

Racial Equity and Transforming Government

Racial Equity Study Group
NAACP Housing Committee

Racial Equity Scorecard Metrics

YOUTH SUCCESS AND EDUCATION

OUTCOME	Equity across race in access and success for children and youth
INDICATORS	Early education/ K-readiness Third grade reading levels Connection to a caring adult On time graduation rates

HEALTH

OUTCOME	Equity across race in health and healthy life outcomes—no racial disproportionality in access to quality health care, health resources, and rates of illness
INDICATORS	Infant mortality rates Life expectancy

HOUSING

OUTCOME	Equity across race in housing—no racial disproportionality in home ownership and access to safe and affordable rental housing, temporary and transitional housing
INDICATORS	Housing cost burden by race (paying more than 30% income on housing) Home ownership across race/ethnicity

JOBS/ECONOMIC JUSTICE

OUTCOME	Equity across race in employment—no racial disproportionality in access to living wage jobs, unemployment, career advancement and barriers to employment.
INDICATORS	Household income Unemployment rates Jurisdiction's workforce reflects or exceeds the racial demographics of the community Jurisdiction contracting and purchasing reflects or exceeds the racial demographics of the community

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

OUTCOME	Equity across race in public safety—no racial disproportionality in arrests, sentencing and incarceration
INDICATOR	Arrest and conviction rates, sentencing and prison population

COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVING RACIAL EQUITY

OUTCOME	Increased urgency and commitment to achieving racial equity
INDICATORS	Percent of population who think government should prioritize addressing racial equity gaps in jobs, health, housing and other areas Percent of government employees who are actively promoting racial equity in the work place

HOUSING

OUTCOME	Equity across race in housing—no racial disproportionality in home ownership and access to safe and affordable rental housing, temporary and transitional housing
INDICATORS	Housing cost burden by race (paying more than 30% income on housing) Home ownership across race/ethnicity

“Racial equity” is when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes and outcomes for all groups are improved.

**Advancing Racial Equity and
Transforming Government**

RacialEquityAlliance.org

Racial equity means that race can't be used to predict success, and we have successful systems and structure that work for all.

Equity is about fairness, while equality is about sameness.

What matters are the real results in the lives of people of color, not by an abstract conception that everyone has equal opportunity.

Race, income, and wealth are closely connected in the United States. However, racial inequities are not just about income.

When we hold income constant, there are still large inequities based on race across multiple indicators for success, including education, jobs, incarceration, and housing.

Why race?

For us to advance racial equity, it is vital that we are able to talk about race. We have to both normalize conversations about race, and operationalize strategies for advancing racial equity.

Certainly, we must also address the biases that exist based on gender, sexual orientation, ability and age, to name but a few. But focusing on race provides an opportunity to introduce a framework, tools, and resources that can be applied to other areas of marginalization.

To have maximum impact, focus and specificity are necessary. Strategies to achieve racial equity differ from those to achieve equity in other areas. “One-size-fits all” strategies are rarely successful.

Because of the inter-generational impacts of discrimination and continued disparities due to implicit bias, policies must be targeted to address the specific needs of communities of color.

This means that sometimes different groups will be treated differently, but the aim is to eventually create a level playing field that currently is not the reality.

The Difference between Explicit and Implicit Bias

<i>Explicit Bias</i>	<i>Implicit Bias</i>
Expressed directly	Expressed Indirectly
Aware of bias	Unaware of bias
Operates consciously	Operates Unconsciously
E.g. Sign in the window of an apartment building—“We don’t rent to_____.”	E.g. A property manager doing more criminal background checks on African Americans than on whites.

We all carry bias, or prejudice. Bias can be understood as the evaluation of one group and its members relative to another. Acting on biases can be discriminatory and can create negative outcomes for particular groups.

Implicit bias are attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. Individuals may be unaware that they possess these potentially unfavorable opinions and fail to connect these unconscious biases to their actions. Unconscious biases are created through historic legacies and life experiences and influences from other individuals.

Implicit Bias Self-Assessment: [Project Implicit](#)

Expressions of explicit bias are no longer deemed acceptable in most of American society. Explicit bias expressions have declined significantly over the past half-century. Implicit bias has been shown to be persistent and widespread.

Explicit bias has morphed into implicit bias, with implicit bias perpetuated by institutional policies and practices. These policies and practices replicate the same racially inequitable outcomes that previously existed.

Implicit bias increases the difficulty in perceiving and resolving the existence of racial inequality.

A main approach to counteracting bias is to incorporate anti-bias ideas and procedures into our decision-making.

Why government?

From the inception of our country, government at the local, regional, state, and federal levels have played a role in creating and maintaining racial inequity:

- Who is a citizen
- Who can vote and what barriers,
- Who can own property,
- Who is property,
- Where can one live.

