

**CENTERING  
COMMUNITIES &  
BUILDING CAPACITY**

**Collaborative on Health and the Environment  
Agents of Change in Environmental Justice Webinar  
March 31, 2022**

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Health Fellow***

***Hosted by the US EPA,  
Scientific Research  
Integrity Program,  
ORD/OSAPE/SPD***



**EQUITY  
CENTERED**

**SERVICE  
ORIENTED**



**SCHOLAR/  
ADVOCATE**

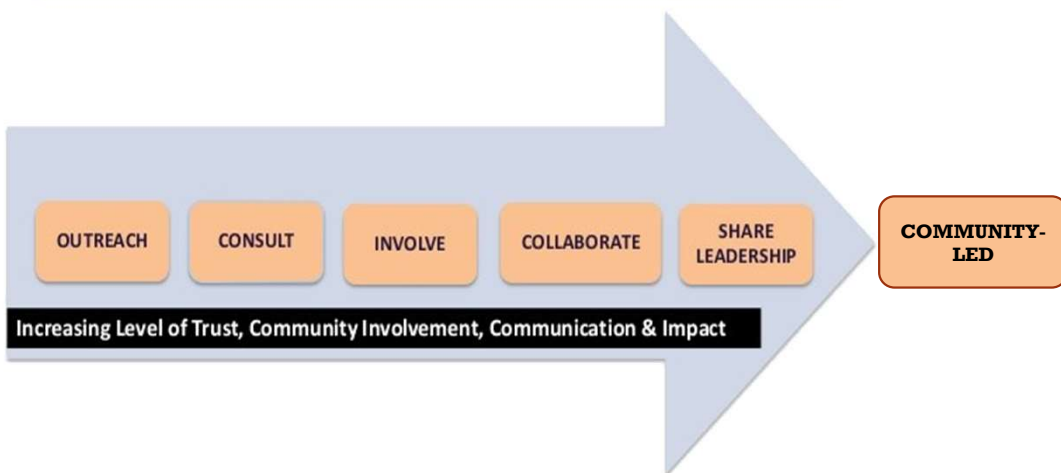
**COMMUNITY  
DRIVEN**

**CULTURAL  
HUMILITY**



# Frameworks that center community & build capacity

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTINUUM

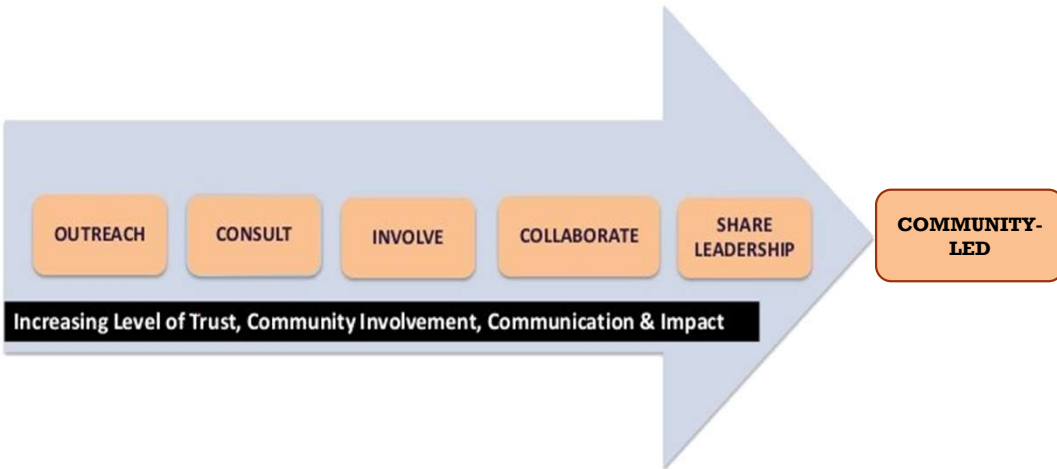


\* Clinical and Translational Science Awards Consortium  
Community Engagement Key Function Committee Task Force  
on the Principles of Community Engagement  
<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/>

## COMMUNITY CAPACITY THEORY

*Citizen participation*  
*Community history*  
*Community power*  
*Community values*  
*Critical reflection*  
*Leadership*  
*Networks*  
*Resources*  
*Sense of community*  
*\_Skills*

