



Moving Towards Racial Equity

An Environmental Scan of Models & Frameworks

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Contents

Territorial Acknowledgement	2
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Executive Summary	3
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Introduction	4
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- Context.....5
- Project Aims.....6
- Project Methodology6
- Why This Work Now?7
- Disaggregated Data.....8

Glossary of Terms	10
--------------------------	----

Creating a Racial Equity Strategy	13
--	----

- Guiding Principles.....14
- Promising Practices and Recommended Actions15
 - Promising Practice 1: Collaboration.....17
 - Promising Practice 2: Data supported19
 - Promising Practice 3: Resourced.....22
 - Promising Practice 4: Sustainability23

Measuring Inequality through Disaggregated Data	25
--	----

- Opportunities26
 - Gather with Care.....26
 - Owned by Community.....27
 - Intersectional.....28
- Barriers.....28
 - Neutrality28
 - Existing Norms of Confidentiality28
 - Customer Service Models.....29
 - Paradigm of Accountability29

Conclusion	30
-------------------	----

References	32
-------------------	----

Appendix: Anti-Racism/Racial Equity Plans Summary	36
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Territorial Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work on the ancestral, traditional and unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səlíl̓wətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, who have stewarded these lands and waters since time immemorial. We recognize the devastating, intergenerational impacts of the racist and violent practices of colonization on Indigenous peoples across the country.

As we work to build communities that are equitable and resilient, we bear witness to these atrocities and commit to ongoing meaningful action on Indigenous rights and reconciliation. We commit to deep listening and learning how to decolonize our practices and relationships. We commit to learning how to do the good work of walking in solidarity alongside our Indigenous neighbours on a path of truth and justice.

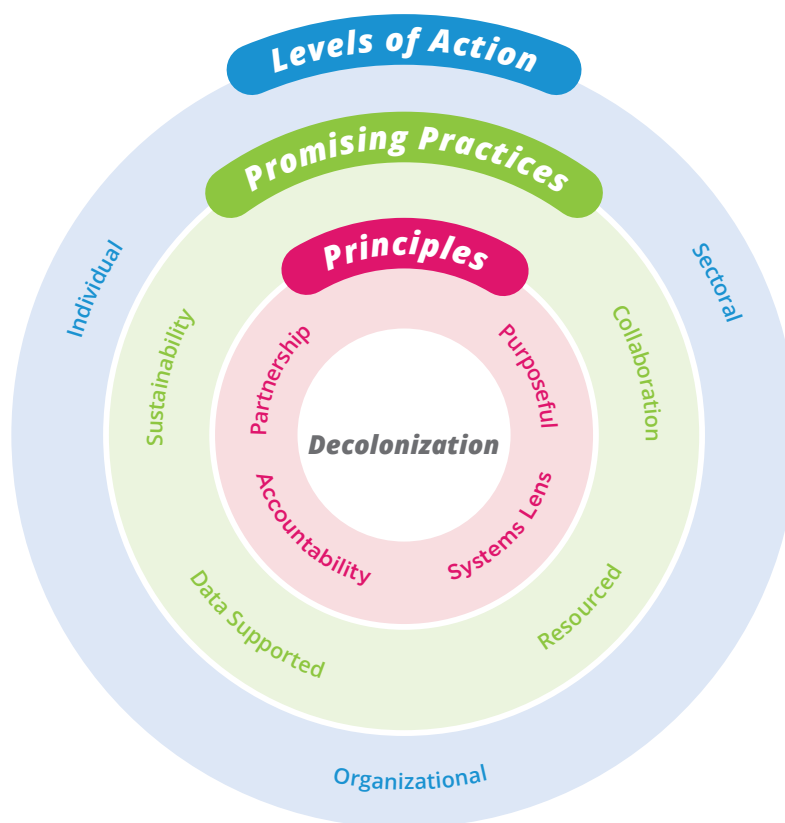
Executive Summary

Immigrant populations in North Shore municipalities continued to grow at a rate of 8.7% between 2011 and 2016, higher than the Metro Vancouver growth rate of 8.3%. In 2019, North Shore service providers as well as individual community members identified a need for more education on how communities can work against racism and discrimination. The recent rise in experiences of racism hate in our local communities and across Canada as a whole, exacerbated by the global COVID-19 pandemic, has only amplified that need.

In 2020, to meet and respond to these community needs, the North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership (NSIIP) – a project of Impact North Shore (formerly North Shore Multicultural Society) hosted a series of community engagement activities aimed at improving community understanding of anti-racism and racial equity. This environmental scan is an extension of those efforts and integrates learning and

themes that emerged from the activities. The final report is intended as a resource for local institutions, agencies and community members looking to further their own understanding of best practices in racial equity planning models and frameworks.

The report highlights key principles, practices and actions for engaging in impactful racial equity work and disaggregated data collection. Together, these theoretical frameworks and tools offer insights and set the foundation for sustainable racial equity work in the North Shore to take root. Racial equity work is part of our collective work of decolonization and truth-seeking. Where colonization and white supremacy separate us from each other, the land, and ourselves, the work of racial equity requires ongoing personal and systemic decolonization. Our work, the work of our families, our organizations and institutions are all part of an interrelated whole. The time for action is now.



The background features abstract organic shapes in green and blue. A grey curved line starts from the bottom left and arcs towards the right. The word "Introduction" is centered in a bold green font.

Introduction

Introduction

Context

“This is a time for commitments to address systemic racism and oppression across British Columbia and to move from words to real change. This is a call to action.”¹”

HISTORY OF RACISM ON THE NORTH SHORE

The North Shore is made up of three distinct municipalities: the District of North Vancouver, the City of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver. The North Shore region is, and has always been, a community of immigrants. In 2016, it was home to 65,050 immigrants accounting for 36% of the total population, compared to 34% in 2011 and higher than the national average.² Immigrant populations in North Shore municipalities continue to grow at a rate of 8.7% between 2011 and 2016, higher than Metro Vancouver's growth rate of 8.3%.³

Similar to other communities across Canada, the North Shore has a long history of racism and discrimination, including residential schools and land covenants that exclude people of colour from living in certain communities. In a 2017 survey conducted prior to an Impact North Shore⁴ (formerly North Shore Multicultural Society) Anti-Racism Forum, 61% of participants indicated that they had heard people say things on the North Shore that sounded discriminatory or racist. In the same survey, 38% of respondents indicated that they were worried about

personally being treated negatively or harmed on the North Shore in the future because of their ethnic, cultural, racial or religious background.

Experiences and impacts of racism are a reality for many racialized and Indigenous people living in North Shore communities. Ongoing histories of colonization, anti-Asian and anti-Black racism, among other forms of racism and injustice, have shaped the way in which our present day institutions and

systems function to reinforce and create further gaps between racialized and Indigenous people and others. Over the past few years, there have been a variety of reported incidents in the community, including racist, Islamophobic and Anti-Semitic graffiti in public places as well as defacing of a residential school memorial and anti-black racism in public places.

According to Stats Canada, the number of reported hate crimes in Canada has also steadily been rising over the last five years. Across the country, hate crimes rose by 47% in 2017 (total of 2073 reported incidences) compared to 2016. Data also indicates a provincial increase in ethnic or racially motivated hate crimes between 2017 and 2018 with BC. In 2018, BC recorded the third highest number of provincially reported hate crimes in the country trailing only Ontario and Quebec.

Experiences and impacts of racism are a reality for many racialized and Indigenous people living in North Shore communities.

1 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, "Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective", September 2020, p.6.

2 Census 2016.

3 Census 2016.

4 <http://impactnorthshore.ca>

In the time of COVID-19, Impact North Shore and other local non-profit organizations have also noted an increase in race-based hate, particularly in relation to anti-Asian racism. Since Spring 2020, a significant increase in incidents have been reported by non-profit agencies, which have included verbal attacks in public, pushing, the prevention of passage on sidewalks as well as more passive intimidations such as the refusal to make eye contact with or quickly moving away from people of Asian descent.

Though racism can be experienced on an individual level through the attitudes and actions of individuals, institutional racism refers to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups.⁵ Addressing institutional racism requires the examination and dismantling of systemic policies and practices that serve to perpetuate disparities. This environmental scan supports efforts to address such disparities by highlighting key principles, practices and actions needed for impactful racial equity work and disaggregated data collection. It is intended to help community organizations from diverse sectors and community members looking to further their own understanding of racial equity and inspire a commitment to action.

Project Aims

The following research questions have guided this work:

1. What promising practices, policies, and models exist (in BC, Canada, or elsewhere) to guide a meaningful anti-racism/racial equity strategy with associated racial equity targets and data collection strategies?
2. What are some existing practices, opportunities, and barriers with respect to gathering disaggregated data and measuring the impacts of systemic racism within diverse North Shore sectors (health, policing, education, business etc.)?

Project Methodology

The development of a North Shore anti-racism strategy with associated racial equity targets and data collection strategies requires a deep understanding of local context, the impact of current existing structures and systems, and promising practices, policies and models that exist locally, nationally and internationally.

The first phase of this project involved better understanding the context of North and West Vancouver through attending community gatherings, presenting at meetings of the North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership (NSIIP)⁶, and doing a scan of potential promising models that could offer guidance for a future racial equity strategy. These potential models were discovered through a review of academic research.

The second phase of research involved conducting interviews with individuals who could provide context/support about their sector or could offer guidance on best practices to support the development of a racial equity strategy across sectors and organizations. These interviews were synthesized with desk research to surface preliminary insights. This synthesis indicated areas for further exploration, highlighted knowledge gaps, and guided the selection of additional case studies and interviews. Finally, learnings from the literature and expert interviews were put in conversation with sectoral learnings to create a list of promising values, practices, and actions to help guide the development of a meaningful racial equity strategy and policies and practices for collecting data within diverse North Shore sectors.

In total, ten interviews with racial equity practitioners, scholars and sectoral staff members informed this report. Given the limitations of time, interviewee availability and the size of the project team, this environmental scan did not include community representatives or staff members from each sector or jurisdiction in the North Shore. Rather, this report focused narrowly on the question of how best to approach the work of creating a racial equity strategy and how to collect and use disaggregated data on the North Shore. To create a robust racial

⁵ Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Useful definitions around racism, p.2.

⁶ <https://nsiip.ca>

equity strategy, deeper engagement is needed with a broader range of community members, municipal staff and other key sector actors in order to identify key priorities and potential actions.

Why This Work Now?

As a community-based partnership table focused on improving the settlement outcomes for immigrants to the North Shore region, the North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership (NSIIP) is uniquely positioned to respond to the growing urgency for gathering data and mobilizing responses to growing racism and experiences of oppression. NSIIP engages more than 30 North Shore community service providers and stakeholders including all levels of government, libraries, recreation centres, school districts, emergency responders and police, as well as the community service organizations across sectors including seniors, youth, children, family, health and mental health, legal advocacy, education, literacy and settlement sectors. Through enhanced service coordination, educational opportunities, research and community engagement activities, NSIIP seeks to support the successful settlement, integration and active participation of immigrants and to build inclusive, welcoming and productive North Shore communities.

NSIIP's work on racial equity emerged through needs identified by both service providers and community members. Research conducted in 2019 highlighted a demand for more education on both Indigenous perspectives and how communities can work against racism and discrimination. This need surfaced again in an anonymous online survey conducted by the North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership in June 2020: 100% of survey respondents indicated that it was important or very important for NSIIP to take a leadership role in exploring an Anti-Racism and/or Racial Equity strategy to guide the work of partners across the North Shore. There was a particular interest in focusing research energy in understanding best practices for addressing racism and racial inequity.

These trends are echoed in other research and community experiences. Like other parts of Canada, 2020 brought an increase in incidents of anti-Asian racism in North Shore communities, with community members reporting “verbal attacks, threats and incidents of intimidation in public spaces and shops.”⁷ In a recent Impact North Shore survey, 19 % of respondents from countries in East Asia reported that they have experienced an attack, harassment, or discrimination based on race on the North Shore. In a social services stakeholder workshop hosted by the District of North Vancouver in December 2020, xenophobia, and anti-newcomer sentiments were among the top issues mentioned by workshop participants.⁸

To address these community needs, NSIIP concentrated much of its programming in 2020-2021 on improving community understandings of anti-racism and racial equity. Working collaboratively with Impact North Shore colleagues, the following programming efforts were offered in community:

- Dialogue series about building anti-racist communities;
- Town Hall about racism and opportunities for working towards equity;
- Community Storytelling event and Anti-Indigenous Racism workshops;
- Employer Roundtable focused on equity and inclusion in workplaces; and
- Community Forum focused on actions for achieving racial equity.

Ending systemic racism requires enormous changes across all institutions and sectors. In the North Shore, racial equity has been a conversation of growing importance. There are numerous examples that illustrate the commitment to action taking root in different municipal and community spaces. In December

Ending systemic racism requires enormous changes across all institutions and sectors.

7 Brent Richter, “COVID-19 related racism on the rise, North Shore group says,” North Shore News, May 30 2020.

8 Urban Systems, “Targeted OCP Review Social Services Stakeholder Workshop Summary, Dec 10 2020, p.1.

2020, through a unanimous Council vote, the District of North Vancouver joined the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities.⁹ As part of this work, the District will create inclusion strategies for sectors under the municipal authority, and will develop an action plan to answer Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action that relate to municipalities.¹⁰

Within the City of North Vancouver and the Districts of North Vancouver and West Vancouver, individual sectors are examining their own role in advancing anti-racist work within their respective organizations. Some additional examples of action and change are highlighted here. In October 2020, the North Vancouver School District #44 struck an Anti-Racism Steering Committee tasked with assessing levels of racism within North Vancouver schools.¹¹ Parents at local elementary schools are organizing to create Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (IBPOC) parent initiatives to address both systemic and interpersonal racism.¹² In October 2020, the North Vancouver RCMP created the "Officer in Charge Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee" aimed at bringing the community together in dialogue with the RCMP.¹³ In Recreation, anti-racism and inclusion are strategic priorities for the North Shore Recreation and Culture Commission.¹⁴ In the District of West Vancouver, the Mayor has committed to all West Vancouver municipal employees receiving anti-racism training in order to better recognise and address individual, systemic and institutional racism.¹⁵

As part of the ongoing anti-racism work across the North Shore and in the province more broadly, this environmental scan is a contribution to better understanding the ways in which current systems and structures continue to perpetuate racist and exclusionary principles, policies, and practices and, in turn, harm racialized and Indigenous people in our communities. It is a guide for how to best take action.

Disaggregated Data

Disaggregated data is a key tool in working towards racial equity in so much as data can help to highlight where inequities lie within and across institutions. In 2020, the call for disaggregated data became an increasingly important conversation as the Black Lives Matter movement highlighted how ethical and careful collection of disaggregated data demonstrates and quantifies the impact of systemic racism across institutions.

In June 2020, Premier Horgan requested the BC Human Rights Commissioner, Kasari Govender, and Information and Privacy Commissioner Michael McEvoy to investigate and "provide recommendations on how to collect, store, use and disclose disaggregated data in a way that furthers

the aim of substantive social equality without reinforcing marginalization."¹⁶ The subtitle of their report "The Grandmothers Perspective" originates from Gwen Philips of the

Ktunaxa Nation. It refers to the fundamental frame that underpins the report's recommendations: namely, that data should be collected through relationship for the purpose of addressing inequities. Every factor that shapes our decisions to ask and collect data, from purpose, process, tools must be guided and approached through this lens.

Furthermore, the BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner report highlights that collecting disaggregated data is not a goal in and of itself, but rather a means of identifying where inequalities and disparities exist. Disaggregated data makes inequalities

...data should be collected through relationship for the purpose of addressing inequities.

9 Brent Richter, "District of North Van to create anti-racism plan," North Shore News, Dec 8 2020.

10 Ibid.

11 Jane Syed, "North Van working group to examine racism in schools," North Shore News, Sept 30 2020.

12 Ben Bengston, "North Van School PAC group advocates for diversity education", North Shore News, Jan 13 2021.

13 Ben Bengston, "North Vancouver RCMP launch new diversity and inclusion committee," North Shore News, Oct 29 2020.

14 Curren, Megan, "District of North Van, Report to Council," November 25 2020.

15 Staff report, "District of West Van staff to receive anti-racism training," North Shore Daily Post, July 8 2020.

16 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, "Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective", September 2020, p.6.

between groups visible. With a greater understanding of inequality, we can more powerfully advocate for social and structural change.¹⁷ By extension, good policy relies on data and information, and disaggregated data can bring to light inequalities between different groups hidden in aggregated datasets.¹⁸ When inequality is made visible, good policy can emerge. In Toronto for example, many significant social plans including the Toronto's Newcomer Strategy, use and share disaggregated data.¹⁹

Alongside the benefits of collecting disaggregated data there are risks, including that when gathered without the right intention and approaches, data can be used to oppress and marginalize communities. The BC Human Rights Commissioner's recommendations about how purpose, process and tools can mitigate risks and enhance racial equity offer strong recommendations to meet these concerns.

17 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, "Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective", September 2020, p.28.

18 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, "Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective", September 2020, p.28, quoting Teranishi et al., 2013.

19 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, "Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective", September 2020, p.31.

Glossary of Terms

Glossary of Terms

Ally: A person who supports a marginalized group in their pursuit of freedom from oppression. An ally takes supportive action on their behalf, and also seeks to reduce the ways that they themselves have been complicit in their oppression. Ally-ship is not self-defined or a personal identity, it is support that actively uplifts (and is endorsed by) marginalized peoples.²⁰

Collective Impact: Collective Impact is a framework for community change that is founded on the premise that collaboration takes many forms and approaches. The Collective Impact idea is situated within the broad frame of collaborative efforts focused on systems and policy change.²¹

Disaggregated data: Data that provides sub-categories of information, for example by ethnic group, gender, occupation and educational status.²²

Discrimination: The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion and other categories.²³

Individual Racism: The attitudes and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism. It can occur on a conscious or unconscious level and be active or passive.²⁴

Institutional Racism: This refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups.²⁵ Addressing institutional racism requires the examination and dismantling of systemic policies and practices that serve to perpetuate disparities.

Anti-racist work aimed at institutional racism is about examining the structure and nature of institutions and amending their necessary component parts.²⁶

Intersectionality: Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality is a lens that describes the ways in which race, class, gender and other elements of our identity interact, intersect or overlap with one another, so that individuals simultaneously experience oppression and privilege in their daily lives on both a micro and systemic level.²⁷

Oppression: Social inequality that is woven throughout our social and political institutions, as well as embedded in the human psyche. Oppression creates hierarchical relationships in which privileged groups benefit from the disempowerment of targeted groups.²⁸

Prejudice: A pre-judgement or usually negative attitude directed toward an individual or from one group towards another group. Such judgements are typically based on stereotypes that prevent a person from being recognized as a unique individual with authentic characteristics.²⁹

Racial equity: The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. Racial equity is one part of racial justice, and includes work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or that fail to eliminate them.³⁰

20 Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Useful definitions around racism, p.1.

21 Collective Impact | Tamarack Institute (tamarackcommunity.ca)

22 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, "Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective", September 2020, p.86.

23 Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Useful definitions around racism, p.1.

24 Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Useful definitions around racism, p.1.

25 Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Useful definitions around racism, p.2.

26 Racial equity expert, Dec 11 2020.

27 CSSP, Key Equity Terms and Concepts: A Glossary of Shared Understanding, p.7.

28 Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Useful definitions around racism, p.1.

29 Racial Equity Tools, Glossary.

30 Ibid.

Structural Racism: The normalization and legitimization of an interplay of historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal dynamics that advantage Whites and lead to chronic adverse outcomes for people of colour. Multiple institutions and past present cultural norms have reinforcing effects that continually reproduce old forms of racism and also produce new forms.³¹ Anti-racist work aimed at structural racism involves looking at and examining the ideas, actions, policies and processes that contribute to racial disparities.³² Structural racism is not simply about the beliefs of a few people, it is the convergence of racist concepts and theories that govern our economic, political and social systems.³³

Systemic Racism: Racism that formed the foundation of current society, and is therefore embedded in all aspects of society. Institutions, policies, practices, ideas and behaviours all intersect and overlap to create an unjust amount of resources, rights and power for white people while denying these to people of colour. Systemic racism includes all other forms of racism.³⁴

White Supremacy Culture: White supremacy culture refers to the dominant, unquestioned standards of behaviour that are defined as “normal”, “professional” or even “good”. They are a continuation of the attitudes that were in place when countries like Canada and the USA were created as settler states for white bodies. White supremacy culture is the invisible behavioural norms that are in allegiance with white bodies, and “other” and devalue different ways of being or knowing.³⁵

31 Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Useful definitions around racism, p.4.

32 Dr Ismael Traoré, NSIIP Town Hall, Sept 30 2020.

33 CSSP, Key Equity Terms and Concepts: A Glossary of Shared Understanding, p.11.

34 Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Useful definitions around racism, p.4.

35 Ibid.

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Creating a Racial Equity Strategy

Creating a Racial Equity Strategy

The key principles, practices and actions identified in this environmental scan were both identified by racial equity practitioners and scholars, and emerged from the literature as key elements of a racial equity strategy. To supplement the limitations of the interview list, the expertise and wisdom shared at community events about racial equity hosted between September 2020 and March 2021 by the North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership (NSIIP) and Impact North Shore were used to identify important values and associated practices and actions. Through this process, a total of four guiding principles and four promising practices emerged from the research.

Guiding Principles

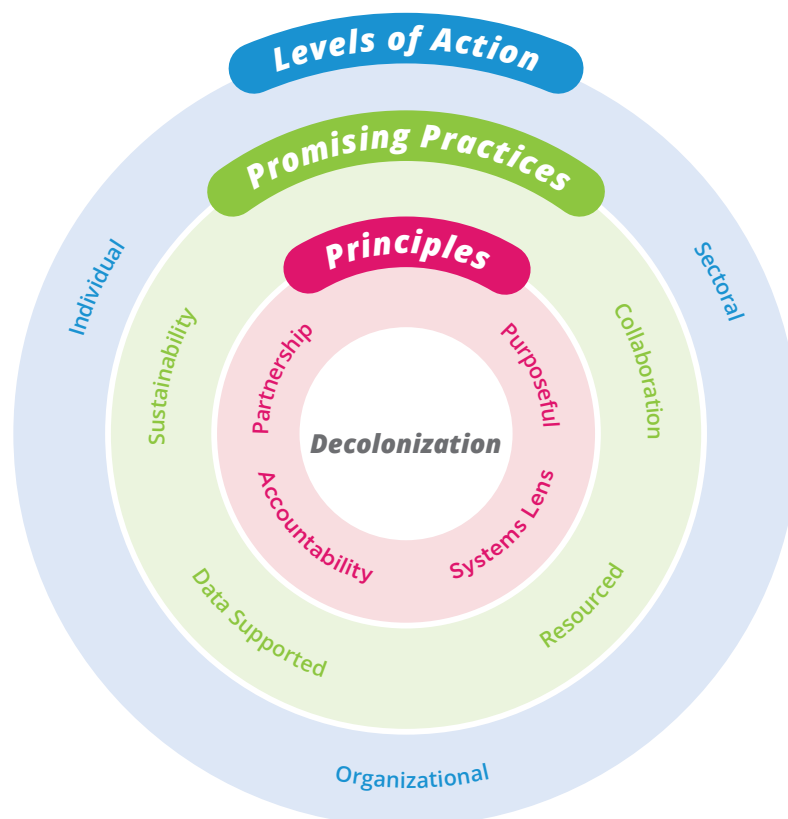
Purposeful: This principle emphasizes the importance of being clear on why racial equity work is taking place and ensuring that project activities and approaches are aligned with the intent and

purpose of racial equity. Clear purpose creates a willingness for change and helps determine what the necessary tasks and steps on that journey must be.

Systems Lens: This principle highlights the need to focus on systems failure rather than individual failure and to acknowledge the larger socio-economic structures and inequalities at play in our communities.

Accountability: This principle highlights the importance of doing the self-work required to participate fully in racial equity initiatives and ensuring accountability structures exist to uphold racial equity commitments. Change processes can be demanding on community members and leaders must be clear that equity work is not a short-term process.

Partnership: This principle highlights the value of working intentionally with community as partners throughout all stages of a racial equity journey, a key element of which includes centering the voices and expertise of indigenous and racialized people.



Promising Practices and Recommended Actions

Promising Practice	Recommended Actions	Levels of Action		
		Individual	Organizational	Sectoral
Collaboration	Break down silos			✓
	Build accountability structures		✓	✓
	Partner with community		✓	✓
Data Supported	Use purpose to guide data collection		✓	✓
	Apply critical assessment strategies	✓	✓	✓
	Use strengths-based approaches		✓	✓
	Share data with care		✓	✓
Resourced	Allocate necessary resources for racial equity work	✓	✓	✓
	Embed racial equity work into operational plans		✓	
Sustainability	Create long-term, staged process		✓	✓

The ways in which these promising practices and associated individual, organizational and sectoral actions show up differ from plan to plan. Below are two examples from the cities of Vancouver and Toronto that demonstrate the implementation of unique actions in different spheres of influence and change.

Example 1: City of Vancouver (YVR) Culture Plan: Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture

Promising Practice	Individual Action	Organizational Action	Sectoral Action
Collaboration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages artists from diverse backgrounds as part of the design process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One unified policy document that aligns and directs the City's investment in arts and culture. Engages artists from diverse backgrounds as part of the design process
Data Supported		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report includes disaggregated data to illustrate and identify disparities Centers Indigenous ways of knowing through the subtitle of the plan: "Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report includes disaggregated data to illustrate and identify disparities Centers Indigenous ways of knowing through the subtitle of the plan: "Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture."
Resourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses complementary, integrative and dedicated equity approaches Speaks directly about the need for additional resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses complementary, integrative and dedicated equity approaches Speaks directly about the need for additional resources Embeds racial equity work into larger operational plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses complementary, integrative and dedicated equity approaches Speaks directly about the need for additional resources
Sustainability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates long term, staged process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates long term, staged process

Example 2: City of Toronto Anti-Black Racism Action Plan

Promising Practice	Individual Action	Organizational Action	Sectoral Action
Collaboration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountability and Partnership Circle ensures commitments are upheld Invites intentional community engagement at all stages of action plan creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works across silos Accountability and Partnership Circle ensures commitments are upheld Invites intentional community engagement at all stages of action plan creation
Data Supported		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews existing research instead of convening new consultations about anti-Black racism Looks to community as strong partners Engages youth facilitators and meaning makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews existing research instead of convening new consultations about anti-Black racism Looks to community as strong partners Engages youth facilitators and meaning makers
Resourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources the community to conduct consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources the community to conduct consultations Embeds racial equity work into larger operational plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources the community to conduct consultations
Sustainability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 year planned process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 year planned process

LEGEND



Individual



Organizational



Sectoral

The next section offers more details about each of the above-listed promising practices and their related actions to be activated on individual, organizational and sectoral levels

PROMISING PRACTICE 1: COLLABORATION

“Ideally, you have a cross-organizational approach where you have champions from different areas, not from all one positional power level, coming together and mapping out what accountability looks like. Otherwise when the consultant leaves or the one person who has been tasked with EDI leaves, it dismantles.”

