

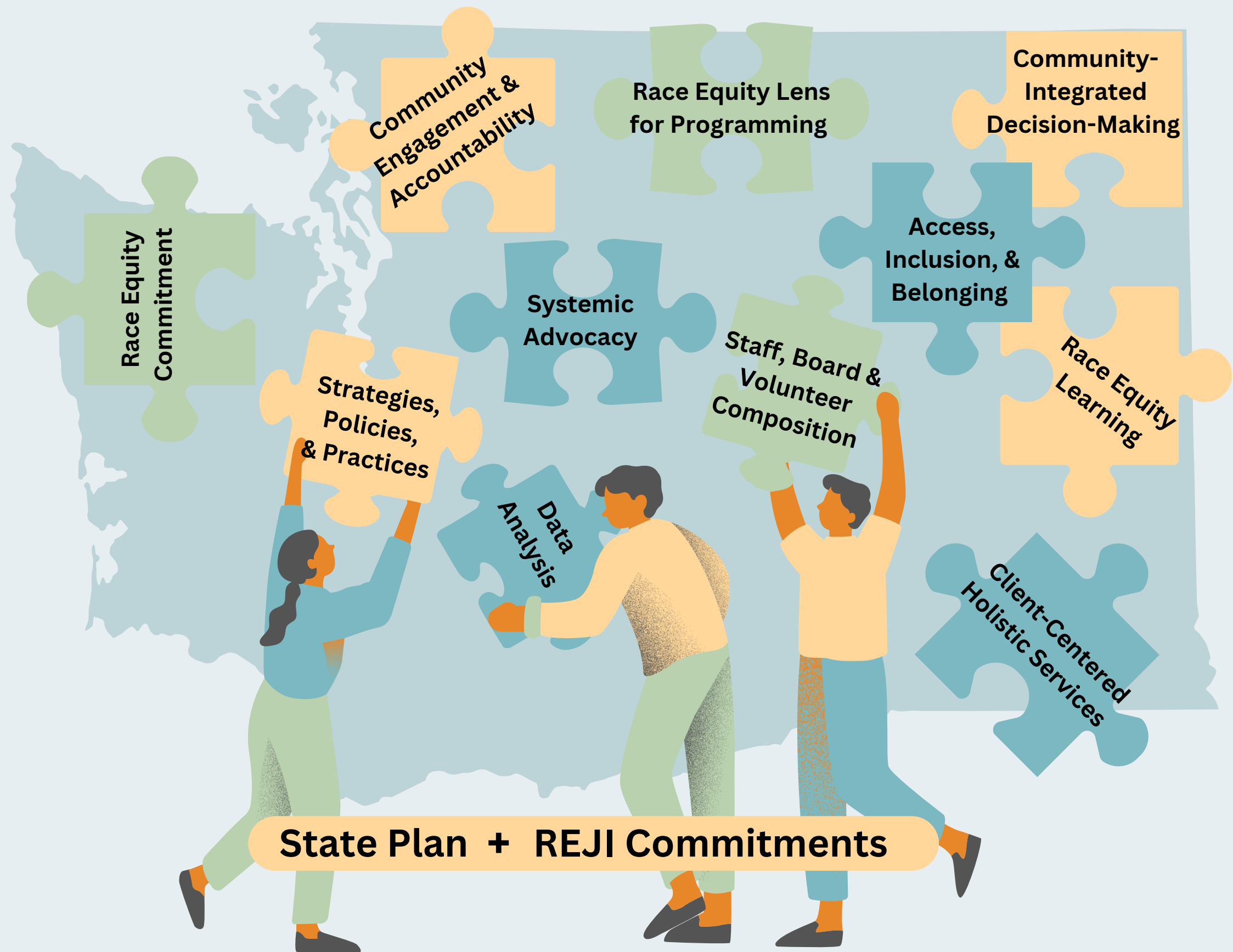
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The Race Equity Practices Spectrum Tool was created to link organizational and programmatic work to the goals and strategies of the State Plan and REJI Commitments. We recognize that each organization's journey is complex and will not fit neatly into the spectrum, but we hope this tool will be helpful in outlining the shared language, goals, and strategies of the Alliance, in addition to identifying possible future steps and resource needs.

For the purposes of this tool, "organizational" components refer to the internal policies, practices, and governance of an organization. "Programmatic" components focus on delivery of services and external work with clients and impacted communities.



The spectrum identifies five points along a continuum:

These are based on the “indicators of success” outlined in the State Plan as well as additional race equity resources referenced at the end of the document.

“Not Yet Started” - Has not yet begun work on this particular component.

“Planning in Progress” - Has started developing plans that will be implemented but has not yet launched those plans.

“Launched” - Has piloted or launched work on this component but has not yet evaluated and refined the strategy.

“Well on the Way” - Has implemented multiple strategies, evaluated the effectiveness and impact, and started to develop systems for improvement. This stage is when the “practice” of race equity work is up and running.

“Embedded Practice” - Has fully integrated this practice into their work, developed clear indicators of success, and has robust systems in place to ensure the strategy is maintained, reviewed, and improved upon long term. Strategies are a model for other organizations.

Race Equity Component	Not Yet Started	Planning in Progress	Launched	Well on the Way	Embedded Practice
<p>Organizational</p> <p>Race Equity Commitment</p> <p><i>State Plan Goal 1, Strategy 1</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitments 4, 5 & 7</i></p> <p><i>REJI “Talking the Talk” of Race Equity”</i></p>	<p>Does not name <u>race equity</u> explicitly in its mission, policies, or programs. Has not yet engaged in activities that create a shared awareness and understanding of what is needed to achieve race equity in our legal systems and society.</p>	<p>Recognizes <u>race equity</u> as important and is considering how to name it in its work. Has plans to engage in activities that create a shared awareness of race equity principles.</p>	<p>Articulates a commitment to race equity work by incorporating <u>race equity</u> language into its mission statement, vision, and values. Demonstrates an understanding and awareness of the reforms needed to achieve race equity in our legal systems.</p>	<p>Features <u>race equity</u> language in most aspects of work. Ambassadors for the organization (staff, board, volunteers)- and particularly decision-makers—understand the importance of advancing race equity and how that work connects to the organization’s mission, vision, and values.</p>	<p>Has an integrated <u>race equity</u> commitment throughout the organization, creating a shared awareness and understanding of what is needed to achieve race equity in our legal systems and society. Organization regularly communicates about its work to further <u>racial justice</u> and has systems in place to continually review and update language. Organization is “talking the talk” of its race equity commitments.</p>
<p>Organizational</p> <p>Staff, Board & Volunteer Composition</p> <p><i>State Plan Goal 1, Strategy 2</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitment 4</i></p>	<p>Staff, board, and volunteers are not comprised of community members and do not reflect those most impacted by mission.</p>	<p>Has had internal discussions about the idea of <u>diversifying</u> its staff, board, and volunteers to reflect communities most impacted by mission and has begun the planning process.</p>	<p>Has started implementing strategies to <u>diversify</u> board, staff, and volunteers, but may not have effective systems in place. Initial efforts may be tokenizing and/or siloed to non-leadership roles in the organization.</p>	<p>Actively engaging in multiple intentional strategies resulting in an increase in staff, board, and volunteers reflecting <u>diversity</u> of communities it serves. Retention strategies are in place and <u>BIPOC</u> staff are in leadership roles.</p>	<p>Organization reflects the <u>diversity</u> of the communities it serves on all levels, especially leadership. Has robust recruitment pipeline with retention strategies and leadership ladders in place. Systems to track and evaluate disparities are integrated throughout.</p>