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTINUUM

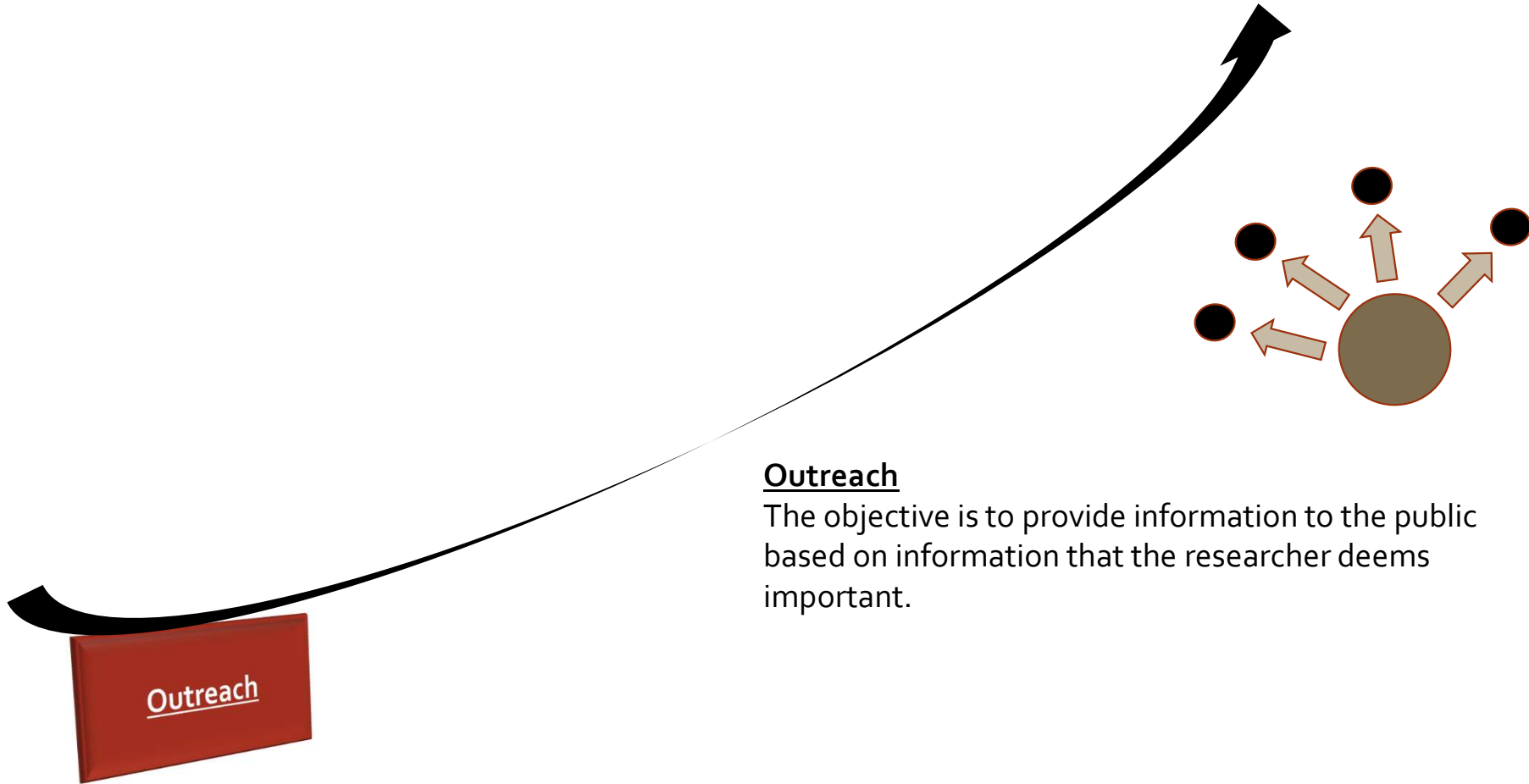


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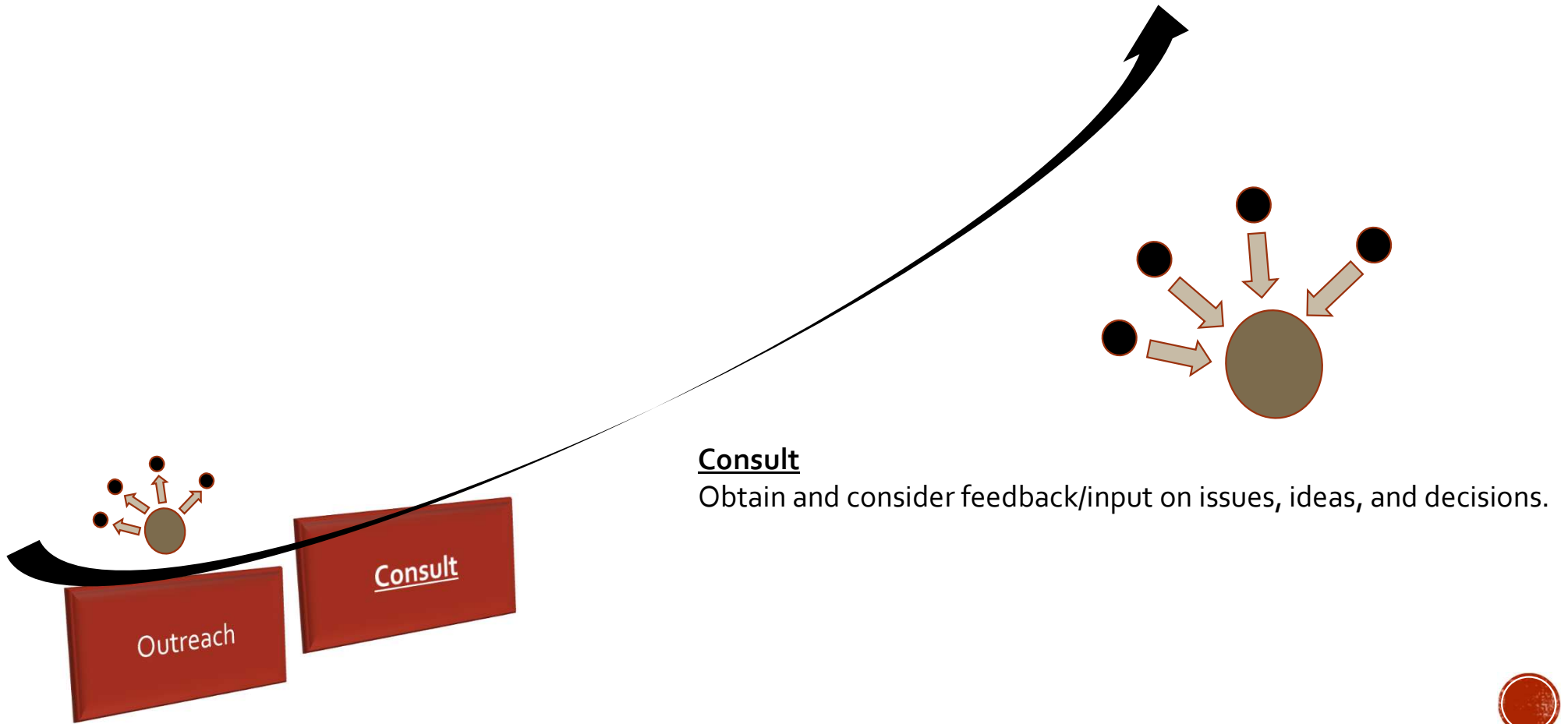
