become your list of root causes by taking the themes and making them into root cause statements. See an example below:
 - Theme: Processes to receive services take too long and are hard to go through
 - Root Cause: Service systems are not easy to navigate

Now that you have your list of root causes, it is time to prioritize them for action. As with any step in the action planning process, it is important to have diverse perspectives involved.

Here is a list of questions that may be helpful:

- Which root causes seem to have the most influence on the targeted problem?
- Which root causes are affecting multiple people and settings across the community?
- Are these issues within your current scope or focus?
- What unintended consequences may emerge in addressing this root cause?
- Are there others in the community working to address these root causes? If so, how? Are there opportunities to partner for greater impact?

Design Powerful Strategies

Now that you have prioritized one or more root causes for action, you are ready to develop powerful strategies to help you achieve results. Systems change strategies shift the mindsets, policies, and practices that are contributing to the problem. Strategies that focus on program design and building awareness of existing programs and resources are the least powerful and are less likely to create lasting change.

There are a variety of methods and frameworks you can use to design powerful strategies. Here is one basic approach:

1. Brainstorm Strategy Ideas

- Clearly outline the disparities present and the root causes prioritized for action.

- Have group members individually brainstorm ideas using a question like the following: How might we (insert vision for change) given the prioritized root causes and what we have learned from those experiencing this problem? Encourage group members to apply an equity lens by asking themselves: ‘Will this strategy improve system conditions for those most affected?’
- Have group members use sticky notes to write down their strategy ideas, one idea per sticky note.

2. Sort and Label Groups of Strategy Ideas

- Members of the group gather and place their strategy ideas on a shared wall as they read them aloud to the group. It is important that everyone’s ideas are heard.
- Ask the group to review the wall of ideas and determine if any additional strategy ideas need to be added.
- Work with the group to organize ideas in groups. It is important that group members feel comfortable with how their strategies are interpreted and organized.
- Once groupings become clear, work with the group to label them. Ask the group to name each strategy cluster.

It may be helpful to take pictures of your strategy clusters to ensure you are able to accurately document the work that has been completed up to this point.

3. Prioritize Strategy Clusters

- Work with group members to prioritize the strategy clusters. A helpful way to do this would be to provide them with a small number of stickers or to use a marker to indicate what they feel are their top 3 priorities.
 - Some questions that may help folks narrow in on their top 3:
 - Which strategy clusters tackle one or more of the root causes we need to address?
 - Are they necessary? Feasible? Desirable?
 - Do they reflect the needs of those experiencing the issue?
- Once group members have indicated their top priorities, work with the group to notice which strategy clusters have been prioritized. Move other strategy clusters to a separate area of the wall and check to make sure there is consensus on the prioritized strategy clusters.
 - It is important to document all strategy clusters identified, whether prioritized or not, so the group can re-evaluate and prioritize others for action when there is capacity to do so.

It may be helpful to take pictures of the prioritized strategy clusters to ensure you are able to accurately document the work that has been completed up to this point.

4. Finalize Strategies

Use the following questions to screen each strategy before finalizing for implementation:

- Does the strategy intentionally address the disparities that are present?

- Are the strategies equitable and designed to address the unique needs of those who will be impacted?
- Are there others in the community working on a similar strategy? If yes, who and how? Are there opportunities to partner for greater impact?
- What unintended consequences might emerge if we implement this strategy? How might we mitigate these unintended consequences?

Refine your strategies as needed to finalize.

5. Test Your Strategies

Before you move to implement your strategies, it is helpful to test them on a smaller scale by connecting with folks who would be involved and impacted to gather feedback. This provides you with an opportunity to refine your strategy for improved results early in the process.

Here are some questions that may be helpful:

- Who will be most impacted by this strategy?
- When, where, and how might you engage with them to share your strategy(ies) and gather feedback? Who is best suited to lead this engagement activity?

Work with your group to review the feedback that has been gathered and refine your strategy(ies) as needed.

Identify Meaningful Measures

To understand if your strategy is making an impact, you must identify some meaningful measures. A meaningful measure are data points focused on helping make informed decisions on if a strategy is implemented is having a positive impact.

Meaningful measures are comprised of indicators and metrics that can be used to track and measure progress over time.