Race Equity Component	Not Yet Started	Planning in Progress	Launched	Well on the Way	Embedded Practice
<p>Organizational</p> <p>Race Equity Learning</p> <p><i>State Plan Goal 1, Strategy 1 & 3</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitments 5 & 7</i></p>	<p>Does not offer its staff and board trainings or learning materials related to race equity and has not developed plans to do so.</p>	<p>Has race equity training and learning planned for staff and board, but it has not occurred yet.</p>	<p>Staff and board occasionally participate in race equity learning and training. Has completed race equity self-audit, such as the REJI Organizational Assessment, and identified long-term learning goals.</p>	<p>Staff and board engage in on-going race equity learning and training. It is built into the organization’s orientation, continual professional development, and team learning.</p>	<p>Staff, board, and volunteers are held <u>accountable</u> to race equity strategies with clear indicators of success. Organization sees itself as a learning organization in continual growth process.</p>
<p>Organizational</p> <p>Strategies, Policies, & Practices</p> <p><i>State Plan Goal 1, Strategy 3</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitments 4 & 7</i></p>	<p>Does not use a race equity lens for organizational policies, practices, and strategies (beyond non-discrimination).</p>	<p>Is interested in developing race equity-informed internal policies and strategies and has begun the planning process.</p>	<p>Has some policies and infrastructure in place that were developed using a race equity lens. Impactful policies may include: hiring, supervision, compensation, benefits, purchasing, etc.</p>	<p>Has many race equity-informed policies and formal structures to operationalize and integrate race equity into organization’s internal work. Has begun to evaluate effectiveness and impact of strategies and build systems for improvement.</p>	<p>Has robust race equity-informed policies and an organizational DEI plan. Continually assesses policies and makes improvements. Clear goals, strategies, and indicators of success are in place. Organization is <u>“walking the walk”</u> of its race equity commitments.</p>
<p>Organizational</p> <p>Community-Integrated Decision-Making</p> <p><i>State Plan Goal 1, Strategy 3, State Plan Goal 5, Strategy 1</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitment 1 & 4</i></p>	<p>Community feedback is not sought out when making organizational decisions. Race equity principles are not reflected in decision-making and leadership structure.</p>	<p>Has had internal discussions and has started to make plans to incorporate community feedback into work. May view it as an option or an add-on to core decision-making considerations.</p>	<p>Starting to implement community feedback and race equity strategies into decision-making on an ad hoc basis. For example, one-time community involvement on the hiring committee for a new Executive Director.</p>	<p>Those most impacted by the mission provide input on the direction of the organization and its decision-making in multiple ways. For example, community guidance is sought regarding strategic planning, priority-setting, and policy creation.</p>	<p>Communities most affected by systemic racism drive organizational decisions. Robust systems of accountability are embedded into organizational policies, practices, and structure. Strategy is maintained, reviewed, and improved upon long term.</p>

Race Equity Component	Not Yet Started	Planning in Progress	Launched	Well on the Way	Embedded Practice
<p>Programmatic</p> <p>Data Analysis</p> <p><i>State Plan Goal 3, Strategy 1</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitment 5</i></p>	<p>Does not collect and analyze data, including racial demographics, in its programming.</p>	<p>Does not currently collect and analyze racial demographic data but plans to do so.</p>	<p>Currently collects racial demographic data but does not disaggregate and analyze. For example, LegalServer client intake data is collected but racial demographics are not thoroughly reviewed for disparities and trends.</p>	<p>Collects and disaggregates racial demographic data to inform planning and decisions in multiple areas. For example, disaggregating the client demographics of closed cases for a particular legal clinic to identify disparities and create targeted strategies to increase access for clients not currently being served.</p>	<p>Has strong racial demographic data collection and analysis practices. Uses information to identify disparities and provide targeted solutions on an on-going basis. Continually explores how race and poverty intersect to make worse the effects of racial discrimination. Practice is fully embedded in operations and examined to make improvements.</p>
<p>Programmatic</p> <p>Race Equity Lens for Programming</p> <p><i>State Plan Goal 1, Strategies 1 & 3, State Plan Goal 4, Strategy 1</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitments 3,4, & 5</i></p>	<p>Does not yet employ a <u>race equity lens</u> in its programming.</p>	<p>Recognizes that using a <u>race equity lens</u> for its programming is important and is in the planning process.</p>	<p>Has clearly defined <u>race equity lens</u> and can articulate how the lens is used to examine, develop and improve programming. Has begun applying it to some areas.</p>	<p>Has clearly defined <u>race equity lens</u> and applies it to most areas of its external work with clients and communities. Has started to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of strategies.</p>	<p>Applies a well-defined <u>race equity lens</u> to all programming and assesses the impact of those decisions on <u>BIPOC</u> communities. Identifies root causes of inequities and creates targeted strategies to build long-term change. Has systems in place to track indicators of success and continually reviews and improves on process.</p>
<p>Programmatic</p> <p>Community Engagement & Accountability</p> <p><i>State Plan Goal 3, Strategy 1, State Plan Goal 4, Strategy 2</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitments 1, 6 & 7</i></p>	<p>Does not express interest in building stronger partnerships with communities most affected by systemic racism and oppression; may see it as unrealistic or unimportant to organization.</p>	<p>Values the idea of building partnerships with communities most affected by system racism and oppression and is in the planning process. May not know how build partnerships or have existing relationships to draw upon.</p>	<p>Beginning to build partnerships with communities most affected by systemic racism and oppression but those partnerships are limited and/or do not yet have <u>accountability</u> established.</p>	<p>Actively works to build partnerships and trust with communities most affected by systemic racism and oppression. Strategically and intentionally collaborates with multiple community-based partners. Has started to establish a track record as a reliable, trustworthy community partner. Has developed an annual community engagement plan.</p>	<p>Has strong, mutually beneficial, <u>accountable</u>, and equitable partnerships with organizations and leaders from communities most impacted by systemic racism and <u>oppression</u>. Has a long-standing track record of trust and transparency. Has clear indicators of success in place and continually evaluates and improves on community partnership strategies.</p>

Race Equity Component	Not Yet Started	Planning in Progress	Launched	Well on the Way	Embedded Practice
<p>Programmatic</p> <p>Access, Inclusion, & Belonging</p> <p><i>State Plan Goals 2, 3 & 4</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7</i></p>	<p>Does not see access, <u>inclusion</u>, and belonging as an issue or priority. May identify “open door” or “non-discrimination” policies as sufficient.</p>	<p>Values the idea of access, <u>inclusion</u>, and belonging and is starting to make plans for improvements. Understands the Civil Legal Needs Study’s findings that “who you are matters” and a person’s identity.</p>	<p>Has implemented some strategies to increase access, <u>inclusion</u>, and belonging. Staff, board, volunteers, clients, and community members are still expected to conform to the dominant <u>culture</u>.</p>	<p>Creates a clear sense of <u>inclusion</u> and belonging in multiple ways. Has increased services, access & materials for clients with primary languages other than English, disabilities, or other barriers. Takes intersectional approach to embrace all aspects of identity.</p>	<p>All members of the organization (clients, community members, staff, board) feel welcome and encouraged to bring their whole selves to the organization. There are clearly defined systems, policies, and practices in place to maintain a <u>culture of inclusion</u> and belonging, with clear indicators of success.</p>
<p>Programmatic</p> <p>Client-Centered Holistic Services</p> <p><i>State Plan Goals 3 & 4</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7</i></p>	<p>Has not yet identified the needs of underserved communities in its area and/or specialty. Legal services may be focused on attorney availability and attorney needs.</p>	<p>Has started to identify needs of underserved communities and develop client-centered holistic approaches to services but has not yet launched changes.</p>	<p>Has launched community-informed services that are client-centered and address the holistic needs of clients. For example, clinics may be offered in trusted community spaces in partnership with other local service providers.</p>	<p>Client-centered holistic legal aid services are being offered that address the intersectional needs of clients in many ways. Systems are still being created to integrate approach into all services.</p>	<p>Client needs are centered in the development and implementation of all services. Delivers a holistic service model driven by client needs with systems in place to continually evaluate and improve services. Clients are met “where they are.”</p>
<p>Programmatic</p> <p>Systemic Advocacy</p> <p><i>State Plan Goal 5</i></p> <p><i>REJI Commitment 1, 2, 3, 5 & 6</i></p>	<p>Does not see systemic advocacy or <u>community lawyering</u> as part of its work.</p>	<p>Has identified systemic advocacy and <u>community lawyering</u> as goals and has begun planning.</p>	<p>Engages in some limited systemic advocacy. Has started to use a <u>community lawyering</u> model in some services.</p>	<p>Systemic advocacy and <u>community lawyering</u> are key elements of its model. Advocacy is intentionally focused on identifying and eliminating systems, structures, and practices that negatively affect communities of color and other marginalized populations.</p>	<p>Systemic advocacy and <u>community lawyering</u> are core components of organization’s strategic client service mix (Goal 5, Strategy 4) with the majority of its work dedicated to dismantling the root causes of systemic racialized oppression.</p>

Glossary and Key Concepts (REJI Toolkit, 2nd Edition and State Plan):

ACCOUNTABILITY Ensuring that organizational decisions are understood and feel justified by the communities that may benefit or be harmed most. Most notably used when applied to community partnerships, accountability depends on those relationships which stand to gain or be harmed the most by organizational decisions. Accountability within those partnerships is demonstrated through transparency, responsiveness, participatory processes, and ongoing reflection for improvement. Accountability is also demonstrated by acknowledging and naming the harm that may have been caused and identifying how harm will be mitigated in the future.

ANTI-RACISM A concept is described as “the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organization structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.” Learn more information on anti-racism at NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity. This is more a pro-active stance than being simply “non-racist.”

ANTI-RACIST VS. NON-RACIST Ibram X. Kendi, in his book ‘How to Be an Anti-Racist’ simply defines anti-racist as One who is supporting an anti-racist policy through their actions or expressing an anti-racist idea. Being an anti-racist requires practicing anti-racism in all aspects of your life. It includes but is not limited to making a conscious choice to act and challenge white supremacist systems and consequent oppression against Black, Indigenous People of Color. For those who are white, this means challenging notions of their racial superiority and leveraging their white privilege to advance racial justice.

The REJI Toolkit emphasizes the more proactive term anti-racist rather than simply being “not racist” as the latter denies responsibility for systemic racism, assuming our systems are neutral and just. Being ‘nonracist’ shifts responsibility for racism and oppression onto others, often seen from white people to Black, Indigenous, and People of color. Responsibility for perpetuating and legitimizing a racist system rests both on those who actively maintain it, who benefit from it, and those who refuse to challenge it. Angela Davis once said, “In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist.”

CLIENT-CENTERED SERVICES Services delivered in a manner that takes into account clients’ self-identified needs and designed to achieve the individual client’s goals.

COMMUNITY LAWYERING (MOVEMENT LAWYERING) Using legal knowledge and skills, including community organizing techniques, to achieve goals that are identified by the community so the community can enhance its own power. In the community lawyering model, lawyers and legal advocates provide technical expertise and support. Still, power and decision-making lie with or are transferred to those community members and community-based organizations who are most affected by the issue. This is a shift in the paradigm that the attorney is best situated to identify the best solutions and instead moves power to those most closely impacted by the problem.

CULTURE Spoken and often unspoken shared set of attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or an organization and amplified by those in positional authority or leadership positions.

DIVERSITY The state of being diverse or showing variety in something. Within race equity work, diversity means representation within a group or set by people who carry a range of different social identities, perspectives, and lived experiences.

EQUITY To be fair and just. In a societal context, equity is ensuring all peoples have opportunities to reach their full potential. It recognizes the history of systemic oppression and necessitates the creation and strengthening of policies, practices, and organizational structures that produce fair outcomes and eliminate disparities based on social factors such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, place of origin, religion, and Indigenous heritage. Racial equity means that race no longer determines one’s outcomes.

HOLISTIC SERVICES Services that are provided in a manner that takes into account the entirety of a client’s barriers and goals, legal and nonlegal. This includes two primary components:

- Helping clients identify legal and nonlegal problems and potential solutions for their legal problems; and
- Working in collaboration with legal and nonlegal community partners to ensure that the client’s range of needs are addressed, whether through direct, unbundled, or referral services.

INCLUSION Integration of diverse perspectives that provides a sense of belongingness. Where diversity is an invitation to the table, inclusion actively asks and welcomes input from everyone as part of critical decision-making. Note, however, that inclusive environments are not necessarily equitable - often marginalized individuals and communities are provided access to decision-making spaces but only within terms and norms of the dominant group with limited power, thus only perpetuating harmful dynamics.

INTENT VERSUS IMPACT Despite our best intentions, any one of us may still have a negative impact on others. Learning from the negative impact we cause and committing to consistently avoid the same harm in the future is part of the process of learning and growing that supports race equity work across the organization.

OPPRESSION Systemic devaluing, undermining, marginalizing, and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the privileged norm; when some people are denied something of value, while others have ready access.

PERSON/PEOPLE OF COLOR A Person of Color, sometimes abbreviated as “POC,” is a person that does not identify as white or does not have White/Caucasian/European ancestry. This term gets complicated when you consider mixed-race or biracial persons (particularly people who have both European and non-European ancestry), but mixed-race people may identify as POC. As race is socially constructed in the United States, who is considered “white” or a Person of Color also shifts over time.

There is also the abbreviation **BIPOC**, an abbreviation of Black, Indigenous, People of Color, to specifically bring attention to the complex and racist histories faced by both Black and Indigenous communities in the United States. It also acknowledges that even within “non-white” spaces or spaces led non-Black and non-Indigenous people of color, anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenity can still be perpetuated, especially in ways harming Black and Indigenous women.

RACIAL EQUITY 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 the root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.

RACE EQUITY LENS Examining a practice, system, behavior, or event with an awareness and focus on the vision that race or color should not predict the amount and quality of opportunities, services, and benefits for impacted communities and individuals.

