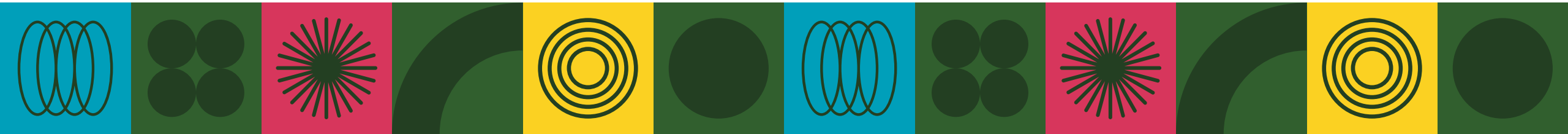




# Wellbeing in Washington

Presentation to VMCC

Lindsay Morgan Tracy | Economic Justice Team | 2026





A collaboration between experts with lived experience, community organizations, state and tribal governments, and legislators to implement the 10-Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty.

Our mission is to ensure every Washingtonian can meet their basic needs, fully contribute their talents, and pass well-being on to future generations.

# WHO & HOW



# 8 Strategies

## Blueprint for a Just & Equitable Future: 10-Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty



**1: UNDO STRUCTURAL RACISM & INEQUALITY**  
Understand structural racism, historical trauma and inequality, and undo their legacy in policies, programs and practices.



**5: PRIORITIZE URGENT NEEDS**  
Prioritize the urgent needs of people experiencing homelessness, hunger, violence, substance use disorder or behavioral illness.



**2: BALANCE POWER**  
Make equal space in decision-making for people and communities most affected by poverty and inequality.



**6: BUILD A HOLISTIC CONTINUUM OF CARE**  
Build an integrated human service care system that addresses the holistic needs of Washingtonians.



**3: INCREASE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**  
Target equitable income growth, education opportunities and wealth-building among people with low incomes.



**7: DECRIMINALIZE POVERTY**  
Decriminalize poverty and reduce reliance on the child welfare, juvenile justice and criminal justice systems.



**4: ENSURE FOUNDATIONAL WELL-BEING**  
Invest in social and economic conditions to promote the intergenerational well-being of children, adults and seniors.



**8: PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK**  
Ensure a just and equitable transition to the future of work.

# What Alliance Does



## Radical Collaboration

- Cross-system infrastructure for problem-solving and aligned action
- Strong relationships with community organizations
- Deep trust and engagement with people served by health, housing and human services



## Evidence-Based Solutions

- Deep knowledge and applied understanding of social and economic policy, safety net programs, and family and worker supports
- Cross-system policy and program analysis
- Data analysis and stories
- Pilots



## Alignment & Action

- Multiagency and system alignment toward shared results and strategic planning
- Statutory pathway for legislative-executive collaboration and action
- Federal support
- Public-private partnerships



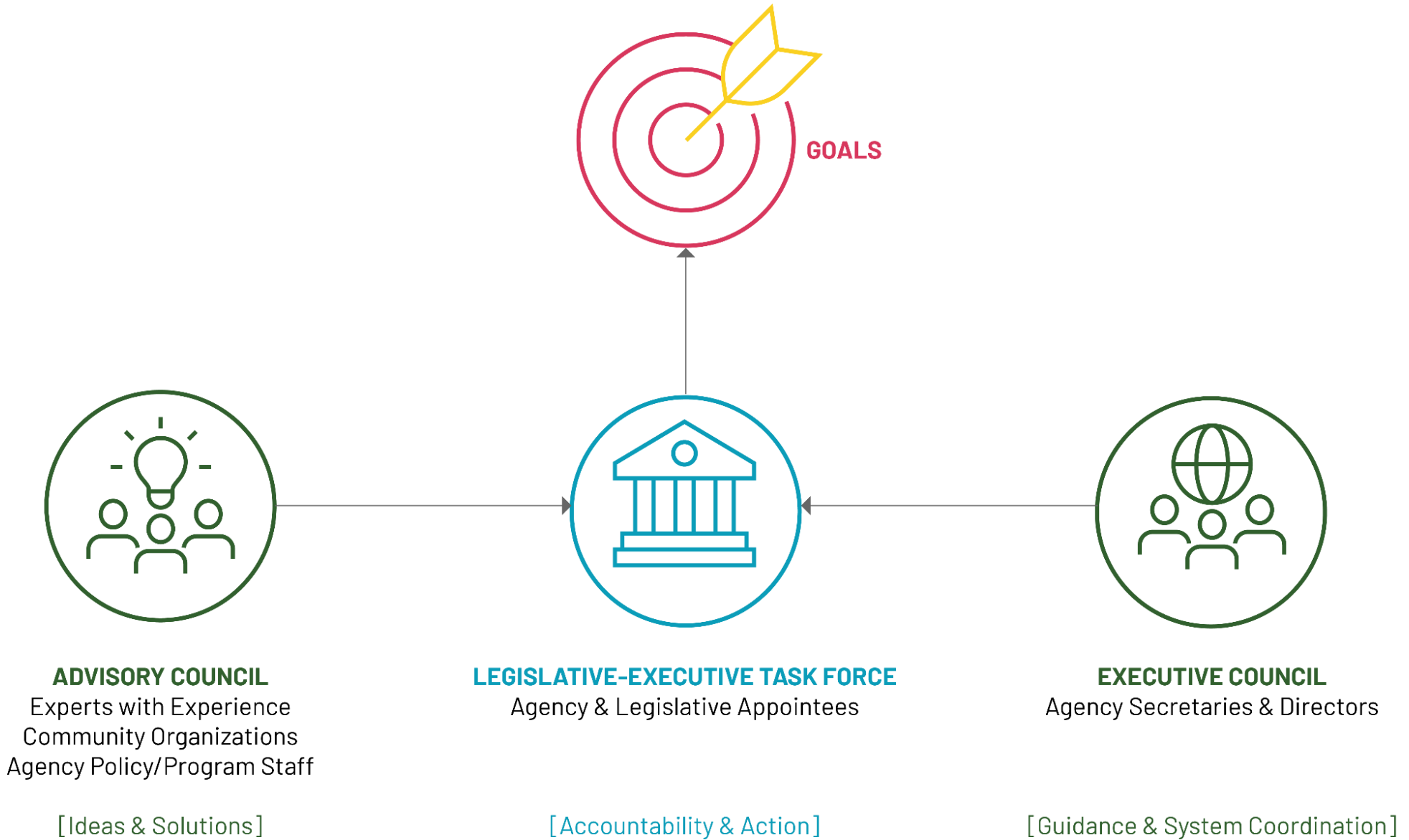
## Learning & Accountability

- Measurement framework and data dashboard
- Advisory Council
- Action tracking
- Impact analysis
- Federal tracking

# Who We Work With



# Alliance Action Pathway





## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Pro-equity, anti-racist
- Efficient, nimble & responsive
- Strengths-based
- Lifelong learning
- Honesty, trust & transparency
- Celebration, joy & self-care

## ECONOMIC JUSTICE TEAM ACTIVITIES

-  Data and research
-  Communications
-  Partnerships
-  Government affairs





## ALIGNED CONTRIBUTORS

- Lived Experts
- Community Organizations
- Agencies
- Legislators

## OUTPUT: ADOPTING THE 8 STRATEGIES TO DISMANTLE POVERTY

-  1. Undo structural racism
-  2. Balance power
-  3. Increase opportunity
-  4. Ensure foundational well-being
-  5. Prioritize urgent needs
-  6. Build a holistic continuum of care
-  7. Decriminalize poverty
-  8. Prepare for the future of work

## EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

1. Prevention
2. Access
3. Stability
4. **Poverty Reduction** 
5. Mobility
6. Wealth-Building
7. **End Poverty** 



## VISION

Generational justice, belonging, and well-being.

# Centering Experts with Experience

“It wasn’t about a single process - it was about the relationships.”

“In advisory committees or other work, there is an us and a them. This work shelved the ‘them’. It turned it into a ‘we’.”

“If we want to change the narrative, we also have to change the narrator. The work was about this statement.”

“When people affected by a policy or program are in the room, leadership is much more likely to give those meetings merit. Sitting in the same space with a common purpose makes a difference. If not, you are doing business as normal and the status quo won’t change.”



