URGENT

# NEVER MORE URGENT

A Preliminary Review of How the
U.S. Is Leaving Black, Hispanic, and
Indigenous Communities Behind

NEVER

## Acknowledgements

THE NATIONAL CENTER
FOR
FAITH BASED INITIATIVES
EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITIES · IMPACTING OUR WORLD



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
SOLUTIONS NETWORK
A GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

# WHAT IS THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAITH BASED INITIATIVES?

The National Center For Faith Based Initiatives ("National Center") is a faith-based organization that creates coalitions of faith and community-based, intermediary organizations dedicated to increasing access to high quality, economic programming and "place-based" services in underserved communities.

As a intermediary organization, NCFBI provides systemic, "backbone" services to targeted areas/regions. In addition to pass-through funding for communities where capital is often difficult to obtain, the NCFBI supports community-based initiatives with several reinforcing functions including capacity training, advocacy, standard setting and quality assurance through data collection and reporting; and by providing critical linkages to public and private sector partners and resources.

The National Center seeks to expand access to high-quality programming through policy, practice and communication that helps cities and regions better coordinate and scale successful approaches. We at the National Center know from experience the power created by leveraging faith- and community-based programming and the communities they support. Working in local communities through established intermediaries using place-based strategies, the National Center continues to:

- Introduce state-of-the-art process tools and organizational change methodologies commonly used in the private sector.

- Work closely with government entities, foundations and local communities to design and implement strategies and solutions to identified issues, problems within communities and the institutions that serve them.

- Create (where applicable) within local communities, an evaluation framework that produces data continuity and research metrics contiguous with the prototypical United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, allowing the National Center to report progress across domestic domains with a view toward global indices.

- Work with community stakeholders as "credible messengers" on the ground to design solutions and approaches to these issues, apply new strategies and implement the appropriate initiatives to address local needs.

- Work with organizations and communities to design strategies that will engage leadership, practitioners and other stakeholders in developing and implementing a solution.

- Support implementation, ongoing improvement and sustainability of the initiatives and the systems that support them.

Using this hands-on approach to identifying the most pressing priorities, organizations and communities, the National Center helps cities and regions better coordinate approaches to increase the scale, quality, and accountability of expanded initiatives, particularly by leveraging the combined power of communities and the organizations that serve them.

Using the tools of needs assessment, capacity training, targeted technical assistance, knowledge sharing, research, evaluation and advocacy, The National Center will continue to empower these strong coalitions as they relentlessly build strong communities and families.

# WHAT IS SDSN USA?

The Sustainable Development Solutions Network United States (SDSN USA) endeavors to build pathways for achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals in the United States by mobilizing research, outreach, and collective action.

The SDSN USA is a network of researchers, knowledge creators and thought leaders working together to mobilize expertise on the SDGs in the United States. Officially launched on December 4, 2018, the SDSN USA has nearly 140 members from 44 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Washington DC. It joins the existing Sustainable Development Solutions Network which spans six continents and draws upon the knowledge and educational capacity of over 1,000-member institutions.

SDSN USA is co-chaired by Jeffrey D. Sachs at Columbia University, Dan Esty at Yale University, Helen Bond at Howard University, and Gordon McCord at the University of California, San Diego. Find out more about SDSN USA at www.sdsnusa.org.

# ABOUT THE TEAM



**Dr. Helen Bond** is an Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction in the School of Education at Howard University in Washington DC and the former director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Assessment. She is also a Fulbright-Nehru Scholar to India and the winner of the Interdisciplinary Research Award at Howard for her research on the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). With a Ph.D. in Human Development, Dr. Bond's expertise is education and human development, Holocaust Education, teacher education, and preventing violent extremism through education (PVE). She is one of the contributing authors of the UNESCO publications, *Teaching Respect for All: Implementation Guide and Teacher's Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism*, the first contribution to the implementation of the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, announced in January 2016. She is interested in how marginalized children and youth navigate the world. She was lead author of the book *Through Children's Eyes: President Obama and the Future Generation* that explored the politics of childhood in China, Jamaica, Russia, Sierra Leone, West Africa, and the United States. She was inducted in the 2020 Alumni Hall of Fame by The Ohio State University-Mansfield for her commitment to inclusive excellence.



**Caroline Fox** has led the SDSN USA network since its launch in December 2018. Previously, she helped launch and later directed SDG USA, a close partner of SDSN, to develop a program of research and outreach on the SDGs in the United States, including the launch of America's Goals for 2030, the America's Goals Report Card, and the first US SDGs State Index. Prior to that, Caroline worked on the Millennium Villages Project and the Nigeria Scale-up Initiative, based at Columbia University and Millennium Promise, managing projects and overseeing operations focused on scaling solutions to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Caroline holds a Master's in Public Administration in Environmental Science and Policy from Columbia and a B.A. in Comparative Literature from Smith College.



**Earl W. Hamilton** is the Chief Operations Officer of the National Center For Faith Based Initiative. Mr. Hamilton is strategist recognized nationally for providing innovative program design, capacity building, policy and advocacy to projects that are rooted in empirical data and established best practices.

During the course of his career, he has leveraged hundreds of millions of public and private sector funding to create infill housing and wrap-around supports in distressed, urban communities. He has designed and facilitated technical assistance programs, provided capacity training and administered grant funding to more than 15,000 faith and community-based organizations throughout the United States.

Prior to his work in the nonprofit sector, Mr. Hamilton began his career in the banking industry as a commercial lender with a specialty in mergers and acquisitions; holding executive positions at Textron Financial Corporation and BankAtlantic. In addition to advising and providing lending for mid-to large corporations, he opened and managed the regional corporate offices in Southeast Florida.

Mr. Hamilton received a Bachelor's degree in Business Finance and Management with a Minor in Mechanical Engineering from Florida Atlantic University. Mr. Hamilton has received numerous accolades including be named to "2015 Washington's Top Association and Non-Profit CFO's" list By Trending40.com.

**Dr. Clarence Lusane** is a Professor of International Relations and former Chair of the Political Science Department at Howard University. He is an activist and scholar, and a well-respected expert in the areas of human rights, African American politics, global race relations, U.S. elections, and international relations. He has lectured on these topics in over 70 countries including China, Colombia, Cuba, England, France, Germany, Haiti, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama, Russia, Rwanda, S. Korea, Switzerland, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe among others. He is the author of more than 100 scholarly articles and eight books on human rights, U.S. and black politics, globalization, and European history. Dr. Lusane's last book is *The Black History of the White House*. The book led to two presentations at the White House during the Obama presidency. His next book, *$20 and Change: Harriet Tubman, Andrew Jackson, and the Struggle for a Radical Democracy in the Neo-Liberal Era*, is scheduled for release in 2021.

**Dr. Harold Calvin Ray** is Senior Pastor of Redemptive Life Palm Beach in West Palm Beach, Florida. He is the Founder and CEO of The National Center for Faith Based Initiatives, which has received national acclaim for its facilitation of coalitions of faith and community-based, intermediary organizations dedicated to increasing access to high quality, economic programming and "place-based" services in underserved communities. Dr. Ray currently serves as Sr. Vice Presiding Bishop of the Global United Fellowship, a reformation of over 1,500 churches in 43 countries. He is a member of the United Nations COVID Commission Task Force.

Dr. Ray holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Oral Roberts University, where he later served as a member of the University Board of Regents, and Adjunct Professor of Law. He is an Honors graduate of the University of Notre Dame Law School from which he received his Juris Doctorate degree in 1981. Dr. Ray holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from South University School of Theology.

A licensed member in good standing of the Texas State Bar since 1981, and a member of numerous local, regional and national boards, Dr. Ray is happily married to his wife of 36 years, Brenda Ray. They are the proud parents of two children, and grandparents of seven adoring grandchildren.

**Alainna Lynch** is a Senior Research Manager at the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), where she considers the question: What will it take to achieve the SDGs in the United States? Alainna's research interests also include understanding how poverty and inequality become entrenched in social systems, and how to prevent harm when designing policy and programs. Prior to SDSN, Alainna worked with Overseas Development Institute (ODI) on the Leave No One Behind Agenda. Alainna has a degree in Sociology from the University of Chicago and a Master's degree in Evidence-Based Social Intervention from Oxford University.

**Jeffrey D. Sachs** is a University Professor and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, where he directed the Earth Institute from 2002 until 2016. He is also Director of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and a commissioner of the UN Broadband Commission for Development. He has been advisor to three United Nations Secretaries-General, and currently serves as an SDG Advocate under Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. He spent over twenty years as a professor at Harvard University, where he received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees. He has authored numerous bestseller books. His most recent book is *A New Foreign Policy: Beyond American Exceptionalism* (2018). Sachs was twice named as Time magazine's 100 most influential world leaders, and was ranked by The Economist among the top three most influential living economists.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# FOREWORD FROM BISHOP RAY

Nearly sixty years ago Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. penned, "Any religion that purports to be concerned about the souls of men, that is not equally concerned with the slums that damn them, the economic conditions that strangle them, and the social conditions that cripple them is a spiritually dry-as-dust religion".

Dr. King's poignant reflection expresses the very heartbeat of the National Center for Faith Based Initiative mission. Our passion is to provide a faith-based, purpose-driven comprehensive continuum of services that will strategically lead Black and Brown families toward the dignity of a higher quality of life. Foremost in our mission is the identification and elimination of the policies, practices, and preferences which have historically, socially, and economically disenfranchised communities of color in American society.

Nowhere has there been a more prominent reminder of the adverse impact of these policies, practices, and preferences than in the glaring disparities across quality of life indices. While evidenced as commonplace among majority populations, the data shows that indicators of a meaningful quality of life are absent or deficient among Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities. More telling, however, is the fact that these disparities, which continue to enslave entire populations, result from deliberate policy initiatives or omissions. Fatally, the absence of critical supportive policies preempts the possibility of vibrant community economies, generational wealth building, and access to quality community-based health, education, and other staple services readily available to majority communities and necessary to experience a meaningful quality of life.

The research commissioned by the National Center, including the comprehensive data reflected in this report, began with empirically documenting these disparities and the absence of policy initiatives to address them. At that time we neither expected nor even imagined that during the course of this study, the world would be presented with a global pandemic which not only highlighted these disparities, but exacerbated them.

The irrefutable, disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, when superimposed upon already existing policy disparities, further demonstrates the dramatic quality of life gap experienced by minority communities. As such, the pandemic has served as a floodlight illuminating a myriad of debilitating maladies strangling the sustainable development of Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities.

If ever a laboratory for the exposure and correlation of societal maladies and the policies sustaining them could be found, we are living now in its epicenter. The combination of the globally intensified attentions with the current demonstrations of social unrest, provokes an analysis of the deeply-rooted supremacist ideology which has been embedded in our cherished American experiment from its inception. The anger and frustration which is now reflected in peaceful protest in the streets of many U.S. cities, is an unearthing of the emotional trauma of a people who have suffered the plight of centuries of untruths. These untruths deny the vices of our nation, which for too many and for too long, have mocked the *promise* of America with the *practice* of America.

For communities of color, the "blank check marked insufficient funds" so eloquently referenced by Dr. King in his famed, "I Have a Dream" speech, remains a daily life experience. This reality will remain insufficiently challenged without the application of empirically based, policy directed reformation. This report compiled by The National Center provides the background data to develop strategic initiatives intended to ameliorate, if not forever close, the gap of the deplorable disparities evidenced so prominently in American society. To be sure, this is only the beginning. However, it initiates an expanding and substantive effort to expedite policy transformation essential to building sustainable quality of life in all American communities.

Our impending work with the COVID-19 International Commission, assures that this report, compiled from the analytics now being garnered around the world and leveraged to develop global best practices for improvement of quality of life, is available for deployment in local communities throughout the country. Moreover,

this preliminary report is already being followed by collaboration with a growing network of research and data analysis think tanks, social engineers, policy experts, community builders, and faith-based leaders, who will settle for nothing less than the promise of America becoming the practice of America for all Americans.

On the tragic evening of April 4, 1968, history chose Senator Robert F. Kennedy for the somber responsibility of informing an inner-city crowd of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As he stood in the back of a pick-up drawing from a deep well of compassion born of the personal tragedy of his brother's assassination years earlier, he attempted to comfort the crowd, reeling with shock and anger, with words articulated by the Greeks generations earlier. Kennedy humbly exhorted the people before him to "tame the savageness of men, and make gentle the life of this world" before leading them in prayer.

As we issue this preliminary report, the streets of our nation are disquieted by the anguish and anger of those who have suffered oppression, injustice, inequity, and debilitating disparity for far to long. Regrettably, this outcry is too often being met by divisive opportunists who seek to perpetuate hatred, division, and oppression rather than promote love, unity, and equality.

Even as we pray, draw upon our own wells of compassion, and reflect upon the admonition to "tame the savageness of man", it is our hope that this report might serve as a timely catalyst to finally abridge the disparities in communities of color, improve the of quality of life, and yes, to "make gentle the life of this world." Indeed, it has *never been more urgent!*

## A Note from the National Center for Faith Based Initiatives

In keeping with National Center for Faith Based Initiative's long history of working with grassroots organizations and public policy advocacy directed at improving the quality of life for the neighborhoods they serve, the CEO sought to look at socio and economic disparities amongst minority populations from a purely empirical, non-subjective viewpoint. Quite simply, "what does public data reveal about the most glaring challenges impacting Black, Hispanic and Indigenous

communities in the United States?" Thereafter, "how do we collectively galvanize policy and resources to ameliorate those issues in an iterative and measurable process?"

Finding the answers to these critical questions was the guiding principle in commissioning this report and the coalescing a stellar group of conscious researchers and experts to complete the work herein.

# FOREWORD FROM JEFFREY D. SACHS

## Reclaiming the Promissory Note for Social Justice

Bishop Harold Ray's Introduction to this volume recalls Martin Luther King's prophetic admonition in 1963 that America's promissory note to African-Americans for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness had been returned with the stamp, "insufficient funds." Now, 57 years later, as the COVID-19 pandemic ravages America and afflicts populations of color with particular fury, that promissory note must be honored in full and with no further delay.

The new President and Congress in 2021 will have two overwhelming tasks to save our nation: first, to stop the killer COVID-19 pandemic; and second, to put America's political focus and energies on a recovery based on social justice. They must also make up for lost time, as the massive inequalities between the haves and have-nots have been widening for decades.

To achieve social justice, policymakers must attend urgently to the plight of people of color who, as detailed in this report, face extraordinary and enormous unmet needs in healthcare, decent jobs, quality education, affordable housing, food security, criminal justice, and a safe environment. In each of these areas, people of color find themselves facing structural challenges of discrimination and pervasive biases that are deeply embedded in legislation; federal, state, and local regulations; and the unequal funding and provision of public services. The vast inequalities in American society also afflict poor and working-class people, who find themselves at the mercy of rich, powerful, and uncaring powerbrokers in government and business.

Survey data show that people of color in America are among the most religious and faith-loving people in the nation and the world. Many of the faithful have been told time and again that their faith is enough; that poor health, low-paying jobs, COVID-19 infections, dilapidated neighborhood schools, and polluted air, will be overcome through faith and self-help alone, as if the responsibilities to make things right lie with the most vulnerable themselves. Yet Martin Luther King Jr. knew better. He demonstrated that faith must also work its means through political action, bold legislation, tax justice, and a shift from war and military spending to peaceful investments.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s faith, indeed, continues to inspire Americans in the belief that this nation will finally turn away from decades of greed, corruption and neglect to a new era of economic recovery based on sustainable development and social justice. A strong voter turnout in this November's election will powerfully remind the incoming President and Congress that in America, it is not the billionaires and their cronies who hold the ultimate power, but the people themselves, especially when they cast their votes and make clear demands for justice.

Starting in 2021, every American, as a basic human right, should have access to healthcare coverage, as is the case in every other high-income country. Healthcare as a right is the standard in Canada, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and indeed across the democracies of Europe, plus Japan, Korea, and other developed countries around the world.  The US stands alone in denying this basic right.

Starting in 2021, every American adult needs to have the right and access to vote, regardless of any criminal record, housing instability, or zip code of origin. For generations, America's brutal and discriminatory criminal justice system has locked up young African-American men over utterly phony or petty charges, and then used that incarceration to permanently deprive them of their right to vote. In several states, more than one in five African-Americans has been disenfranchised in this way.

Starting in 2021, we must immediately bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control using the proven public-health measures that have successfully suppressed the virus in countless other countries, especially in the Asia-Pacific region (such as in Australia, China, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Vietnam). This includes mandatory use of face masks, protective equipment for front-line workers, widespread and free testing, contact tracing by professional public health workers, publicly provided facilities for safe isolation of infected individuals, and above all, politicians listening to and respecting the scientists and public health professionals who are expert in epidemic control and

health care. Federal support must also include emergency funding for America's states and cities to ensure that they can provide the social services needed at this critical time, for comprehensive healthcare coverage related to COVID-19, and personal income support for individuals who are unable to work, either because of unemployment or because they must stay home for safety.

Starting in 2021, every student must be guaranteed access to free, quality education from pre-K through secondary school, either in person when safe or online as necessary, but in either case with the needed funding for facilities, online connectivity, and personal digital equipment (e.g. tablets or laptops) to meet the needs of all students. The federal government should amply fund emergency relief for America's public schools through block grants to the states for that purpose. At the same time, the financial means must be available for all young people to attend and complete a four-year college degree. This means an end to the current system of student debt, which has impoverished and encumbered generations of students with more than $1.6 trillion of student debt. These debts must be substantially cancelled, and the federal and state governments must work together to ensure a new system for low-cost tuition in state colleges and universities.

Starting in 2021, Congress must turn to tax justice. America's super-rich have reached levels of wealth that were previously unimaginable. The richest four Americans have a combined wealth of $500 billion! The richest 50 Americans are estimated to have the net worth of the poorest 165 million Americans! And, the richest 168 Americans have reached a combined wealth of $2.7 trillion, up by around $300 billion since the start of 2020, even as the economy has collapsed and food and housing insecurity have risen across the country. It is high time to close the tax loopholes, boost the individual and corporate income tax rates, and levy a wealth tax on the richest Americans, so that they contribute to meeting the urgent social needs of the tens of millions of Americans who have sunk deeper into poverty this year.

Starting in 2021, we must finally turn to environmental justice. Big Oil plutocrats and major banks have continued to defile the planet and to add to global warming, even as the ice sheets of Antarctica and Greenland threaten to dislodge, with dire risks of a multi-meter rise of sea levels that would devastate the world's coastal regions. With forest fires blazing up and down the Pacific Coast and the Gulf region, and Atlantic states being pummeled by floods, hurricanes, and tropical storms, the American people are more than ready for decisive action.

America can shift quickly and decisively from dirty energy to clean, safe wind and solar power, and create millions of jobs in the process.

Starting in 2021, unemployed and underemployed Americans can be trained and hired to produce the new solar panels, wind turbines, electric vehicles, advanced batteries, long-distance transmission grids, and other advanced technologies needed for a clean and safe zero-carbon economy of the future. Millions of existing homes and commercial buildings can be retrofitted for energy efficiency and electrification to replace the burning of coal and heating oil. The shift to a sustainable economy is not only vital for our health and safety, but is the surest pathway to economic recovery and millions of new good and meaningful jobs.

Starting in 2021, we should ensure as a matter of right, not merely of decency, that every American, and especially every American child, has enough to eat of a healthy, nutritious diet, and a safe and secure place to call home. Instead of hundreds of billions of dollars lavished on overseas military bases and new weapons systems, funding should be put to work to ensure adequate affordable housing and food security for all.

These goals are within reach. The nation is very rich, even if many within it are not. These goals require social and political action, as individual uplift, though important, is far from sufficient. For too long, our political system has served the few, not the many. For too long, the poor and the vulnerable have been told to be patient and to wait, or to look inward for solutions even as the injustices are manifestly to be found outward, in the economic and political rules of the game. COVID-19 has devastatingly exposed the rot of an unfair system, and has reminded us of promises made but not yet kept. The data in this report can help to provide a preliminary framework to build on and guide the coming changes. The 2020 election can be the watershed that marks the start of a new era of sustainable development and social justice.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sustainable development is the foundation of the United Nations' agenda. It refers to human flourishing that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability to meet the needs of the future. These needs are framed within the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) Agenda. In this report we affirm the potential of these communities as a driver for sustainable development, through the specific contributions that they can make throughout society.

The purpose of our research was to distill five areas where available data reveals the biggest gaps between Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities and white communities. We used disaggregated data from 37 topics across ten Goals to find the biggest disparities, and found they were spread across five main areas: Justice, Food and Housing Security, Education, Economic Security, and Health. These indicators and others will contribute to a forthcoming data dashboard depicting how well the US delivers the SDGs to identified communities of color.

These data will also provide insight into the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities. Disaggregated data indicate that there are significant racial and ethnic disparities in access to testing of, treatment of, and outcomes from COVID-19 in communities of color. These disparities reflect long-standing inequitable policies and practices that should inform policy discussions around current realities on the ground.

The report will build upon previous research on US cities and states to contextualize these data and underlying indicators within a national and global framework. This report lays groundwork to contribute to the ongoing discussion of policy transformation, and to prepare a scorecard on how the US performs in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities.

## Glossary, Acronyms, and SDGs

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ACLU** | American Civil Liberties Union | | **NBER** | National Bureau of Economic Research |
| **ACS** | American Community Survey, US Census Bureau | | **NCFBI** | National Center for Faith Based Initiatives |
| **AIANs** | American Indians and Alaska Natives | | **NCLB** | No Child Left Behind |
| **AIHEC** | American Indian Higher Education Consortium | | **NCLR** | National Council of La Raza |
| | | | **NY** | New York |
| **AP3CON** | Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council | | **NYCLU** | New York Civil Liberties Union |
| **BJS** | Bureau of Justice Statistics | | **OECD** | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| **BLS** | Bureau of Labor Statistics | | **OH** | Ohio |
| **BOP** | Bureau of Prisons | | **PWA** | Public Works Administration |
| **CAA** | Chinese for Affirmative Action | | **PBIs** | Predominantly Black Institutions |
| **COVID-19** | COrona VIrus Disease | | **PHS** | United States Public Health Service |
| **CDC** | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | | **SC** | South Carolina |
| **CPS** | Current Population Survey | | **SDGs** | Sustainable Development Goals |
| **CRDC** | Civil Rights Data Collection | | **SDSN** | Sustainable Development Solutions Network |
| **FAPE** | Fair and Appropriate Education | | **SDSN USA** | Sustainable Development Solutions Network, United States of America |
| **FHA** | Fair Housing Act | | | |
| **HBCUs** | Historically Black Colleges and Universities | | **STEM** | Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics |
| **HSIs** | Hispanic-Serving Institutions | | **TANF** | Temporary Assistance for Needy Families |
| **IDEA** | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act | | **TCUs** | Tribal Colleges and Universities |
| **IEP** | Individual Education Plan | | **TX** | Texas |
| **JRC** | European Commission Joint Research Centre | | **UNESCO** | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| **K-12** | Kindergarten through 12th grade | | | |
| **LNOB** | Leave No One Behind | | **UNDHR** | United Nations Declaration of Human Rights |
| **MSIs** | Minority Serving Institutions | | **WIC** | Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children |
| **NAACP** | National Association for the Advancement of Colored People | | | |

**FIGURE 1. THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR 2030, ADOPTED BY 193 MEMBER STATES OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN SEPTEMBER, 2015**

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



*Source: United Nations 2020*

## How To Use This Report

This report examines how well the United States, and US states in particular, serve communities of color by using the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a tool for evaluating performance. To do this, the report evaluates gaps in how well Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities are served compared with how well white communities are served. The report is written for a general audience, but can be used by students, academics, politicians, activists, community groups, nonprofits, and others to hold their governments accountable for achieving the SDGs.