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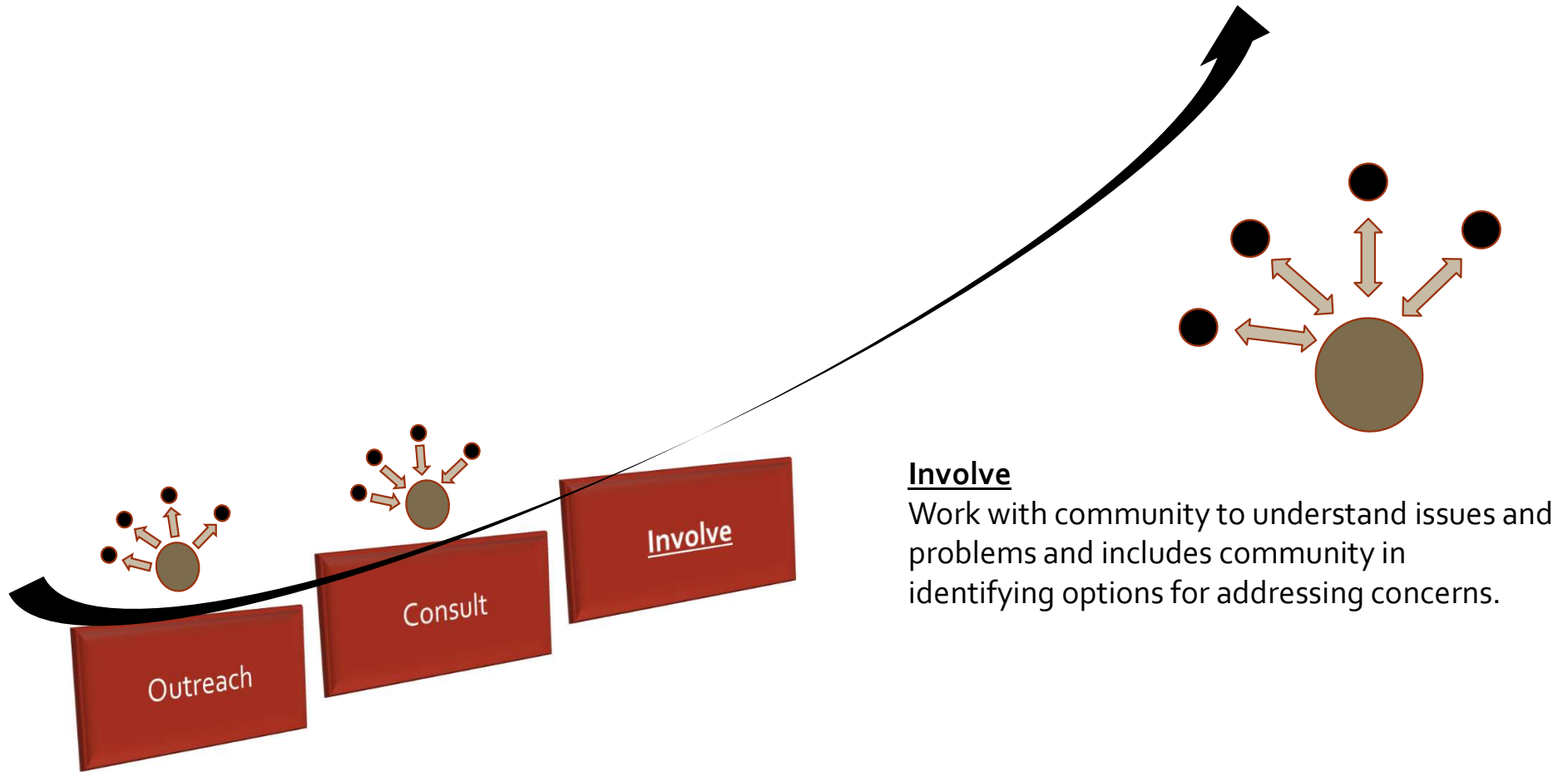
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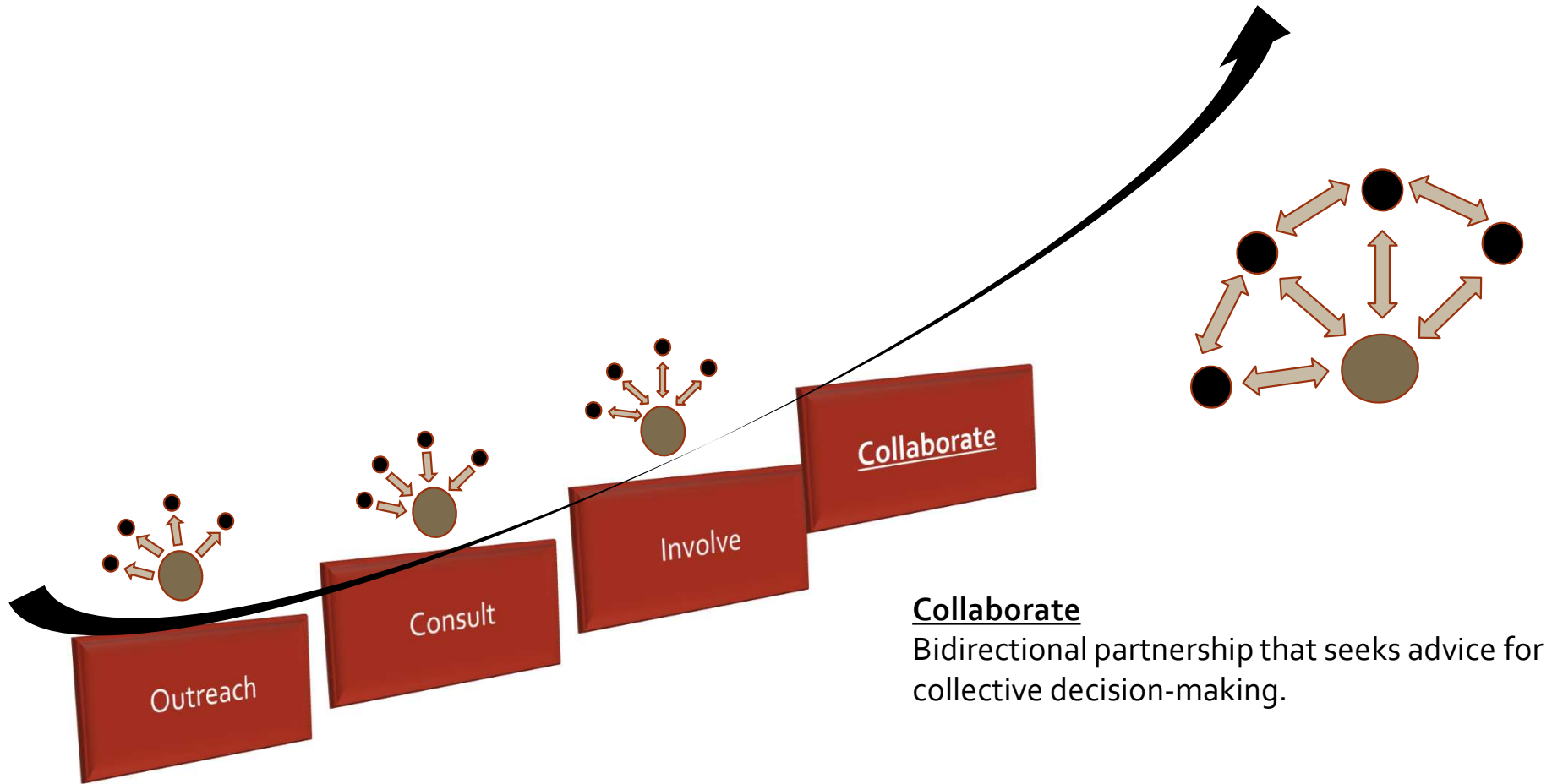
# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTINUUM



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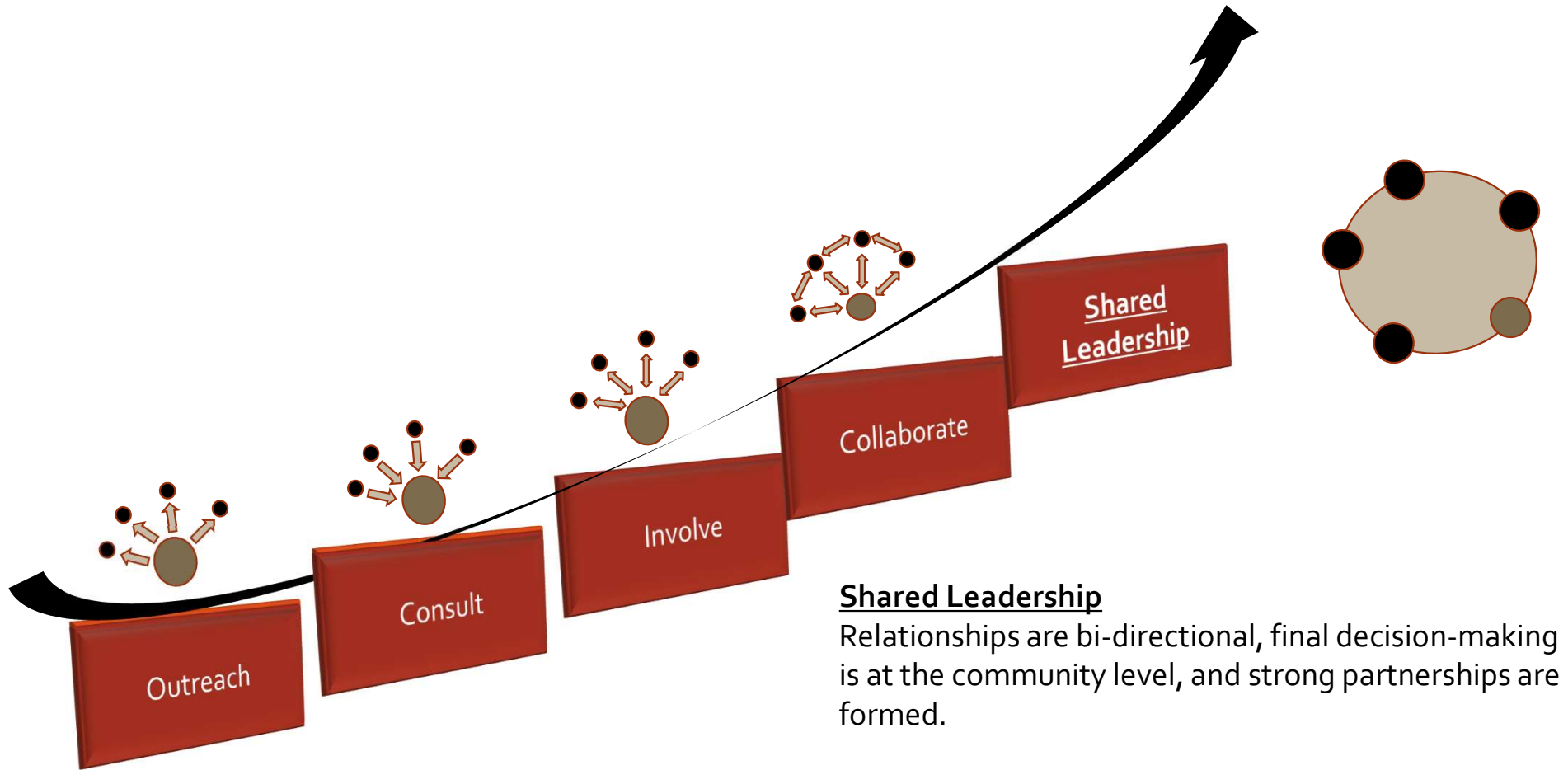