**IMPACT**  
**and**  
**ACCOUNTABILITY**



# Impact

**270 POLICY, PROGRAM &  
FUNDING ACTIONS**

**9<sup>TH</sup> LOWEST POVERTY  
RATE IN NATION**



**NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE**

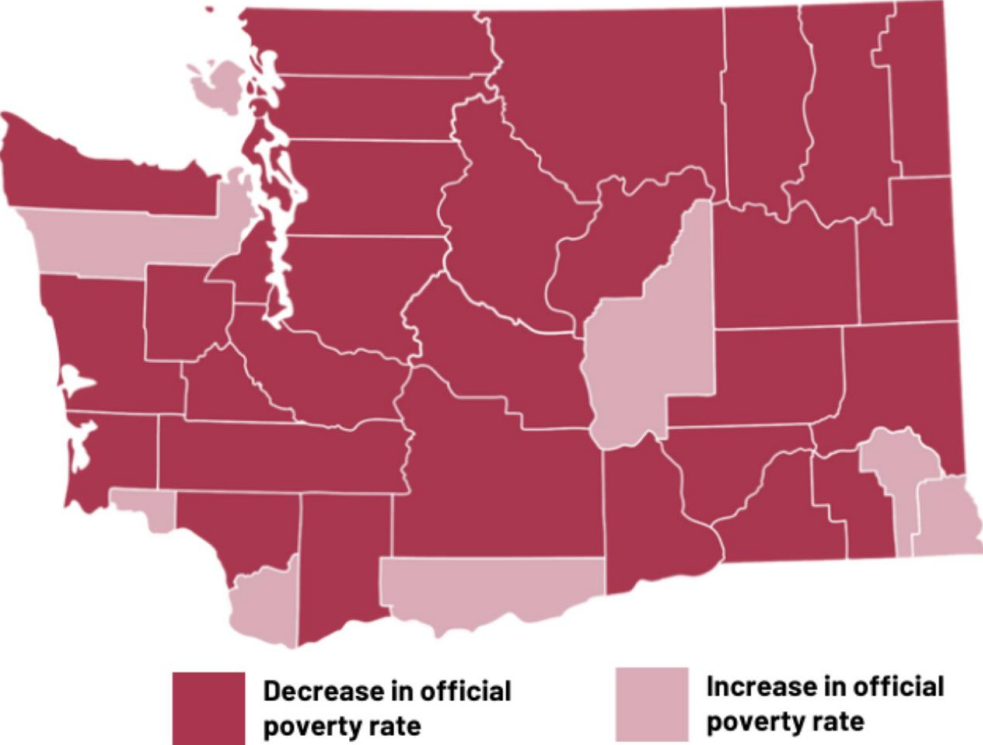
**GAPS STARTING TO CLOSE**

# Impact

## CHANGE IN OFFICIAL POVERTY RATE BY COUNTY

Washington State 2018-2022

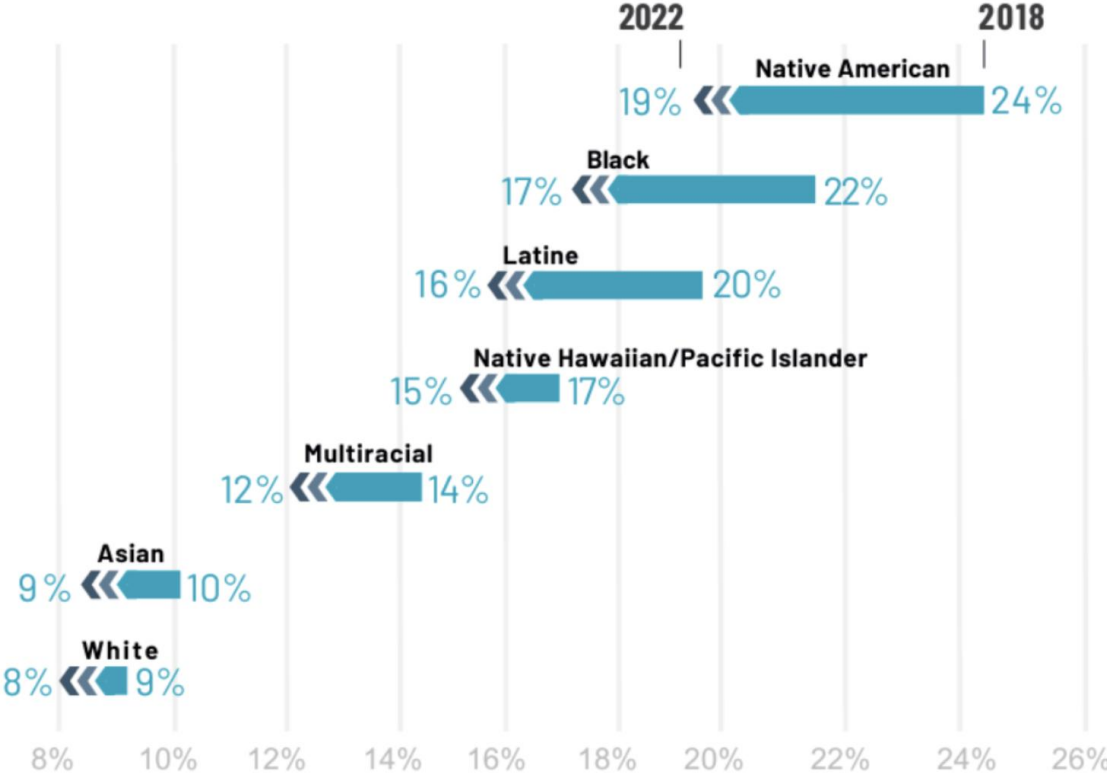
31 of the 39 counties in Washington experienced a decline in poverty rates between 2018 and 2022.<sup>1</sup>



