Scope 11 Briefing
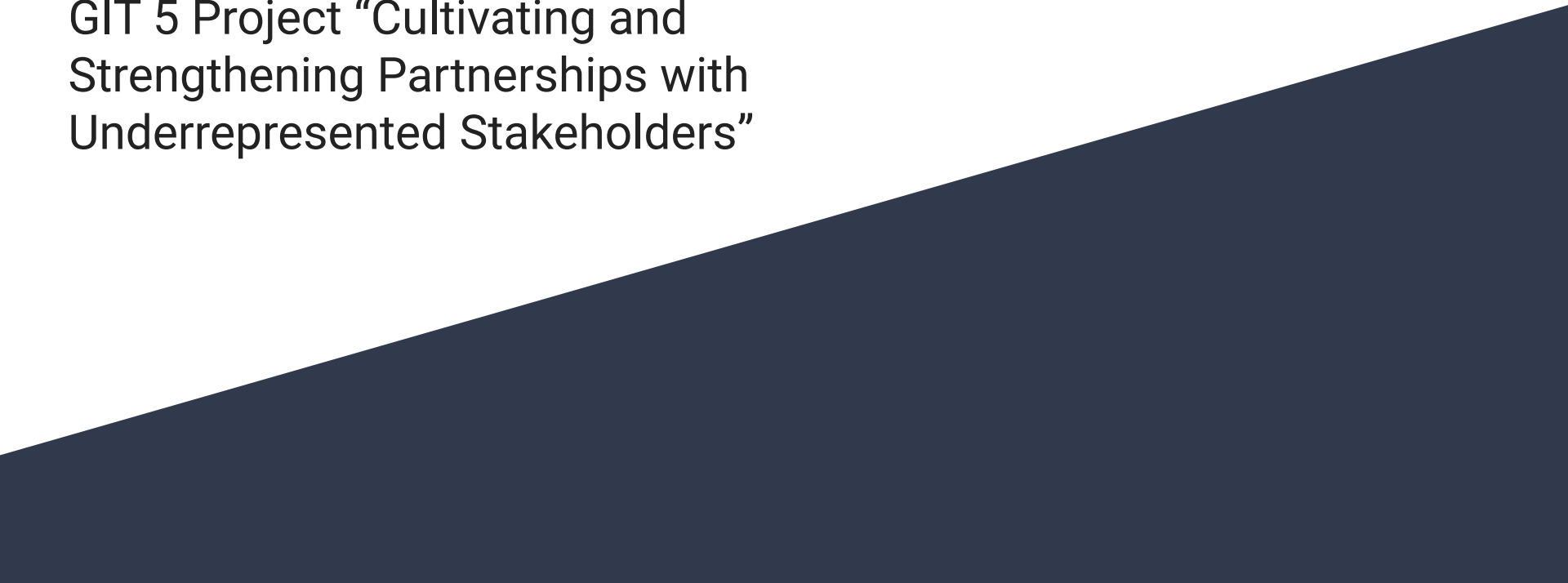
GIT 5 Project "Cultivating and Strengthening Partnerships with Underrepresented Stakeholders"

Agenda

- Project Background
- Methodology
- Discussion themes
- Commendations
- Observations
- CBP Leadership Workshop: what to expect

Background

Project Goals:

- Understand the needs, barriers, and priorities of organizations led by and serving underrepresented and underserved communities such as communities of color.

- Gather important voices and feedback from the Chesapeake community

- Define what meaningful community engagement means for the CBP Partnership and how it will function across the Partnership.

Methodology

Chesapeake Conservancy hosted 6 "Sensing Conversations" sessions with 43 people to gather feedback on engagement of underrepresented communities within CBP

- Session 1 & 2 - CBP GIT Chairs, Staffers and Coordinators

  - 25 participants

- Session 3 - People of color who are no longer active with CBP (staffers, coordinators, interns, workgroup members)

  - 7 participants

- Session 4 & 5 - Community leaders, representing communities of color

  - 10 participants

- Session 6 - Tribal partner interview

  - 1 participant

Methodology

Sensing Conversations

Goal: develop an open, baseline understanding of where we came from, how we view the current status, and visions for the future. Each person's contribution was recorded anonymously by notetakers.

Process:

- Encourages listening and trust
- Is not highly linear
- Individual expression is encouraged
- Contributions are used together with the whole to inform a broader picture of the questions we ask ourselves as a collective.
- Conversations are grounded in mutual respect, and building trust, community, and bonding.

Asset Mapping
&
Needs Assessment

Categories Explored:

Social Capital

- Connectedness
- Networks
- Memberships
- Groups
- Communities

Financial Assets:

- Resources
- Opportunities
- Access

Stories:

- Culture and history
- Told and untold stories
- Tangible and intangible

Discussion Themes Across Groups:

Internal CBP Discussions:

1. Community representation and values of engagement
2. Communications and commitment
3. Health and wellbeing
4. Capacity and assets

Discussion Themes Across Groups:

Community Group Discussions

1. Conservation ethic and intersectionality
2. Funding and capacity
3. Participation and partnership
4. Accountability

Commendations

Internal CBP Discussions

- CBP staff show high levels of interest in engaging underrepresented for value driven purposes
- CBP partnership entities possesses many assets identified through an "Asset Mapping" activity
- Staff show interest in learning and shifting practices to be more inclusive of underrepresented voices in the Bay Program

Strong interest in knowing what is top of mind for folks—probably not water quality, etc. but there may be creative connections

Rather than doing a better job, doing things differently.

Commendations

Community Group Discussions

- Communities see value in Chesapeake Bay Restoration and are eager for meaningful involvement
- Communities see potential for resources from entities such as the Bay program Partnership at grassroots levels

Being given the chance to take part in stewardship would be a step in the right direction. All of us means all of us. "There needs to be a greater effort to ensure that all of us impacted [can] also have the opportunity to contribute and help."

Observations

Internal CBP Discussions

- Need communication and clear expectations to reduce confusion amongst staff and community members as to the purpose of CBP community engagement
- Workplace culture affects the ability to create long-term, trusting relationships with diverse communities
- Lower level staff seek clear direction from leadership in defining community engagement for the Bay program

It was hard to do anything that needed funding... Conversations would end shortly if there was no funding to follow... Not much authority or resources or money besides GIT funding.

Noticed higher turn over in diversity workgroup coordinator and staffer positions

Observations

Community Group Discussions

- The intent of community engagement and integration of community feedback are unclear to community members
- Concern about the lack of value in engaging when community voices seem to go unheard and un-integrated into policies

This is not just science and water quality, [engagement] needs to take into account the people.

Why are the community contributions and input not valued. We have spent years giving feedback. Why does the program need community input? If it does, what is the purpose?

Next Steps:

CBP Leadership Workshop

1. Establish values around community engagement, starting with intrapersonal work, self-examination, and reflection
2. Develop a strategy to trickle down from leadership to chair and staff level
3. Develop a communication plan with communities to set expectations and goals of engagement
4. Develop tangible deliverables for projects that can be scaled up

Next Steps:

Community Forum (July 8, 2022)

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