

Engage in the conversation



What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



Equitably identifying stakeholders especially youth and community members is a concern.

Managing the dynamics required for power sharing.

That the strategy is just image and not substantive, concrete change.

That the system will create barriers to a power building strategy that we can't dismantle; that we will disappoint community when we can't live up to our ideals and state values

Leaders worry about giving up their own power and need to consider that people served are actually more the experts of their own lives. That requires an immense amount of self awareness and vulnerability on the part of leaders

Being shut down by leadership

Confusion among the team about who is doing what
Change management - helping people through the transition

that we wont be listened to

There is a major wealth gap in our area, which of course is directly related to racial inequality. So recognizing the wealth gap is recognizing that lack of shared power, which is very difficult.

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



Community Mistrust

That we get stuck in abstract/theoretical terms that in themselves become barriers to power shifting

we don't have the tools to include community members in an equitable way

Gathering information while another decision is being made

that leadership doesn't want to let go of power

Data literacy....being White in an equity space.

sharing power with community (thinking they will go "off the rails")

Politics

Can we truly empower historically marginalized stakeholders?

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



University afraid of not getting full indirects.

How they will handle the inevitable pushback.

Leadership feels like they have to weigh in no matter what to demonstrate their value. Sometimes just listening is all that is required.

Doing a lot of feel-good work without building new spaces within which deep change can emerge and flourish.

Change - any movement from the status quo creates anxiety

Lack of true transparency

Poor representation and lack of feedback once groups/individuals are engaged

Community organizations competing for power

University concern about data ownership.

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



Not making the connections with different groups in the community. Lack of trust. Not getting voice of different community members.

Getting it wrong; not being authentic; tokenizing individuals

Leaders will focus on developing partners who have more monetary incentives than small organizations with less funding

Community power building takes time and it often conflicts with Deadlines required by funders

Worried that we may not have the capacity to meet the community's expectations

This takes a lot of time! Time is very hard to come by in projects driven by volunteers/citizens/residents.

that it will be really hard to reach consensus

Leadership worries about losing funders.

That funders are not fully invested in implementing community strategies; we run the risk of not following through

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



Our organization not being prepared to engage with community on that level

gaining the trust of the community

Capacity and burden

I am a white woman and not representative of many of the communities I serve.

Budgets do not include compensation for community members to participate.

How do we ensure that we have the right stakeholders at the table?

Losing funding

Feeling like we have to have all the "answers" before initiating this process

Lack of support from leadership

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



Time consuming, competing needs, entrenched views.

that the trust built, might be mishandled.

lack of education on health equity. health equity tokenizing to people of color expected to lead equity without full staff trained on health equity and fully on board with strategies.

Being dismissed by community given our position in relation to the groups we serve-we are 'top',

I'm worried about organizations I work with not valuing the opinions of the people we serve.

Do we have sufficient capacity to adequately support it.

Gaining trust within the community and with others that are higher up in their positions

Leadership not wanting to give up power

Leadership concerned about losing funding/not having enough funding.

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Organizational distrust

That the barriers still exist - We don't want to make empty promises!

We worry that the appropriate people are in the room and having their voices heard.

The PI not understanding their position of power with the co-PIs, students, staff, and community stakeholders

Community not actually benefitting

Are there potential conflicts between power building/sharing and the governance responsibilities of institutions.?

Community demand for immediate change compared to time needed to build community knowledge/capacity required for meaningful, productive, empowering engagement.

That power is never ceded voluntarily - those in power are not invested in truly sharing power with communities

So beholden to our funders that we lack "creative courage"

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



Being able to deliver what the community expresses they need or want given the resources we realistically have available.

Causing more harm than healing in well-intentioned power-building that attempts to share power building but then is shut down by large power systems who prevent that (funders, institutions, etc.) and leaving the community hanging, spent, and hurt.

Community involvement showing up as a microcosm of the power imbalance we're addressing. Meaning, marginalized members within communities not having a voice in the processes.

