



# How To Build Equitable Coalitions

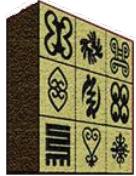
Next Steps in Strengthening Your Application & Your Team  
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# Today's Speaker

**Donzell Robinson**  
COO & Principal



**JUSTICE & SUSTAINABILITY  
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# Equitable Development

## Equitable Development

An intentional investment in the physical and social development of cities and communities to ensure that everyone, especially historically marginalized and at-risk communities, participates in and benefits from a region's economic transformation

## Inequitable Development

Development plans and practices that result in only portions of a population benefiting from a region's economic transformations through effects such as displacement or exclusion of vulnerable communities\*

\*Definition from PolicyLink

## Equity

As an **OUTCOME**: Reduced disparities and more equitable quality of life outcomes (e.g., living wage employment, affordable housing) through public and private investments, programs, and policies

As a **PROCESS** - Inclusive engagement of all impacted stakeholders and conflict resolution that accounts for past history and negative legacies of development

## Justice

Justice corrects the systems that are the root causes and perpetuate inequality.

Effective equitable development creates opportunities to right the historical injustices and repairs social and economic damage to communities that have been marginalized and excluded.

<https://eda.gov/arpa/build-back-better/OH/>

# ARPA and Distressed Communities



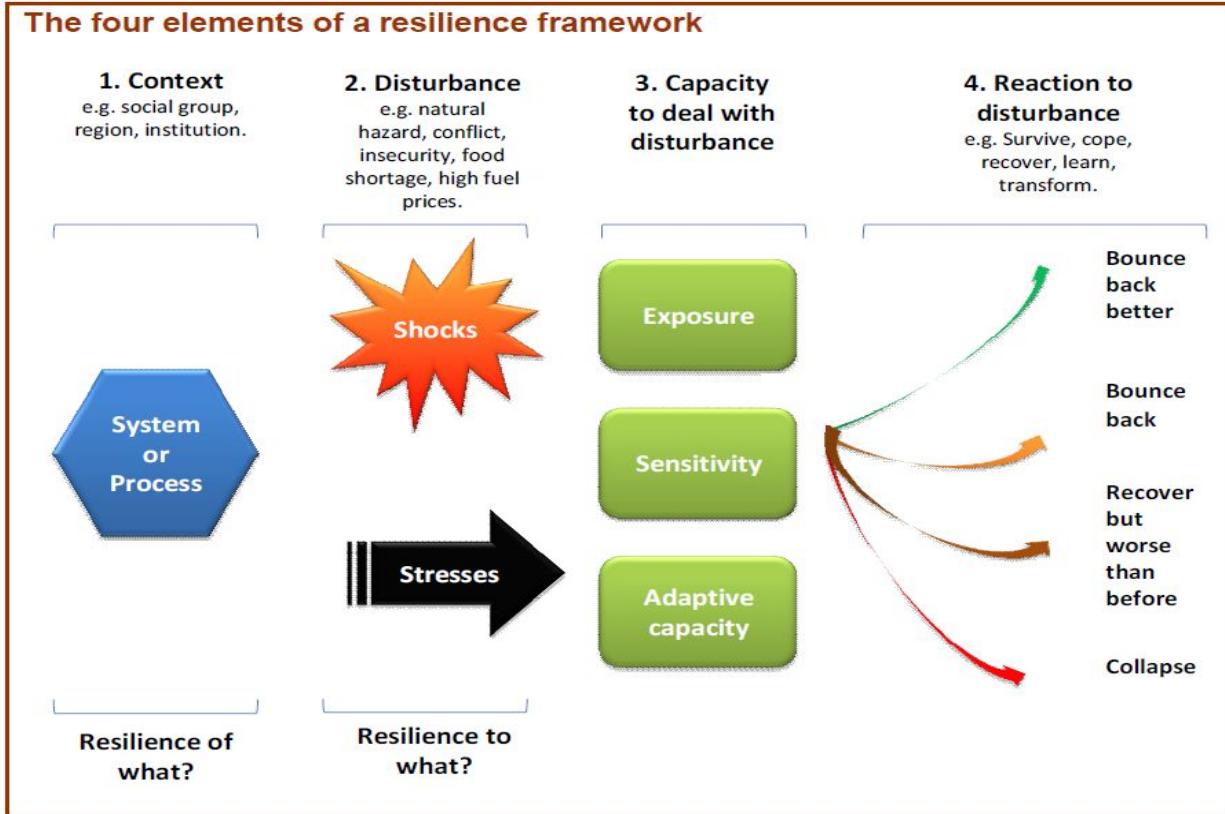
“The American Rescue Plan Act and the Build Back Better Regional Challenge “aims to boost economic recovery from the pandemic and rebuild American communities, including those grappling with decades of disinvestment.”



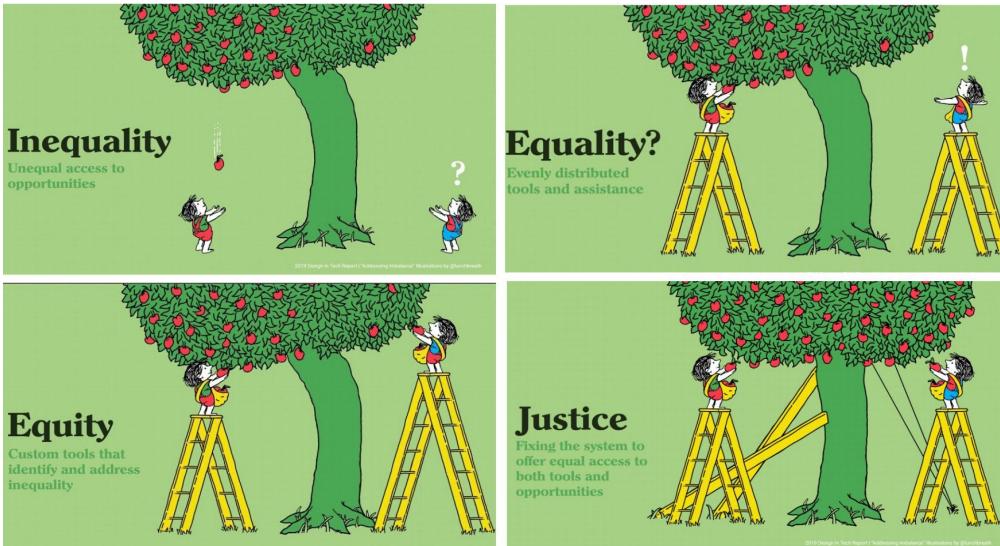
**Equity** requires you to create solutions that are tailored to the communities you are serving.

# COVID's Deepening of Existing Divides

- ▶ Some populations, communities, counties and regions face disproportionate impacts from COVID-19
- ▶ Histories of disinvestment, racial segregation, changes in manufacturing, natural disasters, and other stressors mark certain communities more than others
- ▶ Continuum of impact and continuum of solution