- **Indicators**
An indicator is what is being measured. Indicators include items such as: smoking, homelessness, poverty, unemployment, high school graduation, teen pregnancy, life expectancy, etc.
- **Metrics**
A metric is what will be tracked over time to measure results. For example, if your indicator is food insecurity, a metric might be the percentage of residents that meet the criteria for food insecurity.

Each strategy should have at least one indicator and each indicator should have at least one metric. Keep in mind that one indicator may apply to more than one strategy and one indicator may have more than one metric.

Let's look at an example:

- Strategy: Ensure all employees at organization are earning a livable wage
- Indicator(s): poverty; living wage employment
- Metric(s): percentage of residents living below the poverty line; hourly rate that an individual must earn to support themselves and their family; percentage of residents earning a livable wage.

An important consideration before you finalize your measures is whether you have access to the data you will need in the ways you will need it. Here are some helpful questions to consider as you explore feasibility:

- Is the data available? If so, where?
- Is it available how you need it? Are you able to disaggregate the data how you need to?
- How often is it updated?
- What other limitations are present that may affect your ability to track and report progress as planned?

At this point you may need to revisit your list of measures to explore gaps and problem solve as needed. It is important not to move forward with implementation until you have clearly defined a set of measures and have established a set of baseline data.

We recommend using this [Action Plan Template](#) to organize your work as you begin to prepare for implementation.

Implement Strategies

Now that you have a set of strategies and have identified how you will track and measure progress, it is time to break things down into actionable steps to support successful implementation. Action steps define the specific actions that need to be taken to implement the strategy(ies) that have been identified.

Use the following questions to help you define specific action steps for each strategy:

- Where are you now in relationship to the results you hope to achieve by completing this strategy?
- What needs to happen first? What are some quick wins that will help you build momentum?
- What else needs to happen? By when?
- Who will do it?
- What resources are needed?

As you work to break down each strategy into a set of actionable steps, it is important to consider the following questions:

- Are there too many action steps? If so, your strategy may be too big or broad. Consider breaking it down into smaller, more manageable chunks.
- Do the timelines for action steps align with the overall strategy timeline? The start of your first action step should align with the start of strategy implementation. The end of your last action step should align with the end date of strategy implementation.
- Do the action steps you have outlined get you from here to there? Will completion of the action steps result in completion of the strategy?

- Is anything missing?
- Are there any potential unintended consequences that could impact the community? If so, what? How?

At this point in the action planning process, you should have a clearly defined action plan that includes a clearly defined problem, a list of root causes, and a set of strategies with meaningful measures and timebound action steps.

You are now ready to start implementing your action plan!

Track and Report Progress

A crucial step in supporting successful implementation of your action plan is monitoring progress. Accountability matters. You need to determine how often you will collect and report data to understand if strategy implementation is on track to achieve intended results and to see what progress is being made over time.

Here are some questions to help with this part of the process:

- How often is the data updated?
- How often do we need to look at data to understand if we are on track and help us know when we may need to course correct?
- How often do we need/want to look at data to see what progress is being made?

Using your list of measures, you will want to set up an easy-to-use way of keeping track of data specific to your indicators and metrics over time. An easy and cost-effective way to manage data is in Excel. You can set up an Excel workbook that includes a separate worksheet for each strategy with space to note each indicator and corresponding metrics with columns to drop in data.

It is important to keep track of the data sources that will be used and to note what measurement period it is for. For example, if you are pulling data once a year from a particular source, you would want to note the period the data includes and a link to where the source data can be found. Having this information documented helps maintain consistency and avoid confusion.

Once you have a system and plan in place for how you will collect and keep track of the data, consider how you will report progress to help build and maintain transparent accountability for results.

You will want to consider:

- Who will be impacted by this strategy?
- What other key stakeholders may be impacted?
- Who else may need to be aware of the progress and results being achieved?
- What is most important for this group to know about this strategy and the progress you are making?
- What format and frequency makes sense for each group?

You may need to engage with each of your identified groups to determine what is most meaningful to report, how, and how often.

Learn and Adapt

Throughout action plan implementation it is important to take time to reflect on how it is going.

Understanding what is going well and identifying opportunities for improvement are key to successful implementation and achieving results. Action plans are not static. The strategies and action steps that have been identified may need to be adjusted over time based on what you learn through implementation.

