

Meaningful Community Engagement Principles



ALIGN-T1D is a multi-stakeholder global initiative working to advance equitable access to integrated type 1 diabetes (T1D) care in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The Alliance is grounded in the principle that sustainable progress requires meaningful engagement of people closest to the realities of living with and delivering care for T1D. For ALIGN-T1D, meaningful engagement goes beyond consultation. It involves sustained participation of people with lived experience across strategy, governance, implementation, monitoring, and learning.

These **Six Guiding Principles** build on the World Health Organization’s *Framework for Meaningful Engagement of People Living with Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health and Neurological Conditions* (2023) and broader evidence demonstrating that sustainable health initiatives center on local agency, knowledge, and leadership. These Principles are intended to guide how ALIGN-T1D partners—including governments, implementers, funders, technical partners, and community organizations—work together across country engagement, grantmaking, implementation, advocacy, and shared learning.

Six Guiding Principles

1. **Commit to Long-Term Partnerships:** Partners should engage people with lived experience early and continuously across planning, implementation, and learning processes, while aligning efforts with national priorities and long-term sustainability goals.
2. **Offer Responsive and Strategic Funding:** Participation should not create financial or logistical barriers. Budgets should account for equitable participation, including support for travel, accessibility, interpretation, connectivity, coordination, and community leadership.
3. **Communicate with Clarity and Consistency:** Partners should communicate roles, expectations, timelines, and decision-making processes clearly, while creating opportunities for shared learning and transparent feedback.
4. **Support Capacity Strengthening and Inclusive Participation:** Meaningful participation requires preparation, accessible information, and equitable facilitation approaches that enable diverse voices to contribute effectively.
5. **Co-Create Goals, Metrics, and Reporting Frameworks:** People with lived experience should help shape priorities, indicators, implementation approaches, and learning processes. Community participation should be reflected in monitoring, reporting, and decision-making.
6. **Actively Seek and Respond to Feedback:** Partners should establish safe, accessible channels for ongoing feedback and demonstrate how community input influences decisions, adaptations, and learning.

Applying These Principles in ALIGN-T1D

ALIGN-T1D seeks to operationalize these Principles across governance, country engagement, proposal development, implementation, and reporting processes. RFAs, concept notes, and funded proposals may include expectations related to meaningful engagement, including:

- Inclusion of people with T1D and community organizations in planning and implementation
- Dedicated budget lines supporting community participation and accessibility
- Evidence of how community input informs decisions and program adaptations
- Ongoing feedback and learning mechanisms throughout implementation