That the community voices involved only represent a narrow perspective or preferences, whereas the organization could manage multiple concerns/needs and actually be more inclusive

Lack of capacity to fully engage; the higher level leadership that can really make decisions about funding, for example, are usually never in the room; in Government the model is always to listen but we "can't comit"

Moving idea into action. Where does praxis happen?

Not being in driver's seat. Worried demonstrating return on investment.

Community mistrusts or doesn't know about us

Starting!!!

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challenging historical underpinnings

Ensuring that people are not tokenized and that the shift is truly giving more power to the people we intend to, without creating unfair burdens.

Balancing grant timelines with the time needed to build power

I am concerned that they are not inclusive - there are people missing; and then there are issues of defensiveness and denial...

how to have the strategies work long term (beyond an initial 2-3 years)

leadership not willing to let go of their own power

making mistakes

That there is a strategy behind bringing in varying perspectives at different levels to include the community voice in an intentional way. Specifically, being comfortable with tensions that come up when the community asks for accountability

Not being able to build trust because we can't make the change the communities are asking to be prioritized, because power structures are too entrenched.

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Remaining non-partisan and the ways this work indirectly signals a particular political leaning

Competing with placaters who are working against the community's best interest and desires without their knowledge.

Concerns with funding and staff capacity (time) to do the real community power building and trust building work.

how to incorporate feedback to maintain community trust and power while also respecting the boundaries of the organization

Processes of engagement without authority

Getting started and repeating past harms

that family voice wont be authentic

When we are engaging with community members/neighborhood residents, how are we sure we are sharing power with everyone - not just the most vocal people in the community?

Leaders willing to share any measure of power with their leadership team.

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



We say we want to share power, but are uncomfortable not leading.

Unauthentic leadership

Not being able to respond or integrate the community input gathered

external forces block or stopping progress.

Having enough budget to do this work well and authentically

Some leadership members are resistant to change, others are more ready to think creatively and innovatively

fear of retribution

Fear of being labeled for asking questions and not accepting things as the way they are. No hopes of change.

Our leadership is primarily white male, and their attempts of inclusion is a second thought, and not providing decision making opportunities to people of color/diverse communities.

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



Power going beyond specific individuals' relationships?
How does this continue when there's turnover?

How "trust" is confused with control. I.e., I trust you as long as you're doing what I want you to do.

"Gatekeepers" who have power but are not interested in engaging a representative share and different groups that comprise the community.

Leaders not really ready or understanding how to cede power in a meaningful way.

The costs associated with a change in practice and the full scope of behind-the-scenes work to implement this change is likely overwhelming

Finding a balance between building a strategy that is both exiting for the community and feasible.

Reassurance that the communities being engaged are "representative" on a given issue. How do we assure that the people we have engaged reflect the "true" proportion of those affected?

Locating and inviting the REAL community

The upper leadership is not ready to hear what our community says

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



Having sustainable funding for our efforts

that leadership is so out of touch they dont understand the real issues

Burden to the community

Achieving a project or goal no scaling sustainable change

Native Americans only a small percentage of the population, so can't vote politicians out.

People doubt that it will make an impact in outcomes, but process is as important as the outcome

I am worried that, even though I/we represent a non-partisan governmental org, we are still seen as political. Trust building

Strategies to build capacity within community to sustain a new power dynamic

I've no worries but more so a question. Is it considered gaslighting to direct communities towards our causes ? Rather than asking them to tell us what's most important.

What worries you or the leadership of your organization when considering or implementing community power building strategies?



Strategies to shift power that don't address the affective aspects of the existing power dynamic,

We can fund community partners to do their work and get out of the way!

Having community partners define what success means to them and using those as metrics for accountability

As a funder, recognizing the need for operational support to allow an organization to build the capacity they need to do their work!

Over-dependence on the views of people in "formal" leadership roles.

The necessity of relinquishing power and decision making is vulnerable and ambiguous at times.

What role do you see your organization playing in supporting community power shifting?



Supporting shifts in organizational mindset/culture toward equity and power-sharing

we can convene recipients of services and those in power

Engage the population we serve in decision making

Use our privilege and access to enable others' voices to be heard

We can work in efforts to increase community voice into our project proposals and contracts

engagement with the community and other programs

Involving community leaders in a statewide initiative from the beginning through as advisory, and asking how to best access family input in planning and action.