Create intentional opportunities to share progress, gather feedback, and check in on implementation with others to help you learn and adapt as needed.

Some questions to consider as you reflect on how action plan implementation is going:

- What results are being achieved? How does that compare to what you hoped to see at this point?
- What is going well? Why?
- What is not going as well as you hoped? Why?
- What are some lessons learned that may need to be considered?
- What is happening that you did not anticipate?
- What issues or concerns are emerging? How are they impacting results?
- What adjustment might you need to make to improve results or get back on track?
- Who else might you need to talk with to understand how implementation is going?

Use the information you gather to help you adjust and adapt your action plan and implementation process as needed to support continuous improvement.

Glossary of Terms

The terms below are used throughout this guide and commonly used throughout the Network. The definitions provided are compiled using a variety of trusted sources. Where applicable, a link is included to provide direct access to the source material.

It is important to establish and strengthen our individual and collective understanding of these commonly used terms to help ensure we have shared language as part of our foundation for effective collaborative work. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with these terms and share with others.

Antiracism – Antiracism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Antiracism tends to be an individualized approach and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impact ([Race Forward - Race Reporting Guide, 2015](#)).

Authentic Engagement – Engaging diverse perspectives in all aspects of work. Authentic engagement requires genuine relationships. Genuine relationships require mutual trust and accountability.

Belonging – Belonging describes values and principles where no person is left out of our circle of concern. Belonging means more than having just access, being seen, or feeling included. It means that every member has a meaningful voice, that their well-being is considered, and that they have the opportunity to participate in the design of political, social, and cultural structures. Belonging includes the right to both contribute and make demands upon society and political institutions ([Othering and Belonging Institute – Bridging & Breaking Curriculum, 2023](#)).

Community Member – The Network defines a community member as anyone that lives, works, or plays in Jackson County. At times, ‘community member’ is used interchangeably with ‘community resident’ and may be referring to an individual without a formal affiliation with an organization.

Collective Impact – Collective impact brings people together in a structured way to achieve social change. Collective impact initiatives implement five conditions (common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, strong backbone), with equity practices incorporated throughout ([Collective Impact Forum, What is Collective Impact?](#)).

Collective Impact Network – A network of community members, organizations, and institutions who advance equity by learning together, aligning, and integrating their actions to achieve population and systems level change ([Collective Impact Forum, What is Collective Impact?](#)).

Disenfranchised – To be deprived of the rights or privileges of full participation in society or in any community or organization, especially of the opportunity to influence policy or to make one’s voice heard ([Dictionary.com, Disenfranchised Definition](#)).

Disparity – A noticeable and usually significant difference or dissimilarity ([Merriam-Webster, Disparity Definition](#)).

Disproportionate – Too large or too small in comparison to something else, or not deserving its importance or influence ([Cambridge Dictionary, Disproportionate Definition](#)).

Diversity – Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not

only race, ethnicity, and gender—the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used—but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values ([Racial Equity Tools, Glossary](#)).

Equality – Equality is sameness; everyone gets the same thing. Because of the focus on everyone getting the same opportunities and resources, equality often ignores the realities of historical exclusion and the power differential between whites and other racialized groups ([Race Forward, What is Racial Equity?](#)).

Equity – Equity is a measure of justice that recognizes each person’s different circumstances. It ensures that resources and opportunities are allocated in a way that allows everyone to reach an equal outcome (e.g.: marginalized groups get support so that their wellbeing matches that of others) ([Race Forward, What is Racial Equity?](#)).

Explicit Racial Bias (or Conscious Bias) – Refers to attitudes and beliefs people have that cause them to discriminate against a person or group that has different characteristics than they have. It is also known as overt and intentional racial bias ([Race Forward, What is Racial Equity?](#))

Implicit Racial Bias (or Unconscious Bias) – Refers to stereotypes or attitudes that cause individuals to unknowingly discriminate against people with different characteristics than they have ([Race Forward, What is Racial Equity?](#)).

Inclusion – The act or state of including or being included within a group or structure. More than simply diversity and numerical representation, inclusion involves authentic and empowered participation and sense of belonging ([The Annie E. Casey Foundation: Equity, Inclusion and Other Racial Justice Definitions](#)).