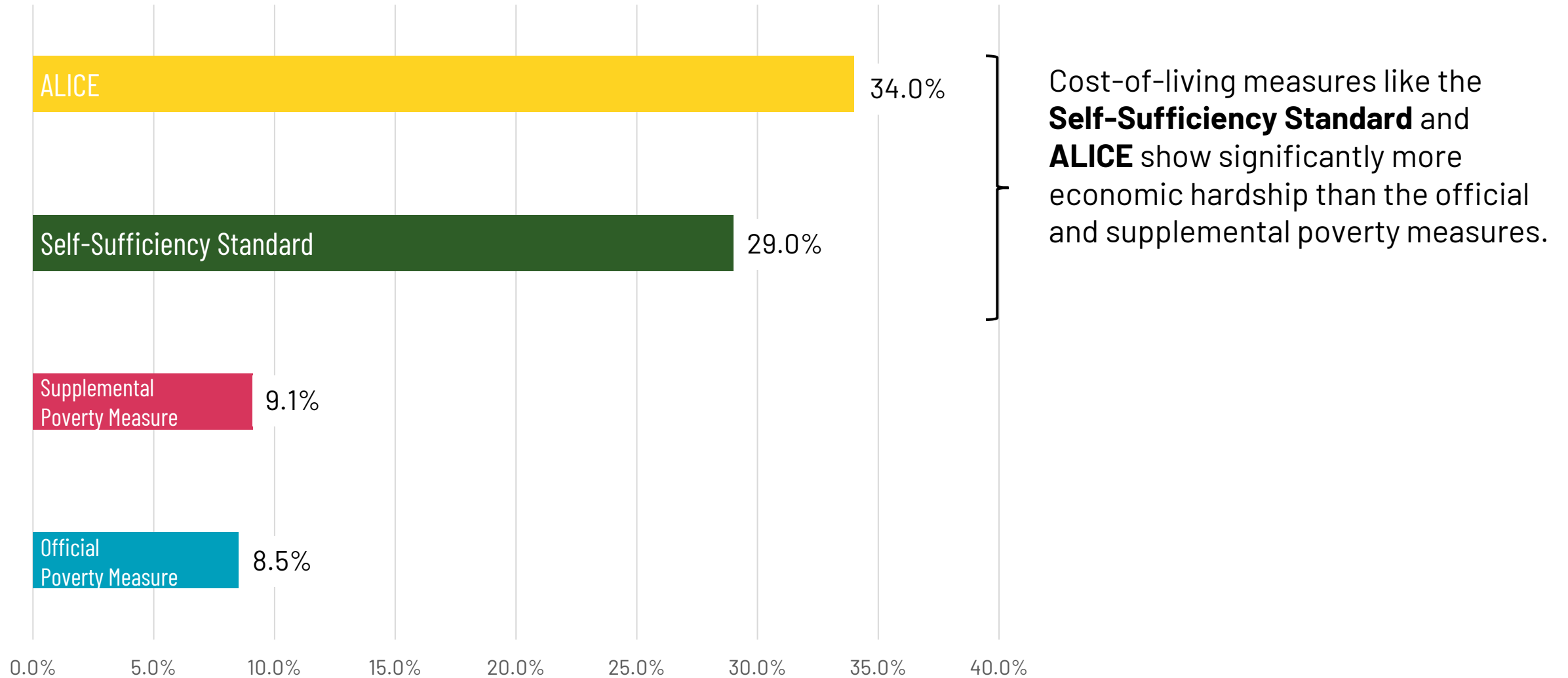
## CHANGE IN OFFICIAL POVERTY RATE BY RACE & ETHNICITY

Washington State 2018-2022

Every racial and ethnic group in Washington state experienced a decrease in the official poverty rate between 2018 and 2022, with accelerated declines among people of color.<sup>1</sup>