The results show that the five areas with the largest disparities are: Justice, Food and Housing Insecurity, Education, Economic Security, and Health. Some historical context is provided to help readers of this report connect policies and practices to the results detailed below. The report also explores disparities in outcomes related to COVID-19 as a set of emerging findings that demonstrate how these policies and practices impact daily life. The case of COVID-19 illustrates how health is also determined by the conditions in which we live, known as the social determinants of health. The report cannot describe what caused any of the disparities detailed below, but it can illuminate the human choices that helped to create these conditions. In doing so, the authors hope it highlights opportunities to unmake these decisions in favor of a more just and habitable society. This report is a preliminary review, exploring connections between policy precedence and current outcomes, as a way to inform new policy and practices to address disparities and repair the systems that perpetuate them. This report is intended to be a technical resource, but also can be used as an advocacy tool and research agenda.

The following report is presented to the National Center for Faith Based Initiatives (NCFBI) as a progress check on how well the United States is delivering on its promise of sustainable development to Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities in the United States. The report is timely, as the US is facing three crises simultaneously: a global pandemic, deep-seated inequality, and police brutality.

This report responds to three main questions: (1) Are state and national governments equitably serving Black, Hispanic, Indigenous and white communities in the US?; (2) If not, what is the nature of those inequalities?; and (3) What are the five areas of greatest disparity amongst these communities?

This report is a preliminary data and policy review, meant to provide an overview of the data and policy landscape, and create a foundation for stakeholder, subject matter experts, and policy leaders to develop a policy agenda to address how well the US and US states are serving Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities. It aims to contribute to that effort by providing an introductory overview of racial disparities, and the policy choices and practices that helped create those disparities. This initial effort will also identify gaps and areas of investigation that require further review and input. The authors imagine this report will evolve as further research is conducted, and stakeholders and experts provide feedback and vision. This report does not aim to be an exhaustive review, rather a starting point that can support and create common ground for a collaborative vision. This work rests upon hundreds of years of scholarship, research and life experience of Black, Hispanic and Indigenous leaders and community members, and just scrapes the surface of the vast literature exploring history and outcomes of these groups in what is currently known as the United States. As is to be expected in an opening venture, this report raises as many questions as it answers, and a large portion of the text is dedicated to scoping and organizing those questions.

This is the first known attempt to leverage the UNs Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to create accountability for racial inequality in the United States.

The SDGs are used in this report as a framework to determine which topic areas are included in this review. The Sustainable Development Goals were sanctioned by all 193 member states of the United Nations to be achieved by 2030. They cover 17 topic areas (Goals), and emphasize simultaneous progress in social justice, economic growth, and environmental preservation. The Goals build upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR), an international agreement that recognizes the dignity and inalienable rights of all members of the human family. Eleanor Roosevelt helped draft the universally recognized covenant, Ralph Bunche helped negotiate it, and Martin Luther King Jr. worked to promote it. This report builds on this declaration in asserting that human beings have the right to a life that is a healthy and productive, without fear of police brutality, disease, poverty, discrimination, and environmental degradation. This report aims to document progress (or lack thereof) towards delivering the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Declaration of Human Rights to Black, Indigenous and Hispanic communities in the United States.

*This report provides an evidence base to policymakers as they determine how to repair wrongs, balance benefits, and address the needs of communities who have been left behind in the United States.*

Simultaneously, this report affirms the work and skills of these communities, who have often been forced to do more with less. The report intentionally uses a strength-based approach to interpret our findings, meaning an approach which draws upon the considerable and unique strengths, assets and resilience demonstrated by communities of color. Just as the report highlights the

historical policy choices that have contributed to the inequality detailed here, it also points to the history of communities organizing and developing solutions for themselves, when government institutions failed or refused to deliver on their promises. This report uses data and evidence-based research as a tool to understand inequality; a practice that has been employed throughout American history. Efforts by Ida B. Wells, W. E. B. Du Bois, the NAACP, National Council of La Raza, Wilma Pearl Mankiller and others have paved the way for reports such as this one, and are referenced in the text.

This report provides an evidence base to policymakers as they determine how to repair wrongs, balance benefits, and ensure that the needs of those the state has left behind are addressed. This report builds on the evidence base of the SDSN Global Index and US State and City indexes. It places the racially disaggregated results in a context where the US is 31st in the world in delivering on the Goals overall, and where no state or city in the US has delivered the Goals thus far (Sachs et al. 2020; 2018; Lynch, LoPresti, and Fox 2019). It is within this context that the racial differences detailed in this work become even more urgent, and action to resolve the data gaps and limitations are required.

## Disparities during a pandemic: How COVID-19 intensifies negative impacts of racism

Leaving No One Behind, the first priority of the Sustainable Development Goals, is an action agenda. It means addressing patterns of exclusion, privilege and unjust power relations that can recycle advantage and disadvantage from one generation to the next. Towards the end of this report, a case study of COVID-19 serves as an example of how the inequalities discussed throughout the report compound, and how in times of crisis they are exacerbated and can result in death to the most vulnerable populations.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis in the US, healthcare workers began to see uneven patterns, where Black, Hispanic Americans and Native Americans seemed to be disproportionately sick and dying (Kendi 2020). However, there was a lack of data broken down by race and ethnicity, mirroring a trend found in many datasets in the US more broadly ("NAACP Statement on White House Call Regarding COVID-19 Impact in African-American Community" 2020). In this report, a full accounting of unequal treatment is not possible due to gaps in racial and ethnic data in areas ranging from life expectancy, to maternal mortality, to food insecurity, to environmental justice. There cannot be a full repair of the harms done through racial, social, economic, gender, or environmental violence if there is not a full record of who was harmed and how.

The cracks exposed by COVID-19 represent much deeper chasms in society. Institutional and historical inequities underlie these data, as well as the sense of trust and trustworthiness that communities of color place in the institutions that make up American society. The policies and practices that give life to these institutions must earn the confidence of the people they are meant to serve. Through the disproportionate racial burden from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the murder of Black people through state and police violence, the opening months of 2020 provided clear cases of where the state has failed to serve Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities. This report explores where available data show that disparities exist and examines the policy choices and practices that preceded them.

METHODOLOGY

This report aims to give an overview of available data, and to use that data to draw preliminary conclusions around what the five areas of greatest disparity are in how US states have delivered the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to white people compared to Black, Hispanic or Indigenous people in the US. The Sustainable Development Goal framework is an internationally-agreed upon set of priorities to be achieved by 2030 and span social, economic, environmental themes. In 2015, all 193 member states of the UN, including the US, signed on to these goals.

The SDGs include a set of targets and indicators that are used to measure their achievement. The SDG targets and indicators provided a frame for selecting the data for inclusion in this report. The authors began with the set of 105 indicators spanning 15 Goals used in the "Sustainable Development Report of the United States 2018." Those 105 indicators were chosen using the methodology established by SDSN and Bertelsmann Stiftung for the "SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2018" (Sachs et al. 2018) and that was refined following the audit from the European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC) conducted in 2019. That methodology requires all included indicators to meet standards of: relevance, quality, timeliness, coverage, and comparability. Indicators also were not repeated across Goal areas, and where possible, they measure outcomes rather than inputs or processes. A full detailing of these requirements can be found in the appendix.

Beginning with the 105 indicators from the report, indicators were evaluated on the following criteria: 1) the indicator could be disaggregated by race/ethnicity and 2) the indicator could be used to create a ratio that showed disparity with the white community. If both criteria were met, that indicator was used. Second, a review was conducted of the indicators that could not be disaggregated, and efforts were made to find a suitable replacement. Finally, a third review was made with expert input to see if there were areas that were both particularly relevant to racial disaggregation, and within the purview of the SDGs, that should be included. Ultimately, 32 state-level indicators and 35 national-level indicators across ten Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), covering 37 topics from poverty to pollution, education to hunger, and life on land to housing, were included in this analysis (see Annex I for full list).

The included indicators cover ten of the SDG's 17 Goals. They are a subset of indicators from 15 Goals that will be used in a forthcoming report to score states and the nation on how well the US delivers the SDGs to Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities. Notably, there are no indicators in this report from SDG 10: Reduce Inequality. All of the indicators used in this report measure inequality directly, and thus any of them could be used as a Goal 10 indicator. The SDGs were designed to be interdisciplinary and overlapping, with strong interconnections between the Goals and targets, and with indicators that repeat across the Goals. However, for the purposes of developing an index, repeating indicators leads to double counting or indirectly weighting certain subjects. As a result, although all the indicators included here measure inequality, they are organized within the subject area of that disparity. It should also be noted that in both this report or the forthcoming report, Goals 14 and 17 are not included. More information on their omission can be found in the data gaps section.

It is notable that from an original list of 105 topics, only 37 are included in this report. Many indicators were not included because disaggregated data was not available. In some cases, racial data is available but could not be constructed as a disparity (segregation, for example), and therefore is not included in this analysis. For some included indicators, there is uneven racial data available, for example in instances where there is data on Black and white communities, but not Hispanic or Indigenous communities. In other cases, all non-white communities are grouped together into a category labeled People of Color (POC). Those indicators are included in this analysis nonetheless, and detailed both in table 1 and in Annex I. As evidenced in table 1, these gaps are particularly acute for Indigenous communities; nearly a third of included indicators do not include data on Indigenous groups. Finally, this report relied on readily available data in a form that is comparable across states. It is likely that additional data exists through analysis of public microdata or through access to researcher-restricted databases. Possibilities for further research and their implications for public accessibility are discussed in the section on data gaps.

## Calculating disparities

To determine the five areas of greatest disparity, a review of the state-level average gap between white communities and each of the Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities was completed. For each indicator, a ratio between each of Black, Hispanic and Indigenous people and white people was created; a ratio of one would indicate equality, a ratio greater than one would indicate better outcomes for the white community, and a ratio less than one would indicate better outcomes in the comparison community. These ratios were then ordered from largest to smallest for each group. Finally, a ratio between the group that was worst served and white people was created and ordered from largest to smallest (see Annex III). The racial/ethnic categories used for 'worst served' include any grouping that was available in the data. This is because in some datasets, Indigenous communities are included in a general 'other' category, and the 'multiple' category could also include Black, Hispanic or Indigenous people. Developing a 'worst served' category prevents the further exclusion of these groups from the analysis (Parker et al. 2015). Further details are available in the section on data gaps. An evaluation of state performance that goes beyond disparity to include both relative disparity and level of delivery, and produces a score based on delivery of the SDGs to these racial groups, is forthcoming.

## Grouping largest disparities into themes

To group these disparities thematically, two techniques were used: one qualitative and one quantitative. First, for each group indicators were ranked largest to smallest by average state disparity. A theme was then assigned to each indicator until five themes were reached. This process was repeated across each racial/ethnic group, and the themes were compared. Given that some indicators were only available at the national level, the theme selection process was repeated at the national level. This was done by several team members and results were compared and discussed until five themes were agreed upon.

To ensure that the five themes represented large disparities, and not just relatively greater disparities, a second analysis was undertaken evaluating only disparities that were greater than 2.5. This list of themes was then compared with the list of themes that generated the initial five groupings, to ensure areas with the greatest

disparities were captured in the selected groupings. A list of the numeric disparities as well as their associated thematic grouping is available in Annexes III and IV.

These five themes helped organize these indicators, but they are by no means the only way to organize these topics. In fact, the SDGs were developed intentionally to be interdependent, with indicators repeating across Goals. This shows up in this analysis, for example, with an indicator on school suspensions which could reasonably be categorized in Justice as easily as in Education. Similarly, the indicator measuring the percent of students attending high poverty schools could be categorized in Economic Security or Education. The SDGs are framed such that progress in one area must not jeopardize progress in another; the interdependency of these indicators and their multidisciplinary influences highlight a similar principle here: achieving progress in any one area, will require progress in all the areas.

**TABLE 1. INCLUDED INDICATORS THAT ARE MISSING RACIAL DATA**

| Indicator | Racial gap |
|---|---|
| Working poor | Does not include indigenous data |
| Food insecurity | Does not include indigenous data |
| Infant mortality | Does not include indigenous data |
| Life expectancy | Does not include indigenous data |
| Overdose | Does not include indigenous data |
| Women in the labor force | Does not include indigenous data |
| Home ownership | Does not include Hispanic or Indigenous data |
| Youth out of school and unemployed | Does not include indigenous data |
| Access to broadband | Does not include indigenous data |
| Concentration of nearby factories | Uses POC at the state level, does not include Indigenous data at the national level |
| Incarceration | Does not include indigenous data |
| State court judges | Uses POC |

*Source: SDSN USA analysis (2020).*

# RESULTS AND KEY FINDINGS

## GAPS IN INDIGENOUS DATA

There is a concerning lack of disaggregated data around many of the topics outlined by the SDGs. Particularly acute in this review is the lack of data describing Indigenous communities. This report was able to find disaggregated data for about one third of the indicators analyzed in a similar report measuring SDG progress at the state level. Of these 32 indicators, an additional one third did not have any data for Indigenous groups. On indicators that do have Indigenous data, the data is often limited (the child poverty indicator, for example, included Indigenous data for four of the 50 states). The lack of data contributes to the continued invisibilizing of this community, rooted in the colonization and genocide of Indigenous peoples in what is now called the United States. For these reasons, it is clear that the current methodology is not sufficient to detail how well the US states deliver the SDGs to Indigenous communities. As this work develops and deepens, the authors seek to work in partnership with Indigenous scholars to develop methods that can account for the pernicious lack of data. For more details on the specific challenges in collecting this data, see the data gaps section.

In evaluating the gaps between communities, the five areas of largest discrepancy were identified, and are discussed in more detail below: Justice, Food and Housing Security, Education, Economic Security, and Health. Although these themes capture the largest average gaps, they are certainly not the only areas where states serve communities inequitably, nor are these the only groupings through which the gaps could be explored.

Average disparities varied widely across both indicators and racial/ethnic groupings, see table 2. One of the largest areas of disparity across groups is school poverty, an indicator measuring the percent of children attending schools where 75 percent or more of the student body receives free or reduced cost lunch. Where the disparity is greatest varies geographically for each racial/ethnic group, as explored further in the Education section below. Youth incarceration is one area of largest overall disparity for Black and Indigenous communities, however, it is also geographically specific, with some states incarcerating no Black or Indigenous youth. Like for school poverty, there is no statistical correlation between the percentage of the racial/ethnic group living in a state to youth incarceration, nor is there any statistical correlation between the percentage of the state population any group makes up to youth incarceration, for any of the included groups. These nuances are explored further below.

Political representation, the ratio between the composition of the community and the composition of the elected officials in each state, by race/ethnicity, is another area where disparity is quite large. For example, in North Carolina, in 2019 there were 1,088 state-elected officials. Only one elected official identified as Hispanic, despite 9 percent of the population being Hispanic. For appropriate representation, North Carolina would need to elect an additional 97 Hispanic officials. This indicator is grouped in the Justice theme, but like many of the indicators has impacts across all five themes. The report that follows will provide an overview of the policies and practices which have at times benefited white communities while harming Black, Hispanic and Indigenous ones. One way this was possible was through the exclusion of Black, Hispanic and Indigenous leadership as described by this indicator.

**TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF DISPARITIES ACROSS BLACK, HISPANIC AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES**

| Summary of State-Level Disparities (Indicator name, Disparity — measured as 'times higher than white communities', on average) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Largest average disparity | Smallest average disparity | Largest state disparity | Smallest state disparity* |
| Black | Incarcerated youth, 6.4 | Overdose, 0.8 | School poverty, 32.2, Wisconsin | Youth Incarceration, 0.0, Hawai'i |
| Hispanic | Political representation, 12.9 | Overdose, 0.3 | Political representation, 113.1, North Carolina | Youth Incarceration, 0.0, Alaska, Maine, Mississippi, Vermont |
| Indigenous | School Poverty, 6.0 | Non-communicable diseases, 0.8 | School poverty, 45.7, North Dakota | Youth Incarceration, 0.0, 17 states where there are no recorded Indigenous youth incarcerated in 2015 |

* Disparity rate is zero for multiple states and indicators, see Appendix III and IV for full details

*Source: SDSN USA analysis (2020).*

Another central finding of this work is a lack of available, updated, nationally-comparable, disaggregated data. For example, there is no available racially disaggregated evidence for life expectancy or food insecurity at the state level. Given the large disparities evidenced at the national level and in other thematic areas, and given the geographic variability of these outcomes, it is essential to not only understand who has been prohibited from accessing resources, but where. Further, of the 32 state-level indicators where disaggregated data was identified, ten did not have data on Indigenous communities (see table 1); while there is little racially disaggregated data available generally, data gaps are even more acute for Indigenous communities (see box on previous page).

In the sections that follow, the authors explore each of the five thematic areas in more detail, through a review of relevant indicators and of the US policy decisions that have impacted the disparities detailed in the data. In the Results and Key Findings Section, the authors connect disparities in outcomes from COVID-19 to the structural issues detailed in each of the five thematic areas. Finally, the authors examine gaps in data, explore opportunities for further research, and discuss conclusions.

## 1. Justice

It is impossible to separate the contemporary US criminal justice system from the nation's history of slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and continuing institutional racism. The brutal and racialized hyper-policing of Black communities has shaped and defined every aspect of the criminal justice system from arrests, prosecution, daily policing, jury selection, and sentencing, to incarceration. Nearly all-white police departments, judiciaries, and jail and prison personnel have dominated Black communities and carried out discriminatory policies for generations (Butler 2017; Alexander 2012). From post-slavery laws that forced thousands of Black people into exploited prison labor, to racialized punitive crime bills throughout the 20th century, to efforts by the Department of Justice to create a new category of black criminality - "Black Identity Extremist," Black Americans have been on the defensive when it comes to the criminal justice system (Blackmon 2008; Cramer 1995; Wheelock and Hartmann 2007). The victories of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements, and election of African American mayors and city council leaders led to a transformation, and in some cases, in the makeup of police departments and local judiciaries, but failed to overthrow institutional and systemic bias in the criminal justice process. The evidence of racial disparities is overwhelming, and has mostly been ignored by policymakers at every level.

For Indigenous communities, the requirement to use the US justice system can in itself be a challenge to Indigenous sovereignty, and many tribal systems of justice operate under different norms and values than the US government system (Royster 2003; Melton 2005). The disregard of Tribal sovereignty and US treaty agreements with Tribal nations is one of the many ways Indigenous people have been denied justice. Wilma Mankiller, the first woman to serve as Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation fought to restore Native pride and sovereignty, emphasizing that Native peoples have indigenous solutions to solve indigenous problems (Mankiller and Wallis 1993). In a recent example, on August 26, 2020, Lezmond Mitchell became the first Indigenous American to be executed since the federal death penalty was resumed in 1994. The execution was controversial because the execution violated a tribal agreement that affirms that Tribe members are not subject to the US Government sentencing the death penalty. The Navajo Nation, of which Mitchell was a member, does not support the death penalty. The U.S. government found a loophole to get around the policy, undermining Indigenous sovereignty in the process (Fuchs 2020).

There are six areas of the criminal justice system that stand out in terms of wide and persistent disproportionalities: use-of-force, racial profiling, jury selection, drug arrests, traffic stops, and incarceration rates. Studies have documented pervasive disparities in these areas at the federal, state, and local levels (Balko 2020).

The most dramatic instance of Black community and police interaction, as tragically and graphically exemplified by the filmed Minneapolis police murder of George Floyd, is excessive and deadly use of force. Unfortunately, Floyd's death was not an exception, as numerous studies indicate. In Minneapolis, as a *New York Times* study discovered, 58 percent of those who were victimized by police excessive use of force were African Americans although they only constituted nine percent of the local population (Oppel Jr. and Gamio 2020). Similar disparities existed in other cities and states around the nation (see figure 2).

Police officers have been able to escape penalty for excessive force, including murder, under the legal theory of "qualified immunity." The doctrine argues that police officers are given a certain degree of immunity or legal protection due to the nature of their job, protection

## VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS WOMEN

The US Federal Government has a responsibility to protect the lives and futures of Indigenous people. Yet the US Supreme Court ruled in Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe (1978), that federally recognized tribes could not criminally prosecute non-Indigenous offenders for unlawful acts committed on Indigenous territory. This ruling protects non-Indigenous or settler offenders, while endangering Indigenous peoples (Douglas 2018). Thurgood Marshall wrote the dissenting opinion to Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe, joined by Chief Justice Warren Burger. Partial relief was provided in The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 through a special domestic jurisdiction provision that helps federally recognized tribes meet criteria required to prosecute non-Indigenous offenders (Rosay 2016). The Indian Law Resource Center estimates that 96% of sexual violence against Indigenous women is committed by non-Indigenous perpetrators, leaving victims of these crimes both in the shadows and without recourse (Indian Law Resource Center 2020; Machles et al. 2019).

Indigenous victims of violence are symbolized by red dresses flapping in the wind on the grounds of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. The museum director describes the impact of an empty red dress as a reminder that Native Americans still exist, while raising awareness of the violence. The REDress Project was conceived by Jaime Black, an artist and mentor based in Canada, who says the dresses "call in the energy of the women who are lost" (Bolen 2019, 32).

**FIGURE 2. ANNUAL POLICE HOMICIDE RATES PER 100,000 PEOPLE**

### POLICE HOMICIDE RATES 2013-2019

Per 100,000



■ Black   ■ White   ■ Hispanic   ■ Indigenous   — White national average
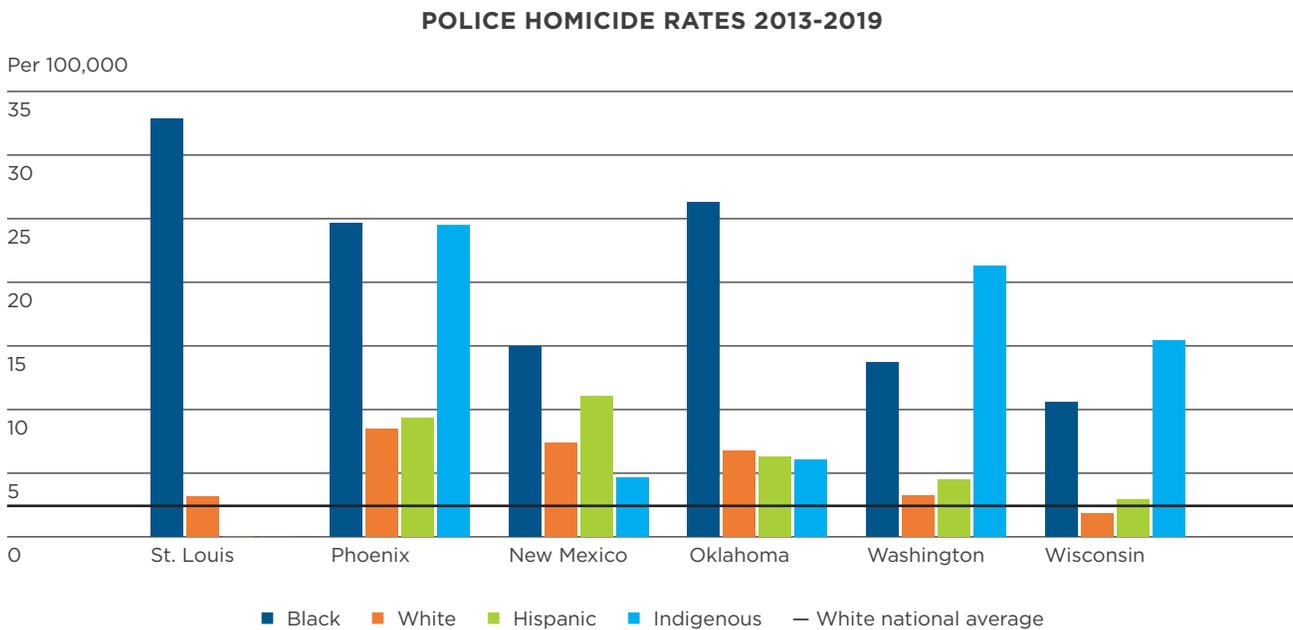
*Souce: SDSN USA analysis of Mapping Police VIolence, 2020*

that has allowed for them to not face legal or civil consequences for the murder of even unarmed citizens except under extremely egregious circumstances. However, there are many legal scholars who contend that the doctrine is constitutionally flawed, and members of the US House of Representatives has proposed legislation that would restrict its application (Baude 2018; Schwartz 2018).

