

The Role of Community Leadership and Accountability in Coalition Effectiveness

1. What does Community Leadership & Accountability mean?

Definition: Community Leadership & Accountability includes all the norms, practices, and leadership that ensure coalitions are led by and accountable to the communities most impacted by the issues they address. It addresses who holds power in the coalition and whose needs and interests drive coalition priorities.

Reflect: What does Community Leadership & Accountability look like or mean to me, my organization, or my coalition? Who is the “community” we should be accountable to? *Consider issue area focus, geography, identity group, other organizations, and people most impacted by the issue.*

Notes:

2. Why does Community Leadership & Accountability matter?

- **Ethical Argument:** When Community Leadership & Accountability is absent, the coalition priorities may exclude or deprioritize the needs of the communities it seeks to serve, or actively harm those communities.
- **Strategic Argument:** When Community Leadership & Accountability is present, it makes for better policy and helps campaigns win.

Notes:

3. How do you implement Community Leadership & Accountability?

Implementing Community Leadership & Accountability is a joint responsibility among funders and organizations.

- **Funders** need to 1) redistribute and allocate more significant resources to community-led actors and 2) establish incentives and accountability mechanisms that encourage and push actors to be led by and accountable to communities.
- **Organizations** need to 1) shore up staffing/stabilizing operations to build the capacity of community-led orgs and community leaders to lead coalitions and 2) create leadership development opportunities, such as training, mentorship, fiscal sponsorship opportunities, etc.

Brainstorm: What ideas has this conversation generated for you about how you can concretely build systems or infrastructure to be accountable to “my community” from your individual reflection?

Notes: