



Assessment Questions

As we continue our work of eradicating systemic poverty as a church with the Matthew 25 vision, we want to be mindful and reflective of our own ways that we enter plans, projects and programs — knowing that sometimes we may unintentionally start down a wrong path because of our positions of privilege and power and that we will need to stay mindful to correct course, accept feedback and adapt as needed. We will bear the following questions in mind as we work to eradicate systemic poverty, so that we are continually assessing our attempts as we go along.

1. How does our engagement show that we understand God's call to see Christ in those living with poverty, and that we are convinced that our Christian faith calls us to work to eradicate systems and structures that keep people and communities poor?
2. How do we demonstrate that we understand that unfettered consumption, the accumulation, consolidation and competition of natural resources, and the love of wealth are root causes of poverty, and how does our work address the problem of wealth in addition to the eradication of poverty? What role does honest confession and repentance play in our project/process?
3. How does our process/project address "root causes" of poverty and the various interlocking systemic/structural justice issues therein?
4. To what extent have we made efforts to be very clear about the end goal and agendas of all partners/participants, so as to reduce confusion or mixed signals?
5. If an initiative, project or partnership relies on the expertise and time of community partners, have we been clear and transparent about possible compensation and fair expectations of those engaging in this effort together?
6. Is our work to eradicate systemic poverty attempting to right past wrongs and repair historic harm, understanding that historic harm continues to have present-day unjust impacts? (i.e., do we operate based on the understanding that communities living in poverty have had resources unfairly extracted from them and therefore their current lack of economic resources is in direct proportion to another's profit? Or, do we think of ourselves as "doing for," "being generous" or "offering charity"?)
7. Do we include the leadership, meaningful participation, and consent of women, people of color, non-English speakers, immigrants, people without college degrees, those in rural areas and the Deep South, and others disadvantaged or oppressed by society?
8. What processes do we have for participants, consulting partners and communities to give honest evaluation of our work? Are there things standing in the way from us getting honest assessment of the work?
9. When we receive constructive criticism from a community partner or consulting partner, how have we adjusted the content and direction of our process/project?
10. To what extent are we interested in and committed to being changed, transformed, affected and inspired, versus one-directional learning?

Drawn from:

Poor People's Campaign, Soul Fire Farm equity principles, Jemez Principles, US Food Sovereignty Alliance adaptation of Jemez Principles, *Faith in Action* resource books