CIVIC ENGAGEMENT RESOURCE: 5 STAGES TO SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT PLANNING

**Stage One: Assessing the Need, Identifying the Problem and Understanding the Issue**
**Guiding Questions**
- What do you believe are some of the most serious social problems or concerns present in our community?
- Which of these problems will we target through our social action projects?
- What do we need to learn about the issue in order to be informed citizens and effective advocates?

**Stage Two: Brainstorming, Dreaming and Thinking Big**
**Guiding Questions**
- What kinds of solutions would make a difference in addressing the need or solving the problem we’ve identified?
- What do we wish we could do, if we had the power and the resources?
- What are our visions?

**Stage 3 Consensus Building, Decision Making and Goal Setting**
**Guiding Questions**
- Can we group the ideas we’ve come up with to see if there are themes emerging from our thinking? What ideas can we rule out given the realities of our situation and circumstances (i.e. cost, time, energy, feasibility, risk buy-in)? What addition factors, variables and issues must we consider before setting goals?
- Given the reality of our situation, the nature of the problem we’ve identified and the range of ideas we’ve brainstormed, what are the best ideas for us to turn into goals and put into action?

**Stage Four: Planning, Making it Happen and Taking the Action**
**Guiding Questions**
- Now that we’ve identified the problem and proposed a solution, what are the steps that we need to take to achieve our goal?
- How can we break down our steps into smaller tasks or action times?
- What is the timeline that we need to follow in order for our goals to come to fruition and be a success?
- Who among us is responsible for which action items?

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1 Adapted from the CDF Freedom School 2007 Social Action CD
Stage Five: Sustaining the Impact Over Time

Guiding Questions

● How can we sustain the energy, focus and commitment that we need to keep the social action project going?
● How can we follow through to ensure the project has a positive impact beyond our workshop?