– INTERVIEW WITH RACIAL EQUITY EXPERT,
DEC 10 2020

Recommended Action: BREAK DOWN SILOS



Achieving racial equity requires a cross-sectoral approach. In different contexts and organizations, powerful racial equity plans cut across organizational boundaries and challenge more siloed approaches to engagement and action. Structural racism involves historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal dynamics that govern our economic, political, and social systems. In order to influence the policies, practices and norms that exist and are upheld across agencies and institutions, a cross-sectoral approach is critical.

A cross-sectoral racial transformation approach to the work can involve change teams that work across organizational and jurisdictional siloes.³⁶ According to the Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race

and Equity (GARE)³⁷, long-term structural change is enabled through transformational change that engages multiple institutions, and addresses organizational culture, values, and business operations. Change teams may include those on the leadership team, a designated internal change team, and/or external partners. An internal change team is typically responsible for the change management process, and can include consultants and leadership as well.³⁸ Change teams are a type of collective impact initiative. Collective impact initiatives are powerful vehicles for change because they go beyond collaboration to create new entities characterized by central infrastructure, staff and “a structured process that leads to a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication and mutually reinforcing activities among all participants.”³⁹

...long-term structural change is enabled through transformational change that engages multiple institutions, and addresses organizational culture, values, and business operations.

Recommended Action: BUILD ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURES



Across organizations, racial equity plans require clear leadership, communication strategies and accountability structures that monitor and track progress. Accountability structures are clearly identified mechanisms that ensure work moves forward and that commitments are upheld. These structures should be built and resourced in ways that remove barriers to implementation and monitor progress in a consistent and ongoing way. It is imperative that they include communities with lived experiences and understandings of racial inequity.⁴⁰

36 Sonnie, A. “Advancing Racial Equity in Libraries”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2018, p.14.

37 <https://www.racialequityalliance.org>

38 Interview with racial equity expert, Dec 11 2020.

39 Kania, J., Kramer, M. Collective Impact. Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter 2011.

40 Curren, Ryan et al. “Racial Equity Action Plans: A How To”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2016, p.5.

The engagement of community members via accountability structures helps to strengthen racial equity plans by identifying and analysing institutional barriers, identifying useful action steps to address those barriers, providing feedback on draft plans and developing stronger and deeper community buy-in during the implementation process.⁴¹ After implementation, community members can also help to keep anti-racism processes accountable through regular reporting on progress.⁴² This should not be volunteer work, but paid opportunities for racialized communities.

Example: City of Toronto Anti-Black Racism Action Plan – Accountability Circle

The Anti-Black Racism and Accountability Circle is made up of Torontonians of African descent and is intended to “support the implementation of the Action Plan in collaborative, transparent, effective and accountable ways.”⁴³ The Circle is made up of 12 Torontonians of African descent or origin with diverse lived experience. These twelve Torontonians include 4 elders “who represent the wisdom of the community to hold the integrity of the Circle’s principles, values and practices”, 4 youth with diverse lived experience, and 4 “people who represent key stakeholder groups of African Toronto communities.”⁴⁴ More information about this accountability process and this Action Plan can be found in the Appendix.

development of a strategy. This is a key step in the work of strategy creation because racialized residents and employees are subject matter experts who can inform the starting vision, the strategy development process, and the ultimate direction of any racial equity plan. For example, institutions or organizations can convene and host community conversations. By entering into a partnership with community-based groups that have existing relationships and credibility, individuals who may not be able to access public institutions through more traditional engagement methods may find other avenues to participate.⁴⁵

Example: City of Toronto Anti-Black Racism Action Plan

In order to develop the City of Toronto Anti-Black Racism Action Plan, the project team chose not to initiate new consultations about anti-Black racism in the City of Toronto. Rather, the team reviewed 41 years of existing research about anti-Black racism in the City of Toronto and surfaced a total of 113 recommendations. These recommendations were then discussed in 41 community conversations that were facilitated by fifteen youth leaders and hosted by eighteen different agencies across the City of Toronto. The fifteen youth leaders also captured community feedback on these draft recommendations, and together, youth leaders and city staff reviewed this feedback and incorporated it into a Draft Action Plan and the subsequent yearly work plans.

Recommended Action:
PARTNER WITH COMMUNITY



Partnering with community in the creation of a racial equity strategy means engaging racialized residents and organizational staff at all stages of the

In some contexts, partnering with community may seem to be in direct opposition to rigid project timelines. Certainly, a balance must be struck between “over consultation and a lack of meaningful consultation on disaggregated data.”⁴⁶ Community partnership takes time however, and

41 Curren, Ryan et al. “Racial Equity Action Plans: A How To”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2016, p.12.

42 Curren, Ryan et al. “Racial Equity Action Plans: A How To”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2016, p.13.

43 City of Toronto, City of Toronto Anti-Black Racism Action Plan, 2017, p.7.

44 City of Toronto, 2021 Partnership and Accountability Circle Application Form.

45 Curren, Ryan et al. “Racial Equity Action Plans: A How To”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2016, p.13.

46 British Columbia’s Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.64.

this time must be accounted for in the overall design and development of anti-racism strategies.⁴⁷

It is important to note that partnering with community does not mean that all community members must be engaged with in the same way. As one expert explained, there should be different levels and opportunities for community members with different time availabilities to get involved in the creation and development of a plan:

“Include people at different levels of the deliberation and implementation of what the anti-racism strategic plan looks like. [When creating] a structural anti-racism plan, don't just make it be top down thing, invite members of the public who want to be part of a working group to come up with suggestions. And there are different ways that people can be included in a plan. On the one hand, they are just provided updates, on the other hand they are consulted, on the other hand they are consulted and they have the veto. You can't have the same engagement approach for everyone.”

—INTERVIEW WITH RACIAL EQUITY EXPERT, DEC 10 2020

These different levels of engagement must be co-created and power dynamics must be adequately considered. Popular engagement frameworks, such as that presented by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)⁴⁸, have been criticized for not offering sufficient guidance around how to create equity-centered planning processes.

The frameworks do not explore how existing inequities and power imbalances can create flawed engagement processes. Consultation is not the same as resourcing community members to create change and does not constitute true partnership.⁴⁹ A better approach is to begin engagement processes with an intention focused on equity, and to “redistribute opportunity, resources and power more fairly.”⁵⁰ When the purpose of an engagement process is at cross purposes with “reciprocity and equity”, it should not continue on.⁵¹ For more guidance and recommendations of tools to apply in equitable public engagement, see Simon Fraser University's guide *Beyond Inclusion: Equity in Public Engagement*⁵².

PROMISING PRACTICE 2: DATA SUPPORTED

Data is an important practice that can support the development of racial equity strategies and help keep work accountable. Partnering with community is important both in the creation of a plan and in the data collection processes. Data can help assess current state, set goals and measure changes over time.⁵³ While more information about opportunities and barriers to capturing disaggregated data across North Shore communities and institutions is detailed later in the report, the below listed recommended actions identify important themes around process and outcomes.

Recommended Action: USE PURPOSE TO GUIDE DATA COLLECTION



The process of data collection has inherent risks: every time data is collected, it is important to be clear on why a particular data set is being collected, for what purpose, and how it will be handled after collection. Without a clear commitment to creating change, data

47 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, "Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective", September 2020, p.65.

