

Governance by Charter, Grounded in Africentricity

**An Africentric Governance Charter as a tool for
Leveraging Systemic Transformation**

Presented by

Nicola Dove, Doctoral Candidate, York University
Karen Richards, Board Chair, TAIBU CHC
Radeka Clarke, Board member, TAIBU CHC
Liben Gebremikael, CEO, TAIBU CHC

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www.taibuchc.ca



Our Team



Karen Richards



Radeka Clarke



Nicola Dove



Liben Gebremikael

Session Objectives and Learning Outcomes



- 1 Articulate how Africentric frameworks (including TAIBU's Black Model of Health & Wellbeing and Nguzo Saba principles) can serve as **governance tools** for advancing equity and community wellbeing.
- 2 Identify **structural** and **cultural** elements involved in **co-developing** the Africentric Governance Charter and the Board's multi-phase **process**.
- 3 Assess how Africentric governance concepts can be **adapted** or **applied** to **support** inclusive and **equity-oriented governance** within their own organizational or sectoral contexts.

Our Vision & Mission

● Vision

Achieving and maintaining health through community development, knowledge exchange, empowerment and the **elimination of systemic racism** and other forms of prejudice and discrimination in healthcare

● Values

Leadership
Community Driven
Africentricity
Quality
Equity

● Mission

TAIBU Community Health Centre provides primary health care and related services for **Black populations across the Greater Toronto Area** as its priority population. We strive to deliver these services through **intersectional, equity-based and culturally affirming** practices which promote holistic wellness, health education, and prevention.

TAIBU's Founding Principles



-  **Anti-Black Racism**
-  **Africentricity**
-  **Systems Transformation**
-  **Proportionate response to disproportionate impact**
-  **Systemic solutions to systemic problems**
-  **Nothing about us without us**

What does Africentric Governance look like?



We define **Africentric Board Governance** as an approach to enacting board functions and responsibilities (fiduciary, strategic and generative) that is informed by **knowledge, teachings, wisdom, stories, traditions, cultures and perspectives from the continent of Africa and its diasporas.**

Board of Governance as a Lever for Change

While TAIBU has long centered community, culture, and collective wellbeing across its programs and partnerships, the Board identified an important governance gap:

culturally grounded practices had not yet been translated into governance frameworks.



What does it mean to govern in alignment with Africentric worldviews?



What does collective stewardship look like in governance?



How can boards reinforce community self-determination while meeting fiduciary and regulatory obligations?

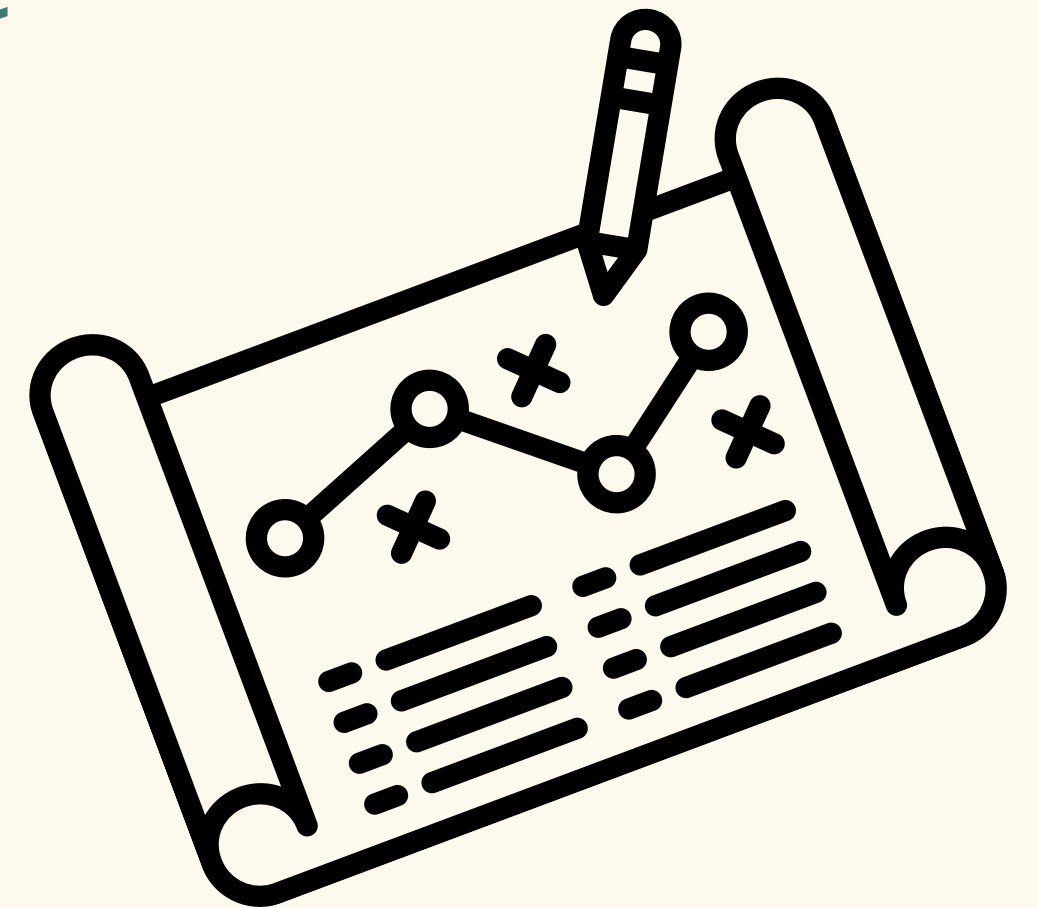
Our Aim

Develop and implement an **Africentric Governance Charter** as an effective way to advance the above-mentioned objective

But First

● What is a Charter...?

● Why a Charter



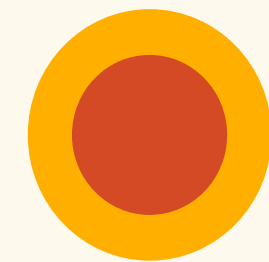
Then what is an Africentric Governance Charter?

****No precedent therefore we must create the blueprint****

In 2024, TAIBU's Board initiated the development of the Africentric Governance Charter—an approach to governance informed by African-centered knowledge systems and cultural frameworks.

The Charter outlines **Principles** (values), **Commitments** (promises), and **Actions** (tasks), designed for embedding into fiduciary, strategic, and generative board responsibilities.

WHY?: An African-Centered Theory of Change

-  **We believe that true transformation comes from honouring our collective stories, cultural values, and spiritual connections.**
-  **This approach reframes health into a journey of liberation, resilience, and collective strength.**





WHAT?: Our Africentric Governance Charter

Africentric Principles

Our Values

Reflect the core values that underpin our commitments and what we do

Africentric Commitments

Our Promises

Reflect our intentions that guide and inform what we do

Africentric Actions

Our Tasks

Reflect what we embody and do across all phases (e.g., entry, engagement and exit)



Stage 1: Entrance

Principles

Ku-ji-cha-gu-lia (Self-Determination)

“To define ourselves, name ourselves, instead of being defined or talked about by others”.

Commitments

Empowering
Black Leadership

Actions

- Be intentional with how we recruit new members, with considerations of the dimensions of diversity within Black community
- Invite, prepare and empower board members to engage in leadership capacities on the board.

Stage 2: Engagement

Principles

Umoja (Unity)

“To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race”

Commitments

Fostering strong
Community
Bonds

Actions

- Structure the board and committees in ways that honor and uplift the strengths, knowledge and wisdom embedded in Black communities
- Do our discussions and decisions help us establish, maintain and sustain the unity of the communities that we serve?



Stage 3: Exit

Principles

Ujima (Collective Work & Responsibility)

“to build and maintain our community together and to make our brothers’ and sisters’ problems our problems and solve them together”

Commitments

Collaborative
Problem Solving

Actions

- Re-engaging previous board members to share knowledge and close gaps for new board members.
- Do our discussions and decisions help us establish, maintain and sustain the unity of the communities that we serve?

HOW?: Process Unfolding; Phased App

01

**Engage
and
Draft**

02

**Review
and
Finalize**

03

**Launch
and
Mobilize**

04

**Accountability
and
Stewardship**

The development process is rooted in community consultation, co-creation, intergenerational dialogue, and the sharing of lived and ancestral knowledge.



Phase 1: Engage and Draft

Process

Board to co-create and refine components of the Charter with members and community.

Implementation Considerations

- Meaningful engagement with Board, members, Elders, youth, staff, and community
- Ensure representation across Black identities and lived experiences
- Balance community voice with governance and regulatory responsibilities
- Ground discussions in TAIBU's Africentric principles and Black Model of Health & Wellbeing

Phase 2: Review and Finalize

Process

Members and community review the Charter, and provide feedback to be incorporated in a final draft.

Implementation Considerations

- Transparent feedback and revision process
- Clarify how community and collaborators input shaped revisions
- Ensure language, commitments, and actions are practical and implementable
- Review for governance alignment and long-term sustainability

Phase 3: Launch and Mobilize

Process

Charter launched, and invitations for engagement and mobilization is extended.

Implementation Considerations

- Charter launch accompanied by education and dialogue
- Move beyond symbolism toward operational integration
- Develop tools and processes to support adoption
- Communicate commitments clearly to partners and community
- Position the Charter as a living governance framework

Phase 4: Accountability and Stewardship

Process

The Board remains accountable to communities served through evaluation activities and reporting.

Implementation Considerations

- Establish mechanisms for monitoring and reporting progress
- Use reflection, evaluation, and community feedback cycles
- Track commitments and governance practices over time
- Maintain transparency and accountability to moral owners and communities served
- Adapt and refine the Charter as learning emerges

Outcomes for our Governance

- Used as the Board's accountability to the community and to its commitment
- Continue to help the Board articulate and enhance what it has been doing
- Demonstrates TAIBU's and the Board's Leadership in Africentric services including governance
- Advances self-determination
- Marks as TAIBU's 'flag', 'logo' and 'brand' – an organization that stands out as a beacon of safe space for Black communities

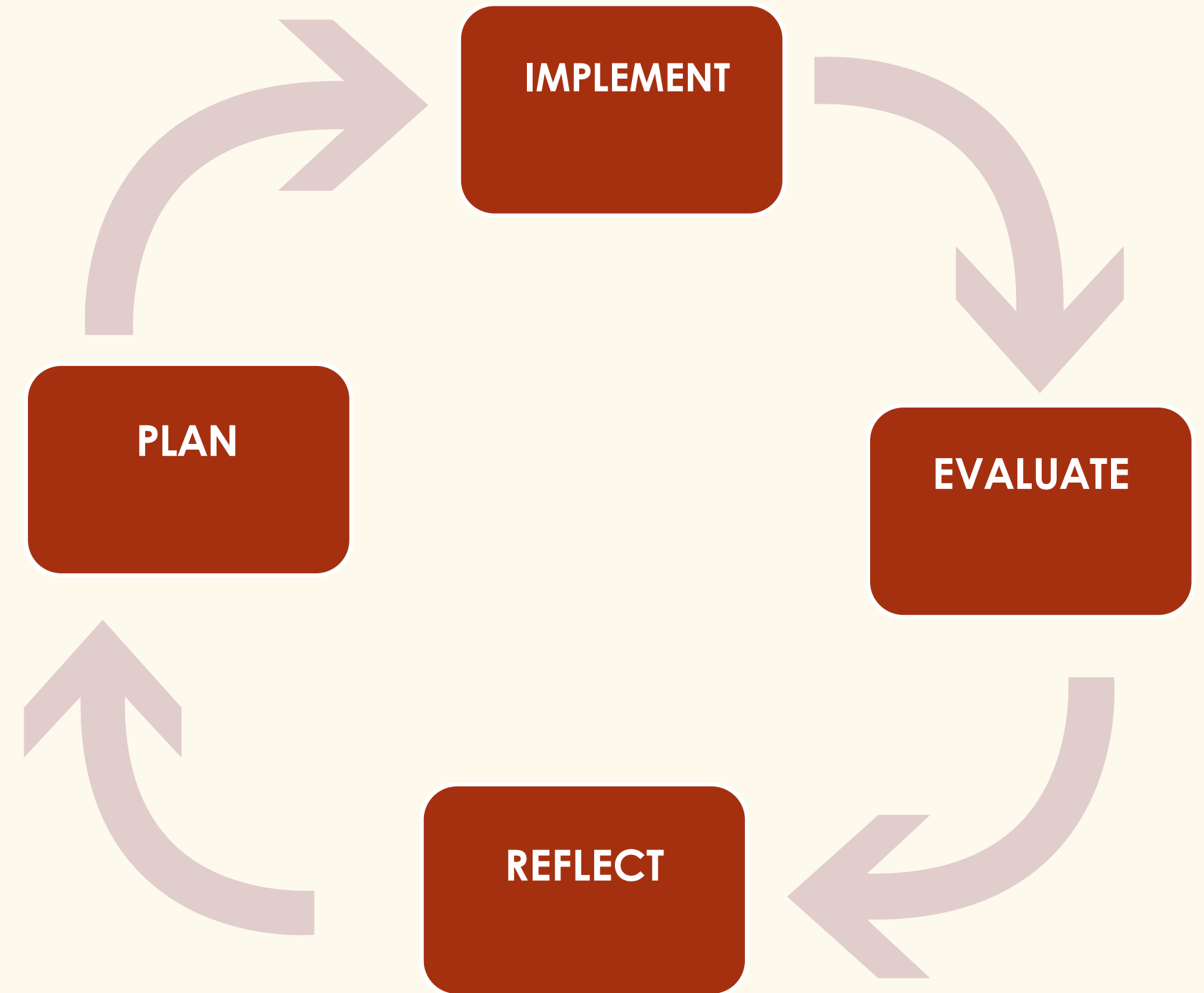
Connecting Evaluation to Planning and Advocacy

Evaluation

What happened? What did we learn?

Planning

Where do we go next?



Example of Indicators

Unity In Governance

Examples of Board efforts to bridge internal differences; instances of collective decision-making rooted in shared Africentric values

Capacity Building & Mentorship

of professional development training sessions, mentorship opportunities linking community members, youth and elders to leadership and governance roles

Advocacy & Accountability

of public statements, partnerships or campaigns led by TAIBU's leadership that addresses systemic anti-Black racism or inequities; reflection logs documenting advocacy outcomes.

Intergenerational Leadership

Presence of youth and elder voices in governance structures, testimonials highlighting mentorship and mutual learning

Collective Reflection & Learning

Uses of retreats, debriefs, and reflection tools to assess leadership effectiveness, integration of staff and community feedback into governance review-styles

Takeaways

For Black led, Black serving
and Black focused (B3) Orgs

- ❑ Trailblazing **new paths** to meet the needs that have never been met
- ❑ **Opportunity to govern** from culturally grounded frameworks
- ❑ **Build systems** rooted in community-defined wellbeing
- ❑ Advance **self determination and accountability** rooted in Africentric principles

Takeaways

For Mainstream orgs serving Black Communities

- ☐ **Understand** who is being served and who holds **decision-making power**
- ☐ Move beyond **performative** equity toward structural **transformation**
- ☐ Build **authentic partnerships** with Black communities
- ☐ **Build capacity** to ensure **meaningful representation** from Black communities

Call to Action

The same system that hurts Black communities **CANNOT be the same system that heals.**

Black Communities need a Black-focused, Black-led, Black-mandated model of governance & care



Call to Action

- 1. Join us in this important journey as we weave Africentricity in governance structures and re-imagine the achievement of Black health & wellbeing**
- 2. Become signatory to the Charter once finalized**



Contact us
Africentric Governance Charter Task
Group

agc@taibuchc.ca

