

Achieving Systems Change through Flow and Links

Aligning actions across community partners

Learning and doing together across community sectors to Disrupt the Cycle, Strengthen Resilience and Restore Lives is needed in order to achieve systems-level change.

Achievement of systems-level change requires community partners to identify, understand and value the *relationships* among each other. When partners commit to engaging with each other at higher levels of collaboration, changes in **Flow** and **Links** serve as the primary facilitators of systems change.



Flow: Changes in how information, funding and resources (human and physical) flow in and out of the organization.

Links: Changes in how we work and how decisions are made supporting enhanced communication and collaborative implementation

RTIC Teams are encouraged to review the *Engagement with Community Partners* chart to determine which level best fits the specific project, program or initiative in order to achieve the desired goals and outcomes.

Levels of Engagement with Community Partners¹

	Independent	Informing	Consulting	Involving	Aligning
Flow	Community partners have some knowledge of activity. Resources and funding remain within organization.	Information is shared with community partners. Resources and funding remain within organization.	Feedback from community partners is considered. Resources and funding remain within organization.	Feedback from community partners is prioritized. Resource sharing is considered. Funds may be shared.	Communities partners engage in ongoing communication. Resource sharing and collaborative funding is explored.
Links	Decisions are made within organization.	Community partners are informed of what decisions were made.	Community partners give feedback and are informed of how they influenced decisions.	Community partners give feedback and support implementation.	Community partners engage in collaborative planning and implementation.

¹Adapted from International Association for Public Participation www.iap2.org and Community Engagement Toolkit (2017) <https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/sites/default/files/Community%20Engagement%20Toolkit.pdf>

In order to determine a level of engagement with community partners, organizations are encouraged to consider the following questions when reviewing implementation plans for a specific program, project or initiative of the organization:

- Is there benefit for the program, project or initiative to be a collaborative endeavor with community partners?
- To what level do you feel community partners should be engaged and why?
- How might the level of engagement with community partners influence outcome and results?
- Are other community partners looking to achieve the same or similar goals?
- Where does your organizational program, project or initiative currently reside within the *Engagement* continuum? Is current placement a good fit or where would you like it to be?
- What does communication about organization's desired level of engagement sound like with community partners? Do words align to actions described in the chart?
- How can your organization plan and implement with community partners according to desired level of *Engagement*?

It is not always necessary or appropriate for organizations to practice *Involving* or *Aligning* actions when planning or implementing specific projects, programs or initiatives. *Involving* and *Aligning* actions support a higher level of buy-in and collaborative ownership with community partners. Organizations are allowing community partners to actively share in decision-making and outcomes through a collaborative effort of aligned actions in order to achieve shared goals. Organizations are actively investing in the collaborative relationship between them as a critical component of success for the program, project or initiative.

Achievement of systems-level change occurs when decision-making shifts from one organization to aligned decisions owned by a collaboration of partners. Alignment allows for differentiation of activities among community partners that are coordinated through shared ownership and a collaborative plan of action.

For additional resources on building a *Resilient and Trauma-Informed Community*, please visit www.resilientcommunitieswi.com

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