48 <https://www.iap2.org/>

49 Cramer, J., "Exploring the Role of power in equitable community engagement", <http://bchealthycommunities.ca/power-in-equitable-community-engagement/>

50 Cramer, J., J. Butcher, "Four principles for equitable public engagement", <http://bchealthycommunities.ca/four-principles-equitable-public-engagement>

51 Ibid.

52 <https://www.sfu.ca/dialogue/resources/public-participation-and-government-decision-making/beyond-inclusion.html>

53 Curren, Ryan et al. "Racial Equity Action Plans: A How To", Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2016, p.7.

collection can be harmful and intrusive⁵⁴ and in many cases “the hunt for more data [is often] a barrier for acting on what we already know.”⁵⁵ Therefore, when disparities are already clear and known, rather than collecting more data, getting to action should be the more the urgent call. However, data collection is purposeful when it leads to clear and actionable steps or helps to galvanize policy and operational change.⁵⁶

Recommended Action: APPLY CRITICAL ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES



Guided by purpose and an action-oriented vision, it is important to assess the current state of racial equity work within a particular context before considering change work. The assessment of self, organization and systems can help to ensure that anti-racism plans are in fact focused on the correct targets. In terms of self, knowing oneself and one's relationship to white supremacy is a way to understand the personal shifts that may be needed on an individual level to support racial equity work. To better understand one's own racial equity journey, the NSIIP resource “Acting Against Racism: Strategies for Moving Forward”⁵⁷ offers key strategies and actions.

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current state
of racial equity
work within a
particular context
before considering
change work.

At an organizational and systems level, assessments can also be used to gauge the ability or readiness of a group or larger sector/system to engage in racial

equity work. Racial equity assessments are tools “designed to integrate explicit consideration of racial equity in decisions, policies, practices, programs and budgets”⁵⁸ to “eliminate racial inequities and advance equity.”⁵⁹ To get started, The Coalition of Communities of Color has a free Tool for Organizational Self-Assessment Related to Racial Equity.⁶⁰

According to the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), the first step to using an assessment tool is to clarify and define the desired outcomes and investigate how a policy, program or norm may be adversely affecting communities of colour served by an organization or system. Helpful questions that can help guide defining desired outcomes include the following:⁶¹

- What conditions of wellbeing do we want for our community?
- Why do these conditions exist differently for people of colour? (ask yourself “Why else?” multiple times to go deeper into understanding the institutional and structural issues at play)
- What would these conditions look like if we achieved them?
- What measures can we use to quantify these conditions?

With a clear idea of desired outcomes, data can help develop a clearer picture of existing barriers and inequities and help inform the development and selection of racial equity goals. The harvesting, analysis and meaning-making of data is best done in partnership with communities of colour.⁶²

54 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020.

55 Hawn, Nelson A., et al., “A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration”, 2019, p.7.

56 Interview with racial equity expert, Dec 10 2020 and Dec 11 2020.

57 NSIIP, Acting Against Racism: Strategies for Moving Forward. 2017.

58 Sonnie, A. “Advancing Racial Equity in Libraries”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2018, p.30.

59 Ibid.

60 <https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/research-and-publications/ccorgassessment>

61 Ryan et al. “Racial Equity Action Plans: A How To”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2016, p.7.

62 Sonnie, A. “Advancing Racial Equity in Libraries”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2018, p.30.

Recommended Action:
USE STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACHES



“A critical challenge with disaggregated data is that it can reinforce deficit narratives—where these narratives are already present, researchers may use data to support them. This, in turn, stigmatizes and individualizes the issue. Shifting the focus from individual failure to systems failure is one way to resist stigma. Applying a strengths-based approach within this shift also counters these challenges by highlighting stories of community resilience rather than individual victimhood.”

— BRITISH COLUMBIA'S OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER, “DISAGGREGATED DEMOGRAPHIC DATA COLLECTION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: THE GRANDMOTHER PERSPECTIVE”, SEPTEMBER 2020, P.43

When working on anti-racism projects, there is a danger of operating from deficit narratives rather than strength-based narratives. A deficit narrative represents “people or groups in terms of lack or deficiency.”⁶³ These narratives are limiting because they characterize individuals and communities as responsible for racial inequities “without acknowledging the larger socio-economic structures and inequalities⁶⁴ that are at play. To operate from a strengths-based perspective is to move from explanations of individual failure, to seeking to dismantle systems that do not serve everyone adequately.

Recommended Action:
SHARE DATA WITH CARE



Sharing data can be a way to build understanding of community needs by strengthening community services, systems and practices in a way that lowers the resource burden of collecting data. Data collection however, must be done carefully and thoughtfully to avoid harm. According to the research group Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy⁶⁵, good data practices include “inclusive participatory governance around data access and use, social license for data access and use, and a developmental approach to data sharing and integration.”⁶⁶

Data practices to be avoided include:

- widespread access to data that can be individually linked;
- data use for “enforcement or investigation actions against residents;
- use of linked data across institutions with patterns of institutional racism⁶⁷; and
- irresponsible use of predictive algorithms.

The Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration⁶⁸ has multiple examples of communities that have shared data for the purposes of increasing racial equity, including the Tacoma Equity Index.

63 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.43.

64 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.43.

65 <https://www.aisp.upenn.edu/>

66 Hawn, Nelson A., et al., “A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration”, 2019, p.8.

67 Ibid.

68 https://www.aisp.upenn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/AISP-Toolkit_5.27.20.pdf

Example: Tacoma Visioning Framework and Equity Index

The 2025 Tacoma Visioning Framework provides a 10 year vision for the City of Tacoma, outlining directions of “increasingly accessibility, education, economy and livability.”⁶⁹ Through this strategic plan, the city partnered with community organizations to examine health equity and the relationships between housing, transportation, employment, and other systems in advancing or hindering health outcomes. This work led to the Equity Index, an interactive tool that maps inequities across Tacoma. The Index “includes “20 indicators that are strongly correlated to equitable outcomes and aligned with the Tacoma Strategic Goals.”⁷⁰

side of their desk. That’s how you guarantee failure. A strategic plan is never on the side. It’s embedded into the very DNA of the workplace. It should be part of the everyday work of staff, part of how they are being evaluated, how the board of governors are evaluating the directors, there has to be different levels of evaluation.”

– INTERVIEW WITH RACIAL EQUITY EXPERT, DEC 11 2020

On an individual scale, leaders and other individuals must be supported to do the self-work of addressing white supremacy and of learning to de-centering oneself. For white leaders in particular, this work involves recognising and addressing the power imbalance that exists within community demographics and leadership demographics.”⁷¹ At the scale of organizations and systems, moving towards racial equity requires an appropriate budget and the allocation of staff resources to enable this work. Important resources required for impactful implementation include clear communication, necessary systems, strong foundational knowledge, and allocated time and budget.

PROMISING PRACTICE 3: RESOURCED

Racial equity work requires financial and resources of time and energy. To create new equity outcomes, systems must shift, and this shift comes with individual, organizational, and sector/system level costs. These must be budgeted for accordingly.

Recommended Action:
ALLOCATE NECESSARY RESOURCES FOR RACIAL EQUITY WORK



The practice of resourcing involves allocating time, personnel and funds towards racial equity work on an individual, organizational and systems level.

“Whoever is responsible for operationalizing the goal, their work evaluation should include their progress on this goal. So that it’s actually linked to their everyday work. It shouldn’t be done on the

Example: Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative

In 2009, the Seattle Mayor created the Race and Social Justice Initiative, a project to create capacity for racial equity work across the city. This initiative offers useful insight on how a cross-sectoral approach can function. Direction for the project came from the mayor who clearly communicated that racial equity was a key priority for the city. A racial equity action team comprised of staff from different areas of the organization then helped guide their respective units through their own racial equity journey.⁷²

69 Hawn, Nelson A., et al., “A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration”, 2019, p.51.

70 Hawn, Nelson A., et al., “A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration”, 2019, p.52.

71 Interview with racial equity expert, Dec 10 2020.

72 Ryan et al. “Racial Equity Action Plans: A How To”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2016, p.10.

Recommended Action:
EMBED RACIAL EQUITY WORK INTO
OPERATIONAL PLANS



“If you ask ten different people what intersectionality is, you’ll get ten different definitions. So even more useful than training, is creating tools that would say what would an intersectional approach mean for data collection, program development, financing and prioritizing in terms of who gets funding. It’s translating what some of these concepts mean to the operational side.”

– INTERVIEW WITH RACIAL EQUITY EXPERT, DEC 11 2020.

When considerations of racial equity are embedded into the operations of an organization, it can be easier to change the norms, policies, and procedures that produce racial inequity. In addition to thinking about core business practices, linking equity to work plans and performance reviews makes equity a core part of what an organization does. Without this link, it is easy for racial equity work to be ignored.

**PROMISING PRACTICE 4:
SUSTAINABILITY**

Achieving racial equity within an organization and broader system requires multiple interventions, but not everything can happen all at once. To be effective, individuals, organizations, institutions and sectors must commit to doing this work over the long term and determine how and where to prioritize resources. A staged process ensures that racial equity work happens with intention around a paced, appropriate flow of actions in a way that is reflective of the broader environmental landscape.

Recommended Action:
CREATE A LONG-TERM, STAGED PROCESS



Anti-racism strategies involve multiple sites of intervention, and to be meaningful, strategies must be staged and involve simultaneous processes. Staged processes are important because prerequisite learning may be needed within staff teams and leadership to authentically engage with the process of racial transformation. Simultaneous processes are important because learning is an ongoing process and yet there is an urgency in which racial inequity must be addressed.

