

# The Role of Racial Equity in SNAP-Ed Part 4 Discussion Session Chat + Notes

September 29, 2022

## Breakout Room Discussion Notes:

### **1. What is your agency's relationship with community partners and community leaders?**

- a) Try to find strengths and how to leverage these and determine where others may be able to complement and vice versa
- b) In some communities do a lot of direct program implementation - strong relationships with partners and work directly with community members. Able to contextualize data and know what questions to ask. At state level, rely on contacts to shine light on broader context. How to understand the big picture and the depth of the context at the same time.
- c) Work with farmers - main interest to help farmers earn a better living. Take direction from the community. When hire a new person, ensure they are from the community, understand language justice. Close relationships with community health center. One on one conversations - all about trust.
- d) Monthly meeting with different partners, sharing, feels more collaborative and not just one-sided
- e) We seek how we can collaborate with community leaders to help provide services to the community with the greatest health disparities.
- f) Get input from the community, we send out notifications in a variety of newspapers, online, social media, we've been doing it so people can call in, we ask is there anything we can do to meet that equity within the community. Also used snail mail and interpreters.
- g) Working to develop SNAC, trying to break down silos, also developing repository-with grants, activities/what others are doing?
- h) Creating trainings (how to create a welcoming FM) and course evaluation to identify community needs

### **2. What might be a feasible first step to advancing equity in community assessments?**

- a) Individual relationships with community partners are essential. Speaking with community members that know the needs, but haven't done a "formal" needs assessment
- b) Feasible first step could be focus group discussions
- c) Read the literature about farmers markets/settings - understand barriers and opportunities (from other states)
- d) Hesitation to over-survey people - consider a more iterative approach, related to program approach
- e) Hoping to see that state agency leading needs assessment will connect with educators - small pool of responses because people are over surveyed. Educators are hearing first hand.
- f) There is an aspect of being backwards looking and deficit based instead of affirmative and forward thinking.
- g) Break down the population you work with and what are some issues that these populations might struggle with. Spanish speaking communities should have access to Spanish surveys, assessments, material. Homeless populations should have questions that relate to their issues or struggles.

- h) One feasible first step to advance equity in community assessments is to provide materials in a variety of languages. A way to advance equity through inclusive spaces is to travel to more rural areas to places of worship, schools, and community rec centers. It's important to reach people in every area of town/county
- i) I also think it's important to invite community members for their opinions on assessment materials. It's always a good idea to have a trial run before actually collecting data
- j) Connecting, building relationships and the rapport needed to gather the necessary information needed. If there is no trust, it's more difficult to find out what the community really needs.
- k) Trying to connect with the younger generations through things like mobile apps to make the different programs more user friendly
- l) Agreed on trust building. And a "make me care" statement to incentivize participation as the "carrot" on the stick.
- m) Exploring needs of rural areas , choose locations easy to access by community, state very spread out with urban centers, mindfulness of geography and resources in program planning efforts
- n) Extension Educ have close relationships with community members and partners. Sometimes staff don't have connection with retail staff which was a barrier to programming focused on shelf space at retail sites. Need representative partners that reflect community voice and expertise. Need folks with lived experience to inform program.

**3. How might you center community members in a community assessment/in the data collection, interpretation or analysis of needs assessment results?**

- a) How to engage community to build a vision vs documenting deficits
- b) How important is language and how important is time frame (looking backwards vs building a vision moving forward) - building vs analyzing
- c) Contracting with community-based orgs to conduct outreach and inherent in that work is trust building that informs our collective strategic choices
- d) Our Voice developed by Stanford engages community members in capturing their lived experience in their communities (assets, challenges), etc.
- e) Photo voice is another tool used, but technology can be a challenge for some populations – how do you address this?

**4. What activities would be helpful in advancing equity through inclusive spaces**

- a) Compensation for time and contributions
- b) Food - unites people

**5. How did you or your agency prioritize strategies for completing an assessment?**

- a) First place to go is FNS guidance needs assessment.
- b) Survey as many participants as possible.
- c) Review needs assessment from other states Washington and Nevada are good examples. Survey participants and leadership,
- d) The racial equity-focused webinars have been helpful. Used "The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership"
- e) By Rosa Gonzalez & Facilitating Power framework as a model for their needs assessment <https://movementstrategy.org/resources/the-spectrum-of-community-engagement-to-ownership/#:~:text=The%20Spectrum%20of%20Community%20Engagement%20to%20Ownership%20charts%20a%20pathway,from%20democratic%20voice%20and%20power.>

- f) Questionnaires and interviews .
- g) Uses a mix of databases and assessment tools to create work plans.
- h) Site level assessment questionnaires accompanied by a planning tool.
- i) Organizational level assessment questionnaires
- j) Short verbal interviews
- k) Focus groups, surveys, asset focused assessments
- l) Photo voice project, co creating/ed solutions and assessments

**6. Did you reimburse any participant for their time? If so, can you share what language you used in the state plan or proposal?**

- a) Use, nutrition education reinforcement items as incentives that can hand out to participant that participate in direct ed programming, such as, measuring cups, calendars, and cutting boards.
- b) Per page 112 of the FY' 2023 SNAP-Ed Guidance – Reimbursement for personal costs such as childcare, meals, lodging, and transportation for recipients of SNAP-Ed to actively participate in focus groups, needs assessment, and advisory groups to inform and improve SNAP-Ed effectiveness. Allowable costs for focus group participants are intended to reimburse for incurred costs, not to provide a financial incentive for participation
- c) Barrier: some agencies are not allowed to provide gift cards; especially not to outlets that sell alcohol.

