

Racial Equity Glossary

Active Bystander

A person who disrupts harmful occurrences when witnessed.

Ally/Accomplice

A person who commits to recognizing their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and working in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Title is given by marginalized communities to those whose actions demonstrate their commitment to solidarity.

Anchor Institution

- Public service entities—like hospitals, universities, or utilities—which are tied to a location due to infrastructure or mission.
- Entities that provide critical services and vital assets to improve economy, health, environment and well-being in communities.
- Organizations that provide active civic leadership and participate in and add to the public life and character of their community.

Sources: <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-water-infrastructure/water-utilities-anchor-institutions>

Anti-racist

A person's whose daily actions act against racism. It involves supporting movements, ideas, politics, and policies that promote racial equity.

Climate Justice

Climate justice focuses on the root causes of climate change and systemic discrimination that must be addressed to eliminate the unequal climate burdens faced by Communities of Color. It centers the leadership and vision of frontline communities most impacted by climate change and acknowledges the rights of all beings to have access to resources to support their survival and freedom.

Community-Based Organization (CBO)

A community-based organization is an organization of demonstrated effectiveness that is representative of a community or significant segments of a community and provides educational or related services to individuals in the community. It is driven by community residents in all aspects of its existence including:

- The main operating offices are in the community,
- Priority issue areas are identified and defined by residents,
- Solutions to address priority issues are developed with residents, and
- Program design, implementation, and evaluation components have residents intimately involved, in leadership positions

Sources: <https://sph.umich.edu/ncbon/about/whatis.html> and https://www.law.cornell.edu/definitions/uscode.php?width=840&height=800&iframe=true&def_id=20-USC-1991540508-1493090985&term_occur=2&term_src=title:20:chapter:70:subchapter:I:section:6303b

Community Engagement

Community Engagement is the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people. It is a powerful vehicle for bringing about environmental and behavioral changes that will improve the health of the community and its members. It often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs, and practices.

Source: "Principles of Community Engagement: First Edition." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: CDC/ATSDR Committee on Community Engagement, 1997.

Community Member

A person who is directly impacted by the issues present in a community. The people in a community make up the community, so any actions taken to improve conditions within the geographical confines of the space the community occupies will impact them. The effects of actions will be different for each member of the community, as people can be impacted differently based on their association with the issues being addressed and their own personal circumstances.

Source: <https://www.universalclass.com/articles/business/meanings-of-community-members-to-community-development.htm>

Community Participation and Empowerment

- Community participation - social process in which groups with shared needs living in a “certain geographical area” actively identify needs, make decisions, and set up mechanisms to achieve solutions.
- Empowerment - multilevel construct that describes a social action process for people to gain mastery over their lives, their organizations, and the lives of their communities.

Note: Community participation is related to empowerment since, by participating, members expand their power from within to create needed changes.

Source: *Annu. Rev. Public Health* 2006. 27:323–40 doi:

10.1146/annurev.publhealth.27.021405.102207

<https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.27.021405.102207>

Community Science

Community Science is the process by which communities and scientists do science together to advance one or more community priorities. “Doing science” includes defining questions, designing protocols, collecting and analyzing data, and using scientific knowledge in decision-making and planning.

Equitable Organizational Development

The study and implementation of practices, systems, and strategies that reduce disparities while fostering organizational change that produces equitable results. The goal of which is to modify an organization's performance and/or culture to meet the needs of underserved communities and individuals through projects, programs, and/or policies.

Environmental Racism

Environmental injustices that have been shown to disproportionately impact BIPOC. These injustices are enabled through institutional laws, policies, and practices. (ex: living in environmentally hazardous conditions)

Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice (EJ) is a civil rights principle: all people have a right to be protected from environmental pollution and to live, learn, work, play, and pray in and enjoy a clean and healthy

environment regardless of race, income, national origin, or English language proficiency. In a time of severe climate change, this also means equal protection against the adverse consequences of severe weather, extreme temperatures, and flooding.

Source: Alternatives for Community and the Environment.

Equity

A measure of just and fair treatment, opportunities, and outcomes across race, gender, class, and other identities which creates conditions for everyone to have an opportunity to participate and prosper. Equity involves increasing access to those who need it most when disparities exist, and acknowledging past structural harms.

Equality

Aims to ensure fairness and that every-one gets the same things in order to enjoy full, healthy lives, but it can only work if every-one starts from the same place and needs the same things.

Source: <https://www.aecf.org/blog/racial-justice-definitions#:~:text=Equity%20vs.-,Equality,to%20enjoy%20full%2C%20healthy%20lives>.

Explicit Bias

Conscious beliefs and assumptions that influence our actions and decision making.

Frontline Communities

Frontline communities are hit “first and worst” by environmental and climate hazards, and are most often Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and low-income people. They often experience higher levels of water equity issues involving water access, affordability, quality, and flooding.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is an approach to water management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle. Green infrastructure incorporates both the natural environment and engineered systems to provide clean water, conserve ecosystem values and functions, and provide a wide array of benefits.

