STRATEGIC PLAN

Report by OCOI Strategy Consultant Team:
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Introduction
Progressive Strategies Consulting LLC and Eric Altman Consulting Inc. were invited to facilitate a strategic planning process for OCOI, including collaborative strategies and structure, as part of a broader effort to reconfigure the initiative based on lessons from its first four years. This planning process was done in coordination with Orange County Community foundation, Charitable Ventures, and consultant teams from Engage R+D and Communications LAB.

Methodology
This strategic plan represents the collective work and thinking of numerous OCOI partners (funded and unfunded). It incorporates findings from two listening sessions, four retreats, two online surveys, and monthly meetings with the Executive Committee. A total of 28 OCOI partners participated over the course of 9 months. Almost all of these events took place virtually over Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which escalated dramatically just as the planning process was getting underway.

Theory of Change
The planning process resulted in a theory of change to guide OCOI’s collaborative work, and this report is structured around the following theory of change components:
- Vision
- Systemic Barriers
- Collaborative Capacities
- Drivers of Change and Initiative Strategies
- Outputs and Impact
Our vision is of an Orange County where immigrant and refugee communities secure justice, solidarity, and a place of belonging in the socio-economic, cultural, political and civic life.
Early in the strategic planning process, OCOI partners were asked to reflect on the initiative's vision statement. Based on their reflections, the following themes emerged as potential additions:

- Racial justice lens
- Justice and equity, not just integration
- Addressing socio-economic conditions and criminalization of immigrants
- Understanding that there is a dominant narrative that is designed to exclude immigrants and refugees
- Shifting of power and resources to immigrant communities
- OC as a leader on policies advancing immigrant justice

The strategic planning process included consideration, discussion, and feedback on a series of potential vision statements, and the Executive Committee adopted a new vision statement in November 2020:

**Old Vision Statement**
Our vision is an immigrant and refugee community that is fully integrated into the socio-economic, cultural, political and civic life of Orange County.

**New Vision Statement**
Our vision is of an Orange County where immigrant and refugee communities secure justice, solidarity, and a place of belonging in the socio-economic, cultural, political and civic life.
During the second Listening Session on Strategy, OCOI partners engaged in a systems analysis conversation to reflect on the historical context of Orange County in relation to immigrants and refugees. Through this conversation they identified systemic barriers they have encountered in serving and advocating for immigrant communities, and how the current political landscape influences systems.

The following are the five main takeaways regarding systemic barriers in OC:

- OC is ground zero for anti-immigrant policies and reactionary movements
- Isolation and targeting of specific immigrant communities
- Collusion between local law enforcement and ICE to criminalize, detain and deport immigrants
- Need for a proactive immigrant rights agenda
- Intentional funding to support grassroots advocacy and approach is a challenge

“It is important to remember that there are immigrant communities and individuals in OC, largely Central OC, that are organized and take up political space in our local governance. However, these political agendas are not often led by individuals that promote inclusive and bold policies that protect and advance the civil, social, and economic rights for the majority of working class, immigrant communities.”

-OCOI Partner
By building collaborative capacity, OCOI can leverage the resources and strengths of funders and partner organizations to break down systemic barriers and advance a collective vision for immigrant justice in Orange County. The strategic planning process identified three areas of collaborative capacity to address:

- Shared governance and decision-making
- Allocation of collective resources
- Backbone functions:
  - Internal and external communications
  - Convening and connecting partners
  - Learning and evaluation
- Collective response to emerging issues
- Alignment with drivers of change and initiative strategies
- Coordination of power analysis and policy landscape assessment
- Coordination of training and capacity building
- Collective fundraising
Collaborative Capacities: Level of Collaboration

Using the following Levels of Collaboration Scale developed by Frey, Lohmeier, Lee, and Tollefson (2006), partners were asked to assess the current level of collaboration and identify the level of collaboration that they would like to see. Although OCOI partners had substantial agreement on the current level of collaboration within the initiative and the need to increase collaboration going forward, there were different opinions on how far to advance on the spectrum of collaboration:

- **Networking**: Aware of organizations, loosely defined roles, little communication, all decisions are made independently
- **Cooperation**: Provide information to each other, somewhat defined roles, formal communication, all decisions are made independently
- **Coordination**: Share information and resources, defined roles, frequent communication, some shared decision making
- **Coalition**: Share ideas, share resources, frequent and prioritized communication, decisions made by majority vote
- **Collaboration**: Members belong to one system, frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust, consensus is reached on all decisions

The strategic planning process addressed this divergence of opinion by seeking consensus around specific roles and responsibilities within the collaborative structure.
GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING

The current structure of the OC Opportunity Initiative is composed of the Executive Committee, OC Community Foundation serving as the backbone organization and Charitable Ventures serving as the fiscal sponsor. In addition the initiative had coordination support from an administrative director which convened the Executive Committee, as well as the Partnership Meetings to engage funded and non-funded partners. The Executive Committee is composed of twelve members representing funders and organizations from the following areas of work: Legal Services, Outreach and Education, and Advocacy.

Through the series of Strategic Planning Retreats, OCOI partners were engaged in reflecting on the current structure of the initiative. Partners participated in the process of identifying a governance and decision-making structure needed to advance the initiative’s vision, collaborative capacity and strategies. A Steering Committee that reflects the organizations working on the ground for systems change and infrastructure development emerged as a model for collaborative structure moving forward for the initiative.

Recommendations:

• **Composition of the Steering Committee**: To the extent possible, the Steering Committee should be comprised of:
  ◊ Members who are working toward systemic change and immigrant justice
  ◊ **Collectively represent the full immigration ecosystem in Orange County**, including funded collaboratives, individual partner organizations (funded and unfunded), funders, and community members, including youth.
  ◊ Steering Committee members should **collectively represent all of the prioritized initiative strategies and policy/issue goals, and all drivers of change should be included**.

• **Governance**: Once established, the Steering Committee will need to establish democratic governance procedures for decision-making process, representation of those not at the table, identification of gaps in strategy and collaborative capacity to achieve strategic goals and vision.
Since OCOI’s inception, most of its grant-making has been in the form of grants to individual partner organizations working within the three areas of work (Legal Services, Outreach & Education, and Advocacy & Organizing). The strategic planning process provided an opportunity for partners to express their preference for a grant-making approach that would reflect the shift toward increased collaboration focused around a set of newly identified drivers of change and initiative strategies. Once again, there was a divergence of opinion among partners about the extent of collaboration, but a clear majority (75%) preferred some type of collaborative grant-making process.

**Recommendation:**
The OCOI grantmaking process should be structured as multiple small or medium sized collaborative proposals around sets of strategies.

“I feel that the moment to gather ourselves and assess what our true capacity is now. With an uncertain future facing us--including the possibility for immigration reform--we have to reimagine how we coordinate and work with one another to protect our immigrant communities, but also to build on our collective wins.”

- OCOI Partner
For OCOI to effectively leverage the capacities of its partners, resources must be allocated toward backbone functions, which serve as the glue and connective tissue for strategy development, planning, and implementation of collaborative work. Through the strategic planning process, OCOI partners allocated backbone functions between the Steering Committee, OCOI staff, and consultant(s) as outlined in the table below. Backbone functions are further defined in a table that follows the diagram.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steering Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Project Leads for each of the Scopes of Work; oversees designated staff and consultant(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Alignement with drivers of change and initiative strategies, and collective response to emerging issues.</td>
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| Scope of Work 1: Planning for Systems Change and Narrative Change |
| Scope of Work 2: Systems Change Advocacy with a Focus on Infrastructure Development for Removal Defense |
| Scope of Work 3: Systems Change Advocacy with a Focus on Cross Cultural & Multiracial Work |
| Scope of Work 4: Infrastructure Development with a Focus on Base Building, Leadership Development and Integrated Voter Engagement |
| Scope of Work 5: Geographic Focus: South Orange County |

| Scope of Work 6: Backbone Functions |
| Designated staff time for internal/external communications, convening and connecting partners |
| Designated staff time and/or consultants to coordinate strategy development and implementation across scopes of work, conduct regional training and capacity building, and engage in fundraising |
| Consultants for learning and evaluation |
## Backbone Functions Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Who Is Responsible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Communications</strong></td>
<td>Ensure that partners are informed about what's happening within OCOI; circulate information about relevant news, meetings, events, policies, court cases, etc.</td>
<td>Paid staff person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Communications</strong></td>
<td>Ensure that OCOI partners develop and utilize coordinated public messaging strategies related to issues and events that impact immigrant communities throughout the region.</td>
<td>Paid staff person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Convening and Connecting Partners</strong></td>
<td>Coordinate meetings and other opportunities for partners to get together for a shared purpose and/or general networking.</td>
<td>Paid staff person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning and Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Conduct qualitative and/or quantitative analysis to measure the impact of OCOI’s work, share lessons and best practices, etc.</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collective Response to Emerging Issues</strong></td>
<td>Coordinate OCOI partners' collaborative strategies and activities to address threats or opportunities that may arise outside of pre-planned work.</td>
<td>Steering Committee in coordination with individual grantees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alignment with Drivers of Change and Initiative Strategies</strong></td>
<td>Ensure that OCOI partners' collaborative work remains aligned with the drivers of change and initiative strategies.</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coordination of Power Analysis and Policy Landscape Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Organize or oversee development of shared power analysis and policy landscape assessment.</td>
<td>A consultant or paid staff person in coordination with individual grantees and the Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coordination of Training and Capacity Building</strong></td>
<td>Identify shared training and capacity building needs of OCOI partners; provide or organize opportunities to address those needs.</td>
<td>A consultant or paid staff person in coordination with individual grantees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collective Fundraising</strong></td>
<td>Identify funding opportunities for OCOI’s collaborative work, and coordinate the development of shared proposals as appropriate.</td>
<td>A consultant or paid staff person in coordination with the Steering Committee</td>
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FUNCTION OF PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS

Since OCOI’s inception, partnership meetings have been an important source of information and networking for partner organizations, both funded and unfunded. With the shift toward systems change, partnership meetings will evolve to include the following functions in addition to networking and information sharing:

- Engage/build synergy across a larger network of partners and collaboratives (funded and unfunded)
- Serve as a central venue for
  - Shared power analysis
  - Shared policy landscape analysis
  - Training/capacity building

“I think the focus should primarily be on shifting power rather than trying to convince folks to have a change of heart. I just don’t see that strategy as effective anymore…. We need to work towards changing the power structures so that the group who is unmoving just becomes smaller and less powerful with time.”

- OCOI Partner
Early in the Strategic Planning Process, in light of the local and national events taking place on immigrant and racial justice, and a global pandemic which further impacted immigrant and refugee communities, the following themes emerged as a focus to inform the process:

- Collective impact cannot be achieved through primary focus on coordination of direct services.
- Need to focus on investing in infrastructure development and systems change.
- Acknowledgment of OC’s changing demographic landscape and the need to uplift cross-cultural and multi-racial work.

Four key areas were identified as pivot points and priorities for the initiative, which are the Drivers of Change:

- **Systems Change Advocacy**
- **Infrastructure Development**
- **Narrative Change**
- **Cross-cultural and Multi-racial work**

Through the Listening Sessions, Strategic Planning Retreats and Online Surveys, OCOI partners engaged in the work of creating a shared definition, develop strategies and identifying priorities for each area. Partners identified fourteen initiative strategies that address capacities needed for the Drivers of Change and moves the initiative towards its vision in the region.
Systems Change Advocacy
Development and implementation of strategies to engage decision makers (elected officials) in order to shift policy and change systems, rooted in advocacy demands from base.

**Initiative Strategies:**
1. Policy analysis, development, and advocacy
2. Analysis of power and systems to identify, understand, and assess different options, approaches, and strategies for intervention
3. Coordination of local/regional work with state and national advocacy efforts
4. Impact litigation

**Recommendation:**
Build into coordinated policy analysis, development, and advocacy (#1) by starting with and analysis of power and systems (#2); then explore impact litigation and coordination with state and national advocacy efforts (#3 and 4).

Narrative Change
Development and implementation of narratives and communications strategies that shift values and shape public opinion regarding immigrants in OC, countering harmful narratives of exclusion and fear.

**Initiative Strategies:**
1. Integration of narrative change with popular education techniques to raise the consciousness of community members regarding cultural and historical experiences of different immigrant communities
2. Development and implementation of communications/messaging strategies to advance a narrative.
3. Development of new narratives to shift values and shape public opinion.

**Recommendation:**
Build toward popular education (#1) by bringing community members into the process from the beginning so that they are involved in narrative development (#3) and communications/messaging strategy development (#2).

**Key Concepts**
- **Impact litigation:** The strategic use of litigation to change policies and/or systems.
- **Narrative change:** A narrative reflects a shared interpretation of how the world works. Who holds power and how they use it is both embedded in and supported by dominant narratives. Successful narrative change shifts power as well as dominant narratives. (Source: Narrative Initiative)
- **Popular education:** An active learning process that raises social awareness; stimulates critical and creative thinking; and leads to action for social change. (Source: American Friends Service Committee)
Infrastructure Development

Creation or expansion of long-term regional capacity for scalable collaborative work on immigration.

Initiative Strategies:
1. Coordinated leadership development and base building to build the capacity of community members to engage in advocacy and systems change work.
2. Integration of base building and leadership development with legal services and outreach/education work, either directly or by partnering with other organizations.
3. Integrated voter engagement: The integration of nonpartisan voter registration, education, and/or mobilization with legal services, outreach, education, organizing, and/or advocacy work.
4. Creation or expansion of collaborative networks for immigration legal services (in addition to removal defense)
5. Expansion of existing collaborative network for removal defense (including legal services and other organizations)

Recommendation:
Create a unified approach for coordination and integration of leadership development and base building along with integrated voter engagement (#1, 2, and 3) that sequences them in the same order as above.