Individual Racial Bias – Bias by an individual or group of individuals towards another individual or group of individuals. Institutional Racial Bias is bias by institutional practices, policies, or cultural norms that disadvantage people of color. An individual’s bias may be a manifestation of institutional bias if they are acting in an institutional capacity (e.g.: a teacher or police officer) ([Race Forward, What is Racial Equity?](#)).

Inequity – An instance of injustice or unfairness ([Merriam-Webster, Inequity Definition](#)).

Institutional Racism – Occurs within institutions. It involves unjust policies, practices, procedures, and outcomes that work better for White people than people of color, whether intentional or not. An example is a school district that concentrates students of color in the most overcrowded, under-funded schools with the least experienced teachers ([Race Forward](#)).

Network Partner – The Jackson Collaborative Network defines a Network Partner as anyone in the Jackson community committed to working together to achieve more equitable outcomes for residents. Network partners are united through their commitment to a shared vision for change and a common set of core values: equity and antiracism, authentic engagement, and continuous learning.

Marginalize – To relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within society or group. Marginalization is used to describe the casting aside of groups that are considered “other” within society. In practice, this can manifest as ignoring the needs of a specific group or failing to provide a

group with the same opportunities that are available to other members of society ([National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, June 2022](#)).

Prejudice – A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or group toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics ([Glossary | Racial Equity Tools](#)).

Qualitative Data – Data representing information and concepts that are not represented by numbers. Often gathered from interviews, focus groups, personal accounts, etc. ([Qualitative Data | NNLM](#)).

Quantitative Data – Data represented numerically, including anything that can be counted, measured, or given a numerical value ([Quantitative Data | NNLM](#)).

Racial Equity – A process of eliminating racial disparities so everyone can have the same outcomes. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of color and other marginalized populations ([What is Racial Equity? | Race Forward](#)).

Racial Justice – A vision of a society where racial hierarchies no longer exist. In this society, all people (Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and whites), have the dignity, resources, power, and self-determination to fully thrive ([What is Racial Equity? | Race Forward](#)).

Racism – Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systemic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices ([Glossary | Racial Equity Tools](#)).

Racism = race prejudice + social and institutional power

Racism = a system of advantage based on race

Racism = a system of oppression based on race

Racism = a white supremacy system

Stakeholder – The Network uses the term ‘stakeholder’ to refer to anyone that may affect or be affected by an effort or system.

Structural Racism – refers to the racial inequities across institutions, policies, social structures, history, and culture. These inequities are deeply rooted and embedded in our history and culture, and our economic, political, and legal systems ([Race Forward](#)).

Systemic Racism – is an interlocking and reciprocal relationship between the individual, institutional, and structural levels which function as a system of racism. These various levels of racism operate together in a lockstep model and function together as a whole system. These levels are:

- Individual (within interactions between people)
- Institutional (within institutions and systems of power)
- Structural or Societal (among institutions and across society)

In many ways, “systemic racism” and “structural racism” are synonymous. If there is a difference between the terms, it can be said to exist in the fact that a structural racism analysis pays more

attention the historical, cultural, and social psychological aspects of our currently racialized society ([Glossary | Racial Equity Tools](#)).

Systems Change – is both a process and an outcome. Both a verb and a noun. Collective impact is literally an approach for leveraging representatives of a system to change the conditions associated with a complex problem ([Systems Change is a Noun and a Verb | FSG](#)).

Targeted Universalism – setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals. Within a targeted universalism framework, universal goals are established for all groups concerned. The strategies developed to achieve those goals are targeted, based on how different groups are situated within structures, culture, and across geographies to obtain the universal goal. Targeted universalism is goal oriented, and the processes are directed in service of the explicit, universal goal ([Targeted Universalism | Othering & Belonging Institute](#)).

Unconscious or Implicit Bias – refers to stereotypes or attitudes that cause individuals to unknowingly discriminate against people with different characteristics than they have ([Race Forward](#)).

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APPENDIX

Action Planning Worksheet

This worksheet is designed to help you document your work as you move through the process outlined in the *Achieving Equity through Systems Change Action Planning Guide*. Need help with action planning? Network staff are available to assist you! Reach out through the Jackson Collaborative Network website or [follow this link](#).

