

THEORY OF CHANGE



HISTORY AND CONTEXT IN ILLINOIS

- Illinois' housing and criminal legal systems were built upon centuries of racism and economic discrimination. Policies and practices carried out by these systems have resulted in racial and economic segregation, community disinvestment and other systemic inequities.
- Racism and punitive practices that fail to address the underlying conditions that produce violence and other social ills have led to over-policing, over-punishing, and under-protecting historically marginalized groups, especially Black people and other people of color.
- Black people and other people of color, particularly those living in disinvested communities, have limited access to quality housing, health care, education and employment opportunities, and experience disproportionate exposure to environmental harms.



IMPACT FOR EQUITY'S BELIEFS

- Any system that dehumanizes any of us dehumanizes us all.
- We are guided by the people most impacted.
- We work for equity, liberation and safety across interconnected systems in Chicago and Illinois.
- Systems are at the root of racial, social, and economic injustice.
- By tackling the systems, we drive change.



IMPACT FOR EQUITY'S STRATEGIES AND TOOLS

- Build innovative and meaningful partnerships to develop and implement effective strategies
- Generate legal research to inform durable change
- Bring together people with lived, professional, technical, and legal expertise to design multidisciplinary policies
- Provide data and policy analysis to understand problems and create evidence-based solutions
- Create public awareness to catalyze change
- Advocate for changed rules, laws, and policies
- Interface with systems stakeholders to educate and inform systems issues
- Convene diverse stakeholders to construct and lead compelling approaches
- Engage in impact litigation to change laws and policies



SHORT AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

- Better defined and framed problems
- Individuals and organizations coordinate activity together
- Issues more clearly set on public agenda and gain prominence
- Leadership and power of community members grows
- New champions of the issues emerge
- New policies or practices are adopted, or harmful policies are not adopted
- Policy decisions are effectively implemented
- Underlying conditions manifesting the injustices and inequities are changed



IMPACT

People in Illinois and Chicago face fewer systemic barriers and have equitable opportunities to live their fullest life in a safe and thriving community.