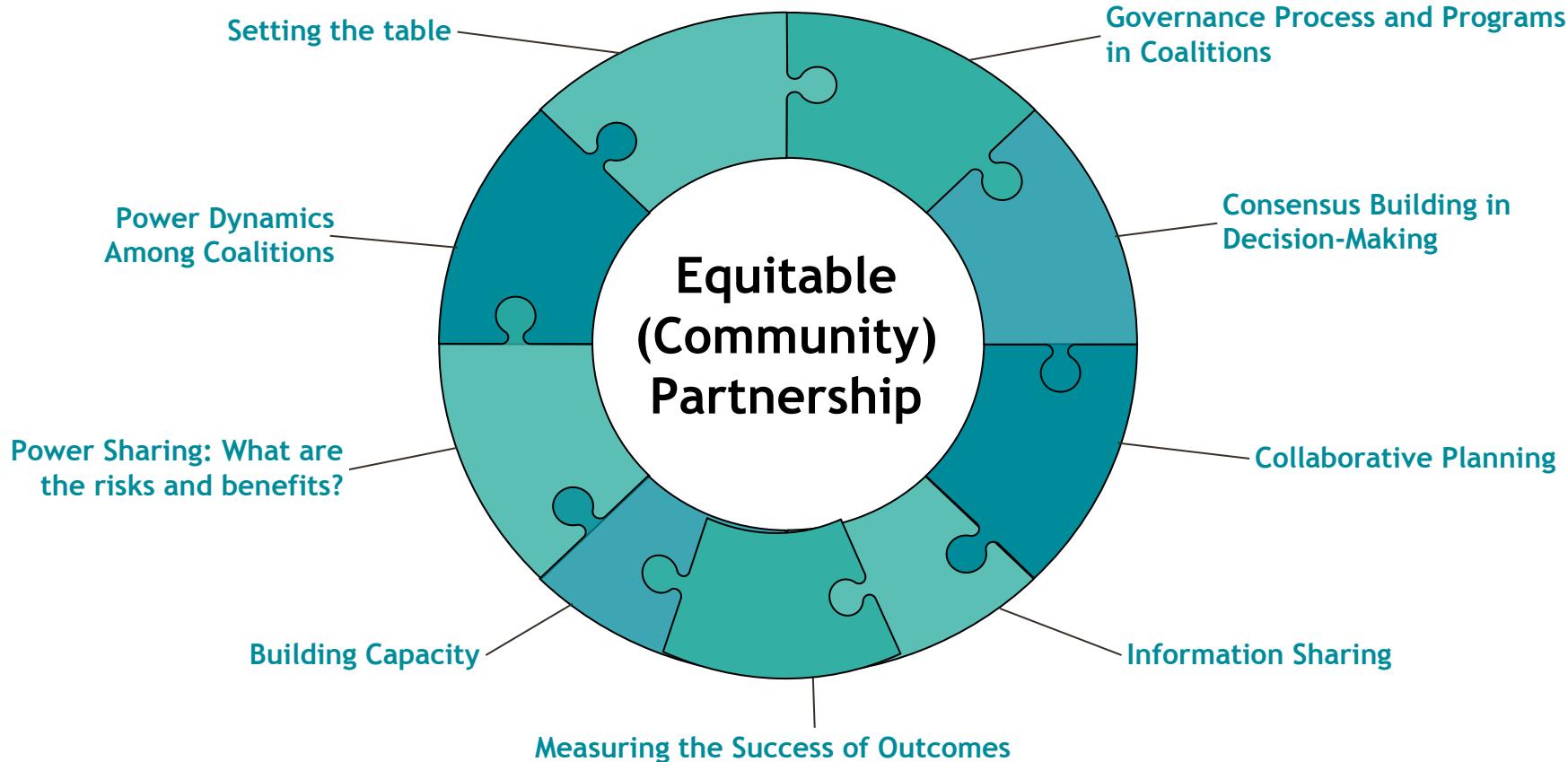
# Equitable Solutions



Created by Tony Ruth based on Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree* for John Maeda's 2019 *Design In Tech Report*

To provide the right solutions for each community, look at planning through equitable lens.

# Creating an Equitable Partnership



# Setting the Table



- **Include historically excluded communities in decision-making**
- **Decide how coalition partners will ensure accountability for inclusion**
- **Clarify and communicate the partners' equity-related roles and responsibilities**



# Power Dynamics Among Coalitions



Photo Credit: <https://bids.berkeley.edu/news/gender-issues-roundtable-discussion-case-study-uncomfortable-conversations>

- Understand power dynamics
- Take **partner capacity** into consideration
- Determine how you will manage disagreements
- Put **procedures/policies** in place that include not exclude (no Robert's Rules of Order.)

