



“You want your efforts to be included, you want to be counted in the positive change that we’re all going to make, so that everyone can say, ‘together, we were able to do this.’”

Karla Bruce, Director
Dept. of Neighborhood
and Community Services

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4. USE DATA AND METRICS

DATA RELATING TO RACIAL inequities is often readily available. What is more frequently lacking, however, are strategies for closing the gaps and tracking progress over time. It is not enough to have data, we must also use data, and this includes data at multiple levels. If our goal is to eliminate racial inequities and improve success across all groups, it is important that we track our impact. At the same time, measurement at the program level is also important to track the impact of specific public sector investments and policy changes.

An oft-repeated saying in government is “what gets counted, counts.”

As in all public sector work, accountability is critical to successful racial equity initiatives.

Unlike some government projects, however, impact is sometimes difficult to measure. There are many factors that contribute to social and economic outcomes of people from different racial groups. Nevertheless, using data and metrics to track progress of a jurisdiction’s racial equity initiatives and to follow trends in racial disparities is important and there are some models emerging on how to do this well. Without the use of data and metrics to evaluate progress, it is difficult to keep staff motivated to work toward collective goals, particularly goals as ambitious as achieving racial equity (Behn, 2003). Metrics also facilitate alignment of outputs with outcomes and the coordination of efforts across many actors

within government (Kania and Kramer, 2011).

Research also indicates that implicitly biased behavior is best detected by using data to determine whether patterns of behavior are leading to racially disparate outcomes—making the use of data for racial equity work especially important (Godsil et al, 2014). Policy organizations focused on racial equity have developed new tools—such as the National Equity Atlas and the Regional Equity Atlas in Portland—to analyze a variety of demographic and economic data to measure equity in metropolitan regions across the country.

The **Regional Equity Atlas** has been used to affect policy in a variety of areas in the Portland metro region, such as in the transportation system. The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) used the Equity Atlas data to inform and motivate the development of East Portland in Motion, a five-year implementation strategy for active transportation projects and programs east of 82nd Avenue, an area that has high concentrations of low-income populations and people of color and limited active transportation options. PBOT also used the Equity Atlas to create a decision-making framework to determine how it prioritizes investments in street lighting upgrades. The criteria uses Equity Atlas maps to determine the neighborhoods with the highest levels of need based on demographics, access to active transit, and transportation safety (Coalition for a Liveable Future).

The City of Portland Office of Equity and Human Rights website features a “demographics

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dashboard” of workforce as well as manager/supervisor diversity statistics, which serves the dual purpose of tracking progress on internal staffing goals and also providing public accountability and transparency. In Seattle, the Race and Social Justice Initiative has conducted both employee and community surveys to measure and track understanding of racial equity efforts and use of the racial equity tools, as well as perception of whether progress is being made.

While data are essential to quality racial equity strategies, some jurisdiction representatives offer a cautionary note. Karen Shaban of the Office of the Fairfax County Executive and Neighborhood and Community Services warned, “You have to be careful to not go down too many rabbit holes. What’s the magic number that would make it urgent? You can be too cautious, you can sit in data all day and night, but you’re not necessarily going to get yourself anywhere. You need to think about it in a strategic way.” The American Public Health Association, in its 2015 *Better Health Through Equity* report, further cautions,

“We need data to pinpoint problems, deploy resources, track progress, evaluate effectiveness, and justify continued support. But in the work toward health equity, data can’t be the only driver.”

For example, worrisome data on prenatal care may lead you to initiate contact with a community. However, residents might have more pressing concerns, such as few employment opportunities, difficulties affording enough food, and unsafe housing conditions. These are the issues you have to tackle first if you want to positively impact infant health in the long term.

Mark Friedman, author of *Trying Hard is Not Good Enough* (Trafford 2005), has developed a guide for effective use of data and metrics called **Results Based Accountability** (2010), which he defines as “a disciplined way of thinking and taking action used by communities to improve the lives of children, families, and the community as a whole.” The terminology for

results and outcomes is informed by our relationships with Results Based Accountability™.