RACIAL JUSTICE Proactive creation and reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all. Racial justice work is not only about being “not racist” and instead requires the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures and sustained action.

- Racial Justice ≠ Diversity (Diversity = Variety)
- Racial Justice ≠ Equality (Equality = Sameness)
- Racial Justice = Equity (Equity = Fairness, Justice)

STRUCTURAL & SYSTEMIC RACISM Racial inequity perpetuated by a system of public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms. While “racism” is often thought of as instances where someone intentionally or unintentionally targets others as a “bigot” with negative intent, structural racism encompasses the ways in which a complex system of organizations, institutions, cultural forces, individuals, processes, and policies interact – maintained by white supremacist power arrangements - to create and perpetuate social, economic, political injustice harming Black, Indigenous, and people of color while benefiting white people. White people with “good” intent still can perpetuate structural racism due to an arrangement of power infused into the arrangement of U.S. society.

“TALKING THE TALK” OF RACE EQUITY The organization articulates an express commitment to race equity work. Ambassadors for the organization (e.g. staff, board, volunteers) – and particularly decision-makers for the organization – understand why to prioritize efforts to advance race equity and how that work connects to the organization’s mission, vision, and values. The organization regularly communicates about the work it is doing to reduce inequities and further racial justice.

“WALKING THE WALK” OF RACE EQUITY The organization is actively investing financial and human resource in learning, development, support, and action around race equity. The organization’s stated values are demonstrably seen and incorporated into internal practices, policies, and culture. The organization is willing to shift and potentially disrupt its ways of doing business to achieve better outcomes for staff, volunteers, partners, and clients of color and communities most affected by the systems of which we are a part.

REJI COMMITMENTS

- 1.** Work together with, take guidance from, be part of, and hold ourselves accountable to community-based movements in communities most affected by structural racialization and structurally racialized systems.
- 2.** Change structures, policies, processes, and practices in the law, legal profession, and justice system that allow harm and disparate outcomes for communities of color to continue unabated.
- 3.** Promote and support legal and policy reforms to advance race equity and racial justice, recognizing that differently situated groups may require different strategies to achieve more equitable outcomes.
- 4.** Continuously examine whether we and the organizations we work with operate in ways that align with the race equity and justice values and goals we support. This commitment includes ensuring that race equity is reflected in policies and practices for recruitment and hiring, work acceptance, priority-setting, governance, organizational culture, and community partnerships and accountability, particularly with low-income communities of color.
- 5.** Continually explore how race and poverty intersect to make worse the effects of racial discrimination.
- 6.** Expand and strengthen the REJI alliance to include diverse partnerships and the sharing of our resources with anyone who is committed to dismantling structurally racialized systems.
- 7.** Ensure our organizations invest in active, ongoing learning that will teach us to see, reveal, and transform structures that create racialized outcomes and push communities of color outside the Circle of Human Concern. This commitment requires that we help members of our organizations and communities to actively and expressly challenge the use of racist language and behaviors, openly listen when we ourselves are challenged, and learn techniques and tools for reducing and eliminating implicit and explicit bias.

Sources:

State Plan for the Coordinated Delivery of Civil Legal Aid to Low Income People

“The purpose of the State Plan is to expand access to our civil justice system and identify and eliminate barriers that perpetuate poverty and deny justice. The State Plan sets forth five goals intended to reflect the universal commitment of the Alliance and other advocates for an equitable legal system.”

Washington Race Equity & Justice Initiative

“The Race Equity & Justice Initiative (REJI) is a call for action to all who understand that we need to work together to challenge the racial bias that has been built into our societal fabric.”

Meyer Memorial Trust Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Spectrum Tool

“The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Spectrum Tool helps assess where an organization is on its DEI journey and to identify potential areas for future work.”

Racial Equity Funders for LGBTQ Issues’s Frameworks & Approaches, Understanding Racial Inequities in Policies, Programs & Grantmaking

“Over the years, a variety of frameworks have emerged to question the persistence of racial disparities across every indicator of well-being, from health to education to the labor market. In a society stratified along racial, ethnic and gendered lines, these models tackle racial inequality by asking: How should race be named when crafting programs and policies? Will more diverse institutions yield an equitable society? How has a long history of racialized policies, practices and values led to disparate outcomes among communities of color? And Funders for LGBTQ asks: How do all of these questions relate to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities of color? We start by comparing four prevailing frameworks.”