# Power Sharing: What are the Risks and Benefits?

- Don't rule out “unlikely partnerships.”
- Be cautious about excluding or rejecting partners just because they do not “tow the line” on a particular issue.
- Collaborating rather than competing or avoiding conflict.
- In other words, equitizing the process—ensuring equity at every step.



# Building Capacity

**Building capacity** means making sure people have the information and ability to be part of decision-making.

- **Providing information and education**
- **Authentically engaging stakeholders**
  - Listen and meet people where they are
  - Don't make assumptions; Ask!



# Governance Processes and Programs in Coalitions



**The Goal:** Equitable decision-making processes that articulate...

- How policies are established,
- How decisions are made,
- Who has a voice in decision-making, and
- Who is held accountable

# Consensus-Building in Decision-Making

- Define shared outcomes
- Surface issues and conflicts
- Reach agreement around approach
- "**a meeting of the minds**"
- Consensus decision-making is concerned with the process of **deliberating** and finalizing a decision, as well as the **social and political effects** of using that decision-making process.



# Consensus-Building in Decision-Making



**STRUCTURE is Key**



- **Steering Committee**
- **Working Groups**
- **Terms of Reference**
  - Purpose
  - Ground Rules
  - Behavioral Expectations
- **No voting**

# Collaborative Planning



## Partners

- Have their “Fingerprints on the Plan”
- Participate in all decisions and see their communities benefit
- Access ongoing opportunities to influence the plan



# Information Sharing



Information should:

-  Be freely available
-  Be accessible
-  Consider all audiences
-  Build trust through transparency

# Measuring the Success of Outcomes



Did we do what we said we would do?



Acknowledge, Include,  
Empower

&

Did we produce the outcomes we wanted?



Equitable outcomes through disaggregated data

# Approach to Engagement & Consensus-Building



A high capacity, well-informed stakeholder partnership

- Stakeholder interviews
- Advisory committees
- Partnership Circles
- Project narratives
- Small group meetings
- Large group meetings

Collaborative & facilitated problem solving

- Focus groups
- Roundtables
- Design charrettes
- Post-event debriefs

Win-win outcomes with evidence-based benefits

- Negotiation & consensus building
- Documentation
- Evaluation
- Crowd sourcing

Sustained information sharing & conflict resolution

- Conflict identification & assessment
- Facilitation & mediation
- Information & education resources
- Engagement databases
- Print, electronic, and digital media
- Social media



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## Equitable Coalitions

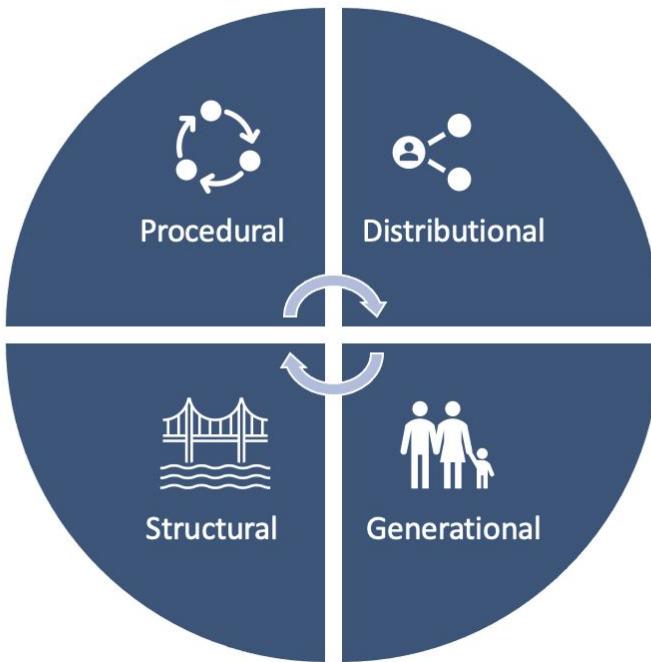
- Is there anything about equity either in the governance of your coalition or in your programming that give you heartburn?
- Do you feel confident in authentically including historically excluded communities in your regional projects?
- Have you thought about strategies to build capacity with coalition members and stakeholders to ensure their fruitful participation in decision making and implementation?