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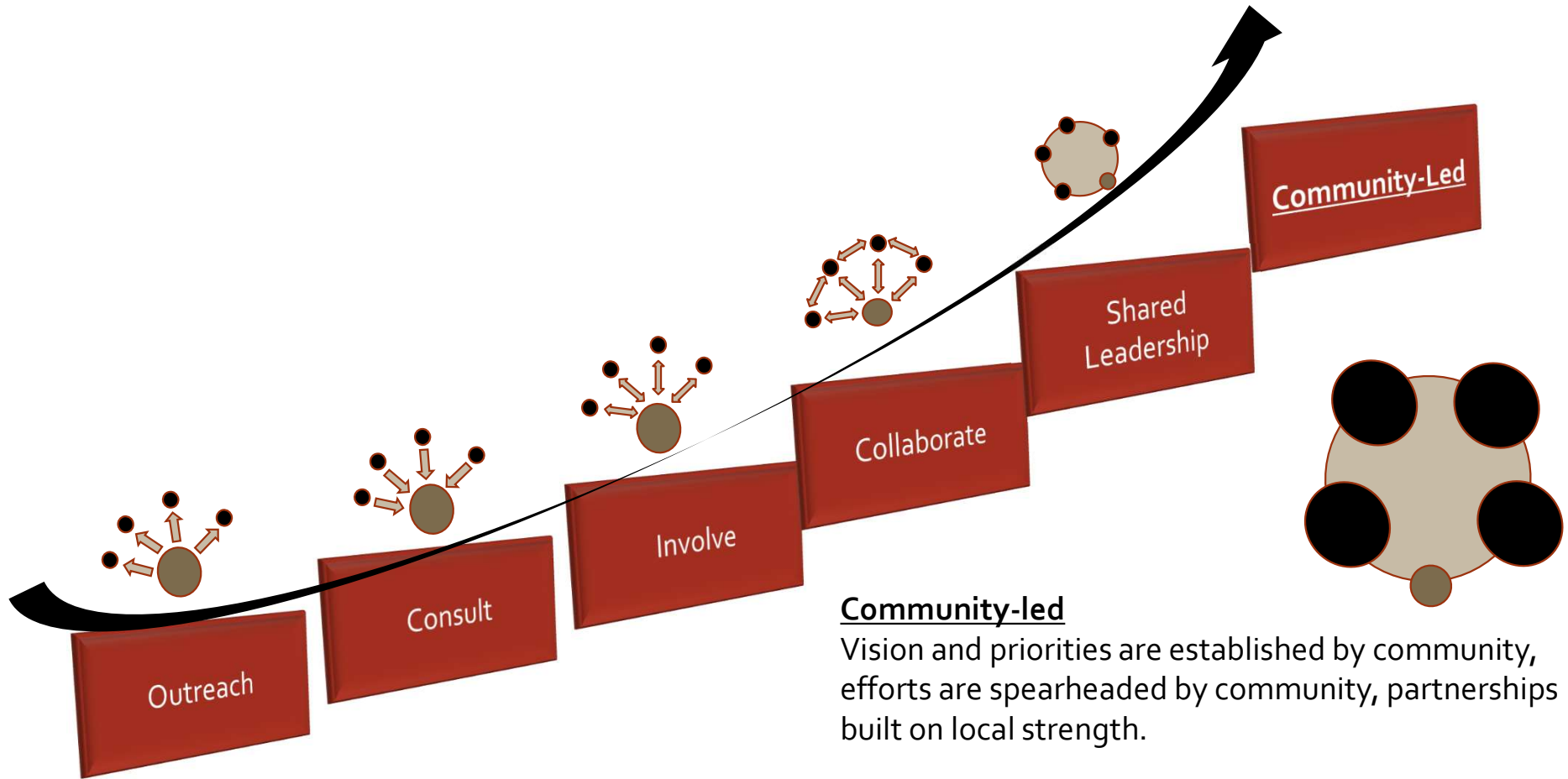




# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTINUUM





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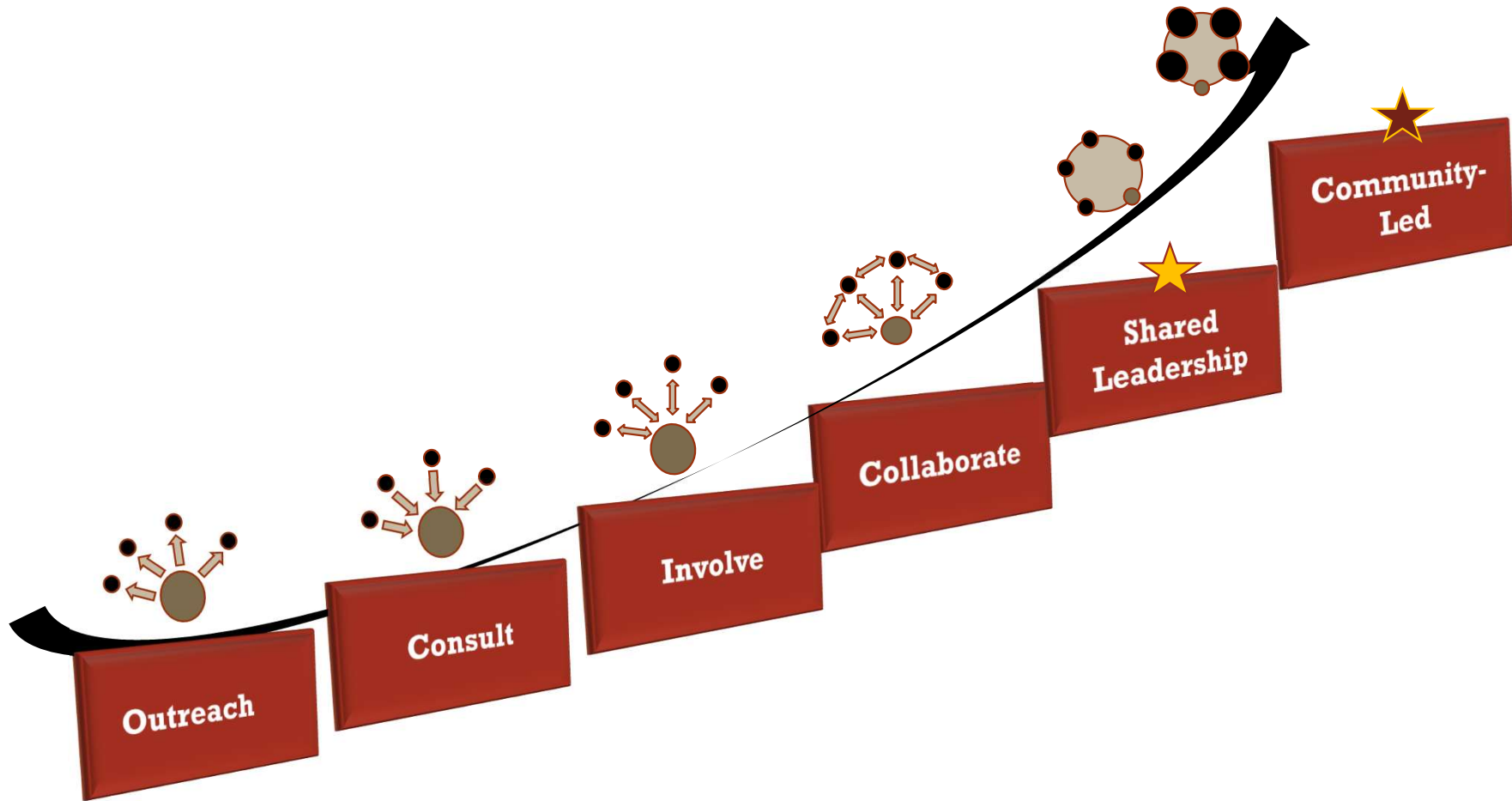


