

URBAN TRANSITIONS ALLIANCE EQUITY FRAMEWORK

How industrial legacy cities are advancing climate justice locally

Cities are at the forefront of increasing climate change impacts and play a critical role to deliver on the Paris Agreement. The more current efforts are failing to drastically reduce emissions and limit global warming to 1.5 degrees, the more a necessity to prioritize people-centered and inclusive climate policies becomes apparent. **How can ambitious climate targets be aligned with social equity considerations to ensure no local residents or communities are left behind in the transition?**

The Urban Transitions Alliance equity framework provides a hands-on approach for local governments to locally accelerate climate justice and social equity. Three simple dimensions help to communicate about social equity with different stakeholders, mainstream equity thinking and ensure municipal programs are designed to increase equity across the city.



ACCESS

Local governments support equal access to public services and infrastructure for all local residents and communities.



PARTICIPATION

Local governments develop policies and processes with rather than for residents, including all voices across the city and involving those affected early-on.



OPPORTUNITY

Local governments are targeting improved access to quality education for all; provision of career perspectives; and increased diversity in employment.

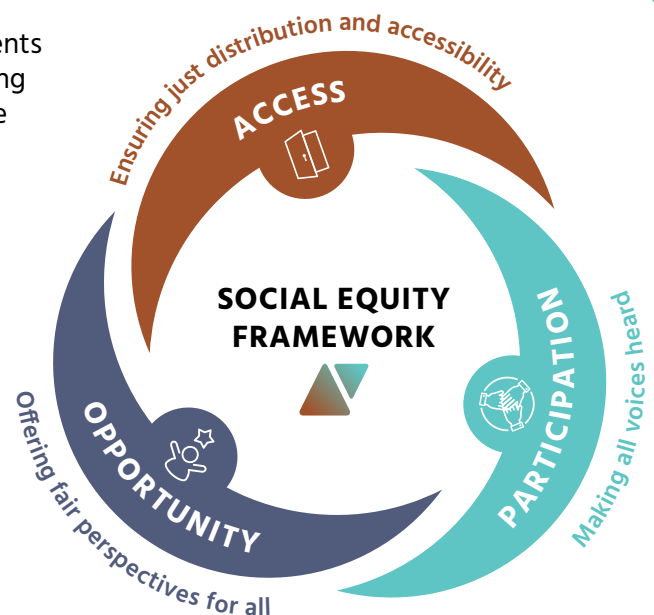
As a baseline of this framework, local governments recognize and respect difference and diversity among residents and communities, and seek to overcome patterns of disadvantage – with a focus on reaching people of different genders, abilities, ethnicities and socio-economic status.

Through the social equity dimensions, local governments enable their communities to thrive because they:

ensure that physical infrastructures and services benefit all,

give a voice to everyone and send the message that everyone matters, and

provide opportunities for all to contribute to the community in meaningful ways.



EQUITY FRAMEWORK IN PRACTICE

GLASGOW, UK: SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH CIRCULAR URBAN FOOD MODELS

The city of Glasgow is currently transitioning away from its manufacturing heritage of the industrial revolution towards a just and sustainable future. Aiming to become net zero on its carbon emissions and one of Europe's most circular cities by 2030, Glasgow is committed to reinvent its identity upon a more innovative, fair and participatory economic growth. As part of its industrial legacy, the city is dealing with vacant and derelict land and high inequality between different neighborhoods. To jointly advance on the city's climate and equity targets, Glasgow intends to use vacant land in high unemployment areas for circular food production, with the vision to increase social justice, participation and democracy in these areas. Expected equity outcomes include improved **ACCESS** to fresh food and green space for local residents, increased **PARTICIPATION** of local communities through a collaborative approach based on co-creation and self-governance, and new job **OPPORTUNITIES** in areas with high unemployment rates.



TURKU, FINLAND: CIRCULAR ECONOMY INTERVENTIONS WITH EQUITY OUTCOMES

As Finland's oldest city and a key trade point in Europe, Turku is advancing the transition from extractive industrial practices to production models that reduce waste and primary resource demand. Under the "Circular Turku" project, the city is bringing together different circular economy efforts to collaboratively design an action plan to achieve zero emission, zero waste and a low ecological footprint by 2040. The Circular Turku roadmap outlines opportunities for circular economy action across five priority sectors while engaging local residents and businesses. For each of the roadmap's priority sectors, it was mapped how the interventions could benefit or not each of the three social equity dimensions (**ACCESS**, **PARTICIPATION**, **OPPORTUNITY**) and which pre-conditions would ensure a fair and inclusive circular transition. In addition, concrete social equity actions were defined per sector and dimension. The equity framework will be used to design the roadmap's pilot projects in the upcoming months.



PITTSBURGH, USA: JUST EMPLOYMENT TO FOSTER THE RENEWABLE ENERGY TRANSITION

Proudly acknowledging its legacy as a steel city, Pittsburgh is prioritizing the workforce transition to ensure all residents benefit from the city's investments in a greener and renewable future. Through a new procurement platform, the city of Pittsburgh and its partners in the Western Pennsylvania Energy Consortium (WPEC) have shifted to 100% renewable energy supply. This has helped the city to meet its renewable electricity targets as defined in the Climate Action Plan, while reducing the energy burden on low-income households through increased **ACCESS** to renewable and affordable electricity. In mid-term perspective, the shift to renewables will also strengthen the local workforce in the area of solar, wind and hydro energy. To ensure a just transition, Pittsburgh is closely collaborating with local stakeholders and community organizations like the Energy Innovation Center (**PARTICIPATION**), in turn creating new local job and re-skilling **OPPORTUNITIES** for residents in need.



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The [Urban Transitions Alliance](#) is a global network of industrial legacy cities who have committed to realizing sustainable and inclusive urban transitions. Social inequality constitutes a common transition challenge for many cities that had relied on industrial growth for their overall development and prosperity. To ensure all residents can thrive and find the support they need, Alliance cities are considering equity implications across all their projects and strategies.

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