Identified Problem or Issue: _____

Action Planning Steps	Guiding Questions	Notes
<p>Gather & Analyze Data to Identify Disparities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data are available to understand the problem (i.e., census data/vital statistics)? • What disparities exist between specific demographic groups (i.e.: race/ethnicity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity, income level, education level, age, geographic location, etc.)? 	
<p>Understand Root Causes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific demographic groups are most affected? Why? • Which root causes seem to have the most influence on the problem? • Which root causes are affecting multiple people and settings across the community? 	
<p>Design Powerful Strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which root causes have been prioritized for action? • What strategies are likely to produce the change that is needed? • Are the strategies equitable and designed to address the unique needs of those who will be impacted? 	

Action Planning Steps	Guiding Questions	Notes
Identify Meaningful Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data will be used to measure progress? • What is your baseline? • What target are you trying to reach? By when? 	
Implement Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What needs to happen first? • What are some quick wins to help you build momentum? • Who will do it? • What resources are needed? 	
Track & Report Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using your meaningful measures, what progress is being made? • Who needs to know? • How will you tell them? 	
Learn & Adapt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What results are you seeing? • What adjustments are needed to improve results? • Who can you talk with to understand how implementation is going? 	

Action Plan Template



This template reflects the elements needed to build a strong action plan. It is designed to be used to document your work as you move through the process outlined in the *Achieving Equity through Systems Change Action Planning Guide*. Need help building your action plan? Network staff are available to assist you! Reach out through the Jackson Collaborative Network website or [follow this link](#).

Areas of Opportunity/Desired Outcome:

Problem Statement:

Root Causes/Considerations from Assessment Process:

Targeted Inequities/Disparities:

Indicators (What will be measured):

Metrics (What is being measured):

Strategy	Key Activities/Tasks	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsible Party



Qualitative Data Process Guide

A guide focused on continuous quality improvement with an engagement focused approach.

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About this Guide

This guide was developed to help give Network partners an in-depth look at Qualitative data methods and how they are able to be embedded into work for continuous quality improvement while having a focus on authentic engagement.

Qualitative Data Methods

Listening Sessions or Focus Groups

Listening sessions or focus groups gather individuals who have a similar experience, behavior, or characteristic. An example could be individuals who have received services from your organization in the last 6 months.

Strengths	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Less structure allows facilitator to dig deeper and gain additional information- Can make participants feel more comfortable to be in a group of people with similar experiences- Participants can build off each other's ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Public setting so unable to ask personal questions- Can be costly to hold- Group dynamics could come into play on comfortability of other participants such as social pressure or group think

Planning and implementation:

There are several areas of focus to go through to plan and implement a listening session/focus group.

What's the purpose of your session?

Here look back at your pre-work and clearly define what strategy you're checking in on and what information you're wanting to get out of your session.

Determine focus population

Brainstorm who would be those closest to the problem/issue – Who has experienced the strategies your organization/you are checking in on? Who has spoken out about the barriers they have been experiencing? Keep in mind a diverse group of perspectives will be needed to gather information that will help improve your strategies.

For listening sessions/focus groups, it's important to have a group that's large enough for conversation but small enough that you're able to hear everyone depending on the timeframe you have.

Define questions that will be used to guide the session

These are the questions that will help gather the information you need to help inform the change for your strategies.

Some examples include:

- What's working or making a difference?
- What's not working?
- What would make it better?

- What's missing?
- What would it look like if service systems were easier to navigate?

Identify who will facilitate to support the session

Take time to reflect on your focus population. Who do you have relationships with that would be considered a trusted person to this group? Having someone who has a strong/established relationship and is connected with their group or within the community will help to put people at ease and will be the key to gaining helpful insight.

Determine how data will be captured during the session

During listening sessions/focus groups, a facilitator will be engaging participants in questions/conversation. This means it will be critical to have a way that data will be captured throughout the session. There are several ways this could be done: (participant or other individual with consent from the group) could be taking notes while the participants in the listening session/focus group are talking, there could be a small group discussion where groups capture their own notes, with consent from the group the session could be recorded to later be transcribed this could inhibit authenticity or cause lack of engagement.

There is the opportunity to gather a few different ways data could be captured and then once the group is in session present them with the choices and have the group decide how best to capture the data.