**Discussion Session Questions:**

1. What were some key take-aways from your discussion?
2. What were some next steps to advance equity in carrying out needs assessments?
3. What training and/or resources do you need?

**Discussion Session Notes**

All in agreement we need to find ways to compensate people for their time

Discussion about distinguishing between reimbursement and compensation...need to shift to compensation based approach

Strategy recommendation to making groups concise with all people represented but with smaller cohort of people; One group interviewed a group of 4 but ensured they were from diverse backgrounds and were representative of the community

Lack of clear, consistent ways to compensate community members for the planning, and implementation of program throughout SNAP-Ed programming. Need cohesiveness for paying people to participate in the assessment and need to find synergy to figure out how to do it equitably when interacting with members of the community

Discussing what it means to be a part of the planning and implementation team as well as being a participant in the program. Need to develop ways to navigate it equitably

Need to ensure the program is implemented based on participants' lived experience.

Strategy recommendation utilize multiple method of collecting data; photovoice projects, cocreating assessments with community (more examples in chat transcript)

Varying your data collection; centering the community voice

Be sure to work with other state agencies to create a multifaceted solution to a multifaceted problem

Providing materials in a variety of languages, making all materials accessible

Traveling to rural areas; you want to avoid hearing from the same groups of people

Providing community team members with letters of recommendation is an option for compensation; crediting them in journal publications, articles, etc

Important to credit community members for their expertise

When we talk about communities, we have different levels of needs within the community and we can engage people to talk about their experiences and their needs as it relates to the assets available to them. Need to consider environmental context and be willing to assess the needs of the place. Assess resource gaps as well as the risks that exist in the community. Bring together experiences of the community members and the physical place that they live → place based approach; this is needed especially when thinking locally;

Questions to ask: where are the barriers, strengths, and assets in the community

## **Chat Transcript**



**15:44:38:**

From our group: people have found it difficult to recruit community members to get their input. Some solutions included strong relationships with community partners to help with recruitment and looking for external funding sources for compensation / incentives



**15:44:50:**

2. Feasible first step to advancing equity

Great way to focus on who you're bringing into the conversation; representation across the community; diverse sectors as well as diverse members of the community

Feasible first step: Gaining permission to even approach the community, working with tribal nations be sure to ask all the right people; who are the leaders and who are the influencers, who should be at the table, who is missing.



**15:46:02:**

get input from the community, we send out notifications in a variety of newspapers, online, social media, we've been doing it so people can call in, we ask is there anything we can do to meet that equity within the community. Also used snail mail and interpreters.



**15:47:16:**

What might be a feasible first step to advancing equity in community assessments?: there is a tendency of being backwards looking and deficit based instead of affirmative and forward thinking. Need to focus on engaging community with trusted local partners/leaders in building a vision vs documenting deficits.



**15:49:41:**

Sorry my audio is not working...another point discussed... One feasible first step to advance equity in community assessments is to provide materials in a variety of languages. A way to advance equity through inclusive spaces is to travel to more rural areas to places of worship, schools, and community rec centers. It's important to reach people in every area of town/county



**15:52:22:**

In the HEALth MAPPS project Beatriz and I shared about last week - we got to know the community members we recruited for the project via the SNAP-Ed classes we were teaching at the time - we selected and moved forward with the project in response to conversation with the community members - so taking the time to just listen and connect with folks in other ways sometimes leads to another effort, like an equity-focused community assessment . . .



**15:53:41:**

I'm curious (and don't know if this was covered in the first training, I missed it) - how much time would you put aside to conduct an equitable community assessment? It seems like a shorter window for an assessment might be less equitable because you'd be more likely to leave people out. But if the assessment is tied to funding, there might not be much flexibility in the time to get it done



**15:54:12:**

We have had success receiving non-SNAP-Ed funded grants that have covered incentives such as gift cards for community members/volunteers . . .



**15:54:51:**

We covered that a bit, Allison, and you are right, short timelines make it hard to advance equity....a suggestion was at least 1 year, if not a 3-year process!



**15:55:31:**

Multi-level assessment of needs - needs of people/community groups and experienced in and as a determinant of the needs - resource gaps and risk exposures - of the community place where people/diverse population groups live



**15:57:37:**

so important. the real context of place and peoples daily lives