Guidelines for Setting Up Your Engagement Evaluation

Evaluating your engagement process is important for understanding whether your efforts are achieving the outcomes you intended, and for improving your approach in the future. Consider the three evaluation approaches below; it's recommended that you consider all three to evaluate your engagement efforts. It is also recommended that you decide how you will evaluate your engagement **before** completing the engagement activity.

Approach 1: Outreach and engagement metrics

Defining a set of participation metrics is one way to measure the success of outreach and engagement efforts. As a reminder, outreach shares information about the project or an opportunity to get involved, whereas engagement entails the actual participation of community members in the project. This distinction is particularly important when evaluating whether your outreach efforts—particularly within communities that have historically been underrepresented or excluded from planning processes—are translating into opportunities for true engagement and collaboration. Consider the example metrics below.

Example Metrics

Outreach Metrics	Engagement Metrics
Flyers / Postcards	
• Number of flyers/postcards sent to EJ neighborhoods • Number of flyers/postcards printed and distributed in languages other than English	• Number of people who responded to the call to action on the flyer/postcard using a link/QR code
Attending Existing Events	
• Number of community-based organizations' meetings or public events where the project team presented or participated in discussions related to the project	• Number of people who participated in the meeting • Number of people who signed up or followed up to be involved in future parts of the process
Hosting Pop-Up Activities	
• Number of pop-ups at local community events or neighborhoods	• Number of people who stopped to get information about the project • Number of people who participated in pop-up related surveys, comment, or mapping activities

Consider: What metrics could help you assess the success of your outreach and engagement efforts? What numbers do you hope to reach?

Approach 2: Community evaluation

Consider asking for community feedback on your engagement and outreach. Receiving feedback from community members can help your Core Team assess whether the activities feel accessible, valuable, and effective for community members. You can conduct live polls at the end of engagement activities, provide hard-copy surveys, email a follow-up survey, reach out to people individually for a feedback interview, or share the number to a feedback hotline for participants to share feedback.

Evaluation Questions to Consider

- Was attendance representative of your community?
- Was the event conducted in an accessible location and at a time that is convenient for you?
- Were the purpose, goals, and timeline of the project clear to you?
- Was the quality of translation and interpretation services good?
- Did you feel comfortable raising concerns or questions during the event?
- Was it easy to receive information about the event?
- Do you believe this project is relevant to your community needs and priorities?
- Are you interested in staying engaged in the project?
- What would you like to see happen differently for future events?

Consider: Is there an opportunity to gather feedback from the community on their experience with the engagement activity? If so, how will you go about doing that?

Approach 3: Other indicators of success

In addition to the participation metrics and the community's evaluation, there are likely other ways to measure whether the engagement approach was effective in meeting your engagement goals. Consider the following questions below.

Evaluation Questions to Consider

- Did the engagement activities lead to material changes in the project? If so, how so?
- In what ways did these changes occur in response to needs or concerns highlighted by EJ and other priority populations?
- In what ways did the engagement activities result in more people, and particularly EJ and other priority populations, being involved in future phases of the project?
- Did you feel that the activities were successful in supporting your goals for relationship building? What makes you feel that way?

Consider: Reflect back on your engagement goals that you outlined in your Engagement Plan. How will you know if you are successful at reaching your goals? What questions (such as the ones above) could help your Core Team evaluate your success?