Determine listening session/focus group event details

Think about what will be most accessible for your focus population – Here are some questions to keep in mind:

- What day? (digging deeper: is it a day during the work week? Is this a religious day? etc.)
- What place? (digging deeper: is it on a bus line or easily walked to? Do you need a form of ID?, etc.)
- What time? (digging deeper: will work schedules conflict? Would people need childcare?, etc.)
- What will the stipend structure/resources/food and beverages available look like?
 - o If stipend process includes gift cards, be sure to ask the group where they would be helpful. In instances people make assumptions that a grocery store is the best route, but many people have barriers for getting to specific stores.

Reaching out to community partners and going to where they are already gathering is a great source. You're likely to find success to adding to an already existing convening.

Determine follow-up

Identify how to follow-up with the participants to ensure the notes captured are accurate. This step is essential for a transparent/authentic feedback loop. With follow up mention "this is what I heard you say (especially if paraphrasing) and asking did I interpret or get it correct or is there more you want me to know?" Participants need to know they were heard, and that the information collected is reflective of their thoughts/opinions.

Keep in mind, for follow-up you will need to have contact information for each of the participants, so everyone is able to be involved in this step.

Hold listening/focus group session

All the pre-work and planning comes together! Here are a few helpful tips to keep in mind for the session:

- Review the purpose of the session with the group participants
- If you're trying to problem solve, using visuals can be helpful! An example of this is having individuals highlight on a map where services are hard to navigate and why they are hard at locations.
- Review follow-up and how participants will be involved.

One on one interviews

One on one interviews are session between two people, one includes a facilitator who asks the questions and the other, the participant is answering the questions.

Strengths	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- More conversational and private could make participants feel more comfortable- Less structure allows the facilitator to dig deeper to gain additional information- Private setting and able to ask more personal questions if needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Can be costly to hold- Can feel intimidating

Planning and Implementation

What's the purpose of your interviews?

Here look back at your pre-work and clearly define what strategy you're checking in on and what information you're wanting to get out of your session.

Determine Interviewees

Brainstorm who is those closest to the problem/issue – Who has experienced the strategies your organization/you are checking in on? Who has spoken out about the barriers they have been experiencing? Keep in mind a diverse group of perspectives will be needed to gather information that will help improve your strategies.

Define questions that will be used to guide the session

These are the questions that will help gather the information you need to help inform the change for your strategies.

Some examples include:

- What's working or making a difference?
- What's not working?
- What would make it better?
- What's missing?
- What would it look like if service systems were easier to navigate?

Identify who will facilitate to support the interviews

Take time to reflect on your interviewees. Who do you have relationships with that would be considered a trusted person to the interviewees? Having someone who has a strong/established relationship and is connected within the community will help to put them at ease and will be able to gather more in-depth information easier.

Determine how data will be captured during the interview

There are several possibilities how data could be captured for these sessions such as interviewer could be taking notes while the interviewee is speaking, an outside participant could be there to take notes (this may inhibit authenticity or cause lack of engagement), a recording could be taken with transcription of the interview (again, may inhibit authenticity or cause lack of engagement).

With these interviews being more personal, having consent from the interviewee consent and feel comfortable with however data is being captured will be essential. There is always the option of presenting the data collection choices to the interviewee and having them decide which way would make them feel most comfortable during the session.

Determine one on one interview details

Think about what will be most accessible for your interviewee – Here are some questions to keep in mind:

- What day? (digging deeper: is it a day during the work week? Is this a religious day? etc.)
- What place? (digging deeper: is it on a bus line or easily walked to? Do you need a form of ID?, etc.)
- What time? (digging deeper: will work schedules conflict? Would people need childcare?, etc.)
- What will the stipend structure/resources/food and beverages available look like?
 - o If stipend process includes gift cards, be sure to ask the group where they would be helpful. In instances people make assumptions that a grocery store is the best route, but many people have barriers for getting to specific stores.

Reaching out to those participating and going where they are will likely lead to more success in making this more equitable.

Determine follow-up

Identify how to follow-up with the interviewees to ensure the notes captured are accurate. This step is essential for a transparent/authentic feedback loop. With follow up mention “this is what I heard you say (especially if paraphrasing) and asking did I interpret or get it correct or is there more you want me to know?” It’s important that they know were heard, and that the information collected is reflective of their thoughts/opinions.

Keep in mind, for follow-up you will need to have contact information for each interviewee to ensure everyone is able to participate in this step.