Dedicate resources to making this happen. Building the capacity of other organizations to also do this work

flexible grantmaking process and flexible dollars

What role do you see your organization playing in supporting community power shifting?



Including natural community leaders in decision making and civic process, and ensuring/demanding equal voices at the table.

Local multiservice non-profit providing admin support for grassroots groups - creating capacity to do the work while we take care of the back-end work (bookkeeping, HR files, IT, etc.)

Teaching. We need to teach the greater public we still exist. We need to teach others that Tribal Governments are not the tribe. The PEOPLE are the TRIBE.

our org has access to large grants; we could/should engage grassroots orgs through allowing them decision making power and providing resources

We can continue to offer training to help other agencies and professionals establish values and supporting practices for community voice and power

Truth-telling

encouraging relationship building through task forces addressing and determining the priorities in the community. after priorities are determined through qualitative and quantitative data we aim to bring funding to orgs serving those needs.

Teach funders about sovereignty so they understand the dynamic of all streams of money

We can engage experts in racial equity to help build our own practices for supporting community voice and power.

What role do you see your organization playing in supporting community power shifting?



Run focus groups, invite feedback during program design phase, user-centered design

provide a platform for community member stories, opinions, lived experiences

Holding those in power accountable

Providing funding and trusting that community know how to use it. Supporting but getting out of the way!

Require transparency

being very intentional about how we show-up to the community. allocate funds into the community organizations and being intentional about where these funds go. use equity lens while supporting community initiatives by other organizations.

Bringing specific communities to the conversation and compensating community members

do not cut off women of color to explain equity

Disrupt assumptions about what counts as 'knowledge' and 'evidence' and 'impact'

What role do you see your organization playing in supporting community power shifting?



Open the door for different narratives to replace harmful ones that dominate now

Intermediary with entities with power

Help people discern between 'losing their power' and 'using their power differently' - sharing or circulating power can amplify power rather than diminish it

Teaching, guiding, explaining evaluation and not just executing without input from community.

Centering communities in data so they design the learning and lessons that strategy is built on.

Advocate and resource for community members

conduit for change

University has so many resources to draw on and to share. Work on returning resources to our local communities..

centering partnerships around values

What role do you see your organization playing in supporting community power shifting?



Intermediary, building capacity for building evidence for local field-initiated practices.

Transferring research question identification to practitioners instead of researchers

Model equitable community partnering

We can be the connector to bring members of the community to the organizations doing the work and act as an intermediary.

Show up with more questions than answers

Allowing community members to be at the table, listen, and act upon those efforts and needs.

Providing space and frameworks to nonprofits interested in power shifting

We are starting community advisory boards in different regions of the county and looking for leaders to represent underserved populations in each of those regions

As an evaluator, our role can support community power shifting by naming the priorities for communities groups we are working with, highlighting our role as a learning partner and centering that lens when we step into spaces

What role do you see your organization playing in supporting community power shifting?



Connecting people, and supporting their engagement. Helping people to build skills that will support their success.

Supporting community with financial resources

training and continued education recruitments for full staff on health equity. hold ourselves accountable with outside agency input and evaluations. transparency

creating micro and macro tools for measuring change that inform, impress, and activate further change

I am an evaluator. We are trying to incorporate power sharing in evaluation, but it is difficult because when the whole organization is not moving in the same direction at the same time.

Diverting financial resources to community-led organizations.

Focus on how to be more trustworthy

Hub for awareness & growth, leadership development, organization systems shifts, community advocacy and power shifting.

Engaging with community beyond needing to receive, achieve or communicate something specific.

What role do you see your organization playing in supporting community power shifting?



Amplify joy when we encounter it

Funding community led research studies and evaluations.

Creating community through creating radical consent in all our processing, sharing our values through teachings.

Frame evaluation as capturing truths and realities rather than measuring things

Help to strategically use power that you have access to but don't have the 'power' to share