Source: <https://www.americanrivers.org/threats-solutions/clean-water/green-infrastructure/what-is-green-infrastructure/>

Green Gentrification

Since investment in Green Infrastructure tends to interact with an economic system that incentivizes property speculation, private profit, and growth, the occurrence of urban green infrastructure initiatives and their associated benefits can trigger a series of negative impacts commonly associated with gentrification. These can include increases to land or property values, which raise property taxes and make living in the area less affordable, changes to the character of a neighborhood or the displacement of low-income, long-term residents.

*Sources: <https://theconversation.com/how-cities-can-avoid-green-gentrification-and-make-urban-forests-accessible-160226>
<https://create.umn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Green-Gentrification.pdf>*

Inclusion

Ensuring differences are welcomed, different perspectives are respectfully heard, and every individual feels a sense of belonging.

Source: <https://eab.com/research/strategy/resource-center/diversity-equity-inclusion-and-justice-initiatives-in-higher-education/>

Inclusive Culture

An inclusive culture involves the full and successful integration of diverse people into a workplace or industry. It is not limited to basic representation; it indicates a climate in which respect, equity and positive recognition of differences are all cultivated and the social and institutional response to racial identity poses no barrier to a positive employment experience.

Source: <https://di-ucw.org/what-is-an-inclusive-culture/>

Infrastructure resilience

Infrastructure Resilience is the ability to reduce the magnitude and/or duration of disruptive events. The effectiveness of a resilient infrastructure or enterprise depends upon its ability to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, and/or rapidly recover from a potentially disruptive event.

Source: Smith, Heather. (2014). Understanding resilience: Implications for the water sector. 10.22459/GW.05.2014.33.

Institutional Racism

The overarching structure of racism. Which uses history, law, and controlling of resources to create disadvantages for people of color while simultaneously creating systems of advantage for white people.

Implicit Bias

Unconscious attitudes, beliefs, and automatic assumptions that influence actions and decision making.

Justice

A measure of equal treatment, opportunities, and outcomes across race, gender, class, and other identities. It involves providing everyone with the same access. However, in an oppressive society marginalized people do not begin with equal access, some people may need additional resources or different resources to achieve equality. A sense of restitution, fairness, and equitable treatment. Involves identifying obstacles to equity and fairness and creating solutions. Justice identifies a solution for the root cause of oppression so that equity is achieved.

One Water

One Water is a transformational and holistic approach to water management that ensures multi-generational water stewardship and an equitable and sustainable water future for all.

Participatory Planning

Participatory Planning is a process by which a community undertakes to reach a given socio-economic goal by consciously diagnosing its problems and charting a course of action to resolve those problems. Experts are needed, but only as facilitators.

Source:

<https://www.fao.org/3/ad346e/ad346e06.htm#:~:text=Participatory%20planning%20is%20a%20process,needed%2C%20but%20only%20as%20facilitators.>

Privilege

An unearned and sustained advantage that comes from being White, Able-Bodied, Cis-Gendered, Heterosexual, or Rich. Hierarchical systems create advantages for “dominant” identities. Having a privileged identity does not mean a person never experiences marginalization.

Power

Having control over resources and narratives. Wealth, racial identity and white supremacy
Whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms
through which power can operate.

Race

A social construct that artificially divides people into hierarchical categories based on physical
and cultural characteristics like skin tone, language, facial features, traditions and hair textures.

Racial Equity

Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted,
in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity
as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include 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.

Resilience

A system's ability to absorb disturbances and reorganize itself into a better configuration,
while still retaining its fundamental characteristics.

*Source: Smith, Heather. (2014). Understanding resilience: Implications for the water
sector. 10.22459/GW.05.2014.33.*

Returning Citizens

People who have been incarcerated.

Service Equity - Service equity is the delivery of inclusive and equitable service to all customers
recognizing our systems carry important and documented inequities based on race, income,
gender, and sexual orientation among others.

<https://www.seattle.gov/utilities/protecting-our-environment/community-programs/environmental-justice-and-service-equity/glossary>

Tokenizing

The practice of hiring or including a person who belongs to a minority group in a process in a way
that does not shift the decision-making power and is done primarily to create the appearance of
fair treatment or an equitable process.

Vulnerable communities

Vulnerable communities face historic or contemporary barriers to economic and social opportunities and a healthy environment. The principal factors in community vulnerability are income, race or ethnicity, age, language ability, and geographic location. Vulnerable communities may include the following groups:

- Communities of color
- Elderly
- Immigrant communities
- Indigenous communities
- Limited English proficiency
- Lower-income communities
- People with disabilities
- Rural
- Youth

White Supremacy

Describes a political ideology and systemic oppression that perpetuates and maintains the social, political, historical, and/or industrial White domination over people of color and resources.

Additional Resources

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