Whether formally or de facto, many police departments carry out a policy of "stop-and-frisk," where individuals are stopped by the police and questioned although they have not committed any obvious crime. The data shows clearly that Black and Hispanic people are dispropor-tionately the victims of these practices. A 2014 ACLU study found that in Boston, Black people made up 63 percent of those who were stopped due to stop-and-frisk practices, although they comprised just 24 percent of the population ("Black, Brown, and Targeted: A Report on Boston Police Department Street Encounters from 2007–2010" 2014). In 2002, New York notoriously initiated a stop-and-frisk policy that went horribly wrong. According to the NY ACLU, whites were about ten percent of those who were stopped while comprising 45 percent of the total population, while 80 percent of

the stops were of Black and Hispanic people, who made up about 50 percent of the total population. The peak was reached in 2011 when over 685,000 stops were made, of which 87 percent were Black and Hispanic (Dunn and Shames 2019).

The "war on drugs" is generally thought of as a 1980s and 1990s policy regime carried out by Republican and Democratic administrations with a racially-disparate focus and impact. In fact, the linkage between race and drug policy dates to the 1880s, when Chinese individuals were stigmatized as heroin traffickers and users seeking to destroy white people. At various points during the early part of the 20th century, Black and Hispanic people were also accused and persecuted on drug charges. The 1980s presidential and congressional drug wars came out of this history and generated a volcanic surge in incarceration (Hinton 2016; Provine 2007).

Despite an end to the so-called "war on drugs" and significant reforms during the Obama presidency, huge racial disparities abound in drug arrests. The National Registry of Exonerations, which seeks to overturn unfair and wrongful convictions, documents that "innocent Black people are about 12 times more likely to be convicted of drug crimes than innocent white people"

(Gross, Possley, and Stephens 2017, 16). The NAACP notes, "African Americans represent 12.5 percent of illicit drug users, but 29 percent of those arrested for drug offenses and 33 percent of those incarcerated in state facilities for drug offenses," even though drug use by Black and white people are relatively the same ("Criminal Justice Fact Sheet" 2020). In Manhattan, a *New York Times* report found that Black people were arrested on marijuana charges, despite sweeping legislation to decriminalize the drug, at 15 times the rate of white people (Mueller, Gebeloff, and Chinoy 2018).

Black people are no safer from discrimination in their cars than walking down the street. Disproportionate traffic stops are pervasive across the nation. This includes Cincinnati, Ohio; Ferguson, Missouri; Los Angeles, California; Washington, DC, and many other localities (Aldridge 2019; "Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department" 2015; Poston and Chang 2019; Duggan 2019). As one group of scholars noted after reviewing more than 20 million traffic stops that "just by getting in a car, a black driver has about twice the odds of being pulled over, and about four times the odds of being searched" compared to whites (Sides 2018; Baumgartner, Epp, and Shoub 2018). A May 2020 study of 95 million traffic stops documented that African Americans were more likely to be stopped during the day, when the race of a driver was easier to see, than during the evening where it was more difficult to identify the driver's race or ethnicity (Pierson et al. 2020).

On February 15, 1982, James Kirkland Batson, who is Black, was convicted by an all-white jury in Kentucky of burglary and receiving stolen goods. Batson's legal team refused to accept the verdict, arguing that the prosecution had violated Batson's Constitutional rights by deliberately excluding Black people from the jury. The case would eventually go to the Supreme Court, that would rule in a 7-2 decision on April 30, 1986 that, indeed, Batson's rights had been violated and prosecutors could not dismiss prospective jurors solely based on race. However, decades after *Batson v Kentucky*, prosecutors continue to find ways to construct juries that exclude Black jurors (Edelman 2015). In the two decades following the Court's decision, according to a 2011 Michigan State University Law School study, about 53 percent of prospective Black jurors were dismissed from juries compared with about 26 percent of whites. In response to this study, the court made the astonishing conclusion that the likelihood of this being a random event was "one in ten trillion" (North Carolina v. Marcus Reymond Robinson 2012, 58).

Disparities in arrests, traffic and street stops, and composition of juries all contribute to vastly disproportionate racialized incarceration rates. A study in the Sociological Research for a Dynamic World journal found that 63 percent of Black people have or have had a family member that was incarcerated, compared to 42 percent for white people and 48 percent for Hispanic people. The survey sample included too few Indigenous people to make a confident estimate for that population (Enns et al. 2019, 1).

The Sentencing Project, which tracks racial disparities in incarceration, parole, and probation, notes that "African Americans are incarcerated in state prisons at a rate that is 5.1 times the imprisonment of whites" (see figure 3) (Nellis 2016). Even in the state with the lowest Black/white disparity in incarceration rate (Hawai'i), Black people were imprisoned at a rate more than double the average of the five OECD countries with the worst incarceration rates (see figure 3 and figure 4). Although data on Indigenous people was not included in the dataset, other reports, although older or less detailed, point to stark inequalities in Indigenous incarceration. For example, in 2010, Indigenous incarceration rates were double that of white people nationwide, and in North Dakota, where there are large indigenous populations, incarceration rates for Indigenous people were seven times larger than that of white people (Daniel 2020). More details on missing data is included in the data gaps section.

**FIGURE 3. IMPRISONMENT RATE PER 100,000 PEOPLE**

### INCARCERATION RATE (2014, 2018, 2019)
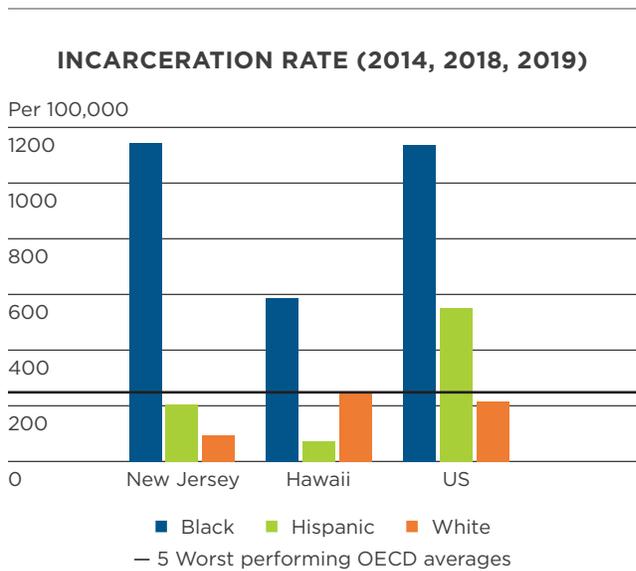


Source: Data from BJS, 2018; and Sentencing Project, 2014; World Prision Brief, 2015-2020

**FIGURE 4. BEST AND WORST OECD MEMBER IMPRISONMENT RATES PER 100,000 PEOPLE**

## OECD INCARCERATION RATE 2019

Per 100,000
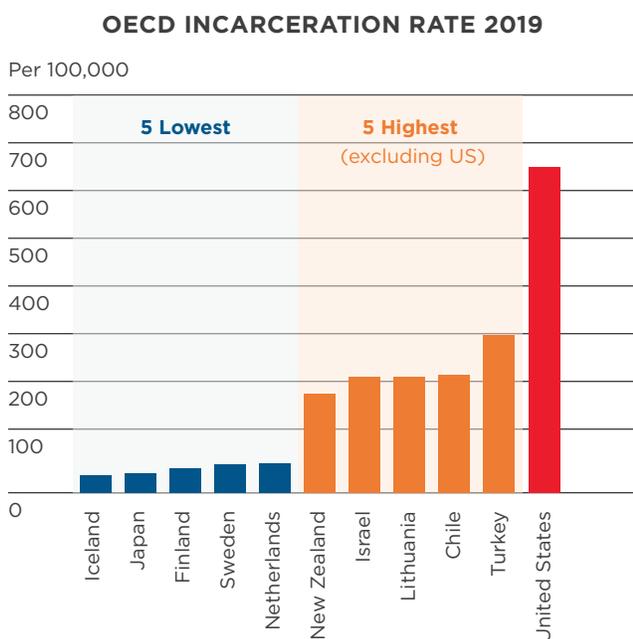


*Source: Data from World Prison Brief, 2019*

### Political Disenfranchisement

The criminal justice system has also been central in Black political disenfranchisement; most states have or previously had laws that take away the voting rights of people convicted of felonies (Butler 2017; Alexander 2012; Pettus 2013). In some instances, such as in Florida and Texas, those rights were permanently removed for decades. Florida recently developed a path for voting restoration, but established obstacles that continue to prevent many from being able to vote (Totenberg 2020).

The Sentencing Project documents that more than six million votes were lost in the 2016 elections due to felony disenfranchisement. Nationally, about 1 in 13 adult African Americans, 7.4 percent, is disenfranchised. This is considerably higher than for whites at 1.8 percent. In some states, the number of disenfranchised Black Americans is more than a fifth of the Black voting age population: Florida, 21 percent, Kentucky, 26 percent, Tennessee, 21 percent, and Virginia, 22 percent (Uggen, Larson, and Shannon 2016). There is very little specific data on Hispanic and Indigenous disenfranchisement.

It is notable that criminal justice data on Indigenous people is woefully inadequate. While there is some data on incarceration, though often not disaggregated by gender, there is virtually no information on traffic stops, stop-and-search street encounters, and deaths in police custody. The data that does exist indicates that vast disproportionalities abound. In 2018, the rate of American Indian/Alaskan Native (AIANs) in local jails was 401 per 100,000, a rate twice that of whites (187) and Latinos (185). A decade ago, 32,524 AIAN men and 5,132 AIAN women were in state and federal prisons according to census data (Daniel 2020). There is a critical need for better and mandatory data collection.

Indicators that were sorted into the "Justice" theme make up some of the largest average disparities found through this analysis; this holds at both the state and national levels. Resolving disparities enacted through the Justice system will be central to eliminating racial disparities writ large. Table 3 shows indicators that had the largest gaps that were sorted into the Justice theme (see methodology section for more details).

**TABLE 3. JUSTICE INDICATORS**

| Indicator | Youth Incarceration | | | | Local Representation Gap | | | | Incarceration Rate | | | | Police Involved Fatalities | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measure | US | State Average | State Min | State Max | US | State Average | State Min | State Max | US | State Average | State Min | State Max | US | State Average | State Min | State Max |
| Black | 5.0 | 6.4 | 0.0 | 30.1 | N/A | 2.9 | 0.6 | 9.6 | 5.2 | 6.0 | 2.4 | 12.2 | 2.9 | 3.8 | 0.0 | 19.5 |
| Hispanic | 1.6 | 1.7 | 0.0 | 7.9 | N/A | 12.9 | 1.6 | 113.1 | 2.5 | 1.4 | 0.1 | 4.3 | 1.4 | 1.1 | 0.0 | 5.5 |
| Indigenous | 3.0 | 2.8 | 0.0 | 19.6 | N/A | 4.1 | 0.6 | 10.7 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 3.1 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 34.6 |
| Largest disparity* | 5.0 | 7.0 | 1.1 | 30.1 | N/A | 27.8 | 3.4 | 113.1 | N/A | 6.0 | 2.4 | 12.1 | 4.7 | 7.1 | 1.4 | 54.3 |
| POC | 2.7 | 3.6 | 1.1 | 11.8 | N/A | 4.4 | 1.0 | 13.8 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

\* Figures are measured as the number of times higher than white rates. The category 'largest disparity' refers to the racial/ethnic grouping with the largest difference with white, and extends to all groups included in the data, including 'multiracial' and 'other.'

*Source: SDSN USA analysis (2020).*

## 2. Food and Housing Security

In 2018, approximately 14 million Americans experienced food insecurity, defined by the US Department of Agriculture as households that are "uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, at some time during the year, enough food to meet the needs of all their members because they had insufficient money or other resources for food" (Coleman-Jensen and Marquardt 2020). Food security is a central component of the SDGs, Goal 2: No Hunger focuses entirely on food systems because of its centrality to supporting a thriving and secure human life (United Nations 2020). Food insecurity is known to have many negative physical and psychological consequences, and subsequent hunger can lead to poor health, greater risk for chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity. Hunger damages children's ability to grow and learn, and can create difficult tradeoffs for seniors with fixed incomes ("Food Insecurity in America: Causes and Solutions" 2020). The impacts of food insecurity are wide-ranging, and include negative externalities across nearly all the other Goals. Unfortunately, in the US it is also one of the areas where there is the least amount of racially-disaggregated data.

While nationwide, approximately 11 percent of households are food insecure. In households with children under the age of 18, 14 percent report food insecurity, as do 44 percent of disabled people who are not in the workforce ("Food Insecurity in America: Causes and Solutions" 2020). Like the other issues explored in this report, not all groups have equal access to food security. Nationwide, Black people are 2.6 times more likely to be food insecure than white people, and Hispanic people are twice as likely than white people to be food insecure. Black children are nearly three times more likely (2.9), and Hispanic children are 1.6 times more likely, to be food insecure than their white peers. Despite the prevalence of food insecurity and indications that some groups are specifically impacted, there is little detailed data on this issue. For instance, data on food insecurity of Indigenous people was not available, and state-level racially disaggregated data is not available for any group. Even baseline statistics around the percent of food insecure people from each race/ethnicity by state is lacking. This extends to data on government food programming, including WIC, Child Nutrition Programs,

and SNAP (Gamblin, Brooks, and Khalaf 2019). Without this crucial data, communities and governments are destined to continue to poorly serve those in need because they cannot be accountable to improving delivery of essential services without information on where they are falling short.[1]

There is a long history of Black people being denied access to food security. Traditionally, Black people have been tied to the land and food production. From the antebellum period to the modern era of urban gardens, the Black community has played a key role in creating and providing food for the American table, while being prohibited from enjoying the benefits and bounty they helped create (Newkirk 2019). Black farmers have faced discrimination in a multitude of ways, including: lack of or limited access to private sector loans, limited access to markets, and discrimination in federal funding (Farlie, Robb, and Robinson 2016; Baradaran 2017; Newkirk II 2019). In the current era, Black farmers, who historically were central to food production and consumption in the Black community, are disappearing. In 1920, there were 949,889 Black farmers according to the US Census. By 2019, that number had fallen to 45,508. Most recently, the Trump administration's farm subsidy initiative, the Market Facilitation Program, sent 99.5 percent of its funds to white farm operators, even though Black farmers are more likely to operate small farms and have smaller incomes (Rosa-Aquino 2019). This mirrors the experience of Black small business owners' access to the Payment Protection Program, the US government's relief effort for small businesses for COVID-19 (Flitter 2020; Leatherby 2020; Buffington et al. 2020). In urban areas, there have been similar outcomes, although the process has been different; urban areas have been abandoned by major grocers, contributing an escalating health crisis where healthy and affordable vegetables, fruits, and other nutrient rich foods are rarely available (MacNell et al. 2017; Brones 2018).

For indigenous communities, food insecurity was an intentional strategy used by the US government to force Indigenous peoples off their land and into the US reservation system. Through the slaughter of buffalo across the West and Midwest of what is currently known as the United States, the US Army attempted to

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[1] For a more detailed review of available data, see Gamblin, Marlysa, Christian Brooks, and Nesreen Bassam Abu Khalaf. 2019. "Applying Racial Equity to U.S. Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs." Bread for the World. https://www.paperturn-view.com/us/bread-for-the-world/applying-racial-equity-to-u-s-federal-nutrition-assistance-programs?pid=NTg58712&v=3;

use starvation as a way to get access to land for western expansion (Dunbar-Ortiz 2015). The forcible removal of Indigenous peoples from their land and the deliberate and flourishing ecosystems they had built to sustain themselves also contributed to Indigenous food insecurity. The colonization of what is now the East Coast of the United States started this process, and moved the Indigenous people off of migratory hunting paths and cultivated land (Dunbar-Ortiz 2015).

The Indigenous peoples of what is now Southwest United States and Mexico, were also forcibly removed from their land in what is now the United States, following the Mexican-American War. Through the Bracero program and other policies, many Mexicans began working as US farm labor. Today, an estimated 71 percent of US farmworkers are Hispanic, and somewhere between 50 and 70 percent of farmworkers do not have work documents (Jordan 2020; "Farm- workers, Deemed Essential, Don't Feel Protected From Pandemic" 2020). Estimates of farmworker food insecurity vary, but some research suggests it can be quite large; a 2011 study of migrant farmworkers in Georgia found that nearly 63 percent did not have enough food (Hill et al. 2011; Kiehne and Mendoza 2015). Migrants and undocumented workers also face greater barriers to accessing food programs either due to residency requirements, translation services, discomfort interacting with government services due to undocumented status, and isolation from the larger community (Farmworker Justice 2020). More generally, although employment rates for Hispanic people in the US is above the US average, they are also more likely to be food insecure than the US average, pointing to a low quality of employment opportunities, which include migrant labor but extend further (Mora and Davila 2018; "Hispanic and Latino Hunger in America" 2020; Coleman-Jensen and Smith 2019). This is explored further in the Economic Security section.

Research demonstrates that families are often forced to use money that would go to food to pay for housing, and that housing insecurity is closely connected to food insecurity (Givens et al. 2020; King 2018). Housing insecurity is an overarching term that encompasses the many dimensions of difficulties that people face related to housing, including (but not limited to): affordability, overcrowding, quality, insecurity, loss of housing, moving frequently, etc. ("Housing Instability" 2020; *PD&R Edge* 2020). In 2014, 57 percent of the 46.5 million people served by the Feeding America network reported having to choose between food and housing,

with 79 percent reporting that they purchased inexpensive, unhealthy food to stretch their budget (Weinfield et al. 2014).

Rent burden, meaning household spending more than 30 percent of their income on rent, is a problem for all groups living in the US at both the state and city levels. Even in Ogden, Utah, the city with the lowest rent burden, nearly 40 percent of all renters are burdened. When rent burden is broken down by race, we see Black and Hispanic groups are even more left behind by state governments. Nationally, 53 percent of Hispanic households are rent burdened, and 55 percent of Black households are rent burdened, compared with 43 percent of Indigenous and white households (see figure 5). In four states: New Mexico, Hawaii, Montana, and Vermont, more than two-thirds of Black households are rent burdened. While national rent-burden averages for Indigenous groups are low, in four states more than two-thirds of Indigenous households are rent-burdened, and in three locales (Washington, DC; West Virginia; and Connecticut), more than 80 percent of Indigenous households are rent burdened.

**FIGURE 5. RENT-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS IN THE UNITED STATES**

**RENT-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS THE US 2013-2018**



| | |
|---|---|
| Black | 55% |
| Hispanic | 53% |
| Indigenous | 48% |
| White | 42% |

0% 2020 Rent-burdened goal
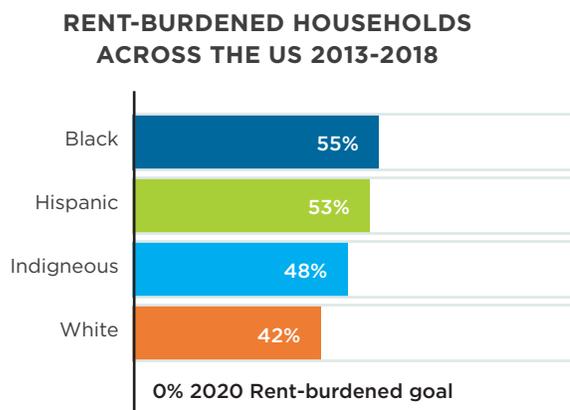
*Source: Data from National Low Income Housing Coalition (2020).*

For Indigenous people, housing insecurity can also be traced back to colonialism and the multiple forced removals of Indigenous peoples from their lands and homes (Dunbar-Ortiz 2015; Estes 2019). For Black families, housing insecurity rests on decades of racial

segregation that was central to facilitating the persistent housing and wealth gap between Black and white families. That segregation was not only a result of individual racism, but was primarily driven by federal and state housing policies that explicitly and surreptitiously prevented Black people from a fair opportunity to purchase homes or rent properties. The 1968 Fair Housing Act (FHA), that outlawed discriminatory lending policies known as "redlining," played a critical role in attempting to address these disparities and enforce fairer housing laws. However, other institutional methods were developed, such as promoting dispropor-tionate subprime loans to Black people across the income spectrum, that have seen a continuation of bias and disparities in housing. The FHA and PWA (Public Works Administration) not only prevented Black people and other people of color from getting loans or being allowed to integrate public housing, they facilitated the segregated growth of the nation's white middle class. The policies of these agency drove housing development around the nation (Baradaran 2017; Rothstein 2017).

Black and Hispanic people also bear the burden of displacement in gentrified areas, and are more likely to be unhoused (Wiltz 2019; "Racial Disparities in Homelessness in the United States" 2018). There are similar disparities when we compare home ownership rates of white men and Black women. Even in the best performing state, Mississippi, white men were one-and-a-half times more likely to own a home than a Black woman. In 21 of the 40 states with data, white men owned homes at a rate more than three times that of Black women. In Minnesota, white men owned homes at a rate 3.7 times higher than Black women.

The Food and Housing Security theme has the least available data of the five themes included in this

analysis. Table 4 below highlights the limits of available data, while also highlighting that there are relevant disparities that warrant geographically specific data.

## 3. Education

During the US slave era, both the enslaved and slave masters understood that education was empowering: every southern state passed laws against educating Black people, whether they were enslaved or not. The Reconstruction era (1865-1877) witnessed an explosion in public education for Black people throughout the nation, including the founding of Black colleges and universities. This effort would eventually be obstructed by the 1895 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision that "separate, but equal" could become a legal shield to deny African Americans educational and other rights. Around the same time, Indigenous people were unwillingly separated from their families and forced into boarding schools meant to strip them of their language, culture and community (Bear 2008; Dunbar-Ortiz 2015; Watras 2004).

*The development and support of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) by these communities is just one example of how they have organized to provide essential services in the face of violence and disenfranchisement from state institutions.*

**TABLE 4. FOOD AND HOUSING SECURITY INDICATORS**

| Indicator | Home Ownership | | | | Broadband Access | | | | Rent-Burdened Population | | | | Food Insecurity | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measure | US | State Average | State Min | State Max | US | State Average | State Min | State Max | US | State Average | State Min | State Max | US | State Average | State Min | State Max |
| Black | | 2.1 | 1.5 | 3.7 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 0.6 | 2.1 | 1.28 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 2.1 | 2.6 | | | |
| Hispanic | | | | | 1.5 | 1.5 | 0.7 | 2.2 | 1.24 | 1.2 | 0.8 | 1.7 | 2.0 | | | |
| Indigenous | | | | | | | | | 1.01 | 1.1 | 0.3 | 2.0 | | | | |
| Largest disparity* | | | | | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.0 | 2.2 | 1.28 | 1.5 | 1.1 | 2.3 | 2.6 | | | |
| POC | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

* Figures are measured as the number of times higher than white rates. The category 'largest disparity' refers to the racial/ethnic grouping with the largest difference with white, and extends to all groups included in the data, including 'multiracial' and 'other.'

*Source: SDSN USA analysis (2020).*

The impact of these policies on Black and Indigenous communities was devastating (Running Bear et al. 2018). The development and support of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) by these communities is just one example of how they have organized to provide essential services in the face of violence and disenfranchisement from state institutions. The successes of this approach challenge the prevailing discourse about children of communities of color—which overemphasizes limitations and deficits and fails to draw upon the considerable strengths, assets and resilience demonstrated by these communities. Policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Race to the Top have traditionally focused on identifying and sorting talent, rather than developing it. A strength-based or talent-development model approach builds on the context, culture, and historical legacy of these communities so that progress is sustainable (Ivory A. Toldson 2018).

Minority Serving Institutions, which include Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and others, exemplify this approach. These institutions possess strong and historical ties to the communities and strong commitments to the success of students from these communities. For example, recognizing that STEM and health care professions are growing faster than average, HBCUs have committed to prepare students for these careers: HBCUs enroll ten percent of all African American college students, and graduate 27 percent of all African American STEM graduates (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2019).

HSIs play a critical role in the education and development of the Latino community with limited resources (Malcom, Bensimon, and Dávila 2010). They educate 67 percent of Latinx students enrolled in higher education institutions,

## SYLVIA MENDEZ

The story of Sylvia Mendez and her role in advocating for Mexican Americans in the education system is just one example of how Hispanic Americans have organized for equality in the US. In the fight for equal access to education resources, Mexican Americans led several court battles that preceded Brown v. Board, such as: Independent School District v. Salvatierra (1930), Roberto Alvarez v. Lemon Grove (1931), and Mendez v. Westminster (1945) (Moore III and Lewis 2014; Nieto 2004).

Sylvia Mendez and her siblings were denied admission to their local white-only school in California. She was eight years old when she was denied entry and told instead to go to the Mexican school which consisted of — "two wooden shacks on a dirt lot next to a cow pasture" (Kandil 2016). A class-action lawsuit followed against the Westminster School District and four other districts in Orange County, California (Nieto 2004). While the challenge was appealed by the Orange County school districts in 1947, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

affirmed the lower court's ruling. The ruling, however, was limited. Mexican Americans could enroll in white schools, but the children could not register as Mexican children, but rather as white children. Further, the ruling did not extend to Native Americans and Asian Americans in segregated schools (Santiago 2019). The ruling did help lay groundwork for future cases. Justice Thurgood Marshall, who represented the NAACP's amicus brief during the appellate case, would go on to raise similar arguments in what became known as the landmark decision of the century—Brown v. Board in 1954 (Santiago 2019).

Sylvia Mendez was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Obama for her role in Mendez v. Westminster in February 15, 2011. In a post-award interview, she stated how proud this award would make her people: "With this honor, the Latino community will find out about Mendez, how the Latinos have always been fighting for integration" ("2010 Presidential Medal of Freedom Recipient - Sylvia Mendez" 2011).

while being only 17 percent of all institutions ("Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)" 2020). Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) provide a historically relevant and culturally responsive postsecondary education for Indigenous in the US. TCUs are a critical resource that provide Native as well as non-Native students with access to higher education and thereby higher earning potential and other lifelong benefits. Similarly, 37 TCUs that comprise the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) provide access to higher education to over 80 percent of Indian Country. Mary Annette Pember, wrote in her Tribal College Journal (2012) that "since the beginning, Tribal Colleges have been a study in American Indian tenacity of spirit".

These institutions have contributed to closing the higher education gap, but large inequalities persist. White people are more than two times more likely to have a bachelor's degree or more than Hispanic people, and 1.6 times more likely than Black people. These gaps have real implications for people's lives; Americans with less education tend to suffer worse health outcomes, are less likely to have jobs which allow them to work from home, and are less likely to have health care coverage. These factors have also contributed to an increased vulnerability to COVID-19 ("Education: It Matters More to Health than Ever Before" 2015; Gould and Wilson 2020).

Higher education gaps have roots in policy decisions and practices dating back to the end of the 19th century. Both at the K-12 and university levels, Civil Rights leaders filed lawsuits in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s leading up to a historic Supreme Court decision: the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision struck down legal segregated education, but failed to create equal education. The fight against desegregation continues through the present day despite numerous setbacks over the past 50+ years (Moore III and Lewis 2014).

Today, that tenacity of spirit is being undermined through suspension and expulsion of Black, Indigenous and Hispanic students. High rates of suspension and expulsion contribute to the achievement gap between Black and white students in the US and demonstrate the criminalization of Black, Indigenous and Hispanic children (Pearman et al. 2019). The implementation of zero-tolerance policies, originating in the 1980s as a response to drugs and crime in society as a whole, bled over into schools and have played a role in Hispanic, Black and Indigenous students receiving disproportionate discipline for similar or the same offenses as their white counterparts (C. A. Brown 2014).

*In North Dakota, Native American students were nearly 12 times more likely to be expelled, and five times more likely to be suspended than white students*

Nationally, Black students are suspended or expelled three times more often than white students, Indigenous students nearly two times more often than white students, and Hispanic students at about the same rate as white students. These averages hide some state extremes. For example, in six states (Illinois, South Dakota, Maryland, Nebraska, Wisconsin and North Dakota), Black students were disciplined at a rate more than five times higher than white students. In North Dakota, Native American students were nearly 12 times more likely to be expelled, and five times more likely to be suspended than white students (see figure 6). The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) reported that a Latino student attending a school in Philadelphia was 1.6 times more likely to be taken into police custody than a white student (Sallo 2011).

Sadly, this maltreatment is compounded for students with disabilities. Misdeeds by a child with a disability may be subject to the same or similar appropriate levels of discipline as any other child, if the misconduct is found to be unrelated to the child's disability and in accordance with the child continuing to receive a fair and appropriate education (FAPE) ("Beyond Suspensions: Examining School Discipline Policies and Connections to the School-to-Prison Pipeline for Students of Color with Disabilities" 2019). In addition to Indigenous students, Black students with disabilities are meted out an extremely high number of suspensions. Approximately 23 percent of Black students with disabilities and 21 percent of Indigenous students with disabilities received suspensions (Dwyer 1996). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '97) was amended in 1997 to prevent this from happening to children with disabilities, especially where their behavior might have been more effectively addressed in their individualized education plan (IEP) ("Beyond Suspensions: Examining School Discipline Policies and Connections to the School-to-Prison Pipeline for Students of Color with Disabilities" 2019).

The racial discipline gap is not only connected to exposure to violence, but also to less diverse schools and a pernicious racial achievement gap, more aptly referred to as an opportunity gap. Researchers note that an increase in the racial discipline gap can predict an increase in the opportunity gap (Pearman et al. 2019).

**FIGURE 6. COMPARISON OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION RATES IN NORTH DAKOTA**

### COMPARISONS OF SCHOOL EXPULSION RATES IN NORTH DAKOTA SY 2013-2014

### COMPARISONS OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION RATES IN NORTH DAKOTA

■ White  ■ Indingeous
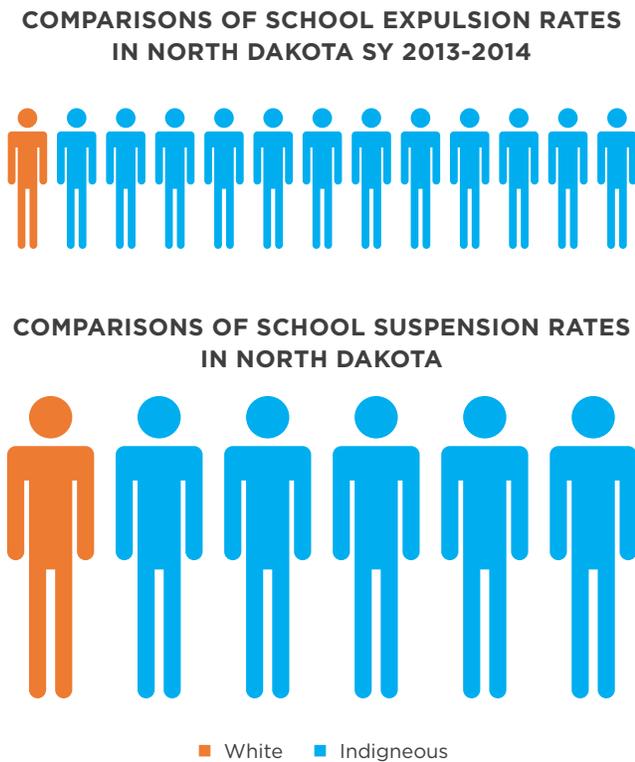
*Source: Data from National Center for Education Statistics (2020).*

**Adultification of Girls of Color**

A six-year-old black girl was arrested, handcuffed, fingerprinted and a mugshot taken by the school resource officer for throwing a tantrum in her first-grade classroom in Orlando, Florida. She was taken to a juvenile jail on a battery charge (Darby 2019). An eight-year-old boy with special needs was arrested at school in Key West, Florida, only to find that the handcuffs were too large to fit his child-size wrists. The incident reportedly began when the child was not sitting properly on a bench.

The excessive disciplining and arresting of children of color in schools is often connected to the perception of Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous children as being less like children and more like adults. Black, Hispanic and Indigenous children are often viewed and treated as if they are much older deserving of harsher penalties (Bafu 2019). During the 2009-2010 school year. more than 70 percent of students arrested in schools were Black or Hispanic (Castillo 2015).

A new study from the Center on Poverty and Inequality at Georgetown University Law Center defines "adultification" as the process of being viewed as more adult-like in contrast with their "more innocent" white counterparts. The process can begin as early as age five, and can continue throughout the teenage years (Bafu 2019; Epstein, Blake, and González 2017). The Georgetown study found that adultification bias is not only linked to harsher treatment, but feeds the school-to-prison pipeline.

The adultification process of Black girls is heavily influenced by societal stereotypes of Black women, in the same way that the adultification process of Black boys is influenced by societal stereotypes of Black men (Toliver 2018; Morris 2019). Underpinning this stereotype are racist norms that were developed to justify violence against Black women and men. The loud, angry Black woman stereotype is often assumed of Black girls, which creates an image of who Black girls are and how they are supposed to behave (C. Wilson 2017).

Black girls are not the only victims of adultification bias. Hispanic and Indigenous girls face a number of vulnerabilities, including being perceived as older and more adult like, that can result in an increased likelihood of being trafficked and/or interfacing with the criminal justice system (Pierce 2012). Indigenous girls are 40 percent more likely than white girls to encounter the juvenile criminal justice system, are 50 percent more likely to be detained in the system, 20 percent more likely to be adjudicated, and much more likely to receive a harsher punishment for the same or similar offenses as their white counterparts (Wiltz 2019).

Adultification bias, along with a number of other factors, can lead to a higher exposure to violence. A 2016 National Institute of Justice study found that American Indian and Alaska Native women victims were 1.5 times as likely as non-Hispanic white-only women victims to be physically injured, 1.8 times as likely to need social services, and 1.9 times as likely to be absent from school or work (Rosay 2016). Indigenous women and girls face some of the highest rates of sexual violence of any community in the US.

**School Segregation**

Despite the limited success of Brown v. Board of Education, PK-12 students are becoming more and more segregated. While segregation for Black students has risen in nearly every state in the US, on average white and Latino students are the most segregated groups in the US. White students attend a school in which 69 percent of the students look like them. Latinx students attend a school in which 55 percent of the students are Latinx. Black students are 15 percent of the US school population, they attend schools that are 47 percent Black. Asian American students attend schools that are 24 percent Asian (Frankenberg et al. 2019).

No geographic area has been spared the crippling effects of poverty and segregation. Integrated school settings tend to have better outcomes for children of color due to expanded options and resources and increased funding (Schofield 1995; Trent 1997). The 1973 Keyes v. Denver School District No.1 decision was important as it connected the racial discrimination of Black students in school desegregation cases with the racial discrimination experienced by Mexican American students (Olden 2017). Previously, these cases had been viewed in terms of ethnicity. The 1954 Supreme Court Hernandez v. Texas, 347 U.S. 475 (1954), ruling established that Mexican Americans were a distinct group of people who experienced discrimination not based on race, but on ancestry.

While students of color have moved from being excluded, to expelled, to re-segregated, many teachers of color lost their jobs in the aftermath of Brown. Prior to Brown v. Board, researchers estimate Black teachers made up 35 to 50 percent of teachers in segregated states (Will 2019). In the 2015 to 2016 school year, about 80 percent of public-school teachers were white, nine percent were Hispanic, seven percent were Black, two percent were Asian, and one percent were of Two or More Races. Additionally, American Indian/Alaska Natives and Pacific Islanders each made up less than one percent of public-school teachers (see figure 7) ("Characteristics of Public School Teachers" 2019).

The need for racial diversity in schools, including among teachers, has important implications for student well-being. The overall teacher diversity in school impacts how effective teachers of color can be for students of color (Banerjee 2018). Research that examined Asian, Black, Hispanic, and white 10th graders in a 2002 Education Longitudinal study found that the impact of teacher and student mismatch was varied and complex. Whether students' derived benefit often depended on the ethnicity and race of the teacher and student, as well as the overall diversity of the school environment, while controlling for a number of other variables (McGrady and Reynolds 2012). Evidence supports that in general all students benefit from diverse teachers, and Black, Indigenous and Hispanic

**FIGURE 7. PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE UNITED STATES**



PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER DEMOGRAPHICS

■ 2003–04   ■ 2015–16
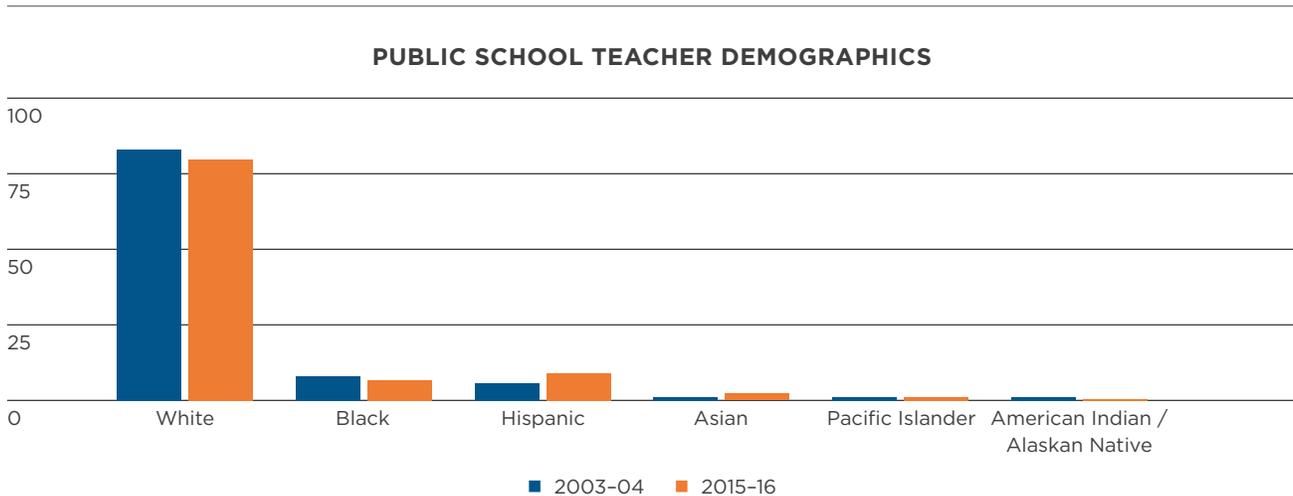
*Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School Teacher Data File," "Charter School Teacher Data File," "Public School Data File," and "Charter School Data File," 1999–2000; and National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS), "Public School Teacher Data File," 2017–18.*

students in particular benefit from teachers who share their racial or ethnic heritage (Egalite and Kisida 2017; Egalite, Kisida, and Winters 2015; Gershenson, Holt, and Papageorge 2016).

**School Funding**

After the landmark ruling of Brown v. Board, the fight for equitable resources has continued. Disparities in how schools are funded negated the impact of hard-fought legislative wins. The Constitution of the United States places most of the responsibility for K-12 education and its funding with the states. As a result, there is a wide variation in education funding between and within states, resulting in schools that reflect the socioeconomic conditions of the neighborhoods and communities in which they serve. For example, property taxes which fund schools are subject to local interpretation and local and state laws (Bowling, Boyland, and Kirkeby 2019). After adjusting for differences in cost of living, public-school students in New Jersey in 1998 had more than twice the funding

allocated than their counterparts in Utah (Biddle and Berliner 2002). In 2020, the state with the highest funding level per student was Vermont, with $27,588, almost doubling the national average of $14,046. Figure 8 illustrates the funding efforts and amount that local, state, and federal governments spend on elementary and secondary education, adjusted for the size of the student population.

Federal funds have also decreased for Title I programs and for special education expenditures over the last decade. For students of color across the states, school funding has remained static and unequal over time ("Quality Education For All… One School At A Time" 2017). The Task Force on Quality Education (2017) further found that in 36 states, public-school funding has not yet returned to pre-2008 levels, prior to the great recession.

Inequities in school funding have also been noted at the university level ("Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)" 2020; MacDonald, Botti, and Hoffman Clark 2007; Toldson 2019). Funding for postsecondary institutions

**FIGURE 8. LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL SPENDING ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**SCHOOL SPENDING BY STATE SY 2016**

|  |  |  |  | AL |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | AR |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | CO | CA |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | FL | IA |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | GA | LA |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | IN | MI |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | KS | MN |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | AZ | KY | MT |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | MS | MO | NE |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | NV | NM | OH | DE |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | NC | OR | VA | HI | MD |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | OK | SC | WA | IL | NH | AK | CT |  |  |
| ID | PR | SD | WV | ME | PA | MA | NJ |  |  |  |
| UT | TN | TX | WI | ND | RI | WY | VT |  |  |  |

| $2,034 | $3,815 | $5,596 | $7,378 | $9,159 | $10,940 | $12,721 | $14,503 | $16,284 | $18,065 | $19,847 |
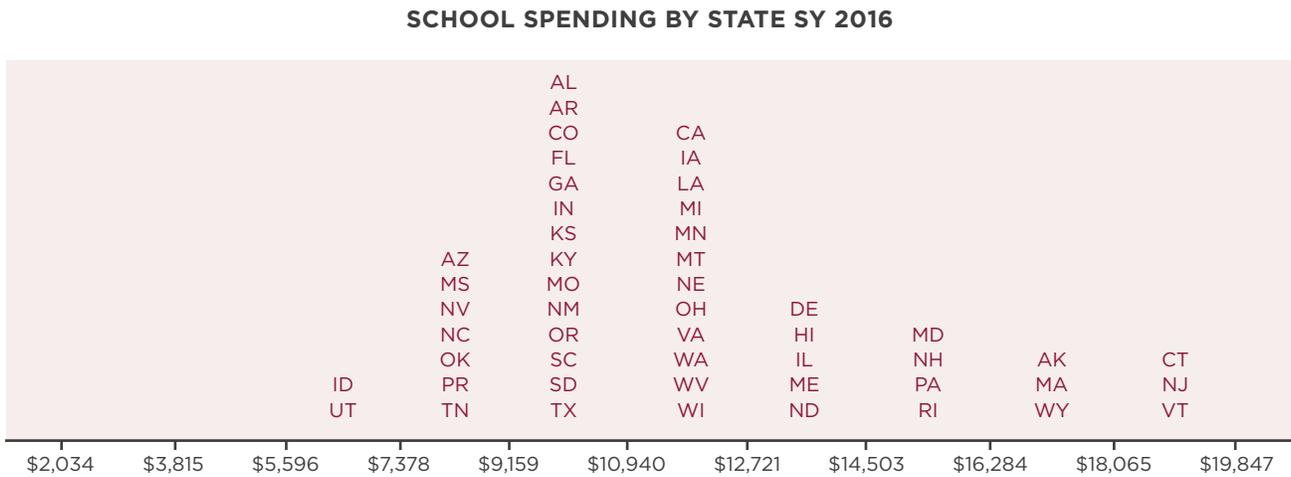
*Source: Data from National Center for Education Statistics (2020), Figure State Indicator S-11*

consists of a mix of public and private funds, including: federal, state, and local appropriations; investments; gifts; grants; tuition; and fees. While both MSIs and traditionally white institutions (TWI) rely on these funding sources, they do so to varying degrees (Toldson and Washington 2015).

State and local funding streams are key sources of revenue for HSIs. HSIs were not funded under Title III of the Higher Education Act (HEA) until 1995, which has provided a more consistent method for HSIs to receive direct federal aid. TCUs primarily serve rural indigenous communities, and have experienced sustained growth over time ("The Economic Value of American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Colleges & Universities" 2015). TCUs struggle with funding, however. Indian reservations' status as federal trust territory prevents the levying of property taxes, reducing the public resources available to TCUs ("Tribal Colleges An Introduction" 1999). Although tribes have the sovereign authority to levy income taxes on their members, bleak conditions in Indian country limit the capacity of a reservation-levied tax base ("Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Statement" 2015).

HBCUs have played a pivotal role in American society. These institutions represent about three percent of two-year and four-year public and private colleges, but award 17 percent of all bachelor's degrees earned by Black students. Yet public HBCUs heavily rely on federal, state, and local funding in ways that their non-HBCU counterparts do not (54 percent of overall revenue versus 38 percent) and private HBCUs are more tuition-dependent than their non-HBCU counterparts ("What Is an HBCU?" 2020).

While K-12 education is largely governed at the state level, the federal government exercises considerable influence in higher education; it is the primary source of financial aid to students going to college. The federal government is also entrusted with oversight of federal civil rights laws which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, language, sex, religion, and disability in schools and post-secondary institutions of higher education. These key responsibilities impact college access and affordability: independent researchers from five universities, including the Institute for Higher Education Policy authored a study on MSIs that found that the Trump Administration and Congress had proposed a series of policy changes that could result in further barriers for students of color, while undermining the institutions committed to serving them (Samayoa 2018).

For example, the executive branch issued a reduced budget request for MSIs of nearly $95 million in proposed cuts. In a call to increase efficiency and reduce the federal government's role in education, the Department of Education focused on consolidating funding sources for MSIs by merging six HEA Title III and V competitive grant authorities into a single institutional formula ("An American Budget: Fiscal Year 2019" 2018, 11). The largest requested single cut was for the Strengthening Historically Black Colleges fund (Samayoa 2018).

Table 5 below summarizes indicators that had the largest gaps that were sorted into the Education theme (see methodology section for more details). Although disparities across groups are noticeable for all indicators, school poverty shows disparities that stretch into double digits.

## TABLE 5. EDUCATION INDICATORS

| Indicator | School Poverty | | | | School Suspensions and Expulsions | | | | Bachelor's Degree | | | | 4-year High School Graduation Rate | | | | Youth Not in School or Work | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measure | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max |
| Black | 5.5 | 6.3 | 0.4 | 32.2 | 3.10 | 3.5 | 0.9 | 10.7 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 1.0 | 2.2 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.2 | 4.7 |
| Hispanic | 5.5 | 5.3 | 0.8 | 17.0 | 1.04 | 1.4 | 0.5 | 3.3 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 0.9 | 3.4 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 0.9 | 2.5 |
| Indigenous | 4.9 | 6.0 | 0.0 | 45.6 | 1.90 | 2.3 | 0.5 | 8.8 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 1.3 | 4.7 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.8 | | | | |
| Largest disparity* | 5.5 | 8.8 | 1.0 | 45.6 | 3.10 | 4.6 | 1.2 | 52.0 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 1.5 | 5.8 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 1.0 | 4.7 |
| POC | 4.9 | 5.9 | 0.5 | 19.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

\* Figures are measured as the number of times higher than white rates. The category 'largest disparity' refers to the racial/ethnic grouping with the largest difference with white, and extends to all groups included in the data, including 'multiracial' and 'other.'

*Source: SDSN USA analysis (2020).*

## 4.  Economic Security

In 1860, more than 88 percent of Black people in the US were held in bondage (U.S. Census, 1860). The Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment legally ended slavery a few years later, and while Black American's were promised a modest portion of the sizeable wealth they had created without compensation for generations, this payment was never rendered. On the other hand, some enslavers received compensation when slavery was ended. This continued a legacy of restricting access to wealth for Black people (W. Darity et al. 2018; Baradaran 2017; W. "Sandy" Darity and Mullen 2020; Coates 2014). After slavery ended and without economic resources, most Black Americans found few job opportunities outside of farm labor or domestic work. In what some scholars have referred to as "re-enslavement," prison labor, tenant farming, and discriminatory labor laws kept an overwhelming number of Black Americans in a desperate and precarious economic state. In 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" was a revolutionary moment for American workers in achieving long sought labor rights, including a minimum wage, 40-hour workweek, and Social Security. However, those policies excluded farm laborers and domestic workers, two professions where almost all workers were Black (Rodems, R., & Shaefer, H. L. 2016). It was not until the 1964 Civil Rights Act and later Affirmative Action laws that discrimination in hiring and wages would begin to be addressed, and clear disparities remain through this day.

In 1962, Delores Huerta and Cesar Chavez, two Hispanic labor leaders, started the National Farm Workers Association, organizing farm laborers against both the economic and environmental risks they faced in the US. They won important protections for farmworkers in California. However, much work remains. The lack of protections for farm labor and domestic work continues, while the demographics of those occupations has changed: nearly one-third of domestic workers and two-thirds of farmworkers are born in Mexico, and nearly half of domestic workers are foreign born (Jordan 2020; Perea 2010; Burnham and Theodore 2012; Wolfe et al. 2020).

An overwhelming majority, 90 percent, of domestic workers identified as women as of 2019 (underlying survey offered only binary gender options) (Wolfe et al. 2020). The Economic Policy Institute finds that the "typical domestic worker is paid $12.01 per hour, including overtime, tips, and commissions—39.8 percent less than the typical non-domestic worker, who is paid $19.97" (Wolfe et al. 2020). These workers are far more likely than the typical worker to be women and Black or Hispanic (information on Indigenous domestic workers was not included in the study), and they are more likely to experience wage theft, be injured on the job, and lack other workplace protections commonly available in other industries. Nearly 20 percent of domestic workers are Black women compared with six percent of the general workforce, and 27 percent of domestic workers are Hispanic women, while Hispanic women make up only seven percent of the non-domestic workforce (Wolfe et al. 2020; Burnham and Theodore 2012).

### FANNIE LOU HAMER

Fannie Lou Hamer is an example of the resilience of people who found ways to do more with less, and put into practice the interconnected goals of sustainable development. In 1962, Hamer bought 40 acres of land in Sunflower County, Mississippi. There, she established the "Freedom Farm Cooperative" which modeled good practices toward eliminating food insecurity during an era when the concept of sustainable development was unknown. Collective ownership of the land and its produce meant that the Freedom Farm families would not go hungry and could operate independent of a white overseer. Over 1,500 families belonged to the Freedom Farm, sustaining themselves through cash crops and vegetables. By 1970, the Farm bought an additional 640 acres and opened a "pig bank" to ensure that no one would be left behind (Nuzzolillo 2019; DeMuth 1964). Fannie Lou Hamer's life work offers a vision for how to integrate health, community, housing, food security and economic security to encourage thriving for all.

In 2018, Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic people were more than two times more likely to be in poverty than white people (see example of Wisconsin, figure 9). At the state level, the biggest poverty disparity was in South Dakota, where Indigenous people were 5.6 times more likely to be in poverty than white people, and where half (49.9) of the Indigenous population was in poverty. Only one other state, Maine, had more than 40 percent of any racial/ethnic population, Native Hawai'ian/Pacific Islanders, living under the poverty line.

**FIGURE 9. PERCENT OF PEOPLE LIVING BELOW THE NATIONAL POVERTY LINE IN WISCONSIN**

### WISCONSIN PERCENT OF PEOPLE LIVING BELOW THE NATIONAL POVERTY LINE 2018



| | |
|---|---|
| Black | 32.9% |
| Hispanic | 22.8% |
| Indigneous | 25.9% |
| White | 8.9% |
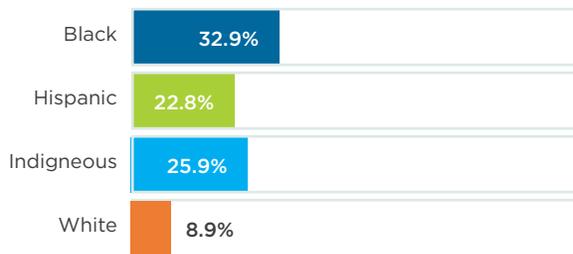
*Source: Data from US Census Bureau (2020).*

Child poverty shows similarly disturbing trends, defined here as children living below 200 percent of the poverty line. Child poverty is alarmingly high in the US, with 22 states having more than 40 percent of children at two times the poverty line. Even in the best performing state (New Hampshire), a quarter of children (24 percent) live at this rate. In the worst performing states, Mississippi and New Mexico, 52 percent of children are living below twice the poverty line. Louisiana and Arkansas are not far behind, with 50 percent of children living in poverty. Black, Hispanic and Indigenous children are more than two times more likely to be in poverty than white children. In South Dakota, 27 percent of white children are in poverty, while 84 percent of Indigenous children are in poverty. In almost every state for which there is data (23 of 28 states) half or more of Black children are living in poverty. Even in the best performing state, Maryland, 40 percent of Black children are in poverty.

In five states, Wisconsin, Mississippi, Ohio, Arkansas and Louisiana, more than 70 percent of Black children are living in poverty. In only four states are fewer than 50 percent of Hispanic children living in poverty (data exists for 35 states). In the worst performing three states, North Carolina, Arkansas and Alabama, 68, 69 and 71 percent of Hispanic children are living in poverty, respectively.

Racial income and wealth gaps have been relatively consistent for decades; so have unemployment figures. Policies have often created barriers for Black and people of color to receive equal benefits, one example is the GI Bill which disproportionately gave white veterans of World War II access to home ownership, higher education, and unemployment benefits (Rothstein 2017). Despite the rise and fall of unemployment since records began comparing racial data in the 1960s, Black unemployment has generally remained twice that of whites. In 2018, unemployment for Black people nationally was 2.2 times higher than that of white people (9.6 percent vs 4.4 percent), 1.4 times higher for Hispanic people (6.1 percent) and 2.5 times higher for Indigenous people (10.8 percent). In Nevada, white unemployment rates are highest at approximately six percent. In 13 states, Black unemployment tops ten percent, and is 14 percent in Illinois—nearly three times higher than the white unemployment rate in that state. In four states, Wyoming, Idaho, Alaska and South Dakota, Indigenous unemployment rates top 15 percent, and in South Dakota reaching 19.5 percent, the highest unemployment rate for any included group in any state.

In the wake of COVID-19, unemployment has hit crisis levels. Employment dropped 13 percent from February to May of 2020. Hispanic women were hardest hit with a 21 percent loss, followed by Asian women (19 percent), then Black women (17 percent) (Kochhar 2020). In May, although unemployment levels fell generally, the impacts were especially acute for Black and Asian workers, with about an additional 100,000 workers out of work, resulting in fewer than half of Black workers being employed (BLS 2020). Families across the US have had to rely on savings to survive the economic violence of the crisis; families that have had historic barriers to accumulating wealth are most at risk. This is particularly concerning given the racial wealth gap where fewer than 2.6 percent of the wealth is owned by Black Americans, even though they constitute 13 percent of the population (W. "Sandy" Darity and Mullen 2020). The Paycheck Protection Program, run by the Federal Government in response to COVID-19,

**TABLE 6. ECONOMIC SECURITY INDICATORS**

| Indicator | Living Below Poverty Line | | | | Childhood Poverty | | | | Unemployment Rate | | | | Gender Wage Gap | | | | Employment Rate | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measure | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max |
| Black | 2.4 | 2.5 | 1.2 | 4.2 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 1.7 | 3.3 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 0.1 | 3.6 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 1.3 |
| Hispanic | 2.1 | 2.2 | 1.4 | 3.8 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 1.6 | 3.9 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 0.5 | 2.7 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.3 | 2.4 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.2 |
| Indigenous | 2.6 | 2.5 | 1.1 | 5.6 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 1.4 | 3.1 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 1.1 | 10.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.1 | 2.5 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 1.7 |
| Largest disparity* | 2.6 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 5.6 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 1.0 | 3.9 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 1.6 | 10.7 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 2.6 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.7 |
| POC | | | | | | | | | 1.6 | 1.8 | 0.9 | 6.2 | | | | | | | | |

\* Figures are measured as the number of times higher than white rates. The category 'largest disparity' refers to the racial/ethnic grouping with the largest difference with white, and extends to all groups included in the data, including 'multiracial' and 'other.'

*Source: SDSN USA analysis (2020).*

replicated historical racial patterns in access to wealth, with disproportionately more white Americans receiving benefits than Black, Hispanic or Indigenous ones ("The Paycheck Protection Program Continues to Be Disadvantageous to Smaller Businesses, Especially Businesses Owned by People of Color and the Self-Employed" 2020).

Table 6 below highlights the indicators with the highest disparity between Black, Indigenous and Hispanic people and white people that were sorted into the Economic Security theme (see methodology section for more details). Poverty indicators show disparities more than two times larger than white people for all racial/ethnic disaggregations.

## 5. Health

Healthcare quality and access affect outcomes across all areas of a person's life. A culture of misdeeds, maltreatment, and systemically unequal treatment has resulted in measurable disparities between white, Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous populations across the United States. A misread of the historical context that underlies an issue can lead to difficulty in defining the problem and developing a broad consensus around how to address it. A striking example is lack of trust in the US healthcare system, which is due in large part to the documented history of racial discrimination in the system. Arguably, few events in American history have been more impactful on trust than the Tuskegee Syphilis Study of 1932. The infamous study that lasted for 40 years involved 600 Black men and became a national and international symbol for medical maltreatment and mistrust of the health care

establishment (Washington 2008; Hagen 2005). The US Public Health Service (PHS) recruited the men under the premise of conducting a study on the impacts of syphilis, and promised access to medical care in exchange for participation. Instead, the participants were betrayed by the researchers who had promised to help them, who went on to instead withhold lifesaving treatment. Exploitation and experimentation on 'othered' people occurred elsewhere in the early 21st century as well, from infecting vulnerable populations in Guatemala with syphilis, to Josef Mengele's treatment of Jews and Roma in Europe. The medical establishment in the United States contributed to a eugenics movement that took place across the world (Black 2003).

In Germany, eugenics led to virulent anti-Semitism, concentration camps, extermination centers, and genocide. In the US, eugenics led to scientific racism, mass sterilizations, and the promotion of a superior race. Fannie Lou Hamer, the famous civil rights leader in the US known for the phrase "Now I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired," was involuntarily sterilized in 1961 as part of the eugenics movement targeted toward Black women. This type of sterilization was known as the "Mississippi appendectomy" (Nuzzolillo 2019).

Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous people's distrust of the medical system is rooted in histories of abuse. One research study found that having a Black doctor resulted in Black men receiving higher quality of care, and that the effects were the most profound for Black men with the greatest mistrust of the medical system. For example, Black men in the study assigned to Black doctors were 47 percent more likely to agree to a diabetes screening and 72 percent more likely to accept a cholesterol

# ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Rev. Dr. Benjamin Chavis coined the term "environmental racism" in the 1980s to describe US environmental policy in response to a pattern he saw in putting pollution-emitting facilities in poor communities of color. Along with leaders like Rev. Leon White, Dollie Burwell and Rev. Joseph Lowery, some of whom had played active roles in the Civil Rights Movement, he began a movement to address the placement of hazardous waste sites in primarily Black and Hispanic communities (Skelton and Miller 2016; Berndt 2017). Similarly, Indigenous communities in the US have long advocated against and resisted activities that result in environmental degradation. Cesar Chavez notably organized for farmworker protection from harmful pesticides ("Where Are the Lead Service Lines?" 2020; Pell and Schneyer 2016; Fedinick et al. 2017). These legacies continue, and grow stronger through each generation, as evidenced by efforts that include the Water Protectors in Standing Rock; post-Katrina recovery work and beyond from The Gulf Coast Center for Law and Policy; efforts to develop a Red, Black, and Green New Deal; and the campaign for clean water in Detroit (Zambelich and Alexandra 2016; Red Nation 2020; Mantey 2020; Clark 2018).

Environmental outcomes are one of the three core pillars of sustainability, and therefore the SDGs; they are also an area where nationally comparable, disaggregated data is lacking. One example, access to clean water is an essential need that is not being met in countless communities across the nation; this is an issue in Detroit, the Navajo Nation, and thousands of communities across the US, but no centralized database tracks how often and where this occurs (Fedinick et al. 2017; Pell and Schneyer 2016; Environmental Defense Fund

2019; US EPA 2019). Of 37 included topics, this report contains only two that evaluate environmental racism. One indicator evaluates on a scale of 0-100 how much air pollution a given community is at risk of being exposed to. Nationally, white communities have a 16-percentage point lower risk than communities of color, and 19 percentage points lower than Black communities. Indigenous communities have a risk seven percentage points lower than white communities. Both the level of risk and the disparity between groups give important information about who is protected or exposed to air pollution. New York state, for example, has an overall score of 54 (out of 100), but has some of the highest disparities between white communities and Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities. On the other hand, states like Georgia, Louisiana and Alabama have very high risks overall (84, 86, and 89 respectively), but smaller disparities across racial groups. In states like Missouri, Nebraska, Alabama and Indiana, communities of color have nearly two times the rate of exposure to chemical emittances from nearby factories than do white communities.

Although nationally-comparable state level data is not available, decades of research demonstrate that Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities are most harmed and most at risk for negative outcomes from environmental degradation (Bullard 1994; Bullard and Wright 2009). As the climate crisis accelerates, understanding who is most at risk is important for prioritizing resources and aid. Expanding environmental justice data availability is essential not only for accountability and repair, but also to stop harms that may already be underway.

screening and other preventive services than those who saw a non-Black doctor (Torres 2018). Yet only five percent of US doctors are Black, compared with 56.2 percent white, 5.8 percent Hispanic, and 17.1 percent Asian. American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawai'ian or Other Pacific Islander make up 0.3 and 0.1 percent, respectively. ("Diversity in Medicine: Facts and Figures 2019" 2019).

*Even though maternal mortality is one of the areas of the largest negative impacts on Black and Indigenous people, data for maternal mortality is very poor.*

Similar to findings on trust and on the same-race teacher effect discussed in the education section, research shows that physician–patient racial/ethnic matching also has positive outcomes for Black infants. Black infants die at rate 2.3 times that of white infants (Hispanic rates are comparable to white rates, and data for Indigenous infants was not available). However, Black newborn babies have a better chance at survival when their birthing parent is the same race/ethnicity of the physician that delivered them (Greenwood et al. 2020).

Similar to infant mortality, in 2016, the US national maternal mortality rate for Black persons was 3.3 times the rate of white people, 2.3 times higher for Indigenous people. Hispanic maternal mortality rates are lower than the rates for white, non-Hispanic people (see figure 10). Although maternal mortality is one of the areas where we see the largest negative impacts on Black and Indigenous people, data for maternal mortality is very poor. Until recently, it was not measured the same way in each state, making comparisons across states unreliable (MacDorman et al. 2016; Rabin 2019). Although for the first time in years we have updated data on maternal mortality at the national level, we still do not have data on maternal mortality disaggregated by race/ethnicity at the state level. Without this data, the scope of the problem remains obscured, while Black pregnant people continue to suffer. More details are available in the section entitled "Limitations of the Work and Opportunities for Expansion."

**FIGURE 10. MATERNAL MORTALITY RATES**

### NATIONAL MATERNAL MORTALITY RATES 2011-2016



Per 100,000
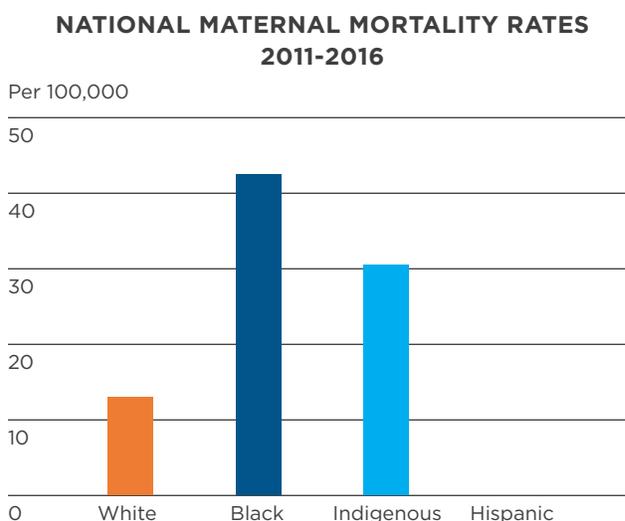
*Souce: Data from CDC Pregnancy Mortality, 2020.*

Trustworthiness of medical institutions plays one part in outcomes for Black, Indigenous and Hispanic people, while access to healthcare plays another. Black people are more than one and a half times more likely to be uninsured than white people, and Hispanic and Indigenous people are nearly three times more likely to be without insurance (see figure 11). Nationally, Black people were one and a half times more likely, and Hispanic and Indigenous people were nearly two times more likely, to skip seeing a doctor due to cost than were white people. Of the 42 states where there is data, in nine states more than a fifth of Black people didn't see a doctor due to cost. In 24 states, more than a fifth of Hispanic people did not see a doctor due to cost. In three states, New Hampshire, Maryland and Missouri, nearly a third of Hispanic people didn't see a doctor due to cost. In even the best performing states for Indigenous health access, Montana and Oklahoma, 10.7 percent and 10.9 percent of Indigenous people lacked economic access to doctors. In Alabama, Florida and Utah, more than 30 percent of Indigenous people lacked economic access to medical care.

This lack of insurance and medical care has historical roots in policy decisions around healthcare access. As highlighted in the section on Economic Security, domestic workers and farmworkers are disproportionately people of color and are excluded from worker protections,

**FIGURE 11. UNINSURED POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS IN NINE STATES**



### UNINSURED POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS IN NINE STATES 2018

■ Black  ■ Hispanic  ■ Indigenous  ■ White
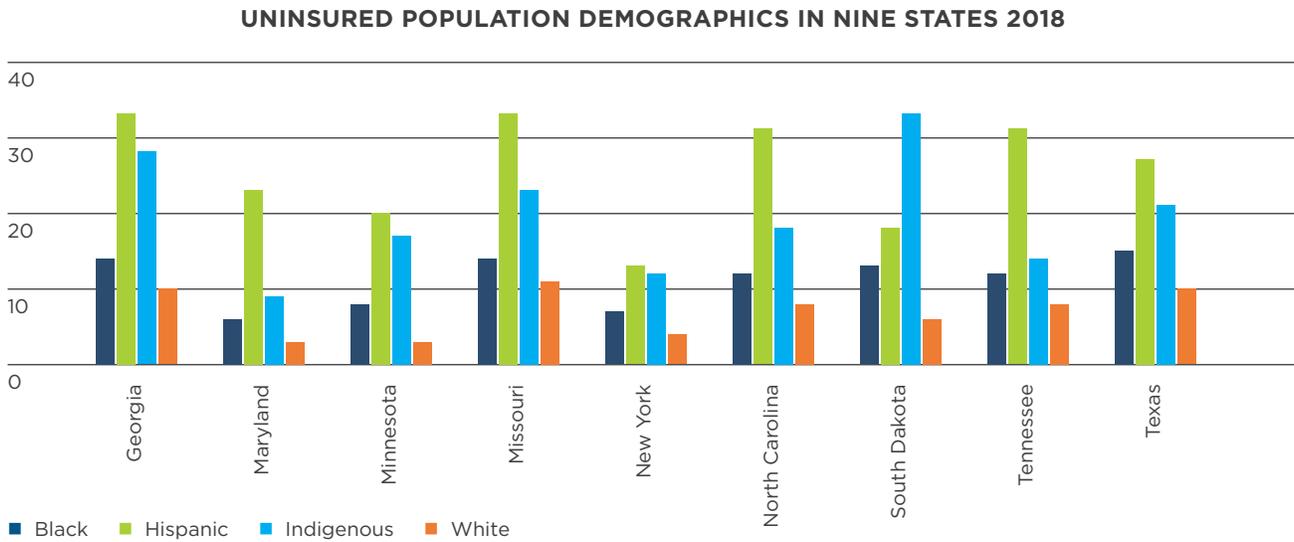
*Source: Data from US Census (2020).*

including worker-provided healthcare coverage. Despite being primarily employed by home health agencies and health care networks, fewer than one-in-ten home health workers have an employer-sponsored retirement plan, and only one-in-five have access to health insurance provided by their employer (Wolfe et al. 2020). The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) estimates that in 2018, 65 percent of farmworkers were uninsured, compared with approximately ten percent of the US population (Lueck and Broaddus 2018; Tolbert, Singer, and Damico 2019). For Indigenous communities, chronic underfunding of the Indian Health Service (IHS), a service meant to fill the US's treaty responsibilities to provide healthcare, contributes to create disparities in access to care. Research estimates that to match the level of care provided by Medicaid, funding to IHS would need to at least double (Smith 2018). Other Indigenous

health care experts tie the Bureau of Indian Affairs' 'Urban Relocation Program' of 1952 and the federal 'Indian Relocation Act' of 1956 - policies that moved Indigenous peoples away from their communities and into urban areas as an effort on the part of the US government to "assimilate" Indigenous peoples – to increased negative health outcomes and further alienation from health services (Poon 2019).

Table 7 summarizes the indicators that both showed high disparity between Black, Hispanic and/or Indigenous people and white people, and that were grouped into the Health theme (refer to methodology section for more details on theme selections). The disparities in health coverage are particularly striking. As COVID-19 continues to lay bare the way underlying racial disparities lead to unjust outcomes, disparities in health care coverage have become critically salient.

**TABLE 7. HEALTH INDICATORS**

| Indicator | Infant Mortality Rate | | | | Health Insurance Coverage | | | | Adults Not Seeing a Doctor Due to Cost | | | | Drug Overdose Deaths | | | | Toxic Air Burden | | | | Pollution Burden | | | | Low Birthweight | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measure | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max | US | State Avg | State Min | State Max |
| Black | 2.3 | 2.3 | 1.5 | 3.6 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 0.9 | 3.4 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 0.2 | 3.5 | 0.7 | 0.8 | 0.2 | 2.1 | 1.9 | | | | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.1 | 2.4 |
| Hispanic | 1.1 | 1.2 | 0.8 | 1.8 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 1.3 | 6.7 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 1.2 | 4.2 | 0.9 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.6 | 1.4 | | | | 1.4 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 1.9 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 0.7 | 1.4 |
| Indigenous | | | | | 3.2 | 2.8 | 1.6 | 5.3 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 0.8 | 3.3 | 1.0 | 1.2 | 0.2 | 5.4 | | | | | 0.8 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 1.4 | | | | |
| Largest disparity* | 2.3 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 3.6 | 3.4 | 4.1 | 1.9 | 8.8 | 1.9 | 2.3 | 1.1 | 4.2 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 5.4 | 1.9 | | | | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 2.4 |
| POC | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1.5 | 1.3 | 0.8 | 2.1 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 1.9 | | | | |

\* Figures are measured as the number of times higher than white rates. The category 'largest disparity' refers to the racial/ethnic grouping with the largest difference with white, and extends to all groups included in the data, including 'multiracial' and 'other.'

*Source: SDSN USA analysis (2020).*

## International Context

Putting the results in an international context offers the opportunity to see where delivery on the Goals compares between groups in the US and in other OECD countries.

### Wage gap

Figure 12 compares the gender wage gap in the best and worst performing OECD countries to the gender wage gap for Black, Hispanic and Indigenous women in the best and worst performing US states. Even the best performing states do worse than the worst performing OECD countries. The wage gap for Indigenous women in Hawai'i is the only instance where a best performer in a US state is better than all the wage gaps for the worst performing OECD countries. The worst performing US states have a wage gap nearly 20 times higher than the best performing OECD countries.

### FIGURE 12. GENDER WAGE GAP IN US STATES COMPARED WITH OECD COUNTRIES: 5 BEST AND WORST

**GENDER WAGE GAP 2014-2018, 2020**
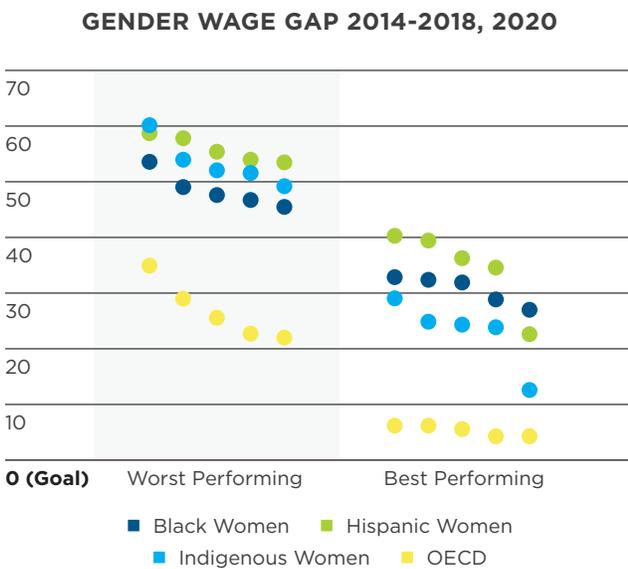


*Source: Data from US Census (2020); Sachs et al. (2020).*

### Incarceration

When US Incarceration rates are put in a global context, a similar pattern emerges. Figure 13 below shows OECD countries (blue) with the highest and lowest incarceration rates, compared with incarceration rates for the three states with the highest and lowest incarceration rates for Black and Hispanic people. Data for Indigenous people was not available. The figure shows that even the state with the lowest Black incarceration rate has an incarceration rate 1.8 times higher than then OECD country with the highest incarceration rate (the US has the highest incarceration rate of OECD countries, but is not included in relative analysis here). The state with the lowest Hispanic incarceration rate is Louisiana. However, the Black incarceration rate in Louisiana is 1,740 per 100,000, a rate nearly 51 times higher than the Hispanic incarceration rate.

### Not seeing a doctor due to cost

The US is the worst performing country in the OECD in terms of the percentage of people who cannot afford to see a doctor due to cost, at 21.8 percent (OECD 2019). National level estimates put the percentage slightly lower, at 12.9 percent (some of this difference may be due to national estimates using ages 18+ while OECD uses ages 16+) (KFF 2018). Given that national level

### TABLE 8. COMPARISON OF US AND OECD AVERAGES OF PEOPLE WHO CANNOT SEE A DOCTOR DUE TO COST

| Number of states with percentages of people who can't see a doctor due to cost, relative to the OCED average (7.5%) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Group | 2 times higher | 3 times higher | 4 times higher |
| White people (50 states) | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Black people (42 states) | 26 | 2 | 0 |
| Hispanic people (42 states) | 41 | 17 | 2 |
| Indigenous people (23 states) | 15 | 7 | 4 |

Note: not all states had enough data to calculate averages for each group

*Source: SDSN USA analysis (2020).*

**FIGURE 13. COMPARISON OF HIGHEST AND LOWEST OCED AND US INCARCERATION RATES**

### THREE HIGHEST AND LOWEST INCARCERATION RATES

Incarceration Rate per 100,000
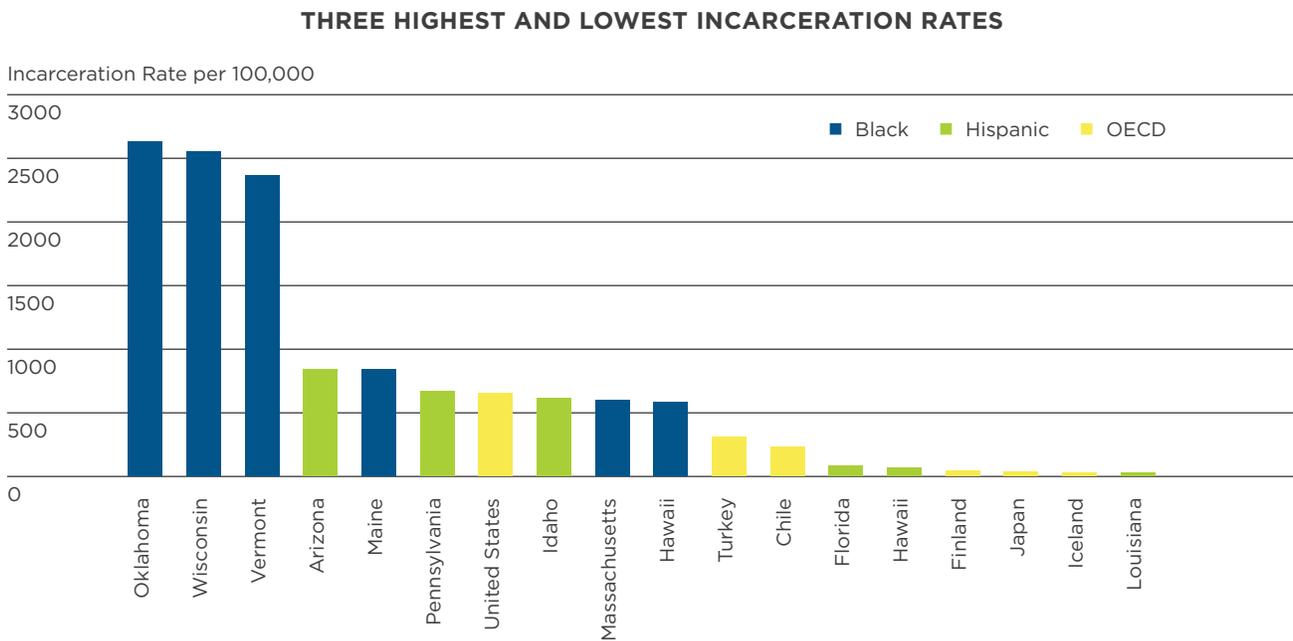


*Source: Data from World Prison Brief (2019); Sentencing Project (2020).*

estimates are quite a bit lower, putting these US-derived statistics in context of OECD findings makes the state estimates of those who cannot see a doctor due to cost more dramatic. For white people living in US states, the four worst performing states have an average twice that of the OECD average, for Indigenous people, the two worst performing states have an average four times that of the OECD average (see table 8).

Using international comparison offers additional context to understand where the US and US states are delivering the SDGs relative to OECD peers. Through that lens, this analysis demonstrates that in at least three areas benchmarks of services provided to white communities may not be sufficient to capture the degree to which Black, Hispanic and Indigenous groups are being left behind.

## The COVID-19 Case

Larry Arnold, jaundiced and with a 103-degree fever, was rushed from his home in the South Side, Chicago to a hospital nearly 30 minutes away. Arnold lived less than a block from a neighborhood hospital that he did not want to go to. A friend called an ambulance for Charles Miles, a retired respiratory therapist who was short of breath. Even though this was a well-known symptom of coronavirus, Miles was reluctant to seek treatment at a hospital. Rosa Lynn Franklin recovered successfully from a stroke, only to be taken by coronavirus (Eldeib et al. 2020).

Arnold, Miles, and Franklin were three of the first 100 recorded victims of COVID-19 in Chicago, Illinois, and they were Black. Out of these 100 deaths, approximately 70 were from Black people who lived in some of the most blighted conditions in the United States. Their deaths tell a story of the impact of COVID-19 that has echoed around the country since the start of the pandemic: people of color in the US have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (Eldeib et al. 2020).

Though there is a dearth of disaggregated data on COVID-19 (see box below on Indigenous Communities), reported data indicates that between March and August 2020, American Indian or Alaska Natives were hospitalized at 4.6 times the rate of white people; Black and Hispanic people at 4.7 times the rate of white people ("Key Updates for Week 35, Ending August 29, 2020" 2020). Black people are dying at 2.4 times the rate of white people, Native Americans at 1.4 times the rate, and Hispanic individuals 1.1 times more ("COVID-19 Hospitalization and Death by Race/Ethnicity" 2020). Black people account for 21 percent of COVID-19 deaths where race is known, although they are 13.4 percent of the overall US population ("The COVID Racial Data Tracker" 2020).

COVID-19 has also sparked incidents of racism and discrimination, particularly against Asian Americans; by April 2020, the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council and Chinese for Affirmative Action had collected over 1,100 reports of hate related incidents (Abbas 2020). US government officials (including the President) and others have perpetuated a xenophobic response by

## COVID-19 IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES: LACK OF DATA UNDERCUTS HEALTH EFFORTS

According to data from a weekly Morbidity and Mortality August CDC Report, American Indian and Alaska Native persons are being disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, compared with the overall white population (Hatcher et al. 2020). Among 23 states reporting adequate race/ethnicity data, the cumulative incidence of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 among American Indian and Alaska Native persons was 3.5 times higher than among the non-Hispanic white population (Hatcher et al. 2020). Persistent racism and discrimination, coupled with historical trauma contributes to disparities in health and well-being, render Indigenous populations more vulnerable to the virus. The CDC reported that missing data stymied a complete analysis of how these characteristics and outcomes triangulate to make some communities more vulnerable than others. Additionally, about 80 percent of state health departments categorized Native Americans as "other" in early disaggregated reporting, but recent (limited) data indicate that American Indian and Alaska Native populations are disproportionately affected by the virus, signaling a need for accurate disaggregated data (Nagle 2020). Improved rigor and consistency in collecting, analyzing, and reporting of data is needed to develop evidence-based public health practices in American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Research on the social determinants of health support the claim that adequate health care and public health infrastructure resources are needed to build trust and culturally responsive policies and public health practices that build off the strengths and knowledge of Indigenous communities.

repeatedly calling COVID-19 the "China Virus" and "Wuhan Virus," (Vazquez 2020). Naming diseases in this way also is a direct contradiction to the World Health Organization (WHO) best practice guidance, which recommend that disease names should be generic, descriptive, and where possible based on the causative pathogen, not a region, community, or animal ("Best Practices for the Naming of New Human Infectious Diseases" 2015).

*Black people account for 21 percent of COVID-19 deaths where race is known, although they are 13.4 percent of the overall US population*

The CDC has identified contributing social factors that lead to increased risk of getting sick or dying from COVID-19 for people of color. These include: discrimination in systems meant to protect well-being or health; healthcare access and utilization; occupation (disproportionate representation in "essential" work settings); educational, income, and wealth gaps; and housing insecurity, all of which map closely to the areas of greatest disparity outlined above ("Health Equity Considerations and Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups" 2020). The example of COVID-19 and its impact on Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities highlights how the underlying structural inequalities discussed in this report, shape the outcomes of shocks, be they pandemics or natural disasters. This also highlights the urgency of addressing the inequitable delivery of services, benefits and resources, which continue to replicate and deepen the longer they are left standing. The example of COVID-19 helps illustrate how the foundational inequalities have real impact on the day-to-day lives of people across the United States.

### Justice

While much is still unknown about COVID-19, the data indicates that Coronavirus spreads quickly in indoor and highly populated environments. This makes places like prisons, jails, and ICE detention centers potential "amplifiers of infectious diseases" (Kauffman 2020;

"Criminal Justice Responses to the Coronavirus Pandemic" 2020). At the federal level, for example, despite guidance prioritizing home release being issued in March 2020, at the end of August 7,559 inmates are on home release, while 141,310 remain in Bureau Of Prisons (BOP) managed federal and community-based facilities (that data is not disaggregated by race/ethnicity) ("COVID-19" 2020). Quality of life for incarcerated people has been substantially affected as well, with suspended or reduced visitation rights in the majority of prison systems in every state across the country (Aspinwall et al. 2020; "Criminal Justice System Responses to COVID-19" 2020).

Further, similar to patterns found in prison data generally, a detailed and evidence-based response to these conditions is hindered by lack of data. CDC prison guidelines do not currently recommend testing people who are not exhibiting symptoms of the virus, which further limits the availability of data to understand the full extent of the virus' presence in prisons and jails; prisons that have tested "aggressively" are finding evidence that the virus is spreading quickly (Aspinwall and Neff 2020). As detailed above, the US not only has the highest incarceration rates of all the OECD countries, but also disproportionately incarcerates people of color. As a result, the burden of risk of COVID-19 from incarceration settings, and the negative impact on quality of life for those that are incarcerated, is also disproportionately placed on communities of color (Aspinwall and Neff 2020).

### Food and Housing Security

Hunger and food security, closely linked to economic security, are also on the rise since the start of the pandemic in March 2020. In March, food banks gave out 20 percent more food than in an average month, with a reported 30 to 60 percent increase since that time. Between March and June roughly 40 percent of people visiting food banks had not received food assistance prior to the pandemic (Morello 2020). Household surveys in July 2020 revealed that 10.8 percent of adults reported hunger in their household over the week prior, and an estimated one in five adult renters were behind in rent. In both cases, the rates for Black and Hispanic households were twice the rate of white households (Parrott et al. 2020).

Warning signs indicate that a housing crisis may be imminent (or already underway) if further interventions are not quickly undertaken ("COVID-19 Housing Policy

Scorecard" 2020; Appelbaum 2020). Researchers have estimated that that 30 to 40 million people in America are at risk of eviction in the coming months, including 29 to 43 percent of renter households (Benfer et al. 2020). Black, Hispanic and Indigenous households that were already disproportionately less likely to have access to housing security, also disproportionately struggled more to pay rent and mortgages. Mirroring conditions around mortgages, and the New Deal benefits, Black and Hispanic homeowners were less likely to receive payment deferments than distressed white homeowners (Cornelissen and Hermann 2020). As housing insecurity is often connected with food insecurity, it follows that these twin burdens will likely disproportionately impact people of color.

### Education

The factors that have led to disparities in the American education system, particularly the racial wealth gap and housing insecurity and instability (and resulting digital divide), are being exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis. As detailed above, Black, Hispanic and Indigenous students are more likely to attend under-resourced schools, which will now be less likely to meet the resource demands of students, many of whom are now learning remotely without adequate access to computers or broadband, as figure 14 below illustrates (Dorn et al. 2020). The risk of short-term learning loss is high for Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic students and comes with lifelong implications (Francis and Weller 2020).

Black, Hispanic and Indigenous students requiring additional support due to language barriers (many online learning resources are in English only), special education needs, those experiencing homelessness or housing instability, child welfare and justice involved children and youth, as well as over-age and under-credited students are particularly at risk (Rodriguez 2020; North 2020). As Black, Hispanic and Indigenous students are more likely to be food insecurity, relying on school meals are crucial, and therefore those students are more likely to be impacted by loss of school meals. School systems that are already resource-poor will be less able to complete building adaptations to reduce virus transmission, further compounding challenges amongst families without adequate space or supervision for children to attend school remotely.

The United Nations recommends education system interventions to prevent "a learning crisis from becoming a generational catastrophe," including: thorough planning for school re-openings alongside large-scale virus suppression efforts; protection for education financing and coordination for impact; build resilient education systems for equitable and sustainable development; and reimagine education and accelerate changes in teaching and learning ("Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and Beyond" 2020). This agenda is critical for the success of future generations, particularly low-income, Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous students, as well as to future economic growth in the United States (Dorn et al. 2020).

### Economic Security

As of June 9, "48 percent of all adults in the US lived in households where at least one person lost employment income since mid-March;" this includes individuals who lost jobs, were furloughed, retained jobs but lost hours and income, or retired. In Black households, the figure was 53 percent, and in Hispanic households 62 percent reported lost income, see figure 15 below (data was not reported for Indigenous households) (S. Brown 2020). Early evidence indicates that inequalities are being exacerbated, not equalized, as a result of the virus and national response, and that "minority, renter, low-income, and households without a college education were far more likely to lose employment income" (Hermann and Cornelissen 2020; Maxwell 2020). Among those who lost their jobs in March, white people reported receiving unemployment benefits at a higher rate than unemployed Black and Hispanic workers by mid- to late March (Grooms, Ortega, and Rubalcaba 2020).

Black, Hispanic, Indigenous, and low-income workers are also least likely to be able to continue to work from the safety of their homes; fewer than 20 percent of Black workers in the pre-pandemic economy were able to work from home, compared with 30 percent of white workers. In addition, Black-owned businesses are more concentrated in industries hard-hit by the pandemic; Black workers are more likely to be in front-line jobs categorized as essential which add risk for employees and their families, and underlying economic factors exacerbate the impact of the recession on Black workers and their families (V. Wilson 2020). Overall, people of color in the United States experience lower incomes, less cash reserves, and more risk of exposure to the virus. Black, Hispanic, Indigenous people across the country were already the most vulnerable economically, and the pandemic has both exacerbated the economic insecurity of these groups and deepened already prevalent disparities.

**FIGURE 14. QUALITY OF REMOTE INSTRUCTION**

## LEARNING LOSS WILL PROBABLY BE GREATER FOR LOW-INCOME, BLACK, AND HISPANIC STUDENTS

**Quality level of remote instruction,** % of K–12 students

| | Average and above-average remote instruction | Low-quality remote instruction | No instruction |
|---|---|---|---|
| Overall | 32 | 48 | 20 |
| White | 38 | 52 | 10 |
| Black | 14 | 46 | 40 |
| Hispanic | 21 | 49 | 30 |
| Low income | | 60 | 40 |
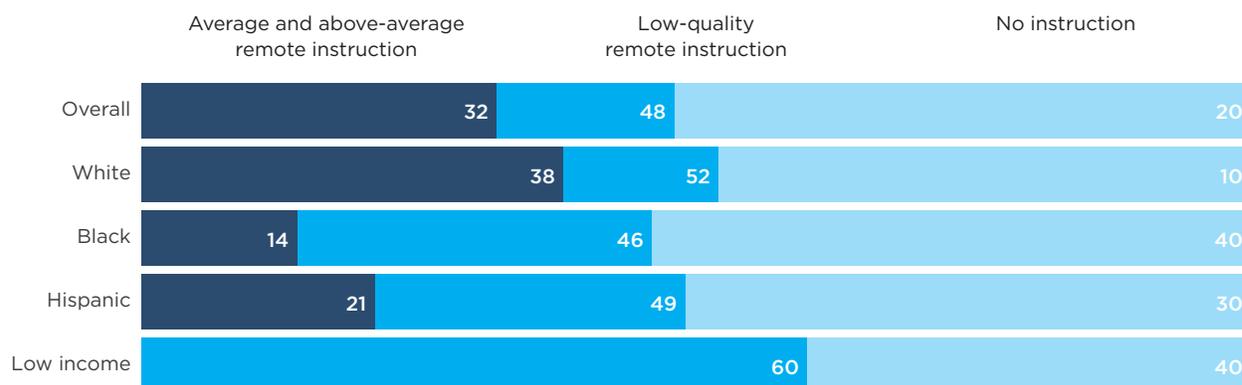
**Average months of learning lost in scenario 2 compared with typical in-classroom learning**

| | |
|---|---|
| Overall | 6.8 |
| White | 6.0 |
| Black | 10.3 |
| Hispanic | 9.2 |
| Low income | 12.4 |
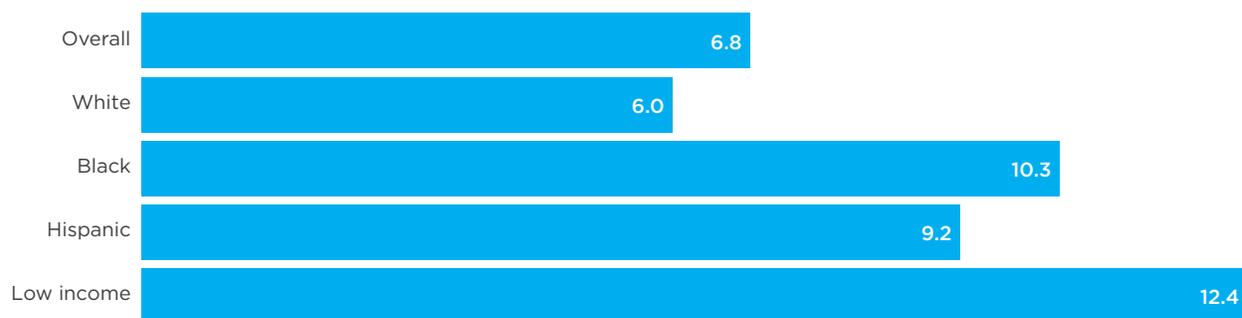
*Source: Figure from McKinsey 2020, Exhibit 3.*

**Health**

The evidence clearly shows increased risk of contracting, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19 among Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous populations in the US compared to the white population ("COVID-19 Hospitalization and Death by Race/Ethnicity" 2020). From less access to quality healthcare, to disproportionate incarceration, to more likely to be classified as an essential worker, to being restricted from financial resources like home ownership, the historical harm caused to Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities has placed these communities at higher risk of adverse impacts from COVID-19 (Hooper, Nápoles, and Pérez-Stable 2020). It is why

physician and public health specialist Dr. Camara Phyllis Jones asserts that 'racism, not race, is a risk factor for COVID-19' (Wallis 2020).