There is no one right path of how to do racial equity planning. Any model and process is a theoretical model rather than a proven path.⁷³ Therefore, it is important to conduct continuous monitoring and evaluation

to ensure the application of chosen approaches are appropriate to the local context. What matters the most is determining what combination of practices and actions will capture the minds and imagination of those living in North Shore communities and propel impactful change.

There is no one right path of how to do racial equity planning. Any model and process is a theoretical model rather than a proven path.⁷³

A series of practices that has heavily influenced the work of both U.S. and Canadian municipalities is the work of the Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)⁷⁴, which offers a 3-stage process of thinking about the development of racial equity plans described as *Normalize, Organize and Operationalize*.

⁷³ Interview with racial equity expert, Dec 11 2020.

⁷⁴ <https://www.racialequityalliance.org>

The first stage of this plan, *Normalize*, is about creating the necessary container for racial transformation work. To create transformational change at the level of business operations and organizational culture, the purpose of a racial equity strategy or plan should be clear at the outset. This clarity is achieved when organizational or municipal leadership commits to communicating to relevant stakeholders and staff how racial equity work relates to overall mission, goals and key priorities.⁷⁵

This communication can be in the form of a guiding purpose statement that highlights why this work is important, or a longer document that offers context for staff and stakeholders to guide them through the initiation, development, implementation, evaluation and review of a plan. It can include principles and guiding values and the rationale and significance of undertaking this work.⁷⁶

Example: Demos Racial Equity Statement of Rationale

Demos⁷⁷ is a U.S based public policy organization that started an intensive 2-year racial transformation journey in 2014. That journey began with a document, created by leadership of the organization called the Racial Equity Transformation Statement of Rationale.⁷⁸ Through the first two years of that journey, this rationale document helped center and ground staff into the work ahead.⁷⁹ To further contextualize this work, each department and team director worked collaboratively with their staff to create their own rationale for investing in racial equity competencies and practices. This deep investment in purpose alignment helped ensure these goals were incorporated throughout the organization.⁸⁰

Organize, the second stage of the process proposed by the Local & Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), is about building the capacity to do racial equity work. This capacity building work involves developing “the internal will, infrastructure and expertise to shift culture and lead transformation.”⁸¹ It is the stage of “laying groundwork so that effective organizing can bring more staff, stakeholders and community partners into the process” of creating racial equity.⁸² According to GARE, the organize phase often means a multi-pronged approach to embed racial equity training across all levels of an organization or sector and participating in equity related initiatives across a sector. It also means addressing barriers that racialized staff members may experience in the engagement process.⁸³ Finally, the organize phase involves listening to and building relationships within the community, and partnering and learning from social justice initiatives that already exist.⁸⁴

The third stage, *Operationalize*, is taking the commitments to racial equity and embedding them within operational plans. While the model offers a clear staged approach to racial equity, in reality, the stages of change may be much more fluid and take place concurrently.

75 Ryan et al. “Racial Equity Action Plans: A How To”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2016, p.10.

76 Ryan et al. “Racial Equity Action Plans: A How To”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2016, p.20.

77 <https://www.demos.org>

78 McGhee, C.H, “Demos Racial Equity Transformation: Key Components, Processes and Lessons, 2018, p.9.

79 Ibid.

80 McGhee, C.H, “Demos Racial Equity Transformation: Key Components, Processes and Lessons, 2018, p.10.

81 Sonnie, A. “Advancing Racial Equity in Libraries”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2018, p.21.

82 Ibid.

83 Sonnie, A. “Advancing Racial Equity in Libraries”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2018, p.32.

84 Sonnie, A. “Advancing Racial Equity in Libraries”, Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity, 2018, p.26.



Measuring Inequality through Disaggregated Data

Measuring Inequality through Disaggregated Data

As previously highlighted, disaggregated data is a key element in working towards racial equity in so much as it can help to highlight where inequities lie both within and across institutions. The ethical and intentional collection of disaggregated data can be a compelling tool for quantifying the impact of systemic racism across diverse sectors. In addition, data can help to track and assess the current state of a system as well as being an integral part of goal setting and measuring change over time.

Within this environmental scan and research project, many North Shore interviewees spoke about not collecting racial data specifically, but having a sense of demographic trends in program participation, funding applications, and service usage through staff feedback and observation. For example, some libraries and recreation services reported that they keep data disaggregated by age, but not by race. In policing, data is most commonly grouped by case type. In arts and culture, the total ask and the number of grants awarded is tracked, but the amount of money awarded to Black, Indigenous or racialized artists or groups is not formally tracked.

Given that disaggregated data collection practices in the North Shore are in their infancy, there is an opportunity to benefit from emerging best practices and to develop systems of data collection that embody racial equity best practices in their purposes, processes and tools. The most important principle to remember is that collecting data is not an end in and of itself, but rather a tool to creating structural change and address systemic racism.⁸⁶ This purpose is aided through a focus on building “respectful relationships grounded in community” because it is through relationships that structural change occurs.⁸⁷

...collecting data is not an end in and of itself, but rather a tool to creating structural change and address systemic racism.⁸⁶

When choosing to collect, use, and share disaggregated data, individual and community harm must be assessed and addressed. Without careful attention to processes of respectful relationship, disaggregated data cause or perpetuate harm and is an unnecessary intrusion of community. In other words, data for data sake is uncaring. Because data collection as a practice has inherent risks connected with it, it is important to interrogate the purposes for which this data collection is taking place and ensure that actions are planned, communicated and taken based on the information gathered.

Opportunities

GATHER WITH CARE

“We are not measuring race, we are measuring racism. Racism is a systems failure; that must be made clear when talking about race-based data.”⁸⁵

85 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.9.

86 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.23.

87 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.8-9.

Respectful relationships are characterised by “relevance, responsibility, reciprocity and reflexivity.”⁸⁸ Relevance requires working with communities on data collection, understanding and addressing the risks of data collection for the community, and using data in ways that are community directed.⁸⁹ Recognising the power dynamics that exist when data is solely controlled by public institutions is an important step to creating more relevant and respectful community relationships.

Respectful relationships are also responsible and reciprocal relationships. This means that beyond simply partnering with community to ensure data collection and data interpretation are meaningful processes, ownership of data and responsibility for data also lies with the community. It is important that “systemically oppressed communities are not merely engaged in consultation, but are supported by a larger social change through which these communities gain access to power, authority, and an opportunity to exercise control over the affairs of everyday life.”⁹⁰

OWNED BY COMMUNITY

“As experts in their own lives, community members are the ones best equipped to identify priorities and risks in potential data collection projects.”⁹¹

The best way to ensure disaggregated data is collected and used safely and responsibly is to partner with communities through all stages of the data collection process, storage, meaning-making and dissemination of findings. This means

changing engagement from a process of town hall consultations or online surveys to partnering with community at all stages of the process.⁹²

Data sovereignty or community ownership of data is a core idea in the BC Human Rights Commissioner’s report on *Disaggregated Demographic Collection in British Columbia*. This principle is important because it “provides for community-led decision making and centres community-based needs, experiences and knowledge.”⁹³ Enacting this principle ensures that communities are not further marginalized and stigmatized in the telling of their stories and the sharing of their data.⁹⁴

When community relationships are at the centre of data processes and community members are a part of the design, use, and dissemination of disaggregated data, research and survey questions are more meaningful and relevant, survey response rate improve, and implementing related actions takes place faster.⁹⁵ In contrast, “paternalistic models tend to have difficulties promoting uptake of their programming.”⁹⁶ This means, for example, partnering with community in the design of data collection tools, asking questions about ownership of and rights to data, examining who can construct categories and questions, and partnering with community in the process of making

Enacting this principle [of data sovereignty] ensures that communities are not further marginalized and stigmatized in the telling of their stories and the sharing of their data.⁹⁴

88 British Columbia’s Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.51.

89 British Columbia’s Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.51.

90 Ibid.

91 British Columbia’s Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.10.

92 British Columbia’s Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.50.

93 Ibid.

94 Ibid.

95 British Columbia’s Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.55.

96 British Columbia’s Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.9.

meaning of data.⁹⁷ When community is involved in the design of questions, these questions are “more likely to strike at the root of inequalities and program and service measures, making research more applicable and placing solutions within reach.”⁹⁸

Finally, respectful relationships are characterised by reflexivity, which involves a regular evaluation of individual and institutional biases to determine whether data collection processes are in the service of equity goals.⁹⁹ These outcomes and goals must be identified as meaningful by communities themselves as with all stages of the project. Evaluation must not only be built in at the end of projects but continually throughout the lifetime of projects as process is foundational to success.¹⁰⁰

INTERSECTIONAL

Collecting and analyzing data in ways that are intersectional is key in enabling disaggregated data to demonstrate how different inequalities interact with one another and how multiple overlapping identities impact the experiences of people across the North Shore.¹⁰¹ Integrating intersectionality into both the design and analysis of data instruments, “helps avoid reductionistic approaches to people’s experiences, their identities and social inequalities” and provides us a clearer picture of policy changes needed.¹⁰²

If this data experience is not available amongst leadership and staff, training and capacity building needs to be prioritized. This might mean data training as an organization, hiring consultants with the appropriate expertise, or knowledge building and sharing with other organizations that are committed to similar processes. To think through how to center racial equity throughout the lifecycle of data integration, the Centre for Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy has a series of excellent resources.¹⁰³

Barriers

NEUTRALITY

Across interviews, diverse sector staff spoke to the growing importance of equity and anti-racism in their organizations and across North Shore sectors as a whole. At the same time, interviewees expressed that the pace of change is slow, and that they felt challenged in knowing what steps to take next. One sector expert shared:

“I think that perception of equity is changing. I think there has been a sort of sense that what we do is in large part somehow neutral, as if there were no cultural bias built into who we are or what we do or the buildings that we exist in. And I think that is changing. Slowly.”