Hold listening/focus group session

All the pre-work and planning comes together! Here are a few helpful tips to keep in mind for the session:

- Review the purpose of the interview with the interviewee

- If you're trying to problem solve, using visuals can be helpful! An example of this is having individuals highlight on a map where services are hard to navigate and why they are hard at locations.
- Review follow-up to help interviewee understand how follow-up will be done and what they can expect.

Surveys

A set of questions that are aimed at gathering information in relation to a specific issue or problem. Surveys can be conducted in a variety of ways including phone, mail, internet or even in-person.

Strengths	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People may feel more comfortable answering questions without talking to others - If available by different methods (ex: online, paper, phone, etc.) can be very accessible to people - Many cheap or free routes if looking to do a paper (including open-ended questions onto intake forms), internet or in-person survey (asking questions when someone comes in for a service) - Would be able to gather responses from a large pool of individuals quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unable to dig deeper to gather additional information leading to vague data - Can feel impersonal to participants - Having only one method may be a barrier for people to participate - Can be costly if you choose a phone or mail survey

Planning and Implementation

What's the purpose of your survey?

Here look back at your pre-work and clearly define what strategy you're checking in on and what information you're wanting to get out of your survey.

Determine who you want to participate in or respond to your survey

Brainstorm who is those closest to the problem/issue – Who has experienced the strategies your organization/you are checking in on? Who has spoken out about the barriers they have been experiencing?

Keep in mind a diverse group of perspectives will be needed to gather information that will help improve your strategies.

Define questions that will be used on the survey

These are the questions that will help gather the information you need to help inform the change for your strategies.

Some examples include:

- What's working or making a difference?
- What's not working?

- What would make it better?
- What's missing?
- What would it look like if service systems were easier to navigate?

Since surveys are mostly given without any face-to-face communication so there are a few things to keep in mind:

- Reading level: Keeping the reading level of your survey somewhere between 6-8th grade reading levels will make your survey more accessible to everyone. Most surveys tools and even Microsoft Word are equipped to help give you information on reading level.
- Definitions of Key Concepts: Be sure to include definitions of key concepts, you can do this in the survey question itself, on a separate document or even just a link if the survey is online. For you to have accurate data, it's important all respondents has the same definition of these key concepts.

Determine which survey method will be used

There are several different survey methods that can be utilized, and each has their strengths and limitations. For example, mail surveys can be sent out to a mass amount of people but is extremely costly while having an online only survey can also be sent out to a mass amount of people and is fairly cost effective but you're leaving out individuals who don't have access to a computer or internet.

The two most popular survey options are the following:

- Online survey
 - o With the continued popularity of social media these surveys are easy to create and market. Survey links can be used and embedded throughout websites, social media sites, emails, and e-newsletters. There are also several free or low-cost options available.
- Paper survey
 - o When most people think of paper surveys, they think of the surveys they get through the mail, although that is one way it's not the only way. This could include utilizing surveys that your organization/you are already using by adding in new questions or even adding on questions onto already existing intake forms that clients are required to fill out when they come in for services.

Determine how survey will be distributed

Think about what will be most accessible for your respondent – Here are some questions to keep in mind:

- Do the respondents have access to computers/internet/mail?
- Will there be a helpline or similar for respondents who aren't comfortable taking the survey, don't understand or have questions?
- Will there or What will the stipend structure/incentive structure look like?
 - o If stipend process includes gift cards, be sure to ask the respondents where they would be helpful. For example, there are assumptions that a grocery store is the best route, but many people have barriers for getting to specific stores.

Determine follow-up

In many circumstances our community members give us information but there is no follow-up on how we used that information. Even if it's releasing a report, sending it out community wide and marketing it with respondents and those who your organization/you serve. Respondents need to know they were heard and the information that was collected is being used in the way it was intended.

Start promotion/sending surveys

All the pre-work and planning comes together! Here are a few helpful tips to keep in mind when you're ready to send out the survey:

- Promotion of the survey is essential!
 - o Leveraging relationships with trusted individuals with those who you are hoping to respond to the survey will encourage others to participate.
 - o Within the last few years, the number of scams continue to rise, and it makes individuals worried. Having a legitimacy number or someone for respondents to reach out to so they can confirm the authenticity of the survey will be helpful to ease these worries.
- Include contact information for any questions or technical assistance questions participants may have.
- Include the purpose of the survey in promotion and within the survey itself if possible; let people know what you're using their responses for.
- At the end of surveys, give participants information on plans for how this information will be used or followed up on.