# Plenty of Poverty Above the Poverty Line



# Key Differences in Measures of Economic Hardship

ACCOUNTS FOR:		Official Poverty Measure (OPM)	Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM)	Self-Sufficiency Standard (SS Standard)
Variations	Family size	✓	✓	✓
	Region		✓	✓
Resources	Pre-tax cash income	✓	✓	✓
	In-kind benefits, tax credits		✓	✓
Expenses	Food	✓	✓	✓
	Housing		✓	✓
	Clothing		✓	✓
	Utilities, Phone, Wi-Fi		✓	✓
	Transportation			✓
	Child Care			✓
	Health Care			✓
	Tax		✓	✓
	Emergency Savings			✓

# What People Are Saying

**"The less people worry about affording food or rent, the more they can focus on school, work and family."**

~Cami Feek,  
Commissioner,  
Employment Security  
Department

**"People experiencing poverty have the knowledge and expertise to guide the state toward a just and equitable future."**

~Drayton Jackson,  
Alliance Co-Chair

**"Economic justice is health justice."**

~Dr. Umair Shah  
Former Secretary,  
Department of Health

**"Poverty is a policy choice. We can end poverty in Washington and the 10-Year Plan is the way to do it."**

~Juanita Maestas,  
Emeritus Alliance  
Co-Chair

**"The collaboration with the Alliance has worked because it is anchored by a unifying purpose of honoring the lived experiences and expertise of frontline communities."**

~Faduma Fido,  
People's Economy Lab

**"Less poverty is an economic win for the state, the peace of mind economic stability gives families is priceless."**

~Drew Shirk, Secretary  
Department of Revenue

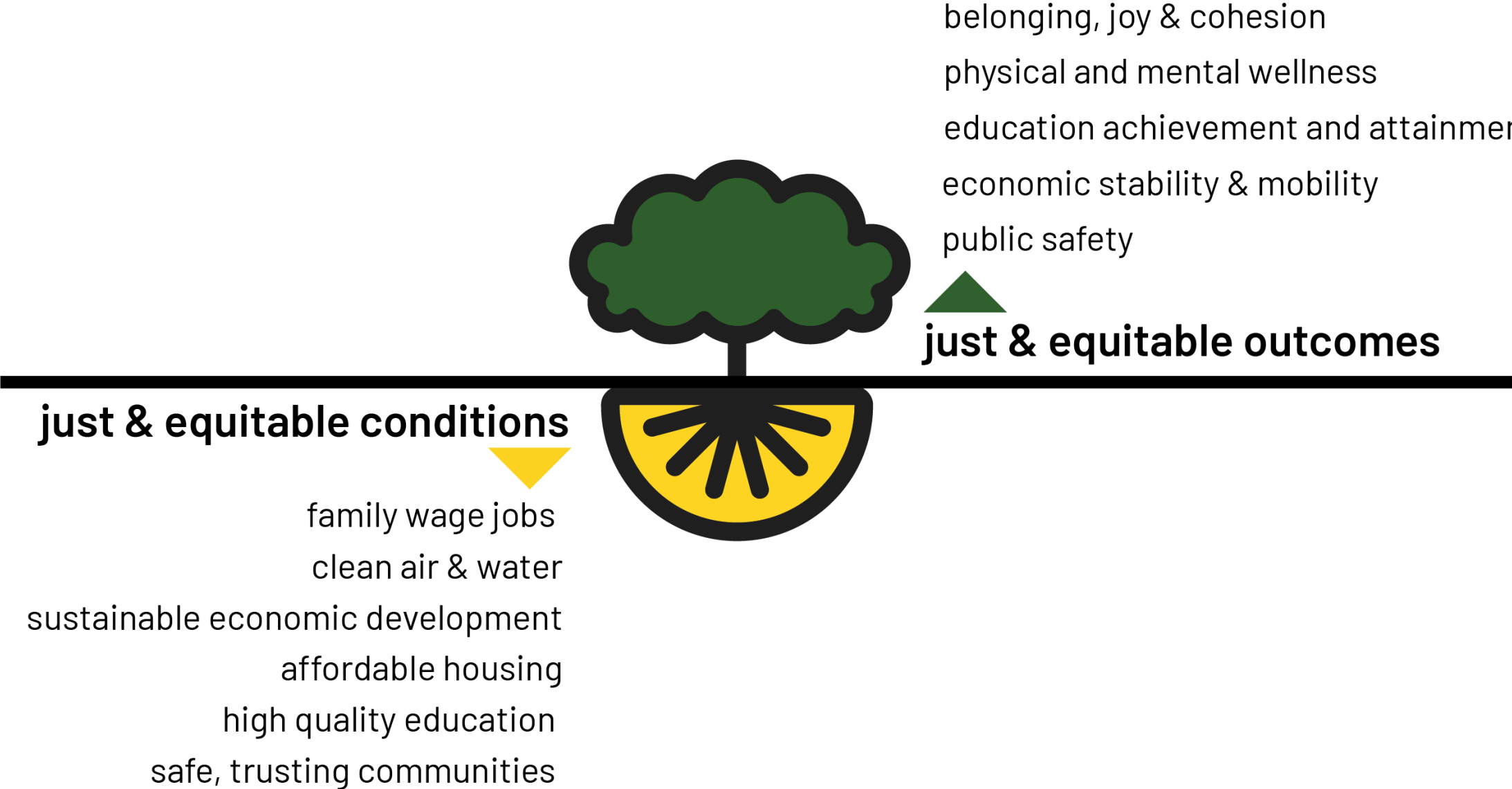
**"The Alliance is absolutely mobilizing change because of how they have done their work."**