# FRAMEWORKS for Increasing Equity



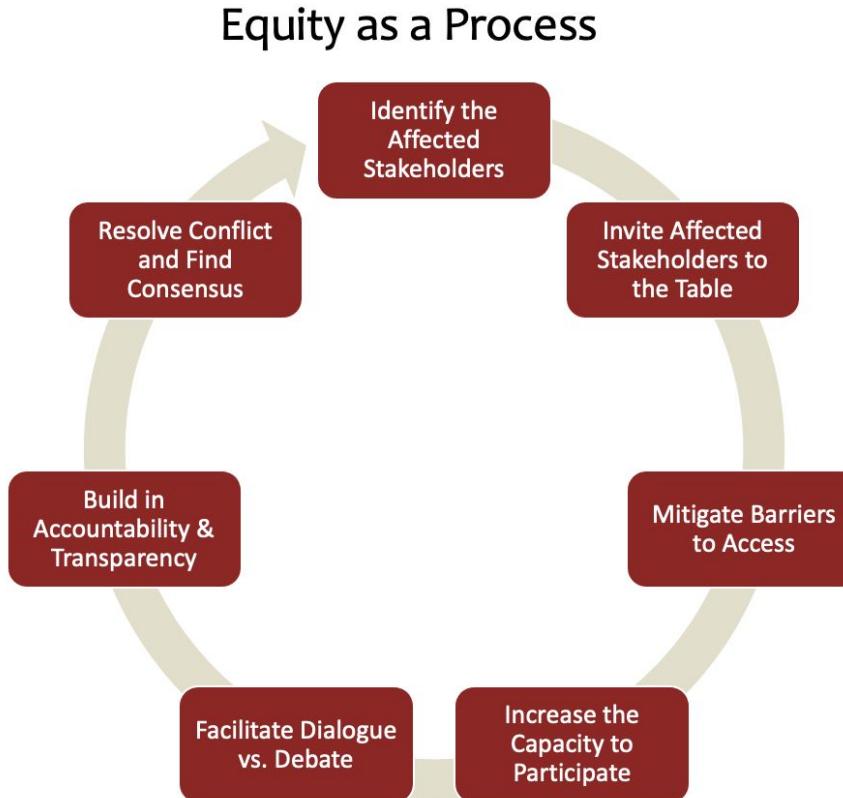
# Equity in Sustainability Framework

## 4 Types of Equity\*

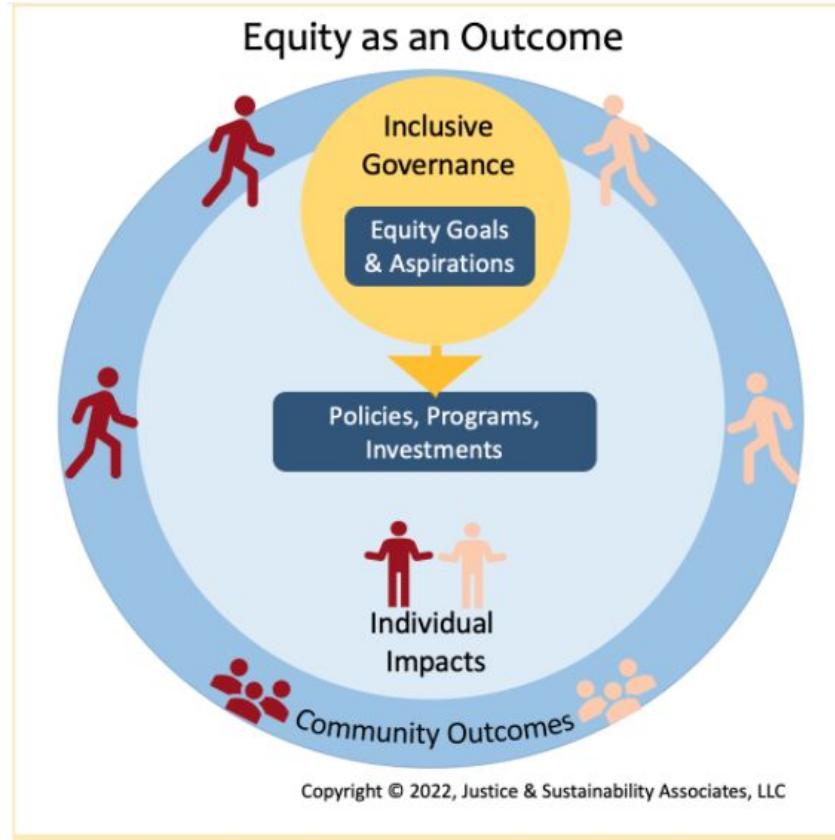


\* Adapted from The Urban Sustainability Directors Network's *Equity in Sustainability* (2014)

# Equity as a Process Framework



# Equity as a Outcome Framework





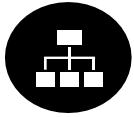
# Nike & Worker Rights Consortium Protocol

JSA designed and facilitated multiple convenings with key stakeholders internally at Georgetown University, Nike, and Worker Rights Consortium to resolve conflicts regarding reported human rights violations, factory access, and sportswear contract.

A Fast Company article describes it as follows:

"To settle their differences, Georgetown University brought in an expert mediator, Don Edwards, CEO of the Justice and Sustainability Associates, who helped the university, Nike, and the WRC talk everything out and arrive at a new contract. with a major concession by Nike as part of a new deal that demonstrates the clout of university athletic systems and the impact of student protests. After months of discussions, Nike and Georgetown have negotiated a new retail licensing agreement that allows the WRC formal access to collegiate licensing factories whenever there are reports of problems."

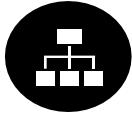
Fast Company | [Here's How Georgetown Convinced Nike To Make A Major Concession On Workers' Rights](#) | Aug 2017



# Georgetown Community Partnership

Since 2010, Justice and Sustainability Associates' team, led by CEO and Principal, Don Edwards, has engaged with Georgetown University and community leaders to resolve development conflicts and to stand-up an alternative planning vehicle to guide the evolution of the University's Campus Plans required for approval by DC's Zoning Commission.