As Larry Arnold intuited when electing to travel 30 minutes to a hospital instead of going to one on the block where he lived, surviving COVID-19 also depends on the quality of care that doctors and hospitals are able to provide. Accessing quality health care also depends on one's ability to pay for it. The connection between health care access and surviving COVID is a critical one. As highlighted in the Health section of this report, Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities already had less access to insurance than white

communities and were more likely to not be able to see a doctor due to cost. Although insurance rates had improved in both relative and absolute terms during the ACA Medicaid and Marketplace expansion, those gains have eroded since 2016 (Artiga, Orgera, and Damico 2020).

Reversing gains in insurance coverage is further complicated by unemployment. An analysis by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) of the pandemic's impact on Black, Hispanic and Indigenous unemployment using Current Population Survey (CPS) microdata through April 2020 revealed Hispanic populations experienced the most severe increase in unemployment with a rate of 18.2. Black unemployment increased by 16.6 percent (Fairlie, Couch, and Xu 2020).

Unemployment can mean loss of workplace-funded health insurance, and difficulty affording individually purchased healthcare, which carries devastating implications during public health crisis. For those that have stayed employed, the strain of working conditions also is taking a toll. A recent study showed that Black and Latinx essential workers are also experiencing higher levels of mental health distress related to the pandemic (the report did not discuss impacts on Indigenous people); with Black essential healthcare workers disproportionately reporting symptoms of anxiety and Latinx essential healthcare workers disproportionately reporting symptoms of depression (Grooms et al. 2020).

**FIGURE 15. EXPECTED LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT INCOME**



**EXPECTED EMPLOYMENT INCOME LOSS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY**
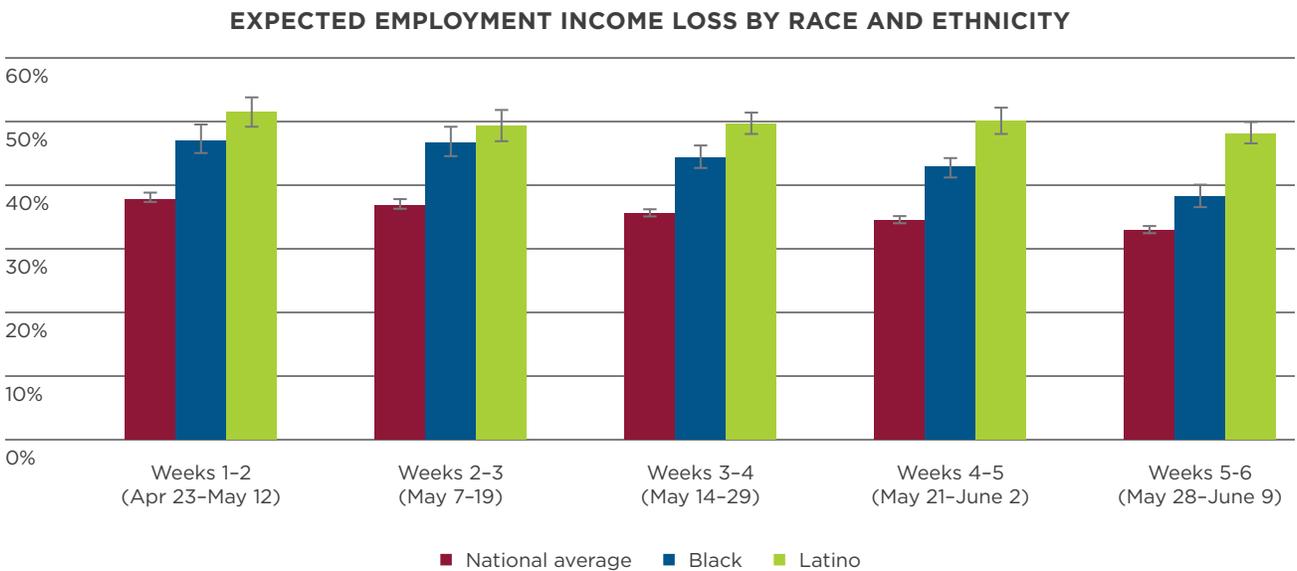
*Source: Figure from Urban (2020), Figure 1.*

## A GENDERED ANALYSIS

Across all five areas of disparity, and in the case of COVID-19, there are differential impacts and disparities between women and men of color. For example, a gendered analysis of frontline workers found that women, who make up about one-half of all workers, are two-thirds (64.4 percent) of frontline workers; particularly in the healthcare and childcare/social services industries (76.8 and 85.2 percent, respectively) resulting in increased COVID-19 exposure (Rho, Brown, and Fremstad 2020). Simultaneously, women are also losing work at rates higher than men (V. Wilson 2020)

Women of color experienced an unlevel playing field before the crisis, and are now bearing the brunt of an economic downturn. The losses in employment as a result of COVID-19 are com-pounded by the fact that many women of color traditionally serve as sole heads of households. A Center for American Progress analysis of 2018 data found that 67.5 percent of Black mothers and 41.4 percent of Hispanic mothers were the primary or sole wage earners for their households, compared with 37 percent of white mothers (Frye 2020). Moreover, as described above, Black women are less likely to own a home, making financial losses higher stakes. The stress of being the sole wage earner in a household can be overwhelming as

indicated in a survey by LeanIn and SurveyMonkey. About 60 percent of Black women were concerned about paying their rent or mortgage during the pandemic as compared with just 24 percent of white men. The poll also revealed that 25 percent of women in general felt overwhelmed with their responsibilities compared with 17 percent of men ("Impact of COVID-19 on Women" 2020).

Moreover, COVID-19 has added an additional layer to maternal mortality. About 700 pregnant women die each year in the United States from pregnancy related complications without the added strain of a deadly virus (Petersen et al. 2019). Data derived from a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) found that pregnant women infected with SARS-CoV-2 are at increased risk for hospitalization, intensive care unit (ICU) admission, and reliance mechanical ventilation (Ellington et al. 2020). Data collected from 20,216 women suggest that Hispanic and non-Hispanic Black pregnant women are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 infection during pregnancy. This is significant given the preexisting racial/ethnic disparities that already exist among pregnancy-related mortality among women of color as discussed above ("Data on COVID-19 During Pregnancy" 2020).

**Conclusion**

There is a need for additional and improved data and transparent reporting in order to more accurately understand both the virus itself, as well as the root causes of disparate outcomes. Even through a review of this preliminary data, however, interlinkages between the health impacts and other areas of greatest disparity identified in this report are clear. The lessons from COVID-19 demonstrate that there is a clear and urgent need to take action now to eliminate these pervasive historical and structural disparities, that lead to preventable loss of life and livelihoods.

Lack of data, adequate testing, and support for isolation/quarantine combined with negligent care of infected prisoners, low-income, Black, Hispanic, Indigenous, and immigrant communities, all negatively impact trust and

the ability to chart a way forward. Trust is as much a moral value as it is a human rights imperative that connects people to others, but also demands equal and fair treatment. COVID-19 has not only laid bare the increased risk Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous people face due to the longstanding institutionalized, systemic discrimination discussed in this report, it is also further widened the gap between racial/ethnic groups in the United States. Racial disparities that are clear with COVID-19 emphasize the underlying inequalities built by centuries of policies and practices. The disparities in outcomes from COVID-19 have to do with far more than any one individual's health, they are rooted in unjust systems of justice, education, livelihood, health and economics. All of these have impact on COVID-19 outcomes, as indicated in figure 16.

FIGURE 16. COVID-19 AND THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

## SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

The diagram below illustrates the connection between Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), COVID-19 disparities, and the gaps found in the course of this research. The largest gaps are in five areas: Justice, Food and Housing Insecurity, Economic Security, Education, Health and COVID-19 disparities. Although these are the largest average gaps, they are certainly not the only areas where states serve communities inequitably.



FOOD AND HOUSING INSECURITY
(Goals 2, 5, 8, 11)

HEALTH DISPARITIES
(Goals 3, 5, 10)

JUSTICE
(Goals 10, 16)

CORONAVIRUS

EDUCATION
(Goal 4)

COVID-19
(Goals 1-17)

ECONOMIC SECURITY
(Goals 1, 5, 8, 10 11)
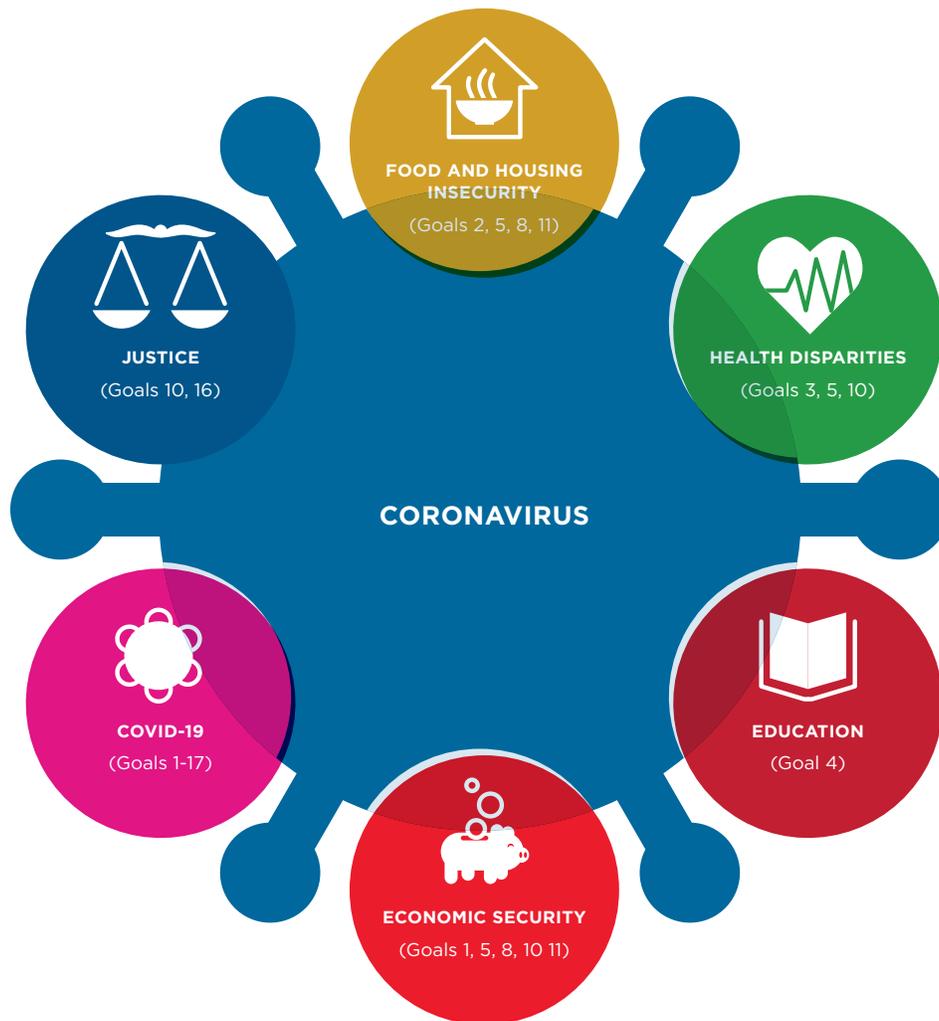
# LIMITATIONS OF THE WORK AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANSION
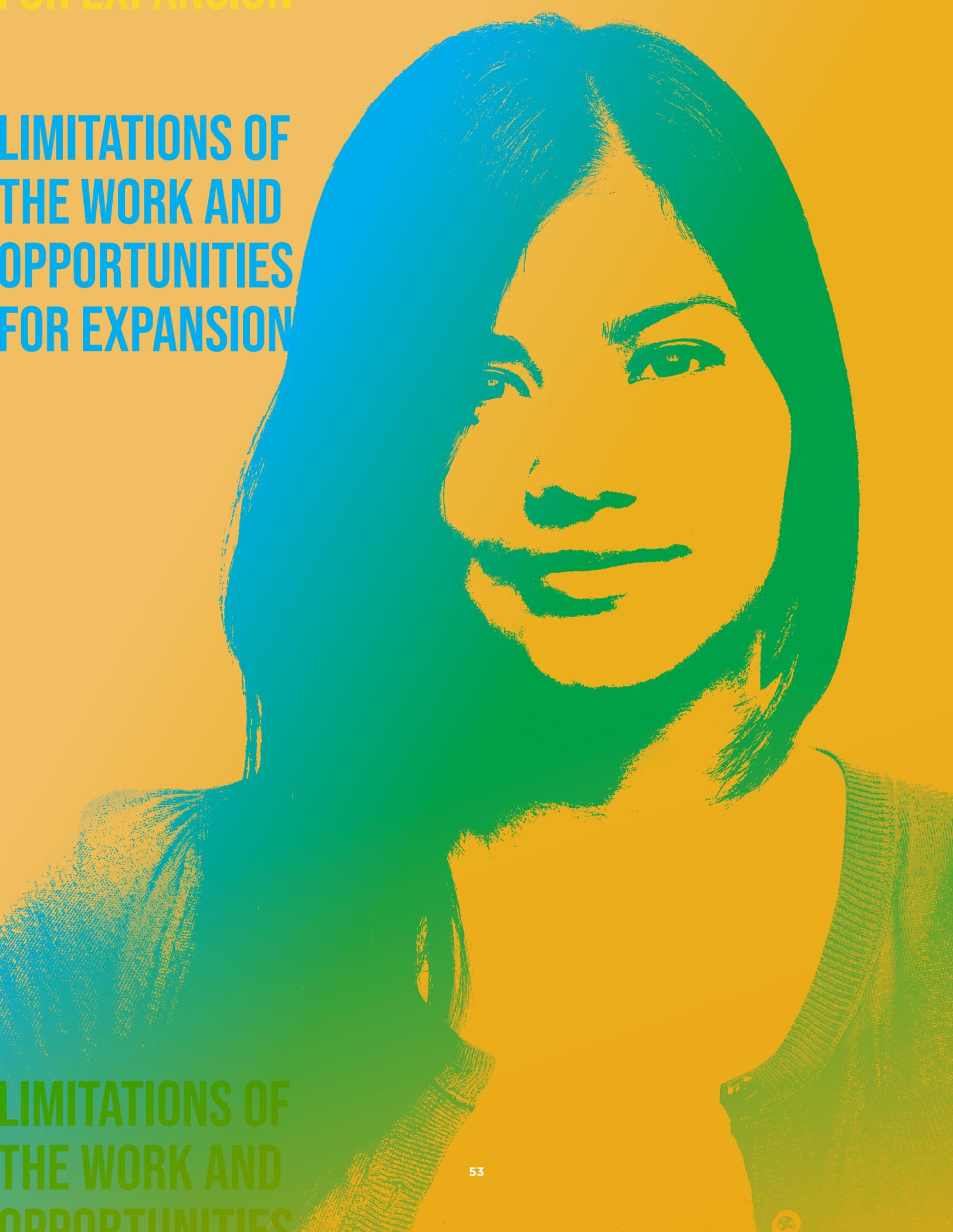
As discussed throughout the report, there is a notable lack of available data to analyze progress towards the SDGs for Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous people in the United States. Standard measures such as life expectancy, food insecurity, and maternal mortality are not available in a racially disaggregated format at the state level. In cases where national level data indicate striking gaps, disaggregated data would allow researchers and policymakers to better understand successful and problematic interventions. In many cases, for example incarceration and felony disenfranchisement, Indigenous data is missing or incomplete.

Data gaps are not the result of one problem, but rather a set of overlapping problems that vary by government agency, topic area and source. Some of these gaps can be resolved through Agency leadership, some through congressional or state laws, and others through NGO, academic and citizen-led efforts. A few of the more common issues are detailed here:

1) Some data is collected but not made public, or data is not released on its predicted schedule, for reasons known and unknown; much of the Bureau of Justice data falls into this category (Daniel 2020; Wood and Naus 2019).

2) Some data is not, or has not been in the past, been collected in a standardized manner across all states; maternal mortality falls into this category (Fedinick et al. 2017; Merelli 2017; Truschel and Novoa 2018).

3) Some data is not required to be collected across all states and is not stored in a centralized repository; lead poisoning in water is an example of this ("Basic Information about Lead in Drinking Water" 2020.; Pell and Schneyer 2016; "Where Are the Lead Service Lines?" 2020).

4) Additional data still could be available, but isn't presented in the pre-made Census tables. Microdata files from iPUMS, for example, may provide further insight and should be explored as this research expands. It is not easily accessible to the general public, however, and therefore should be addressed; child and elderly poverty rates, and home ownership rates are one example of this.

5) The complex social nature of racial categories and the Census Bureau's approach to racial categorization make it complicated to group people, often resulting in imprecise groupings, erasure of Indigenous, multiracial or other non-white identities. See section on available racial/ethnic groupings for more exploration of this topic.

Across agencies like the CDC, EPA, BJS, BLS, and in the US Congress, much work can and should be done to address these gaps. The difficulty of collecting racially disaggregated COVID-19 data is just one clear example of the very real implications of not addressing these gaps; improving these data systems is critical to ensuring justice, creating accountability for fair treatment, and ultimately protecting life.

It would be insufficient to discuss the gaps in government-collected data without highlighting the grassroots and institutional efforts to close these gaps. Groups such as the NAACP, Black Mommas Matter Alliance, and Data for Black Lives are all working to collect and advocate for data that serves and strengthens Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous communities.

## Racial/Ethnic Groupings in Available Data

Much of the racial data in this report (82 percent) is derived from federal sources like the Census Bureau (ACS), Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and others. The Census Bureau and associated data consider five main racial groupings: 1) Black or African American, 2) American Indians and Alaska Native, 3) Asian, 4) Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders, and 5) white. The Census considers Hispanic or Latino to be an ethnicity, which can be used in combination with any racial group. Beginning in 2000, Multiracial was presented as an option to Census respondents. In 2010, the US Office of Management and Budget (OMB) which offers guidelines around racial data collection to the US Census, offered an umbrella category of "Some Other Race," this can but does not necessarily include the option to detail that race (US Census 2020).

### How "Indigenous" is Used

In this report, when describing people, Indigenous is used to refer to the more than 570 nations and tribes that are the original inhabitants of the land currently called the United States. When describing data, Indigenous refers to the US Census grouping of American Indian and Alaska Native. This was chosen because this group was most often specified in the underlying data. This excludes Native Hawai'ian people, who are grouped separately by the Census with Pacific Islanders, and in several sources are grouped with Pacific Islanders with under the Asian heading. This approach risks invisibilizing Native Hawai'ians. The authors recommend revising the methodology in future reports to account for this data structure.

### Considerations for "Some Other Race" Data

Understanding who is included in the "Some Other Race" category is essential for delivering the SDGs equitably. For the US as a whole, as well as in 32 states, the biggest wage gap was between white men and women in the "Other" group. Understanding who these women are will be essential to ensuring they receive equal pay for equal work. Those most likely to skip seeing a doctor due to cost were also in the "Other" group. Indigenous communities, the community most often left out of the data, are sometimes lumped into the "Other" category as well, obscuring the impact of State policies and practices on Indigenous communities (Daniel 2020). If those who are most harmed are unidentified or invisible, how can the harm be repaired? As research on this topic expands, addressing these complexities should be central to that work.

### Gender Groupings

In this report, we use data that classifies only two genders. The authors recognize that gender encompasses far more than two groups, and that by relying on survey data that only offers two gender options, we are further invisibilizing communities that are likely already being harmed. While this report focuses on racial and ethnic disparity specifically, considering the intersection of gender and race is central to understanding where States have, and have not, delivered the SDGs. This should be a priority in future work.

### Disability

Much like gaps in gender and race the current version of this report does not include data specifically on outcomes of Black, Hispanic or Indigenous disabled peoples. This is a gap that again could obscure those most harmed by the inequalities documented above.

### Determining Cause

This report can point to a descriptive analysis of what is happening on the ground at a point in time. The report also includes a historical description of policy initiatives and practices that set the stage for the current reality. In some cases, the report describes how two factors like wages and gender are related to each other. The report, however, does not describe what has caused any particular outcome. Those types of conclusions are beyond the scope of this research. Further, caution should be used when comparing any two states to each other. Due to sample size of underlying data and other research constraints, differences are not always statistically significant.

### Missing Goals

This report does not include data on two SDGs: Goal 14, Life Under Water; or Goal 17, Partnerships for the Goals. Goal 14 is not included because of a lack of a conceptual framework to allow for simultaneous measurement of both landlocked and coastal states. Goal 17 is not included due to a lack of a conceptual framework of how to measure this at a sub-national level. Goal 10 is not included in this report, all included indicators measure inequality. For the purposes of this report, indicators were organized according to their subject content, not the disparity they are measuring.

The authors welcome suggestions on how to improve these above limitations in future versions of this report.

Never More Urgent

The impacts of COVID-19 demonstrate that health is not purely an individual physical phenomenon, but influenced by the conditions in which one lives. This review details how those underlying conditions are not only unequal, but also how Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities are often on the receiving end of systemic, economic, and social violence. As the US confronts three crises simultaneously: a global pandemic, inequality, and police brutality, it has become clear how the unequal provision of services and benefits in the US underlie and deepen each of these crises.

The conditions documented above were not the result of random chance; policy choices and practices in the US have often worked to deepen inequalities by either amassing benefits to white communities, such as through the GI Bill, and the New Deal, or by preventing Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous communities from accessing wealth and education through policies like redlining, incarceration, boarding schools, and more. As inequality has been made, it can be unmade. The current reality is the result of numerous policies, and entrenched and unjust biases over centuries of history; one-off policies will not be enough to combat the persistent and pervasive inequalities documented here.

The interconnectivity of these issues requires that the solutions must be cross-cutting. The SDGs, which include indicators that repeat across Goals, and are meant to be mutually reinforcing and simultaneously achieved, are one pathway to this end. These long-term goals with measurable targets, can support communities in holding policymakers accountable to just outcomes. Solutions that do not reproduce existing inequalities will require following the leadership of those most impacted by these inequalities, and include establishing new norms around trust building and evidence-based decision-making.

The gaps in disaggregated data demonstrate that we do not yet fully understand the extent of these disparities, and there is much work to be done to advocate for improved data collection and analysis. Failure to capture, analyze, release, or act on data about the lives and well-being of Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities is another form of structural racism and must be addressed. The disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 are just one of many examples of how not addressing these issues systematically leads to increased harm in a time of crisis. With more climate disasters looming, the need to act has never been more urgent.

*One-off policies will not be enough to combat the persistent and pervasive inequalities documented here.*

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# ANNEXES

# INDICATOR LIST

This Annex includes a list of Indicator Names, Year, Source, Geography if not available at both National and State levels, and racial groupings included in the data:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **B** | Black | **P** | Native Hawai'ian |
| **W** | white | | or Pacific Islander |
| **H** | Hispanic, all races | **E** | All |
| **A** | Asian | **O** | Other |
| **N** | "Native American" or | **M** | Multiracial |
| | "American Indian | **POC** | People of Color |
| | and Alaskan Native" | | |

*Note: The racial groupings are group "alone, not Hispanic" and that Hispanic includes all races, unless otherwise indicated.*

## 1 NO POVERTY

### CHILDHOOD POVERTY

Children living below twice the poverty line by race and ethnicity in the United States, 2018. N, A, P, B, H, W. *Asian and Pacific Islander are combined.*

*Disparity Group: Economic Security*

KidsCount, derived from Census ACS

### LIVING BELOW POVERTY LINE

Percent of people living below the national poverty line, 2018. A, B, H, M, N, P, W, O.

*Disparity Group: Economic Security*

American Community Survey, Census Bureau (ACS)

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Percent of population aged 25-64 years old that is unemployed, 2013-2017. W, B, H, A, P, N, E, O, M, POC. *Asian or Pacific Islander are combined, "Multiracial" and "Other" are combined.*

*Disparity Group: Economic Security*

PolicyLink/PERE, National Equity Atlas using ACS microdata from IPUMS USA

### WORKING POOR

Workers 16+ who spent at least 27 weeks in the labor force and have incomes below the poverty line. National only. W, H, B, A.

*Disparity Group: Economic Security*

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

## 2 ZERO HUNGER

### FOOD ACCESS

Percentage of population with low-access to large grocery stores (more than 1 mile from a supermarket, supercenter or large grocery store in an urban area), 2015. State only. B, W, H, A, N, M, P.

*"Multiracial" and "Other" are in the same group.*

Food Environment Atlas, US Department of Agriculture (USDA)

### FOOD INSECURITY

Percent of households experiencing food insecurity and very low food security. National only, 2018. W, B, H, O.

*Disparity Group: Food and Housing Security*

US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (USDA ERS)

### OBESITY PREVALENCE

Percent of adults (18+) who report they are overweight or obese by race/ethnicity (BMI 25 or more), 2013-2018. B, W, H, A, N, O, E. *Asian includes Native Hawai'ian and Pacific Islander.*

Kaiser Family Foundation using Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KFF, CDC)

**3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

## ADULTS NOT SEEING A DOCTOR DUE TO COST

Adults who reported that they needed to see a doctor in the past 12 months, but could not because of cost, 2013-2018. E, W, B, H, N, O.

*Disparity Group: Health*

Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (CDC, BRFSS)

## DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS

Age-adjusted deaths due to drug overdose per 100,000 people, 2014-2018. B, V, A, W, H.

*Disparity Group: Health*

Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics (KFF, CDC, NCHS)

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

Percentage of the population without health insurance, 2018. B, W, H, N, A, P.

*Disparity Group: Health*

American Community Survey, Census Bureau (ACS)

## INFANT MORTALITY RATE

Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births), 2017. B, W, H, O. *Uses "Other" rather than N, A, P, M.*

*Disparity Group: Health*

Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS), Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Division of Vital Statistics (DVS)

## LIFE EXPECTANCY

Life expectancy at birth, 2017. National only. W, B, H.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

## LOW BIRTHWEIGHT

Births of low birthweight as a percent of all births by race/ethnicity, 2013-2018. B, W, H, E.

*Disparity Group: Health*

Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (CDC, BRFSS)

## NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Age-adjusted death rate for non-communicable diseases (chronic respiratory, diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular) per 100,000 people aged 35-74, 2018. H, B, W, A, N.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

**4 QUALITY EDUCATION**

## SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS

Average disparity in students suspended and expelled from public elementary and secondary schools, by sex, race/ethnicity, and state, 2013-2014 School Year. A, B, H, M, N, P, W, E.

*Disparity Group: Education*

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

## BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Population 25+ years with bachelor's degree or higher, 2018. National and State. A, B, H, N, M, O, P, W.

*Disparity Group: Education*

American Community Survey, Census Bureau (ACS)

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Percent of population aged 3-5 enrolled in nursery school, preschool, 2013-2015. W, P, B, N, H. *Asian and Pacific Islander are combined.*

KidsCount using Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

## 4-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

Public high school 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR), by selected student characteristics and state: 2010-11 through 2016-17, 2016-2017 School Year. E, W, B, H, A, N, M. *States either report data for a combined "Asian/Pacific Islander" group or report the "Asian" and "Pacific Islander" groups separately. Total represents either a single value reported by the state for "Asian/Pacific Islander" or an aggregation of separate values reported for "Asian" and "Pacific Islander."*

*Disparity Group: Education*

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

## STUDENT POVERTY

Percentage-point disparity in attending a high poverty school (>75% Free and Reduced-Price Lunch) between white people and people of color, 2016-2017 School Year. A, B, E, H, M, N, POC, W. *Asian and Pacific Islander are combined, mixed and other are combined.*

*Disparity Group: Education*

PolicyLink/PERE, National Equity Atlas using National Center for Education Statistics, (NCES)

**5 GENDER EQUALITY**

## WOMEN IN LABOR FORCE

Women labor force participation as a ratio to total labor force participation, population aged 20-64, 2018. W, H, B.

American Community Survey, Census Bureau (ACS)

## GENDER WAGE GAP

Amount per 1 dollar lowest earners garner when compared with white men, by gender and race, for full-time workers over the age of 16, 2014-2018. B, W, H, A, N, P.

*Disparity Group: Economic Security*

American Community Survey, Census Bureau (ACS)

## HOME OWNERSHIP

Disparity in home ownership rates for black women householders and white male householders, 2017. State only. B, W.

*Disparity Group: Food and Housing Security*

iPUMS U.S.A, American Community Survey, Census Bureau (ACS)

## MATERNAL MORTALITY RATES

Number of pregnancy-related deaths for every 100,000 live births, 2011-2016. National only. W, B, H, A, N.

*Disparity Group: Health*

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVALENCE

Lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by race/ethnicity, US women, 2010. National only. H, B, W, A, N, M.

*Disparity Group: Other*

CDC National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey

**8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**
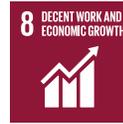
## EMPLOYMENT RATE

Percent of population aged 25-64 that is employed, 2018. E, M, A, B, W, H, N, P, O.

*Disparity Group: Economic Security*

American Community Survey, Census Bureau (ACS)

## YOUTH NOT IN SCHOOL OR WORK

Percent of youth aged 16-24 who are neither in school or working, 2017. B, W, H, E.

*Disparity Group: Education*

Measure of America using Census Bureau data (ACS)

**9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

## BROADBAND ACCESS

Percentage of households with broadband internet subscription, such as cable, fiber optic or DSL, 2014-2018. B, W, H.

*Disparity Group: Food and Housing Security*

American Community Survey, Census Bureau (ACS)

## STEM DEGREES

Population 25+ whose first bachelor's degree major is science and engineering or related field, 2018. A, B, N, P, O, M, W, H.

American Community Survey, Census Bureau (ACS)

## 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

### COMMUTE LENGTH

Disparity in time used for commuting by race, 2012-2017. National and State. POC, E, W, B, L, A, N, M, *Asian American and Hawaiian and Pacific Islander are combined.*

*Disparity Group: Other*

PolicyLink/PERE, National Equity Atlas using ACS microdata from IPUMS USA (ACS)

### RENT BURDENED POPULATION

Percent of race spending more than 30% of income on rent, 2018. H, W, B, N, A, P, O. *"Other" includes two or more races, category for interracial couples not included.*

*Disparity Group: Food and Housing Security*

National Low Income Housing Coalition using American Community Survey, Census Bureau Data (NLIHC, ACS)

## 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

### TOXIC AIR BURDEN

Proportional burdens for nonwhites in particulate matter emissions from nearby facilities, 2017. State only. POC.

*Disparity Group: Health*

National Low Income Housing Coalition using American Community Survey, Census Bureau Data (NLIHC, ACS)

## 13 CLIMATE ACTION

### POLLUTION BURDEN

Percentage point difference between population share and their exposure to cancer-causing pollutants, 2017. W, B, H, A, N, M, POC.

*Disparity Group: Health*

National Equity Atlas, Policy Link using Environmental Protection Agency and Census Bureau data (EPA, ACS)

## 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

### INCARCERATION RATE

Incarceration rate for Black persons (per 100,000), 2014. State only. B, W, H.

*Disparity Group: Justice*

National: Bureau of Justice Statistics; State: The Sentencing Project using Bureau of Justice and US Census data (BJS, ACS)

### LOCAL REPRESENTATION GAP

Difference between non-white population share and non-white representation in government. 2019. N, A, B, H, M, W, POC. *Asian American and Hawai'ian are combined.*

*Disparity Group: Justice*

The Reflective Democracy Campaign using Center for Technology and Civic Life data

### POLICE INVOLVED FATALITIES

Number of times more likely that a black person is killed by the police than that a white person is killed by the police, yearly average, 2013-2018. B, W, N, A, P, M, E, *People of unknown race not included.*

*Disparity Group: Justice*

Mapping Police Violence

### STATE SUPREME COURT DIVERSITY

Disparity between population racial composition and State Supreme Court racial composition, 2019. State only. POC. *People of Color includes individuals who are Black, Asian, Latino, Native American, or multiracial. White is limited to non-Hispanic/Latino whites.*

Brennan Center for Justice

### YOUTH INCARCERATION

Disparity in incarceration between youth of color and white youth, 10 to upper age of jurisdiction, 2013. W, B, L, N, A, O, POC.

*Disparity Group: Justice*

Burns Institute using Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention data (OJJDP)

# INDICATOR SELECTION METHODOLOGY

This methodology was first printed as part of the US Sustainable Development Report, 2018. It has been reproduced here and updated where relevant. The methodology below builds on the methodology established by SDSN and Bertelsmann Stiftung for the SDG Index and Dashboards Report (Sachs, J., Schmidt-Traub, G., Kroll, and C., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G 2018). The European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC) conducted in 2019, for the first time, an independent statistical audit of the underlying methodology of this report, first developed by SDSN and Bertelsmann Stiftung for the SDG Index and Dashboards, now called the Sustainable Development Report. The audit evaluated the statistical and conceptual coherence of the index structure (Sachs, J., Schmidt-Traub, G., Kroll, and C., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G 2018). Based on this audit, a few updates have been made. No imputed data is used for this index. Additional information, including raw data, will be available online when the final report is published at www.github.com/sdsna.

## Indicator selection criteria

To determine quality, technically-sound indicators for selection, we used the following criteria:

1. **SDG and US state relevance:** Data is matched to the SDG targets, then matched to suggested indicators as closely as possible. Finally, when possible, indicators should be relevant to a policy context and/or support communities and leaders in policy-making decisions. Alignment of each indicator to the SDG target or indicator is noted on the Annex.

2. **Statistical quality:** Data must be from a reputable source that produces data in a replicable and reliable way. Preference is given to datasets that are updated routinely, so progress can be tracked to 2030, and to datasets that have disaggregated data available, to track progress for all groups.

3. **Timelines:** Data must be published recently, with preference given to data covering the year 2017 or later.

4. **Coverage:** Datasets must provide data for at least 80% of states. Goals 14 and 17 are not included in this index due to issues of data availability and to lack of city-level comparability.

5. **Comparability:** Data was chosen that has a reasonable or scientifically determined threshold. There are several indicators that the UN has recommended for monitoring purposes, that are not well-suited for comparison in an index because there is no consensus on a "best" level of achievement.

6. **Repeated indicators:** Data should not repeat across Goals. Within the SDGs official indicators, there are indicators that are repeated across multiple Goals. This promotes the idea that the SDGs are interconnected and interdisciplinary. However, in order to prevent double counting of indicators within the index calculations, indicators were not repeated across Goals. In cases where an indicator could reasonably fit within multiple SDGs, it was placed within the Goal with the target that was determined to most closely/directly match the language/intent of the indicator.

7. **Outcome indicators:** Whenever possible, data should measure outcomes. In cases where outcome data was unavailable, process or output indicators were used to track policies or actions that have a research-supported impact on outcomes. For example, paid sick leave and paid family leave legislation were used as an indicator for implementing appropriate social protection systems.

# NATIONAL LEVEL DISPARITIES BY RACE AND INDICATOR

## Black

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Student Poverty | **5.51** |
| Incarceration Rate | **5.20** |
| Youth Incarceration | **5.00** |
| Maternal Mortality | **3.26** |
| School Suspensions and Expulsions | **3.10** |
| Police Involved Fatalities | **2.86** |
| Food Insecurity | **2.62** |
| Living Below Poverty Line | 2.42 |
| Local Representation Gap | 2.36 |
| Infant Mortality Rate | 2.32 |
| Childhood Poverty | 2.22 |
| Unemployment Rate | 2.17 |
| Working Poor | 2.03 |
| Low Birthweight | 1.99 |
| Youth Not in School or Work | 1.89 |
| Toxic Air Burden | 1.89 |
| Broadband Access | 1.83 |
| Health Insurance Coverage | 1.71 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 1.67 |
| Gender Wage Gap | 1.62 |
| Adults Not Seeing a Doctor Due to Cost | 1.52 |
| Pollution Burden | 1.42 |
| Rent Burdened Population | 1.28 |
| Non-Communicable Diseases | 1.20 |
| Sexual Violence Prevalence | 1.17 |
| Employment Rate | 1.16 |
| 4-year High School Graduation Rate | 1.14 |
| Obesity Prevalence | 1.12 |
| Commute Length | 1.12 |
| Life Expectancy | 1.05 |
| STEM Degrees | 1.04 |
| Food Access | 1.03 |
| Early Childhood Education | 0.95 |
| Women in Labor Force | 0.89 |
| Drug Overdose Deaths | 0.69 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

## Hispanic

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Local Representation Gap | **8.38** |
| Student Poverty | **5.54** |
| Health Insurance Coverage | **3.04** |
| Incarceration Rate | **2.52** |
| Bachelor's Degree | 2.23 |
| Living Below Poverty Line | 2.10 |
| Childhood Poverty | 2.07 |
| Working Poor | 2.03 |
| Food Insecurity | 2.00 |
| Adults Not Seeing a Doctor Due to Cost | 1.92 |
| Gender Wage Gap | 1.87 |
| Youth Incarceration | 1.60 |
| Broadband Access | 1.52 |
| Toxic Air Burden | 1.42 |
| Youth Not in School or Work | 1.39 |
| Unemployment Rate | 1.37 |
| Police Involved Fatalities | 1.36 |
| Pollution Burden | 1.35 |
| Rent Burdened Population | 1.24 |
| Obesity Prevalence | 1.11 |
| 4-year High School Graduation Rate | 1.11 |
| Early Childhood Education | 1.09 |
| Infant Mortality Rate | 1.09 |
| Women in Labor Force | 1.08 |
| Employment Rate | 1.08 |
| Commute Length | 1.08 |
| Low Birthweight | 1.06 |
| School Suspensions and Expulsions | 1.04 |
| STEM Degrees | 0.98 |
| Life Expectancy | 0.96 |
| Food Access | 0.92 |
| Drug Overdose Deaths | 0.92 |
| Maternal Mortality | 0.87 |
| Sexual Violence Prevalence | 0.78 |
| Non-Communicable Diseases | 0.70 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

## Indigenous

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Student Poverty | **4.90** |
| Health Insurance Coverage | **3.19** |
| Police Involved Fatalities | **3.06** |
| Youth Incarceration | **3.00** |
| Ratio of political representation share and population share for communities by race/ethnicity | **2.95** |
| Living Below Poverty Line | **2.58** |
| Unemployment Rate | 2.45 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 2.42 |
| Maternal Mortality | 2.34 |
| Childhood Poverty | 2.19 |
| School Suspensions and Expulsions | 1.90 |
| Gender Wage Gap | 1.74 |
| Adults Not Seeing a Doctor Due to Cost | 1.71 |
| Sexual Violence Prevalence | 1.43 |
| 4-year High School Graduation Rate | 1.22 |
| Employment Rate | 1.22 |
| Obesity Prevalence | 1.11 |
| STEM Degrees | 1.04 |
| Early Childhood Education | 1.03 |
| Rent Burdened Population | 1.01 |
| Drug Overdose Deaths | 1.01 |
| Commute Length | 0.94 |
| Food Access | 0.93 |
| Non-Communicable Diseases | 0.93 |
| Pollution Burden | 0.84 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

## People of Color**

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Student Poverty | **4.90** |
| Local Representation Gap | **4.59** |
| Youth Incarceration | **2.70** |
| Unemployment Rate | 1.59 |
| Toxic Air Burden | 1.53 |
| Pollution Burden | 1.35 |
| Commute Length | 1.10 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

**Largest disparity all groups***

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Local Representation Gap | **17.67** |
| Student Poverty | **5.54** |
| Incarceration rate | **5.20** |
| Youth Incarceration | **5.00** |
| Police Involved Fatalities | **4.66** |
| Health Insurance Coverage | **3.38** |
| Maternal Mortality | **3.26** |
| School Suspensions and Expulsions | **3.10** |
| Bachelor's Degree | **3.05** |
| Food Insecurity | **2.62** |
| Living Below Poverty Line | **2.58** |
| Unemployment Rate | 2.45 |
| Infant Mortality Rate | 2.32 |
| Childhood Poverty | 2.22 |
| Working Poor | 2.03 |
| Low Birthweight | 1.99 |
| Gender Wage Gap | 1.98 |
| Adults Not Seeing a Doctor Due to Cost | 1.92 |
| Youth Not in School or Work | 1.89 |
| Toxic Air Burden | 1.89 |
| Broadband Access | 1.83 |
| Sexual Violence Prevalence | 1.78 |
| Pollution Burden | 1.42 |
| Rent Burdened Population | 1.28 |
| 4-year High School Graduation Rate | 1.22 |
| Employment Rate | 1.22 |
| Non-Communicable Diseases | 1.20 |
| Commute Length | 1.16 |
| Obesity Prevalence | 1.12 |
| Early Childhood Education | 1.09 |
| Women in Labor Force | 1.08 |
| Life Expectancy | 1.05 |
| STEM Degrees | 1.04 |
| Food Access | 1.03 |
| Drug Overdose Deaths | 1.01 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

| Theme |
|---|
| Theme: Justice |
| Theme: Education |
| Theme: Economic Security |
| Theme: Food and Housing Security |
| Theme: Health |
| Theme: Other |

\* includes all groups because of inconsistent way racial and ethnic groups are used across datasets, this can point to inequality that may not be otherwise captured

\*\* POC included because some data was only available in this aggregation

# STATE LEVEL DISPARITIES BY RACE AND INDICATOR

## Black

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Youth Incarceration | **6.40** |
| Student Poverty | **6.27** |
| Incarceration Rate | **5.97** |
| Police Involved Fatalities | **3.79** |
| School Suspensions and Expulsions | **3.49** |
| Local Representation Gap | **2.91** |
| Living Below Poverty Line | **2.50** |
| Infant Mortality Rate | 2.33 |
| Childhood Poverty | 2.30 |
| Unemployment Rate | 2.11 |
| Home Ownership | 2.08 |
| Youth Not in School or Work | 1.94 |
| Low Birthweight | 1.84 |
| Health Insurance Coverage | 1.69 |
| Gender Wage Gap | 1.64 |
| Broadband Access | 1.63 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 1.60 |
| Adults Not Seeing a Doctor Due to Cost | 1.57 |
| Pollution Burden | 1.37 |
| Rent Burdened Population | 1.34 |
| Non-Communicable Diseases | 1.32 |
| Employment Rate | 1.16 |
| 4-year High School Graduation Rate | 1.14 |
| Food Access | 1.12 |
| Obesity Prevalence | 1.09 |
| Commute Length | 1.02 |
| STEM Degrees | 1.02 |
| Early Childhood Education | 0.98 |
| Women in Labor Force | 0.93 |
| Drug Overdose Deaths | 0.80 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

## Hispanic

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Local Representation Gap | **12.94** |
| Student Poverty | **5.27** |
| Health Insurance Coverage | **3.16** |
| Living Below Poverty Line | 2.24 |
| Childhood Poverty | 2.24 |
| Adults Not Seeing a Doctor Due to Cost | 2.13 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 2.11 |
| Gender Wage Gap | 1.86 |
| Youth Incarceration | 1.72 |
| Broadband Access | 1.50 |
| Incarceration Rate | 1.43 |
| School Suspensions and Expulsions | 1.41 |
| Youth Not in School or Work | 1.37 |
| Unemployment Rate | 1.35 |
| Pollution Burden | 1.21 |
| Infant Mortality Rate | 1.21 |
| Rent Burdened Population | 1.17 |
| 4-year High School Graduation Rate | 1.12 |
| Number of persons murdered by police | 1.12 |
| Early Childhood Education | 1.12 |
| Women in Labor Force | 1.10 |
| Employment Rate | 1.09 |
| Low Birthweight | 1.07 |
| Obesity Prevalence | 1.06 |
| Food Access | 1.01 |
| Commute Length | 0.99 |
| STEM Degrees | 0.95 |
| Non-Communicable Diseases | 0.31 |
| Drug Overdose Deaths | 0.27 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

## Indigenous

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Student Poverty | **5.97** |
| Local Representation Gap | **4.07** |
| Youth Incarceration | **2.83** |
| Health Insurance Coverage | **2.77** |
| Police Involved Fatalities | **2.71** |
| Unemployment Rate | **2.63** |
| Living Below Poverty Line | **2.52** |
| Childhood Poverty | 2.43 |
| School Suspensions and Expulsions | 2.31 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 2.24 |
| Adults Not Seeing a Doctor Due to Cost | 1.90 |
| Gender Wage Gap | 1.67 |
| Employment Rate | 1.24 |
| Drug Overdose Deaths | 1.24 |
| 4-year High School Graduation Rate | 1.19 |
| Rent Burdened Population | 1.08 |
| Obesity Prevalence | 1.08 |
| STEM Degrees | 1.03 |
| Commute Length | 1.00 |
| Early Childhood Education | 0.95 |
| Pollution Burden | 0.92 |
| Food Access | 0.89 |
| Non-Communicable Diseases | 0.84 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

## People of Color**

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Student Poverty | **5.90** |
| Local Representation Gap | **4.37** |
| Youth Incarceration | **3.61** |
| Unemployment Rate | 1.80 |
| Local Representation Gap | 1.77 |
| Toxic Air Burden | 1.34 |
| Pollution Burden | 1.23 |
| Commute Length | 1.00 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

**Largest disparity all groups***

| Indicator | Disparity |
|---|---|
| Local Representation Gap | **27.80** |
| Student Poverty | **8.79** |
| Police Involved Fatalities | **7.10** |
| Youth Incarceration | **7.00** |
| Incarceration Rate | **5.97** |
| School Suspensions and Expulsions | **4.65** |
| Health Insurance Coverage | **4.11** |
| Bachelor's Degree | **3.09** |
| Living Below Poverty Line | **2.98** |
| Unemployment Rate | **2.80** |
| Adults Not Seeing a Doctor Due to Cost | 2.27 |
| Childhood Poverty | 2.15 |
| Gender Wage Gap | 2.04 |
| Infant Mortality Rate | 1.99 |
| Low Birthweight | 1.79 |
| Youth Not in School or Work | 1.71 |
| Broadband Access | 1.71 |
| Rent Burdened Population | 1.49 |
| Non-Communicable Diseases | 1.43 |
| Pollution Burden | 1.39 |
| Drug Overdose Deaths | 1.33 |
| 4-year High School Graduation Rate | 1.23 |
| Food Access | 1.21 |
| Employment Rate | 1.21 |
| Early Childhood Education | 1.17 |
| Obesity Prevalence | 1.16 |
| STEM Degrees | 1.13 |
| Women in Labor Force | 1.10 |
| Commute Length | 1.09 |

Disparities greater than 2.5, in bold

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|---|
| Theme: Justice |
| Theme: Education |
| Theme: Economic Security |
| Theme: Food and Housing Security |
| Theme: Health |
| Theme: Other |

\*   includes all groups because of inconsistent way racial and ethnic groups are used across datasets, this can point to inequality that may not be otherwise captured

\*\* POC included because some data was only available in this aggregation