**Community Engagement Continuum**



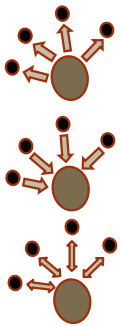
<i>Variable</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Study Examples</i>
 <b>Community-led</b>	<i>community fully involved in shaping their own project and did not identify an academic partner guiding or engaged in addressing the issue of concern.</i>	A <b>community member group</b> , People for Less Pollution and Center for Health Environment, collaborated with an environmental advocacy center for technical and organizing assistance to stop an international paper company from burning tire derived fuel. The community group began a letter writing campaign to a local paper, gathered petition signatures, distributed fliers, and engaged in lobbying with state policymakers. <sup>75</sup>
 <b>Shared Leadership</b>	<i>entities have formed strong partnership structures and final decision-making is at the community level</i>	Development of an action-oriented <b>coalition</b> among public health professionals, business leaders, k-16 schools, non-profit organizations, and community residents dedicated to reducing neighborhood toxins. Accomplishments entail the creation of an environmental health priority list for action, community health worker position, funding for environmental education, and advocacy for healthy neighborhoods and new construction of asthma-friendly housing units, and community-engaged strategies building advocacy among target community. <sup>76</sup>
<b>Collaborate</b>	<i>bidirectional communication and formation of partnership with community on each aspect of project from development to solution</i>	Household exposure assessment of air and dust pollutants conducted among 50 homes with testing of over 150 compounds completed by a regional environmental justice advocacy organization trained to conduct <b>air monitoring</b> , dust collection and interviews. The study rigor was ensured <b>by collective negotiation</b> of study design, choosing sampling sites, recruitment methods, list of chemicals for analysis, and protocol for dissemination of findings to participants and community. <sup>77</sup>
<b>Involvement</b>	<i>participatory form of communication, bidirectional communication, and entities cooperate with each other</i>	Researchers and community members collaborate to develop focus group format that was utilized to <b>conduct 4 focus groups</b> prioritizing environmental exposures and <b>setting community priorities</b> for discussion and action. Information gathered was reported back to community and utilized to lead an environmental education program targeted at youth. <sup>78</sup>
<b>Consultation</b>	<i>research is answer seeking and gets feedback from the community</i>	Participants were recruited to participate in one of fourteen focus groups conducted among women living in a community of study to assess knowledge and action concerning <b>the relevancy</b> of five specific risk reduction strategies to inform the development of a social action campaign. <sup>79</sup>
<b>Outreach</b>	<i>information is provided to community</i>	A study enrolled residents across 16 communities in twice daily data collection to monitor ambient particulate matter, followed by <b>informative interviewing</b> used to develop study data collection instruments. <b>Data gathered was reported back</b> to participants in person through individual and group meetings through the display of visual choropleth and dot maps. <sup>80</sup>

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTINUUM



# COMMUNITY CHANGE TRENDS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**Low engagement**



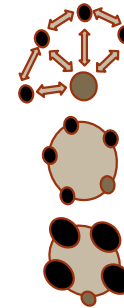
**Outreach**

**Consult**

**Involve**



**High engagement**



**Collaborate**

**Shared  
Leadership**

**Community-  
Led**





Review

## A Scoping Review of Capacity-Building Efforts to Address Environmental Justice Concerns

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**Abstract:** Environmental justice (EJ) efforts aimed at capacity building are essential to addressing environmental health disparities; however, limited attention has been given to describing these efforts. This study reports findings from a scoping review of community-academic partnerships and community-led efforts to address environmental inequities related to air, water, and land pollution in the United States. Literature published in peer-reviewed journals from January 1986 through March 2018 were included, and community capacity theory was applied as a framework for understanding the scope of capacity-building and community change strategies to address EJ concerns. Paired teams of independent analysts conducted a search for relevant articles ( $n = 8452$  citations identified), filtered records for content abstraction and possible inclusion ( $n = 163$ ) and characterized selected dimensions of citizen participation (96.4%,  $n = 53$ ), community power (78%,  $n = 45$ ), leadership (78%,  $n = 45$ ), and networks (81%,  $n = 47$ ); few articles identified a direct policy change (22%,  $n = 13$ ), and many articles discussed the policy implications of findings for future work (62%,  $n = 36$ ). This review synthesizes three decades of efforts to reduce environmental inequities and identifies strategic approaches used for strengthening community capacity.