Touchpoint at Service Delivery

Engaging with individuals at the point of service can be an easy and effective way of gathering qualitative data utilizing the procedures that are already in place at organizations. This method involves

Strengths	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Convenient, quick and cost effective since it's being added to a process that's already being utilized- Able to switch questions easily and quickly if needed or wanted- Constant flow of data collection with an emphasis on real-time collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Unable to dig deeper to gather additional information leading to vague data- Having only one method may be a barrier for people- Only focuses on those who receive the services from or visited your organization

Planning and Implementation

Here look back at your pre-work and clearly define what strategy you're checking in on and what information you're wanting to get out of your touchpoints. This is also a good time to make a plan on where this will happen during your process – Will there be a few questions following intake, would this happen at the end of your service delivery, etc.

Define questions that will be used

It's best to focus on less than 5 questions when you're doing touchpoints, this ensures that the questions get to the points you're looking for but also keeps things quick and efficient.

Determine follow-up

In many circumstances our we gather information but there is no follow-up on how we used that information. Even if this information will just be used internally, updating your clients on what it would be used for and when changes occur, letting them know that these changes were based off of the data received goes a long way with individuals.

Working with the Qualitative Data

Analyzing the qualitative data that has been gathered will be where most of the time is spent during this process. Compiling and theming the data shared by your efforts is an important step to deeply understanding the root causes of the issues/problems you're experiencing.

Managing Qualitative Data

Compile all qualitative data into a format that allows you to work with it more effectively.

- Using regular naming conventions will be helpful to keep files organized. For example, naming a notes document with the name of event and date (CollaborativeNetwork_ListeningSession2_3.10.23.docx)
- Excel is a helpful too for initial collection of data. Each question and set of data should have its own worksheet to support the analysis.
- Below is a template from the [Action Planning Discussion Guide](#) that can be helpful – You can find an Excel template [here](#).

Question: <i>(list the question that you used here)</i>		
Description of Group/Individuals: <i>(provide a high level description of the group or individual(s) that you included in the engagement activity. For example: Families living within the City of Jackson that have children ages 0-5. Include a general description of demographics whenever possible.)</i>		
Initial Data Points <i>(Enter the individual statements from those you engaged with in this column)</i>	Refined Data Points <i>(Initial data points may need to be separated or refined to provide a clearer set of data. Examples included below.)</i>	Perspective <i>(Community Resident, Stakeholder, Leader, Policy Maker, etc. This will help with data collection and sorting as more and more qualitative data is gathered.)</i>
<i>Example: It is hard to get the help I need to find employment because I don't know who to ask or where to go to get help and the ones I know of aren't located in my neighborhood.</i>	<i>Example: Residents are not aware of available employment supports and services.</i>	<i>Example: Resident</i>
	<i>Example: It is difficult for residents to access employment supports and services outside of their neighborhood.</i>	<i>Example: Resident</i>

Qualitative Data Analysis

This step is about selecting, focusing, simplifying, and abstracting the data that was gathered. This is where the majority of time is spent in the qualitative data process. Below are two ways outlined within the [Action Planning Discussion Guide](#):

Sort and theme at a group level.

One activity you can use for this approach is to cut each refined data point, with corresponding perspective, into individual strips. Group members would work in pairs or small groups to identify things that are related. This works well if there is space to work at large tables or if there is wall space available.

Once the small groups have sorted the data points into clusters, each small group considers the clusters and comes up with a name or title for the collection of data. This name represents the theme.

Supplies needed for this activity:

- Data Points with perspectives printed in large enough font for ease of reading, cut these into individual strips
- Tape if you will be having groups work using a wall space
- Post-it notes or half pages of colored paper for theming groups of data points
- Markers

Staff or a small adhoc sort and theme, then present to the larger group for reflection.

Another approach you can use is to have backbone staff or a small group of members sort and theme prior to presenting to the group for discussion. This approach engages groups less fully in the process; however, it can be useful when timing/scheduling is challenging or when the group prefers to divvy up work for various processes.

The small group should present the identified themes as a draft, allowing the full group a chance to review before finalizing. The full group should have access to all the engagement data as a reference.

Jackson

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