

# Prioritizing Program and Policy Options for Health Equity

## Core Questions to Consider for Health Equity

### Understanding the Context

How is prioritization different in the context of a health equity effort? 7

- CDC. A Practitioners Guide to Advancing Health Equity. (Appendix D: Health Equity Checklist, page 106.) <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/pdf/HealthEquityGuide.pdf>
- CDC. Promoting Health Equity: A Resource to Help Communities Address Social Determinants of Health (page 50).  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/healthycommunitiesprogram/tools/pdf/sdoh-workbook.pdf>
- Ontario. Health Equity Impact Assessment Workbook (pages 20-21 focus on reviewing impacts).  
<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/hea/docs/workbook.pdf>
- Wellesley Institute. Health Equity Impact Assessment: A Primer.  
<http://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/publications/health-equity-impact-assessment/>

In what context are priorities being organized (e.g. short-term, long-term population health, health equity, health disparity, social determinants of health, close gaps in outcomes, expand opportunities)?

Why prioritize among our options at this point? How can prioritization potentially undo health equity efforts?

What existing prioritization processes, frameworks, and/or tools can we use to systematically incorporate the goal of health equity into strategy selection and design? 1

- CDC. Prioritization. <https://www.cdc.gov/nphpsp/documents/prioritization-section-from-apexph-in-practice.pdf>
- CDPHE. Steps Toward Conducting Prioritization Process. <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe-lpha/phase-v-steps-toward-conducting-prioritization-process>
- Community Toolbox. Developing and Using Criteria and Processes to Set Priorities.  
<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/criteria-and-processes-to-set-priorities/main>
- Healthy People 2010. Toolkit (Examples on pages 55-57, 67)  
<http://www.healthypeople.gov/2010/state/toolkit/09Priorities2002.pdf>
- Healthy People 2020. Prioritizing Issues.  
<https://www.healthypeople.gov/sites/default/files/PrioritizingIssues.pdf>
- NACCHO. Common Methods of Prioritization. <http://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Guide-to-Prioritization-Techniques.pdf>

Which [social] determinants affect the largest number of people in your community? 5

- CDC. Community Health Status Indicators (County comparison). <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/communityhealth>
- Community Toolbox. Addressing Social Determinants of Health and Development. <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/analyze/analyze-community-problems-and-solutions/social-determinants-of-health/main>
- Healthy People 2020. Social Determinants of Health. (This website overview, objectives, interventions and resources, and national snapshots). <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>
- Kasier Family Foundation. Beyond Healthcare: The Role of Social Determinants in Promoting Health and Health Equity. <http://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/beyond-health-care-the-role-of-social-determinants-in-promoting-health-and-health-equity/>

Which determinants have the greatest positive or negative impact on the health of the community? How are these considered in your prioritization process? 5

Who or which colleagues, team members, partner agencies, community members will participate in the prioritization process? What will each of their roles be? Who holds final decision-making authority or is it shared?

How do we show the value and recognize the expertise of community members in this process? 1

Are under-served populations or populations-at-risk represented? 3

What are the diverse needs and community capacities we should consider when designing strategies that will have the greatest impact on populations experiencing health inequities?

How can we balance community input with evidence-based strategies to select the most effective strategies to reduce health inequities? 1

## Determining the Criteria

How are priorities determined? 7

- Community Toolbox. Developing and Using Criteria and Processes to Set Priorities. <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/criteria-and-processes-to-set-priorities/main>
- Sparks Policy Institute. Developing Solutions/Equity Based Guiding Questions Worksheet. <http://tools.sparkpolicy.com/introduction-taking-an-equity-lens/developing-solutions/>

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Who is developing the criteria? Who is determining priorities? Who will be affected? 7

What criteria will be used to prioritize among your options? (e.g. framework or composite from various approaches, team or advisory group, data, stakeholder engagement, funder) 7

Will the criteria be weighted?

- Healthy People 2010. Toolkit.  
[https://oqi.wisc.edu/resourcelibrary/uploads/resources/Project\\_Prioritization\\_Guide\\_v\\_1.pdf](https://oqi.wisc.edu/resourcelibrary/uploads/resources/Project_Prioritization_Guide_v_1.pdf)
- NACCHO. Common Methods of Prioritization. <http://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Guide-to-Prioritization-Techniques.pdf>
- Minnesota Department of Health. Prioritization Matrix.  
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/opi/qi/toolbox/prioritizationmatrix.html>
- University of Wisconsin-Madison. Project Prioritization.  
[https://oqi.wisc.edu/resourcelibrary/uploads/resources/Project\\_Prioritization\\_Guide\\_v\\_1.pdf](https://oqi.wisc.edu/resourcelibrary/uploads/resources/Project_Prioritization_Guide_v_1.pdf)

Does prioritization include specific criteria that measures positive or negative impacts among affected populations? 7

### Considering the Outcome of Prioritizing

How does the selected strategy or intervention build community capacity and power in communities most affected by inequities (community capacity focus areas include active participation, leadership, rich support networks, skills and resources, critical reflection, sense of community, understanding of history, articulation of values, and access to power)? 1

Do priorities conflict with priorities that communities facing inequities have prioritized?

