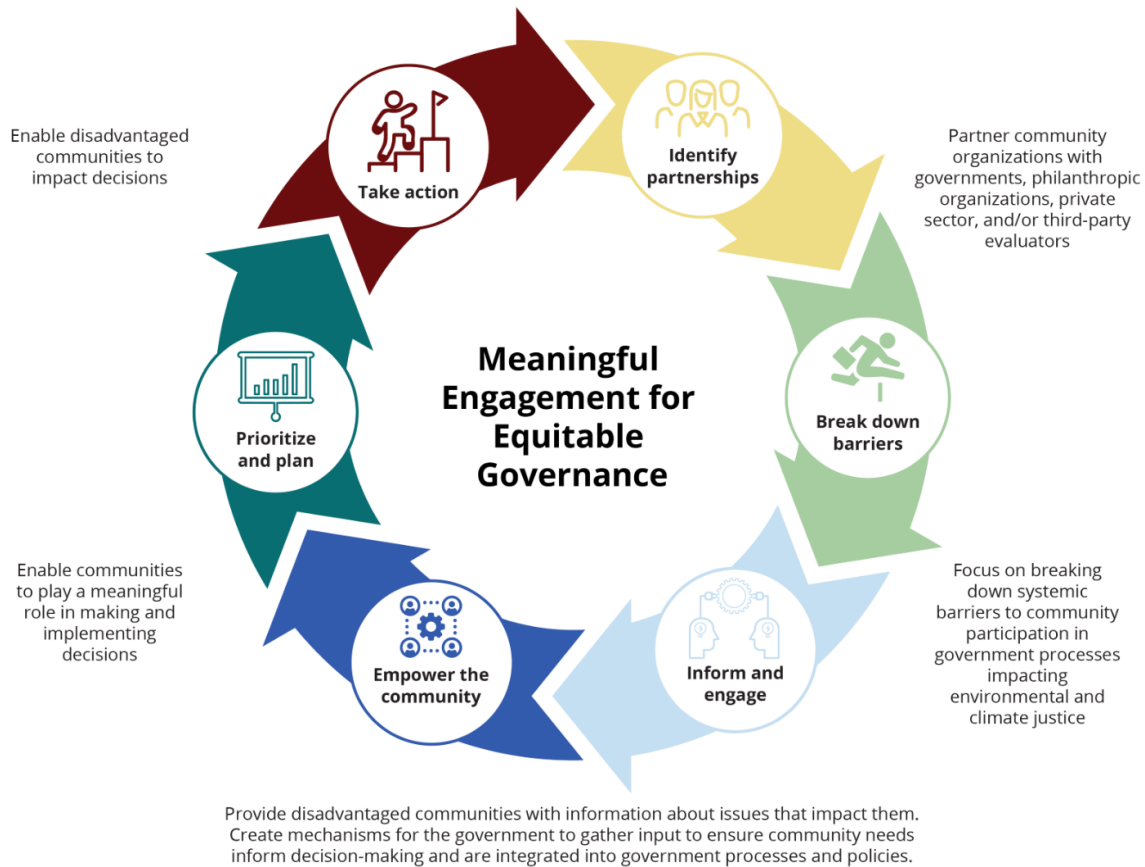




Purpose: This worksheet will help you center meaningful and sustained engagement as part of your Track II application (see Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Section I.H.). For more specific considerations on engaging with communities during the planning and implementation of Track II projects, see [Track II Community Engagement Worksheet](#).

Overview

EPA designed Track II grants – Meaningful Engagement for Equitable Governance – to fund projects that improve communities’ ability to take part in government decision-making processes around climate and environmental justice concerns that directly affect them. Just because you create a process for community engagement does not mean that community members will buy in to that process. Track II projects are meant to build connections that allow for meaningful and sustained engagement between government and a disadvantaged community. The chart diagram below illustrated how governments can meaningfully engage with and involve communities in governance.





Goals and Objectives

Communities can use several tactics to engage in governance processes. Per NOFO Section I.H, you may want to consider the following project examples:

- Educational and Training Programs. These projects prepare, train, and educate members of disadvantaged communities on how to engage in government processes related to environmental and climate justice activities.
- Environmental Advisory Boards. These projects help involve disadvantaged communities in environmental decision-making by creating advisory councils, task forces, or similar groups to engage with government. They may include Tribal members, academics, youth, seniors, disabled populations, and more.
- Collaborative Governance Activities. These activities can guide decisions that will benefit disadvantaged communities by creating collaborative groups with members of disadvantaged communities, governmental entities, and others to work on environmental and climate justice issues.
- Participation in Governmental Funding and Budgeting Processes. These projects may use participatory budgeting to advise public spending on environmental priorities. Participatory budgeting engages communities to provide input on governmental spending around environmental and climate justice issues.

The examples above represent a few approaches. You are welcome to use innovative and effective means of community engagement tailored to the specific needs of your project and community as long as they meet Track II objectives (NOFO Section I.H). The following questions should help you think about how you can structure your approach so that engagement is done in a meaningful way.

Guiding Questions

1. Describe how community members have been involved in government decision-making processes around climate and environmental justice concerns in the past. How has this engagement fallen short?

2. How does your project engage the community in public processes in an equitable way?



3. How does the project empower the community to be the decision maker?

4. How will the project enable continual and consistent interactions between the government and community?

5. How will you design these interactions to ensure they are productive and create mutual trust and respect between the community and government?

6. How will the project incorporate feedback from the community and other stakeholders as the project moves along?

7. How has previous work demonstrated that the proposed Track II project will be successful?

8. Do you know how these strategies will increase engagement with the government and other decision makers to address the community's environmental justice challenges?



9. How will the project be sustained? After grant funds are used, how will the collaborative relationship between the community and government continue?

Tips to Consider

- Root causes of environmental problems aren't always clear, and community members may not thoroughly understand them. Your first focus should be shedding light on the issues at hand and making sure the community and everyone involved is familiar with them.
- Be upfront about which issues can realistically be addressed and which cannot. Set realistic expectations with the community early in the process.
- Consider any existing relationships and collaboration between the community, governmental bodies, and other stakeholders. You may be able to rely on or expand on these to address environmental and environmental/climate justice issues.
- Help encourage community buy-in to the process by recruiting community leaders. Keep in mind that these may not be people in traditional leadership roles. Learn who community members think are important community leaders and influencers, and make a special effort to win their support.
- Establish a core group of people who are willing to work with experts to develop communication strategies, policy recommendations, and potential projects to address issues.
- Consider involving youth. They may care a lot!
- Hold regular meetings with community members to keep them informed and engaged as well as gather feedback. You might consider offering food and refreshments, or a raffle or a giveaway to increase attendance.
- Develop partnerships with organizations that can provide help and long-term support so work can continue after the funding from the CCG grant ends.



Resources

For an example of Educational and Training Programs, see [EPA's EJ Academy](#).

For an example of an Environmental Advisory Board, see [EPA's Environmental Equity Working Group](#).

For more examples of Collaborative Governance Activities, see the [Brownfield Development Community Toolkit](#).

For an example of Participation in Governmental Funding and Budgeting Processes, see [Transform Fresno: The Transformative Climate Communities Program](#).

For more examples and ideas on meaningful engagement and potential solutions, see NOFO Section I.H and Appendix F.

For more information on Track II: Meaningful Engagement for Equitable Governance, see [CCG NOFO Track II Overview](#).

For more ideas on incorporating equity into resilience planning, visit the [Equity | U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#).