~Dona Ponepinto,  
President/CEO, United  
Way Pierce County





# What's in the Soil Bears the Fruit



# Just Futures

## Goal & Objectives of the Just Futures Project

### Goal

To define, measure and build accountability toward a just and equitable future in Washington.



### Objectives

Build a community-led vision and definition for what a just and equitable future means.

Create state accountability toward vision with a process to measure, track and publicize progress to decision makers.

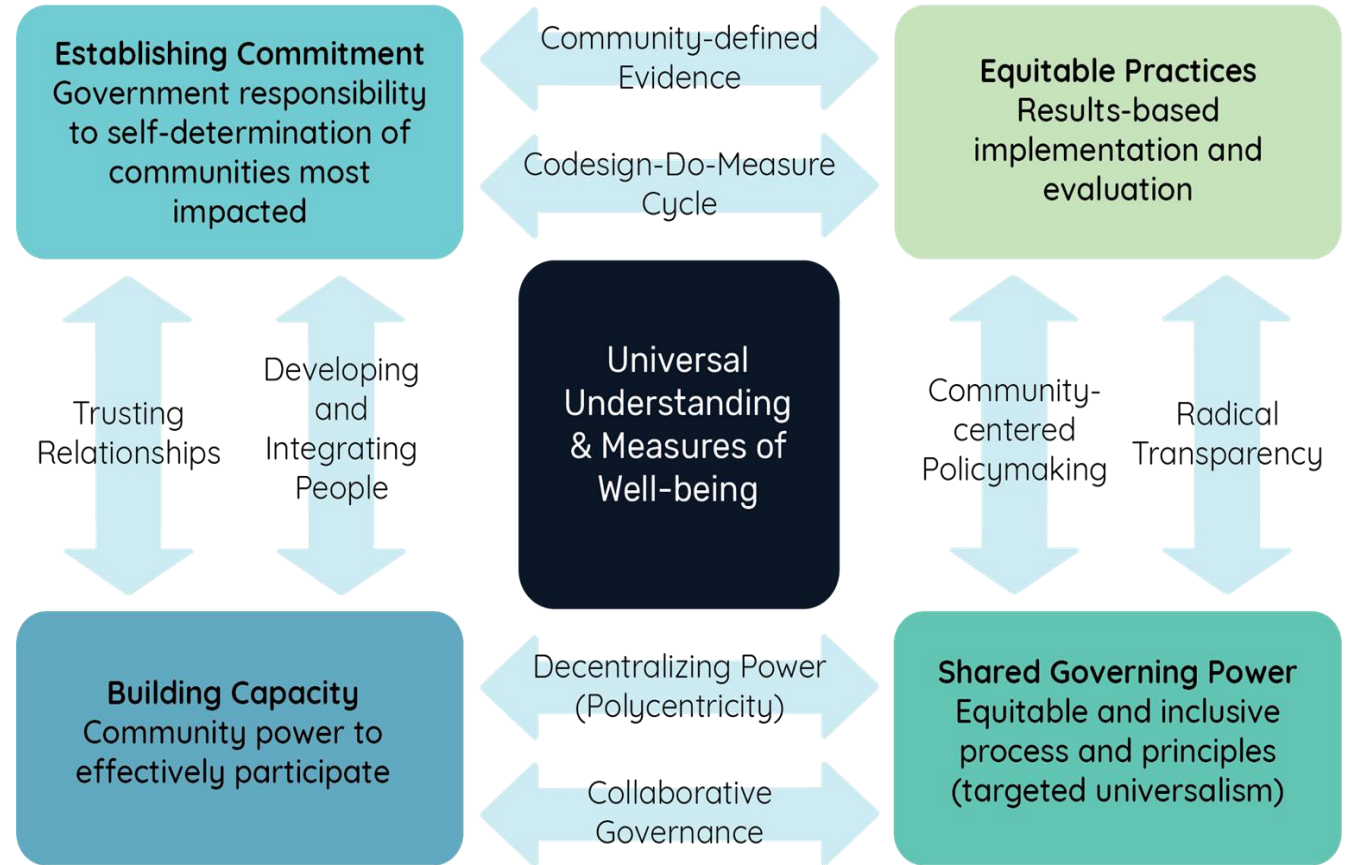
Ensure expertise and solutions of people and communities historically excluded from wellbeing are elevated in state budget and policy decisions.