Where do funding requirements or limitations fit into the prioritization process? 7

Who is going to be affected by the chosen priorities? How do different choices affect populations and groups differently? Who benefits? Who is burdened? 7

To what degree is community diversity and the contribution of diversity (cultural, race, ethnicity, linguistics) reflected in priority determination and selection? Are there ways to maximize equitable opportunities and impacts? What provisions could be changed or added to ensure positive impacts on racial equity and inclusion? 1

- Government Alliance on Race & Equity. Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity (pages 10-11 & 23). Example of “Ban the Box”. [https://www.racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/GARE-Racial\\_Equity\\_Toolkit.pdf](https://www.racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/GARE-Racial_Equity_Toolkit.pdf)

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- Multnomah County, Oregon. Equity & Empowerment Lens (pages 43-50). [http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/ee\\_lens\\_final-portland.pdf](http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/ee_lens_final-portland.pdf)
- RaceForward. Racial Impact Assessment. [https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment\\_v5.pdf](https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment_v5.pdf)
- Seattle. Racial Equity Toolkit to Assess Policy, Programs, and Budget Issues (Steps 3 & 4.) [http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityToolkit\\_FINAL\\_August2012.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityToolkit_FINAL_August2012.pdf)
- Sparks Policy Institute. Developing Solutions/Equity Based Guiding Questions Worksheet. <http://tools.sparkpolicy.com/introduction-taking-an-equity-lens/developing-solutions/>
- Sparks Policy Institute. Developing Solutions/Vetting Solutions: The Process for Selecting Solutions that Drive Equity. <http://tools.sparkpolicy.com/introduction-taking-an-equity-lens/developing-solutions/>

How will historical inequities be taken into account in the prioritization process?

How do other community priorities and issues affect your intervention? How is the intervention viewed by the community? Is the intervention wanted? 7

Are selected strategies responsive to community diversity (cultural, race, ethnicity, linguistic)?

3 What adverse impacts or unintended consequences could result from this program or policy?

Which racial/ethnic groups could be negatively affected? What other sub-populations could be negatively affected? How could adverse impacts be prevented or minimized? 3

- CDC. A Practitioners Guide to Advancing Health Equity. (Appendix B: Considerations for Health Equity Oriented Strategy Selection, Design and Implementation, pages 102-103). <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/pdf/HealthEquityGuide.pdf>
- Government Alliance on Race & Equity. Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity (pages 10-11 & 23). Example of “Ban the Box”. [https://www.racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/GARE-Racial\\_Equity\\_Toolkit.pdf](https://www.racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/GARE-Racial_Equity_Toolkit.pdf)
- Multnomah County, Oregon. Equity & Empowerment Lens (pages 43-50). [http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/ee\\_lens\\_final-portland.pdf](http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/ee_lens_final-portland.pdf)
- National Association of Chronic Disease Directors. Moving to Institutional Equity: A Tool to Address Racial Equity for Public Health Practitioners (Worksheets A-C & Equity Crosscheck, pages 14-17): [http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.chronicdisease.org/resource/resmgr/Gillan's\\_files/Health\\_Equity\\_June\\_2017.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.chronicdisease.org/resource/resmgr/Gillan's_files/Health_Equity_June_2017.pdf).
- RaceForward. Racial Impact Assessment. [https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment\\_v5.pdf](https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment_v5.pdf)
- Seattle. Racial Equity Toolkit to Assess Policy, Programs, and Budget Issues (Steps 3 & 4.) [http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityToolkit\\_FINAL\\_August2012.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityToolkit_FINAL_August2012.pdf)

What actions are being promised for each of the top priority issues? Will resources be allocated to these actions?

## Communicating and Using Priorities

How do we plan for communicating our priorities broadly? What are costs associated with implementing or with not doing anything? 7

- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Prevention – Public Health Assessment Guidance Manual (Section D2. Communicating with Clarity and Accuracy):  
<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hac/phamanual/appd.html>
- Sparks Policy Institute. Using Data/Presenting Data. <http://tools.sparkpolicy.com/introduction-taking-an-equity-lens/using-data/>

What mechanisms exist for communities facing inequities to hold the agency accountable for taking action on the issues of highest priority?

How can the prioritization process be used to educate and change the narrative about what creates health with other agencies, elected officials, and community members?

## Bibliography

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3. Center for Racial Justice. (2013). Racial Equity Impact Assessment Guide. Retrieved from [https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment\\_v5.pdf](https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment_v5.pdf)
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