# RACIAL EQUITY THEORY OF CHANGE

The racial equity theory of change helps to explore and document the webs of mutually reinforcing dynamics- policies, practices and representations – that are behind the chronic racial inequities and injustices but are often difficult to identify. This tool can be used to focus on internal organizational dynamics, or on external racial dynamics that you work on within your communities.

Mapped as a "back-wards" pyramid, the Racial Equity Theory of Change serves as an assessment on how an organization is set up to meet its overarching racial equity goals. As detailed in *Constructing a Racial Equity Theory of Change: A Practical Guide for Designing Strategies to Close Chronic Racial Outcome Gaps (*Aspen Institute, 2009*)* this process blends two theoretical insights:

1. A structural race analysis - as explored in Week One course content
2. *Visioning* methodology that encourages change leaders to investigate their explicit and implicit assumptions about the attributes of the community-level outcomes they seek.
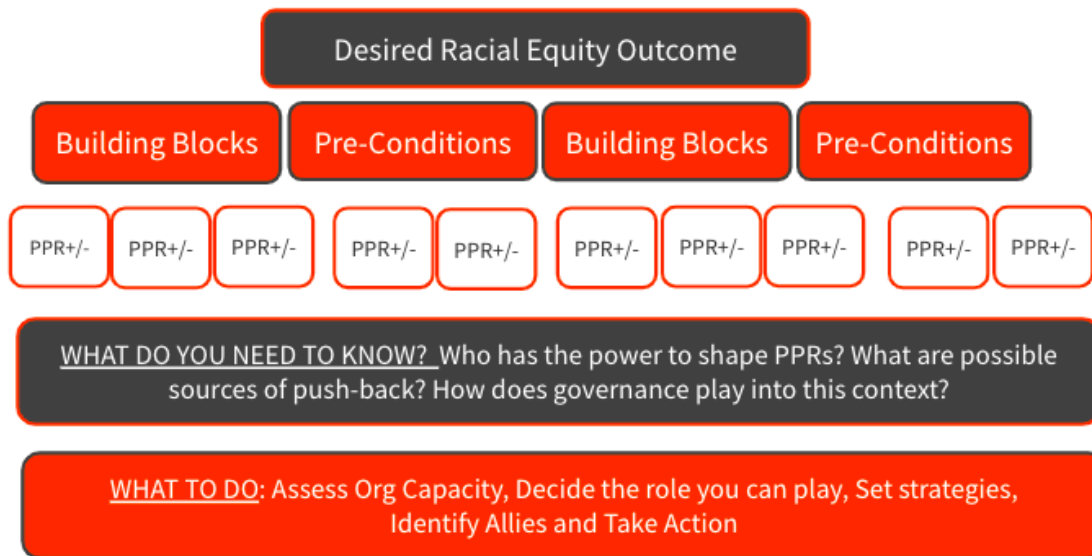
The Aspen Institute, 2009

Overview of YWCA's 10 Steps

Adapting the Aspen Institute's model, YWCA USA identified 10 essential steps:

Important Note:
It may be necessary to seek advice and input of experts and local stakeholders familiar with your chosen issue. It is important to ground your decision-making in research, expert knowledge and community experience.

1. What is your overarching racial equity goal? What is your more targeted, direct racial equity goal?

2. What needs to be in place – what we call "pre-conditions"- in order for your racial justice goal to be achieved?

3. What public policies (+/-) affect each precondition? Is there a policy that could be put in place or modified that would help achieve the goal?

4. What social and institutional practices (+/-) affect each precondition? Are there practices that could be put in place or modified?

5. What representations, stereotypes and belief systems (+/-) affect each of the preconditions? What alternatives could be introduced?

6. Who, and what governance bodies, have the most power and influence to shape the named PPRs that you've found most relevant to your goal?

7. What are the possible sources of resistance to and retrenchment around achieving your goal?

8. What capacities (analytical, convening, communications, networking) will be needed? Do you have them?

9. What allies, partners and collaborators will you need?

10. What preliminary action steps might make the most sense?