

RMI Webinar 3 | Decision-Making Matters: A Deeper Application of the Racial Equity Impact Analysis Tool

January 24, 2019 | 1:00 pm EST

Intro and Context

- Focus of today: using a racial equity impact analysis assessment to determine if policies, practices, protocols, and programs impact racial groups differently
- Racial equity = situational fairness. Racial equity results in the 1) inability to predict advantage or disadvantage by race and 2) BOTH improving outcomes overall AND closing racial gaps in outcomes. This requires:
 - Applying differential resources to unequal needs
 - Removing barriers for dis-similarly situated individuals, families, and communities
 - Treating individuals who are in similar situations, families, and communities in similar ways. Our public policies are usually written this way, but treating the same way often doesn't mean that people will have the same experience.

When did you apply different resources to unequal needs, and how did you know the needs were not equal? (*Anonymized participant responses below*)

- We learned in our work to help opportunity youth re-engage and complete high school/GED and go onto post-secondary that Latinx students were the largest % of students enrolled but not completing. So, we gave a grant to ask Latinx young people to interview/talk to other Latinx students what was happening and different ideas on problems and solutions
- We gave one-time technology grants based on a technology need assessment completed by a consultant. a few orgs got large grants
- Using data, we determined different academic outcomes for black and brown students. These students have fewer resources and more inexperienced teachers. We structured our funding to focus on those neighborhoods and schools-- more teachers supports, more organizing for parents, more supports for those students. We did this rather than district-wide approaches.
- We created a grant opportunity specifically for organizations affected by the Illinois state budget impasse.
- We supported advocacy work to ensure public sector financing for the services in supportive housing to meet the needs of chronically homeless individuals with disabilities. Housing alone was not enough to meet their needs.
- At our organization, we created a program to help build infrastructure in our Southern Dallas nonprofits that are primarily run by persons of color that are the founders of their grassroots agencies. We provided them with skill building courses, a stipend to attend those courses, and a grant towards capacity building at the end of the course. The grant could be put towards paying for an audit, strategic planning, marketing plan, or technology. We knew this was needed because we weren't receiving applications from this group of agencies and

after meeting with them to determine why, we learned that they were missing key elements to be successful in our grant process.

- We disaggregated exit data for young adults experiencing homelessness to see that there was disparity between white and black youth in exits to family reunification - whites were disproportionately more likely to exit to family than were black young adults. Our grant for family reconnection is considering intentional outreach, engagement and work with black youth to explore family connections

Racial Equity Impact Analysis: Insurance that interventions are likely to close racial gaps

- When to use REIA:
 - Review existing policies, practices, protocols, and strategies
 - Programmatic decision-making
 - Identify ways to improve proposed policies, practices, and protocols
 - Determine if you are like to achieve the results you anticipate
- **5 questions to ask to conduct an REIA**
 1. **Are all racial/ethnic groups who are affected by the policy, practice, proposal, etc. at the table?**
 - Who are the racial/ethnic groups for whom representatives should be at the table? Is there already a table where they are present? What does race-informed research tell us?
 - Participant questions and comments:
 - Does this get us caught in a cycle of taping the same people (particularly communities of color) to participate in policy tables? How would you suggest avoiding this? Some of our leaders of color in housing/homelessness are being spread thin in efforts to try to be inclusive.
 - How do we get the input without community engaging people to death?
 - Also important is how they are engaged at the table. We have been engaging young people more often, but leadership doesn't know how to engage them effectively. So they are there, but they still aren't participating equally.
 - We need to also talk about the need to compensate participants for their time, especially if those in power/privilege stand to gain financially from capturing community feedback.
 - Philanthropy writ large should be thinking about the question of how to avoid colonizing tendencies when it comes to community engagement.
 - How do you suggest dealing with the time commitment this would take to make a decision? The amount of community engagement required in this scenario would take a lot of time.
 - Inclusive decision-making requires really changing processes and expectations about time to get to decisions. Important not to see that as a "problem" - worth the time and effort to get to better

decisions really informed by people with the most knowledge and stake in outcome!

- Comments from Joanna:
 - What does the research tell us? What we want to do is build the capacity of everyone doing this work so that we don't just tap the same folks in our network.
 - How do we engage people? People know when they're being tokenized or there to check a box. Think about how youth are engaged – how are youth suggestions taken into account or not? How do we make space, not give space?
 - This is how equity work gets pushed to the side. We have 1 set of time – we need to spend the time on the front end in order to prevent fixing things later down the line. If there is an expectation to do work in equitable ways, it takes time to even figure out what we're trying to do.
2. How will the proposed policy, practice, or decision, what results are you trying to achieve? How will the proposed distribution affect each group?
 3. How will the proposed policy, practice, or decision be perceived by each group?
 4. Does the policy, practice, or decision worsen or ignore existing disparities?
 5. Based on the above responses, what revisions are needed in the policy, practice, or decision under discussion?
 - i. People often jump to this because people often want to point out what's wrong with something. But questions 2-4 help bring about a different, necessary conversation

REIA Test-Drive: Hypothetical Grantee Reporting Template

Please cover the topics in no more than 2 pages:

- Please summarize the objectives for which you were funded.
- Describe specific outcomes of the project to date (number served, geographic location, changes or improvements resulting from your work)
- Discuss specific changes, if any, that you made in the content of the work or application of the funds, and the rationale for doing so.
- Attach copies of any publicity your work received.
- Describe any challenges you encounter with, or for, this grant.

We walked through the five questions of the racial equity impact analysis for this example. We spent time discussing question 2: What results are you trying to achieve in asking your grantees for these data?

- If the goal is to collect information from grantees about the work they have been funded to do, **how might different racial groups be situated differently to answer these questions?**
 - Some may be staffed differently -- development staff to answer questions.
 - Community-based or grassroots based organizations may be smaller and not have as many professional paid staff or have databases that track/capture/report out data.

- It's easier for some groups than others to get publicity and this seems to imply that publicity is an indication of the impact of the work.
 - They may want to report out their learnings/outcomes in different ways - for example, in person - and as part of site visits. Oral communication may be preferred
- Feedback and comments from participants:
 - This makes me really think about: what are the goals/results we want from our grant reports? and how do we make sure we get what we need and do it in a way that works for all of our grantees?
 - I'm very confused on why the way that the data collection question is asked is problematic. It is very open and doesn't have expectations about data that needs to be presented. I would see it as problematic if it did imply that grantees collect particular data. I worry that we could cross the line in dumbing down the process and assume culturally specific groups can't do this work vs recognizing everything they do bring.

Closing thoughts

- "We recognize that a commitment to becoming a multicultural, inclusive and (racially equitable) organization is not the same as becoming one." – Inspired by "Policy statement on Undoing Institutional Racism" – Children's Alliance
- Resources:
 - Book: Racism without Racisms, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva
 - Book: Racing to Justice, John A. Powell