Through the long-standing Georgetown Community Partnership, the University and surrounding community have been able to agree upon two consensus-based campus plans (2010-2017, 2017-2036) and progress and secure consensus around the development of the \$1B Medstar Surgical Pavilion on the Main Campus of Georgetown University.





# West Palm Beach Task Force for Racial and Ethnic Equality

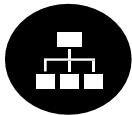
In July of 2020, City of West Palm Beach Mayor Keith James formed the Task Force for Racial and Ethnic Equality (the “Task Force”) to highlight and address systemic racism impacting communities of color in the city. The City hired JSA to provide facilitation support, community engagement, and subject matter guidance for the Task Force and its five working groups (education and workforce development; health; housing and real estate; finance, banking and business; and criminal justice).

Two virtual action summits in December 2020 and June 2021 were held for West Palm Beach stakeholders to inform Task Force priorities and share ideas for building racial equity in their city. Targeted JSA outreach strategies resulted in participation from underrepresented stakeholder groups, including Latinx and youth attendees who had never previously engaged in a civic process.

West Palm Beach Mayor's Task Force on Racial & Ethnic Equality

WPB  
WEST PALM BEACH  
Mayor's Task Force for  
Racial & Ethnic Equality

ACTION SUMMIT  
June 12, 2021



# Questions and Answers



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## Upcoming Webinars:

- Operational Infrastructure for Success
- New Thinking & Approaches to Economic Development
- From Vision to Strategic Coherence
- Setting Impact Goals and Measuring Equitable Outcomes

