

November 2021

The RESULTS logo consists of the word "results" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, positioned inside a red speech bubble shape that points downwards and to the left.

Grassroots Anti-Oppression Audit

Dear advocates,

We can't end poverty without ending oppression, and RESULTS is committed to both. Our anti-oppression work has been a growing focus over the last five years, and this year many of you joined interviews or filled out a survey to help us better understand where we are and what's still needed.

The anti-oppression audit we commissioned wasn't about assessing where we are just for the sake of it, but to inform where we go next. I'm so very grateful for your candor and ideas – this work is central to everything we do, and our mission depends on it. We want to do everything we can to support the leadership of our grassroots on anti-oppression, and I'm committed to making sure this work has clear goals, staffing, and the funding to advance it.

Below you'll find the full grassroots audit findings, a summary prepared by a core group of staff, and our plans for what comes next.

I realize that the work of anti-oppression is complex and often deeply personal. I hope in the year ahead we can build on what's going well, be honest about what's not, and more fully embrace this work, even when it's hard. It is a continuous process – not a checklist to complete – and I'm grateful to be your partner in it.

In partnership,

Joanne Carter

Executive Director, RESULTS

Background and why we did an audit

In 2016, RESULTS took on a new stream of work focused on anti-oppression, guided by a grassroots-generated [values statement](#).

This work grew to include staff and grassroots learning groups, trainings, adjusted HR and volunteer practices, a series of new [resources](#), and changes to messaging and advocacy strategy. Our grassroots organizing shifted more focus and funding to centering advocates with lived experience of poverty and oppression, growing the Experts on Poverty program, and launching new programs like the African Leadership Cohort and the BIPOC Caucus.

Throughout that time, this work has been decentralized, spread across a series of staff and grassroots working groups, individual job and team functions, and a cross-cutting anti-oppression council. In 2021, RESULTS launched an external audit to see the impact of these actions, understand what's working and not working, and strengthen this work that is central to our mission. We're developing our next strategic plan, and want the latest perspective from our grassroots to help shape its direction and focus on anti-oppression.

Grassroots Anti-Oppression Audit

Takeaways and what's next

Based on the findings of the audit, we're focusing our next steps in five areas:

- 1) Formalized response protocols** – The survey highlighted high levels of understanding of our anti-oppression values, but lack of clarity around tools and process for responding to incidents of oppression. A team of grassroots staff will be formalizing and rolling out a protocol for reporting, accountability, and response by the end of 2021.
- 2) Additional anti-oppression training for both staff and volunteers** – Roughly half of existing volunteers haven't had formal anti-oppression training with RESULTS, according to the survey. We'll focus on 4 initial training areas in 2022, with more to follow: 1) anti-bias and microaggressions, 2) difficult conversations and cultural competency, 3) bystander training, and 4) trauma-informed care.
- 3) Historical context of systems of oppression and public policy** – A recurring theme in the survey is better linking our policy work and anti-oppression: how oppression drives poverty in the U.S. and globally, and how we embed anti-oppression in the response. This will be a centerpiece of the launch of our 2022 campaigns, with dedicated focus on the January national webinar, monthly policy forums, and materials.
- 4) Individual and local group input and planning** – We know aggregate survey data is only part of the picture, and want to make the next steps of this work more participatory, equitable, and responsive to people from communities facing historical oppression. We'll hold consultations with all grassroots groups locally beginning in December, as a time for further input, as well as local action planning on anti-oppression.
- 5) Strategic plan, and increased funding and staffing for anti-oppression** – Aligned with the clear call in the survey for clarity in long term anti-oppression goals, RESULTS is developing an anti-oppression "vertical" focus area in our strategic plan, plus cross-cutting anti-oppression goals within each of the other four focus areas. Plans for our 2022 budget also include significant new investment for anti-oppression.

We want to hear from you! Do you have further reflections or specific suggestions for strengthening this work? Please contact Yolanda Gordon (ygordon@results.org) or Karyne Bury (kbury@results.org).

Grassroots Anti-Oppression Audit

Audit Findings & Summary

Process:

The audit was commissioned by RESULTS and conducted by Nicole Lee Consulting, an external diversity, equity, and inclusion consulting group. The full independent report on grassroots findings from Nicole Lee Consulting is available below.

The firm held a number of interviews and focus groups with RESULTS staff and volunteers across the US. All staff members, volunteers, board members, and other designees were then invited to participate in a survey. The survey audience was unsampled, and included 275 grassroots responses. Critically, this does *not* represent the view of every RESULTS advocate, and we recognize the potential barriers to participation in the survey. The firm did not share disaggregated data by demographics, and so the findings should be read with that in mind.

The audit also included a staff and institutionally-focused element, but this document focuses on the grassroots network.

Key Findings:

The full grassroots audit report from Nicole Lee Consulting is available [here](#), or a shortened deck of key slides [here](#).

Below are key finding highlights compiled by RESULTS staff.

Need for clarity

- The overwhelming majority (97%) of grassroots are familiar with how RESULTS defines anti-oppression, but significantly fewer know how RESULTS integrates and executes on anti-oppression. (Slide 10)
- RESULTS volunteers are highly familiar with RESULTS anti-oppression values statement, but much less familiar with other resources for understanding and responding to oppression. (Slide 13)
- 78% stated that when they apply anti-oppression knowledge, they know they are doing the right thing, yet only 47% say they know how to effectively apply and integrate anti-oppression into their work. And 64% say they are neutral, don't agree, or don't know if they have all the resources they need for anti-oppression (Slide 9).

Grassroots Anti-Oppression Audit

Confronting and responding to oppression

- Asked “how is RESULTS doing?”, 76% of survey participants think RESULTS addresses conversations about anti-oppression frankly and honestly, but that number drops to 66% in the next prompt about confronting oppression directly (Slide 12).
- There is lack of clarity around reporting and responding to oppressive incidents – while 6 percent of respondents said they’ve observed or experienced oppressive incidents, of that group only half reported it, either using the form or sharing with another volunteer or staff (Slide 17).
- Most volunteers who participated in the survey felt that the organization is invested in anti-oppression efforts, but they are unsure as to whether the organization has actively addressed oppression that existed historically (Slide 12).
- 70% of respondents believe group leadership practice anti-oppression throughout their work and interactions (Slide 21). Yet over 45% also said that there are at least sometimes issues with people speaking over each other/not sharing space and making assumptions about others availability (Slide 19).

Training and resources

- 55% of volunteers haven’t attended anti-oppression training with RESULTS (Slide 14).
- As an organization with a focus on global poverty, its especially critical that RESULTS also embrace a non-westernized approach to anti-oppression (Slide 30).

Asked what RESULTS needs to improve the most within its current volunteer structure, top answers were (full list on slide 29):

1. Provide more context and history behind issues RESULTS is advocating to change
2. Provide more information on how the issues RESULTS is advocating to change relate to different forms of oppression
3. Provide more targeted support to smaller/more oppressed groups
4. Provide more anti-oppression training for all volunteers
5. Hold all volunteers accountable if/when they have been oppressive
6. Provide clear guidelines, policies, and/or procedures to every volunteer

The five next steps listed at the start of this document are focused on these suggestions, as well as the overall findings of the survey.

Roughly 90% of survey respondents agreed that they have more work to do to better practice anti-oppression. As RESULTS, we believe we **all** do – with a commitment and a responsibility to undoing the systems of oppression that we’ve inherited as a society.

As a learning and growing movement, we hope you will join us for our upcoming webinars and local group conversations about the audit findings, planned next steps, and the shared process of living into our full mission against poverty and oppression.