Cross-Cultural and Multiracial Work

Building solidarity across communities with intentional analysis and understanding of their histories and cultures.

Initiative Strategies:
1. Integration of advocacy and community engagement activities across communities that have historically been divided by race and/or culture.
2. Coordination of referrals and resource sharing across communities that have historically been divided by race and/or culture.

Recommendation:
• Scale up current programs that utilize these strategies.
• Incorporate both strategies into the combined leadership development and base building approach suggested under Infrastructure Development.

Key Concepts
• **Base building**: Recruiting and retaining a large group of volunteer members from impacted communities who participate in and help direct and implement the work. (Source: DataCenter)
• **Integrated voter engagement**: The integration of nonpartisan voter registration, education, and/or mobilization with legal services, outreach, education, organizing, and/or advocacy work.
• **Leadership development**: Developing the political analysis and practical skills of community members to enable them to build a base, fight campaigns, and build the organization.” (Source: DataCenter)
Participatory Defense and Immigration Enforcement: The OC Rapid Response Network

The Orange County Rapid Response Network (OCRRN) is a collaborative space of non-profit and grassroots organizations, law school clinics and volunteers working to advocate against immigration enforcement in the county and; provide support for community members facing detention and deportation. OCRRN Participatory Defense program and Wellness Clinics have increased collaboration between legal service providers, advocates and community members to build a strong infrastructure for removal defense.

Cross-cultural Solidarity in Little Saigon: VietRISE and NDLO

VietRISE and the National Day Laborer Organizing Network are building bridges between the Vietnamese and Latinx community through their Bring Human Rights Home campaign. Through leadership trainings and cultural exchanges they have organized the Vietnamese community in Little Saigon (Santa Ana, Garden Grove and Westminster) and engaged local elected officials to advocate against anti-immigrant policies and hate groups targeting of undocumented immigrants.
In the short term, partners will develop a shared analysis and agenda, leading to new vehicles for systems change in the medium term and ultimately changing policies and systems to advance the vision of an Orange County where immigrant and refugee communities secure justice, solidarity, and a place of belonging in the socio-economic, cultural, political and civic life.

- **Short-Term Outputs**: Planning for collaborative systems change work
  ◊ Shared analysis of power, systems, and landscape
  ◊ Coordinated training and capacity building related to strategic needs
  ◊ Shared policy agenda

- **Medium-Term Outputs**: Creating vehicles for systems change
  ◊ Policy campaigns
  ◊ Stronger community leadership base
  ◊ New and/or stronger collaborations focused on initiative strategies

- **Long-Term Impacts**: Changing policies and systems
  ◊ Policies and systems that create and support immigrant justice
  ◊ Infrastructure that enables people and organizations to fight for immigrant communities
  ◊ Narratives that support immigrant justice
  ◊ Solidarity among immigrant communities
In keeping with the recommendation to structure the OCOI grantmaking process with multiple small or medium sized collaborative proposals around sets of strategies, the following scopes of work are recommended in order to address all of the drivers of change and initiative strategies developed through the strategic planning process:

1. **Planning for Systems Change Advocacy and Narrative Change, including:**
   - Power/Systems Analysis
   - Policy Landscape Assessment
   - Narrative Development

2. **Systems Change Advocacy with a Focus on Infrastructure Development for Removal Defense**

3. **Systems Change Advocacy with a Focus on Cross Cultural & Multiracial Work**

4. **Infrastructure Development with a Focus on Base Building, Leadership Development, and Integrated Voter Engagement**

5. **Geographic Focus: South Orange County**

6. **Backbone Functions**
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The OCOI Strategy Consulting Team would like to thank all of the OCOI partners and Executive Committee members who participated in this planning process, including representatives from the following organizations:

- Access California Services
- ACLU SoCal
- Ahri Center
- CAIR-LA
- Catholic Charities of Orange County
- Chispa
- Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
- Coalition of Orange County Community Health Centers
- Community Health Initiative of Orange County
- Community Legal Aid SoCal
- El Centro Cultural de Mexico
- Haitian Bridge Alliance
- Korean Community Services
- Korean Resource Center
- Latino Health Access
- LGBTQ Center OC
- National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON)
- OC Justice Fund
- OC Rapid Response Network
- OCAPICA
- OCCC
- OCCORD
- Public Law Center
- Resilience OC
- Solidarity
- The Cambodian Family
- VietRISE
- World Relief

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