– SECTOR STAFF MEMBER, DEC 9 2020

EXISTING NORMS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Across interviews, sector staff shared that confidentiality exists as a strong norm of their institution and of their industry/sector as a whole. The intentions and potential impacts of gathering disaggregated data is a challenge that diverse sectors must understand better.

Confidentiality was a particularly important consideration for libraries, but data collection and privacy was significant across all sectoral interviews. One racial equity expert offered the following reflection as a way to work through these questions and create new systems:

97 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.53.

98 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.55.

99 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.51.

100 Ibid.

101 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.18.

102 British Columbia's Office of Human Rights Commissioner, “Disaggregated Demographic Data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective”, September 2020, p.46.

103 <http://www.aisp.upenn.edu/centering-equity>

“Why do people only apply it when it comes to race? No there’s no real objection. The framework of the Human Rights Commission provides reasons for why it is important to collect disaggregated data for equity seeking groups. The purpose is to ensure equity and access to services. It’s not mystical.

Are you okay with doing practices that lead to racial inequities? That is the question we should be asking when we are not willing to collect disaggregated data.”

– INTERVIEW WITH RACIAL EQUITY EXPERT, DEC 11 2020

CUSTOMER SERVICE MODELS

Across sectoral interviews, many interviewees shared that while there are channels for community members to share their needs with service providers, there is an assumed level of knowledge and comfort required to participate in existing channels of engagement. Pre-existing avenues may not be obvious for all members of the community. Multiple options to provide feedback exist in public institutions, but by and large, the onus and burden of providing feedback is on the public.

PARADIGM OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Funding accountability was a strong theme that emerged across sectoral interviews. Since organizations with non-profit or charitable status are deemed fit to receive funds and this privileges more well-established communities and institutions in funding processes. While groups without charitable status can access additional funds through more flexible or alternate funding sources, this often means inequities in funding dollars between white and less established and/or racialized community groups.¹⁰⁴ As the guidelines that explore these

themes are under current debate through a bill proposed by Senator Ratna Omidvar ¹⁰⁵, there is value in examining these paradigms:

“People will really hold onto something like accountability, or their concept of fairness, or what it means to serve the public good, which is a pretty big preoccupation in municipal government especially. And let’s get to what does serving the public good mean in terms of intersectionality, because it doesn’t mean doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people, it means the opposite of that. It means doing very little for most people and doing a lot for these people who are sitting at the intersections. So I think we are needing to redefine some of the core concepts that are sitting at the heart of finance, principles of communication, principles of hiring, promotions, leadership competencies, and what these really mean.”

~ INTERVIEW WITH ANTI-RACISM EXPERT, DEC 11 2020.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with sector staff member Dec 09 2020.

¹⁰⁵ Omnivar, Ratna. An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, Feb 8 2021.

Conclusion

Conclusion

As the North Shore continues to grow, addressing discrimination and racial equity is a priority. This environmental scan is intended as a resource for community members and organizations looking to further their own understanding and implementation of best practices in racial equity processes. It highlights key principles, promising practices and specific actions for advancing racial equity work and disaggregated data collection in different spheres of impact. The principles of purpose, systems lens, partnership, and accountability ensure racial equity work within and across community organizations is deeply rooted and sustainable. This foundation, in turn, support promising practices that power critical individual, organizational and sectoral actions.

Disaggregated data is a key tool in working towards racial equity, because it can help highlight inequities otherwise obscured in aggregated data sets. Above all else, data should be collected through relationship for the purpose of addressing inequities. Every conversation that shapes our decisions to ask for and collect data, from purpose, process, tools must be guided and approached through this lens. The same is true for all stages of the racial equity journey. This work is not linear; it is deeply connected to our individual and collective work of decolonization. As North Shore community members, organizations and institutions, the work of building understanding and advancing anti-racism and racial equity efforts is part of our collective journey of truth-seeking.



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Appendix: Anti-Racism/ Racial Equity Plans Summary

Appendix: Anti-Racism/Racial Equity Plans Summary

City of Vancouver—Culture Shift: Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture

vancouver.ca/files/cov/vancouver-culture-shift.pdf

STRUCTURE:

- Executive Summary
- Strategic Direction and goals
- Content of plan:
 - Strategic directions, goals and priority actions
 - Values: Creativity, Inquiry, Audacity, Humility, Accountability
 - Guiding Principles:
 - Reconciliation and Decolonization
 - Directions Summary
 - D1 Arts and Culture at the Centre of City Building
 - D2 Reconciliation and Decolonization
 - D3 Cultural Equity and Accessibility
 - D4 Making Space for Arts and Culture
 - D5 Collaboration and Capacity

PURPOSE:

- Centers Equity through the Mayors' letter, the General Manager and Managing Director letter.
 - For example: Mayors' letter explicitly addresses how not all stories have been equally celebrated by the City and other arts funders across Canada and gives historical context, noting that "historically, dominant cultural narratives and heritage have been celebrated while non-dominant

narratives and heritage have been systemically excluded" and relegated to the cultural periphery (p.6, p.14)

- Plan uses complementary integrative and dedicated equity approaches.
- Integrative approaches incorporate equity into all programs to reduce barriers to equity seeking groups. Dedicated programs for equity-seeking groups increase the entry rate for marginalized artists and clear pathways to ongoing support." (29)

CROSS-SECTORAL:

- The policy directions in this arts plan are part of the larger developing Vancouver Plan so that the necessary infrastructure is in place to put arts and culture at the centre of city-building and cultivate Vancouver's unique cultural vitality." (p.6)
- The plan outlines arts and culture across cultural services and other city units
- Integrated plan that includes actions from other relevant plans to create a unified policy document that aligns and direct the City's investment in arts and culture. (21)

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE:

- Centers Indigenous ways of knowing through the subtitle of the plan: "Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture". This title highlights the importance of working with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh to ensure that their presence and voice is woven throughout
- The title also draws on the wisdom of local nations to illuminate the role culture plays in sharing place and a shared sense of belonging for all people on these unceded lands.(21)
- Process began with intergovernmental table with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh.

For direct engagement, each Nation shaped a process that reflected their own protocols and ways of working. Indigenous community engagement also included focus groups with Indigenous artists and arts organizations

RESOURCED:

- Well-resourced for community engagement.
- Engagement team engaged Indigenous, racialized, disabled, Deaf, low-income, and LGBTQ2+ artists to design the process so that non-dominant communities were able to lead, grassroots organizations drove the direction and equity-seeking voices were centered.

DATA:

- Report includes disaggregated data
 - For example: 26% lower representation of visible minorities in the artistic workforce than in Vancouver's cultural workforce
- Other data that informed plan:
 - Comparative review of municipal investment practices in Vancouver, Toronto, Seattle, Ottawa and Calgary (28)
 - Recipients of 2018 Cultural Services grant completed voluntary two-part equity and access survey (voluntary) that was intended to identify best practices and assess the presence of diverse leadership & how organizations understand EDI

City of Toronto Anti-Black Racism Action Plan

toronto.ca/community-people/get-involved/community/confronting-anti-black-racism

STRUCTURE:

- Five themes:
 - Children and Youth Development
 - Health and Community Services
 - Job opportunities and Income Supports

- Policing and the Justice System
- Community Engagement and Black Leadership
- 22 recommendations and 80 Actions

PURPOSE:

- Clear purpose statement that guided the process of the plan, the structure of the plan and its related tools.
- 3 guiding principles for planning process
 1. Build on existing research and recommendations
 2. Partner with the community
 3. Engage young leadership in the process
- First phase involved development and launch of public campaign naming and challenging anti-Black racism in public education.
- Guiding principles for implementation
 1. Partner with Black communities
Black communities co-developed this plan with the City "with a vision of co-leadership and collective impact" (12)
 2. Engage the diversity of Black voices
 3. Drive systemic change
This plan is focused on "structural barriers to equal opportunity" because that is what causes the most harm
- Action Plan uses a Anti-Black Racism Analysis lens "to the planning, development, operation, resource allocation and evaluation of policies, services, practices and spaces."(p.14)
- Offers 9 questions to create, implement and evaluate an initiative through the use of Anti-Black Racism Analysis. They relate to the following characteristics:
 1. Diversity
 2. Collaboration
 3. Relationship Building
 4. Accountability
 5. Transparency
 6. Accessibility
 7. Creative and Openness

- 8. Sustainability
- 9. Responsiveness

CROSS-SECTORAL:

- Anti-Black racism involves many systems and this plan looks at the municipal levers under the City of Toronto's influence that can shift anti-Black racism in the City of Toronto. These include housing, recreation, place-based community planning, crisis support systems and more.
- The recommendations and actions in this five-year action plan leverage different municipal levers. Responsibility for each action is assigned to one or more City departments/units
- Interventions:
 - The 80 actions of the Action Plan can be categorized into nine Intervention types intended to intentionally disrupt anti-Black bias in policies and practices. They include:
 - Staff Training
 - Staff Recruitment and Advancement
 - Race-Based Data
 - Collaborative Service Planning
 - Community Investment
 - Youth Mentorship and Employment
 - Public Education
 - Policy Development
 - Intergovernmental advocacy

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE:

- Process began with a review of 41 years of research and recommendations about addressing anti-Black racism in Toronto that became basis of 41 Community Conversations.
- 41 Community Conversations were conducted in partnership with 18 community agencies led by 15 young leaders who guided them and captured community ideas.
- In the third phase, City staff and community facilitators analyzed and collected community ideas into a Draft Action Plan. Then City of Toronto divisions reviewed the Draft Action Plan and the resulting Draft Action Plan was presented to Black

community leaders, organizers and residents on in a feedback workshop hosted by the Mayor. This community feedback was used to refine and finalize the recommendations and actions." (5)

RESOURCED:

- "In phase four, Black community workers, advocates, business leaders and experts worked collaboratively with City staff from across divisions and agencies through five Expert Working Groups supported by Black process facilitators. The Expert Working Groups convened to develop multi-year work plans and to identify resources required to implement actions. Five Black subject matter experts with strong Anti-Black Racism Analysis also assisted eight City divisions and one agency to complete the same task.
- Collaborative meetings, informed by research into existing effective models, also supported the development of the Anti-Black Racism Partnership and Accountability Circle." (5)
- The Anti-Black Racism Partnership and Accountability Circle establishes key yearly priorities and related initiatives to "advance the inclusion of Black Torontonians" (10)
- Goal is not on creating new activities – the emphasis is on taking actions "that will most effectively support equitable outcomes for Torontonians of African descent (10)

DATA:

- Uses disaggregated data to illustrate disparities Black Torontonians face and to determine the priorities of each annual action plan

Housing TO 2020-2030 Action Plan

toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/94f0-housing-to-2020-2030-action-plan-housing-secretariat.pdf

STRUCTURE:

- Executive Summary
- Purpose

- Vision
- Mission
- Key Guiding Principles
- Summary of Key Strategic Actions
- Targets and Implementations
- Section for each Key Strategic Action

PURPOSE:

- In 2009 Toronto adopted the Toronto Housing Charter-Opportunity for all. First stage of the Action Plan involved updating this Charter. This policy statement clarifies and contextualizes the role of housing in creating sustainable and inclusive communities and to overall wellbeing of an individual. It is a policy statement that says in high-level terms why this work is important, how it connects to other federal and international housing legislation.
- Key Guiding Principles
 1. Identify the needs of individuals and groups based on evidence and trends
 2. Provide equitable and measurable housing opportunities
 3. Advance partnerships and collaborations across the housing spectrum
 4. Promote strategic alignment of resources and actions by all orders of government

CROSS-SECTORAL:

- Aligns with other City Policies such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy, Resilience Strategy, TransformTO, the Seniors Strategy and other city-wide plans
- Plan notes that “achieving success will require everyone’s participation in the campaign for housing- whether that be other orders of government, Indigenous communities, people with lived experience of homelessness, persons who are members of equity-seeking groups, local residents, housing stakeholders” and more (p.6)
- 3rd stage of Housing Action Plan involves the Housing Commissioner working with City divisions, agencies, boards and Commissions to review housing programs and policies to ensure they are aligned with and promote the Housing Charter principles and the implementation of the Charter.

- Progress of the Plan will be assessed and monitored by Commissioner in “consultation with groups vulnerable to housing insecurity” (p.20)
- While it is a City of Toronto plan, there is recognition of a regional approach and broader dialogues since issues cross municipal boundaries.

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE:

- The key actions in this Action Plan were developed through the City’s public and stakeholder consultation that involved over 6000 voices.
- 52 organizations conducted their own consultations and reached 2400 of those 6000 voices.

RESOURCED:

- 2nd stage of Action Plan was the appointment of a Housing Commissioner to provide leadership and guidance in this work

DATA:

- Disaggregated data through the report to indicate housing disparities.
 - For example: the over-representation of Indigenous People in the overall homeless population

Seattle Public Library Race and Social Justice Policy

spl.org/about-us/policies/race-and-social-justice#:~:text=The%20Seattle%20Public%20Library%20actively,staff%20equitable%20opportunities%20for%20growth

STRUCTURE:

- Policy Elements:
 - Background
 - Policy Statement
 - This statement acknowledges structural context, the need for jurisdictional change and focuses on programs and education

- Definitions
- Surrounding policies

PURPOSE:

- The policy statement takes a wide scope.
- Names institutional racism and recognizes that barriers exist that must be eliminated
- It actively and positively supports programs that remove institutional racism and barriers

CROSS-SECTORAL:

- Part of broader City of Seattle social justice work
- Library partners with community to create programming. For example, to address the lack of children's books in Somali, library worked with local families, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Housing Authority and local artists among others.
- To redesign the website, change team developed an equity impact statement for the project.
- To make the program more inclusive and meet the needs of people of colour, equity was added as a program goal for the Seattle Reads, "one city, one book" program. To increase participation of people of colour, the program partnered with local organizations to bring in new audiences.

RESOURCED:

- Policy statement actively commits programs and resources to remove barriers and institutional racism
- Resources staff and public through skills training and employment opportunities
- Storytime offered in multiple languages.
- Indigenous youth from Clear Sky Native Council worked with library to create oral histories.

DATA:

- Disaggregated data is a tool to identify existing inequalities and areas that require programmatic focus.
 - For example: bookmobile stops were re-designed so that more low-income families are served. Now 77% of students served by bookmobile programs are racialized.

Forward Through Ferguson Action Plan

forwardthroughferguson.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/101415_FergusonCommissionReport.pdf

STRUCTURE:

- Our Action Strategies
 - Advocate for Policy and System Change
 - Build Racial Capacity
 - Sustain the Work
- Make the Commitment
- Closing Thoughts

PURPOSE:

- Action Plan was preceded by a report created by the Ferguson Commission, an organization tasked with creating a detailed analysis of the social and economic conditions that impede social equality in St. Louis.
- The report identified racial inequity as an underlying cause of poverty, and other social disparities and made 189 recommendations. The Action Plan is a roadmap on how to get there. Last step of the Commission was to create a new organization, "Forward Through Ferguson"
- Core Principles:
 - Apply and Model a Racial Equity Lens to process, discussions, work, in each issue
 - Commitment to Radical Collaboration that brings together disparate parts of the system
 - Commitment to Radical Listening and continuous learning without defensiveness
 - Commitment to Culture of Trying and making interventions
- Action Strategies:
 - Advocate for Policy and Systems Change
 - Build racial equity capacity
 - Sustain the work

CROSS-SECTORAL:

- Forward Through Ferguson, is the cross-

sectoral organization tasked to work on racial inequities in St. Louis.

- FTF “designed to serve as racial equity advocate and systems change catalyst – to help existing institutions in region come together to create systemic change” (4)

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE:

- Commission held 17 different Commission meetings in which 2000 people participated. Each meeting had an opportunity for open public comments, presentations from experts and at many meetings, facilitated discussion in breakout groups.
- To determine the first 2 collaborative campaigns, the FTF organization, heard from 1200 residents through a targeted resident door-knocking campaign, reviewed regional policy plans and alignment and did over 30 stakeholder interviews to better understand current policy context.
- Plan clearly states that affected community members must be centered in this work so that community members are not only consulted but that “community leadership is built into governance structures” (7).




RESOURCED:

- Accountability mechanisms to support the plan
- Plan defines the “Equation for Equity” to be: Policy and Systems Wins + Culture and Practice of Equity + Human and Financial Capital + Heartset for Work

DATA:




- Disparities tracked through data; progress on goals is tracked through success metrics.
- A yearly report called “State of the Report: Calls to Action Report Card



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