**Keywords:** community capacity; environmental justice; community organizing; mobilization; social justice; advocacy

### 1. Introduction

As articulated by Dr. Robert Bullard and other prominent scholars and leaders in the environmental justice (EJ) movement, “everyone is entitled to equal protection and equal enforcement of our environmental health, housing, land use, transportation, energy and civil rights laws and regulations” [1], in all the places “where we live, work, play, worship, and go to school” [1]. In the United States, the EJ movement has grown in response to systematic inequities in exposures to lead and air pollution; groundwater contamination and drinking water safety; close proximity to noxious facilities and nuclear plants; location of landfills, incinerators, and abandoned toxic waste sites; placement of transportation thoroughfares; illegal dumping; superfund sites; and unequal

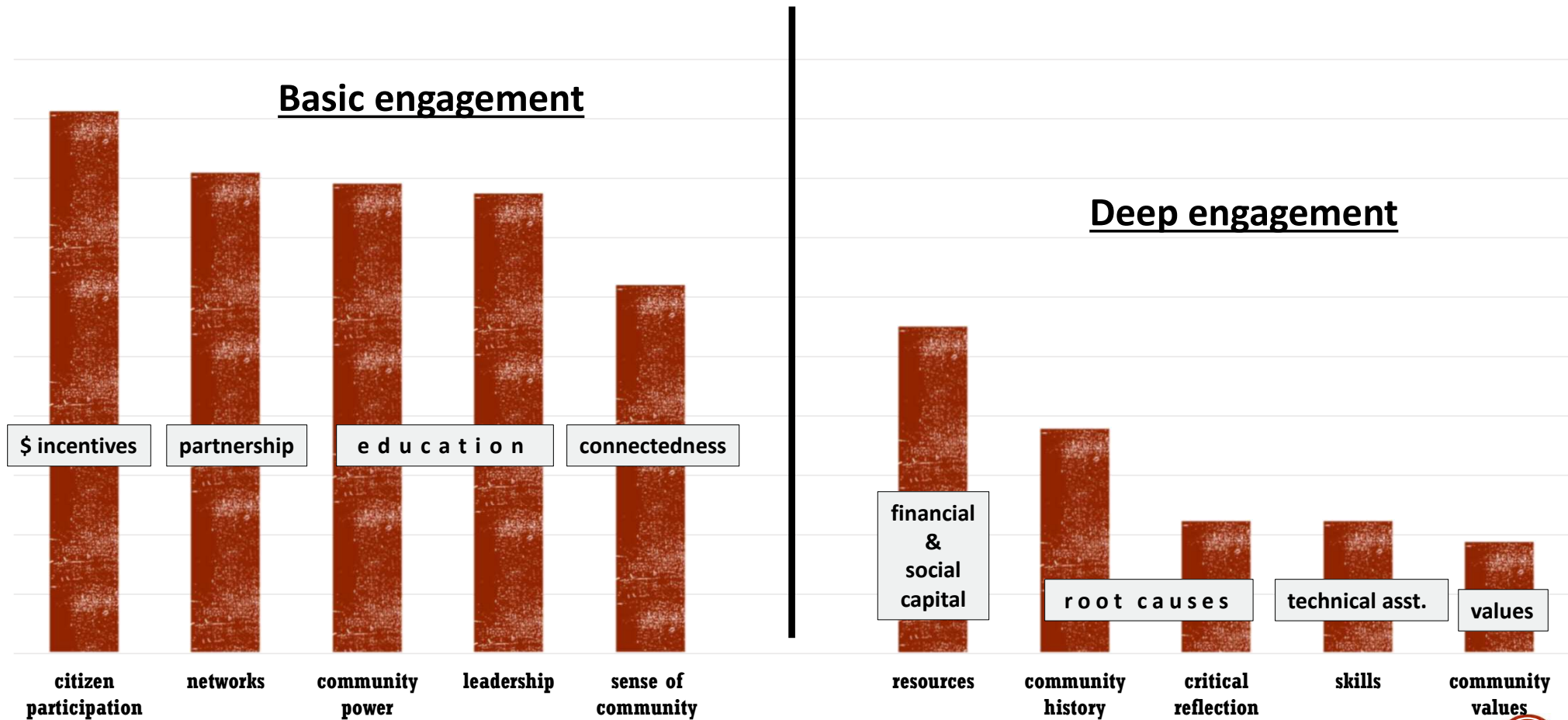
# COMMUNITY CAPACITY THEORY

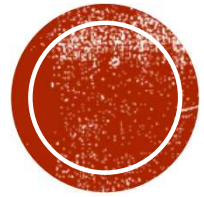
- Citizen participation*
- Community history*
- Community power*
- Community values*
- Critical reflection*
- Leadership*
- Networks*
- Resources*
- Sense of community*
- Skills*

Goodman RM, Speers MA, McLeroy K, et al. Identifying and defining the dimensions of community capacity to provide a basis for measurement. *Health Educ Behav.* Jun 1998;25(3):258-78.



# CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES\*





# **HOW CAN THESE LEARNINGS BE APPLIED IN PARTNERSHIP?**





# COMMUNITY CAPACITY AS A LENS TO ADDRESS INEQUITIES AND BUILD PARTNERSHIP

Creates greater understanding of:

- ✓ resources needed
- ✓ how resources are identified
- ✓ how communities can mobilize

Stresses the importance of:

- ✓ transferable knowledge,
- ✓ skills
- ✓ systems

*Citizen participation*  
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# WHY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS



- ✓ An intentional process
- ✓ Grounded in building relationships based on respect
- ✓ Allows for shared values, priorities, alternative perspectives
- ✓ Uplifts lived experiences, alternative ways of knowing, community expertise
- ✓ Shares decision-making power, builds trust, and is focused on equity





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Office of the Science Advisor, Policy &  
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Office of Research and Development*

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