Governmental laws, policies, and practices created a racial hierarchy and determined based on race who benefits and who is burdened.

Historic Role of Government in Racial Inequities

In US history, rights were defined by whiteness.

- The **National Housing Act of 1934** was implemented using a neighborhood grading system (now known as redlining) that labeled minority neighborhoods as too unstable for lending resulted in entrenched segregation and benefits largely only accrued to white families.
- The **National Labor Relations Act of 1935**, excluded agricultural and domestic employees, predominated by African-American. Created disparities in labor protection that exist to this day, as these jobs remain largely held by people of color and have never been incorporated into the NLRA.
- The **GI Bill**, obstructed African-Americans from getting tuition benefits. Banks and mortgage agencies refused home loans to African Americans

Civil Rights Legislation

The **Civil Rights Act of 1964**, which prohibited discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, or national origin and desegregated public facilities;

Voting Rights Act of 1965, which made racial discrimination in voting illegal.

Current inequities are sustained by historic legacies, structures, and systems that repeat patterns of exclusion.

Despite progress in addressing explicit discrimination, racial inequities continue to be deep, pervasive, and persistent across the country.

Racial inequities exist across all indicators for success, including education, criminal justice, jobs, housing, public infrastructure, and health, regardless of region.

In 2010, for example, African Americans made up 13 percent of the population but had only 2.7 percent of the country's wealth. Additionally, the median net worth for a white family was \$134,000, while the median net worth for an African American family was \$11,000.

Today, government often focuses on symptoms and not causes when attempting to work on racial equity.

While programs and services are often necessary, they will never be sufficient for achieving racial equity. We must focus on policy and institutional strategies that drive perpetuation of inequities.

We are now at a critical juncture where there is a possible new role for government—to proactively advance racial equity

Why now?

In addition to a moral imperative we may feel for righting wrongs, there is particular urgency in our current moment to integrate and incorporate racial equity frameworks and tools due to our country's changing racial demographics.

By 2060, people of color will represent approximately 57 percent of the US population. Latinos and Asians are driving the demographic growth.

Simultaneously, the white population will stay the same until 2040, at which point it will begin to decrease (*US Census Bureau, 2012*).

Strategies to Advance Racial Equity and Government Transformation

- 1. Use a racial equity framework.** Jurisdictions need to use a racial equity framework that clearly acknowledges the racial history of government and envisions and operationalizes a new role.
- 2. Build organizational capacity.** Jurisdictions need to be committed to the breadth (all functions) and depth (throughout hierarchy) of institutional transformation. While the leadership of elected members and top officials is critical, changes take place on the ground, and infrastructure that creates racial equity experts and teams throughout local and regional government is necessary.
- 3. Implement racial equity tools.** Inequities will not disappear on their own. Tools must be used to change the policies, programs, and practices that are perpetuating inequities, as well as used in the development of new policies and programs.
- 4. Be data-driven.** Measurement must take place at two levels—first, to measure the success of specific programmatic and policy changes, and second, to develop baselines, set goals, and measure progress towards community goals.
- 5. Partner with other institutions and communities.** The local and regional government must be working in partnership with communities and other institutions.
- 6. Communicate and act with urgency.** When change is a priority and urgency is felt, change is embraced and can take place quickly. Building in institutional accountability mechanisms via a clear plan of action will allow accountability. Collectively, we must create greater urgency

What is a Racial Equity Tool?

Racial equity tools are designed to integrate direct consideration of racial equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets. It is both a product and a process.

Use of a racial equity tool can help develop strategies and actions that reduce racial inequities and improve success for all groups.

When racial equity is not explicitly brought into operations and decision-making, racial inequities are likely to be perpetuated. Racial equity tools provide a structure for institutionalizing the consideration of racial equity.

A racial equity tool intentionally :

- proactively seeks to eliminate racial inequities and advance equity;
- identifies clear goals, objectives and measurable outcomes;
- engages community in decision-making processes;
- identifies who will benefit or be burdened by a given decision, examines potential unintended consequences of a decision, and develops strategies to advance racial equity and mitigate unintended negative consequences; and,
- develops mechanisms for successful implementation and evaluation of impact.

The Racial Equity Tool is a Simple Set of Questions

1. Proposal: What is the policy, program, practice or budget decision under consideration? What are the desired results and outcomes?
2. Data: What's the data? What does the data tell us about inequities? (Includes statistics, history, patterns.)
3. Community engagement: How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?
4. Analysis and strategies: Who will benefit from or be harmed by the proposal? What are the strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?
5. Implementation: What is the plan for implementation?
6. Accountability, communication, evaluation: How to document and evaluate? Messages and communication strategies to advance racial equity? How to deepen relationships within communities to ensure sustainability over the long-term?