ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY + TRANSFORMING GOVERNMENT

Highlights from GARE's September 2015 Report

Highlights

Key Learnings

This resource guide is a **must-read for those exploring role of equity in local government**. It details six strategies for advancing racial equity and government transformation:

1. Use a racial equity framework
2. Build organizational capacity
3. Implement racial equity tools
4. Be data-driven
5. Partner with other institutions and communities
6. Communicate and act with urgency

A detailed accounting of government's role historically in creating and maintaining racial inequities is provided, concluding with the note that many overtly discriminatory policies became illegal following the Civil Rights movement, racial inequity nevertheless became embedded in policy that did not name race explicitly, yet still perpetuated racial inequalities.

Other key learnings:

- Racial equity means that race can't be used to predict success, and we have successful systems and structure that work for all.
- Implicit bias is attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.
- Organizational capacity requires training and infrastructure
- Seven levers of change are described: mass exposure, personal contact, resistance and expertise, investing in infrastructure, recognizing role of leaders, and rewarding and recognizing accomplishments.

Case studies/profiles of local government efforts to proactively advance an equity-based transformation are reviewed, with the following links for additional info:

- **Dubuque, IA** - www.inclusivedbq.org. Trainings and efforts largely focused on nonprofit capacity building and school system equity issues, with one outcome being an Equity Profile for the city
- **St. Paul, MN** - Trainings also began in response to equity issues in schools, and led to use of a Racial Equity Assessment Tool to examine key policy, procedure and service decisions. Contact jane.eastwood@ci.stpaul.mn.us for further information.
- **Seattle, WA** - Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) has applied a Racial Equity Tool is an analysis to City of Seattle policies, programs and budget decisions, resulting in outcomes around women's right to breastfeed in public, creation of a job assistance ordinance, El Centro de la Raza's Plaza Roberto Maestas development.
- **Madison, WI** - efforts began as collaboration between Health and Civil Rights Departments, conducting trainings and assessments across departments. The resulting resolution established three goals for the city to focus its efforts on: Equity in City Operations, Equity in City Policy and

Budget, and Equity in the Community. Further information can be found at https://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/ priorities/racialequity.cfm).

- **Portland, OR** - long-time effort resulting in creation of Office of Equity and Human Rights, Citywide Equity Committee, "All Hands Raised" Reducing Disparities Initiative, extensive evaluations and training program, and recent application of an equity tool for the city's budget process. More info: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/68111 and https://clfuture.org/equity-atlas.

Report includes organizational charts and communications graphics created by Seattle, Portland, Fairfax County.

GARE has identified common elements across racial equity tools, including:
1. Inclusion and Engagement— Promote racially inclusive collaboration and engagement.
2. Be data-driven and accountable— Use data.
3. Integrate program and policy strategies— Develop and implement program and policy strategies for eliminating racial inequity.
4. Structural change—Develop cross-sector, cross-jurisdictional partnerships to achieve systemic change.
5. Educate and communicate about racial equity—Educate on racial issues and raise racial awareness.

Regional Equity Atlas efforts are held up as critical tools to understanding and communicating current inequities, and moving towards Results Based Accountability. Questions to be asked in data evaluation include:
- What is the community-level impact (disaggregated by race where possible)?
- What is the jurisdiction, department or program action that influences this community impact?
- What is the "end" (result, indicator, or performance measure)?
- How are we doing?
- What is the story behind the curve of the baseline?
- Which partners have a role to play in turning the curve?
- What works to turn the curve?
- What do we propose to do to turn the curve?

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