This approach to measurement clearly delineates between results / community conditions and outcomes / performance measures. These two levels share a common systematic approach to measurement. This approach emphasizes the importance of beginning with a focus on the desired “end” condition. Ideally, the baseline includes both historic data, as well as a forecast for the future for a particular measure.

- **Results are at the community level**, the conditions we are aiming to impact. Community indicators are the means by which we can measure impact in the community. Community indicators should be disaggregated by race, if possible.
- **Outcomes are at the jurisdiction, department or program level**. Appropriate performance measures allow monitoring of the success of implementation of actions that have a reasonable chance of influencing indicators and contributing to results. Performance measures respond to three different levels:
 - a. Quantity: How much did we do?
 - b. Quality: How well did we do it?
 - c. Is anyone better off?

Although measuring whether anyone is actually better off as a result of a decision is highly desired, we also know there are inherent measurement challenges. You should think about a mix of types of performance measures so that you are able to assess the status quo and track progress. The guide includes the following steps to conduct decision making processes that “turn the curve”:

1. **What is the “end”?** Choose either a result and indicator or a performance measure.
2. **How are we doing?** Graph the historic baseline and forecast for the indicator or performance measure.
3. **What is the story behind the curve of the baseline?** Briefly explain the story behind the baseline: the factors (positive and negative, internal and external) that are most strongly influencing the curve of the baseline.

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	QUANTITY	QUALITY
EFFORT	<p>How Much We Do</p> <p>How much service did we deliver?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Customers served # Services/Activities 	<p>How Well We Do It</p> <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % Services/activities performed well
EFFECT	<p>Is Anyone Better Off?</p> <p>What quantity/quality of change for the better did we produce?</p> <p>#/% with improvement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Attitudes Behavior Circumstances 	

- 4. Which partners have a role to play in turning the curve?** Identify partners who might have a hand in turning the curve of the baseline.
- 5. What works to turn the curve?** Determine what would work to turn the curve of the baseline. Include no-cost/low-cost strategies.
- 6. What do we propose to do to turn the curve?** Determine what you and your partners propose to do to turn the curve of the baseline.

TO STANDARDIZE THE TYPES of metrics used to compare across geography, GARE is piloting a “racial equity scorecard” (see next page). Measuring against the outcomes and indicators included in the scorecard will enable jurisdictions to evaluate progress made and to correct their course if real change is not seen in the community.

Friedman offers the matrix shown above as a tool for sorting and categorizing performance measures.

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Racial Equity Scorecard

The Racial Equity Scorecard is a project of GARE to develop a model of tracking equity metrics in a way that facilitates learning across jurisdictions. Eight GARE members are participating in the pilot project, which includes using custom software for tracking progress upon shared metrics. The purpose of the scorecard is to not to just collect data, but use it for achieving results.

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

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Survey Data to Track Perception in Seattle

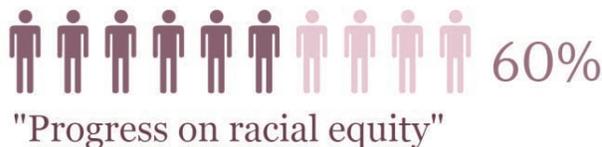
The City of Seattle conducts an internal survey of all city employees every two years. This survey allows Seattle to track the progress of the city as a whole, as well as individual departments, in operationalizing equity. The survey allows the city to assess employee understanding and skill of institutional and structural racism, gain understanding of how departments are building racial equity into programs, policies, initiatives and budget decisions, and track progress over time. In addition, Seattle does a regular survey of residents across the city. Results from this survey made clear: community attitudes and perceptions about racial equity matter. Ninety-four percent of respondents agreed that we have more work to do to address racial inequities in Seattle. Seattle concluded, "We cannot continue with business as usual when race has such significant impacts on the lives of Seattle residents. Seattle residents have expressed their support for City government to address racial equity gaps in key indicators for a healthy community, including education, criminal justice, housing and other areas. The RSJI Community Survey provides the City with baseline data to measure our efforts to achieve racial equity and create opportunities for all.



RSJI EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2012



RSJI COMMUNITY SURVEY 2012



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