## Cornerstones of Co-Governance for a Just and Equitable Future were created to:

- **Elevate leadership and participation of communities** most impacted and historically excluded in setting the vision, measures, assessing progress, and holding the state accountable.
- **Create opportunities for government agencies to collaborate with community owned enterprises** to direct targeted investments - where people most impacted are central to decision making.

## Cornerstones of Co-Governance for a Just and Equitable Future



# Approach : Alignment between Environmental Justice & Poverty

## Environmental Justice

- WA State Environmental Justice Council
- HEAL Act

## Poverty Reduction

- Blueprint for a Just & Equitable Washington: The 10-Year Plan to Reduce Poverty and Inequality
- Subcabinet on Intergenerational Poverty

1. Center lived expertise – those who stand to benefit the most from the programs, policies, budgets are at the tables
2. Similar CBOs and community members at each of our tables
3. Create consistent and accessible pathways for community to be meaningfully involved in government decision-making processes
4. Philanthropic dollars have helped us innovate to get to impact

\*Sources:

WA State [Blueprint for a Just & Equitable Washington](#)

WA State [Environmental Justice Task Force Final Report](#)

WA State [HEAL Act](#)

WA State [Executive Order 22-04 Implementing the WA State PEAR Plan and Playbook](#)



# Briefing of Wellbeing Efforts

Global and National work on wellbeing economies

- ❖ Movement to measure the economy by looking at the quality of peoples' lives and the quality of the environment (climate, water, pollution, etc.)
- ❖ Movement from GDP (gross domestic product) that measures the size of a nation or state's economy to well-being to combine economic prosperity and societal wellbeing.

UN Human Rights Council wants this to be an imperative (July 2024)

"For decades, GDP growth was the dominant approach for eradicating poverty, but it never fulfilled its promise and devastated our planet."  
- Oliver de Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur  
July 2, 2024

OECD Secretary General said we need to put people at the center, not the economy (2019)

## Wellbeing Economy Alliance and the Well-being Economy Governments

- Scotland
- Wales
- Iceland
- Wales
- Finland

## Dashboards

1. Scottish Gov't Wellbeing Economy Monitor
2. New Zealand's Living Standards Framework
3. Canada Index of Wellbeing
4. WIN – Wellbeing in the Nation (U.S.)
5. Social Progress Index from a London Borough
6. Think TN

The World Health Organization (WHO) has a Healthy Lives and Wellbeing for All strategy and reports on what happened and didn't happen.

## SYSTEMS WORK in US

- Aina Aloha Futures
- WELLO in Wisconsin
- Native Roots Network in northern Cal. With cultural relevant Indigenous practices

# People are calling for economic change

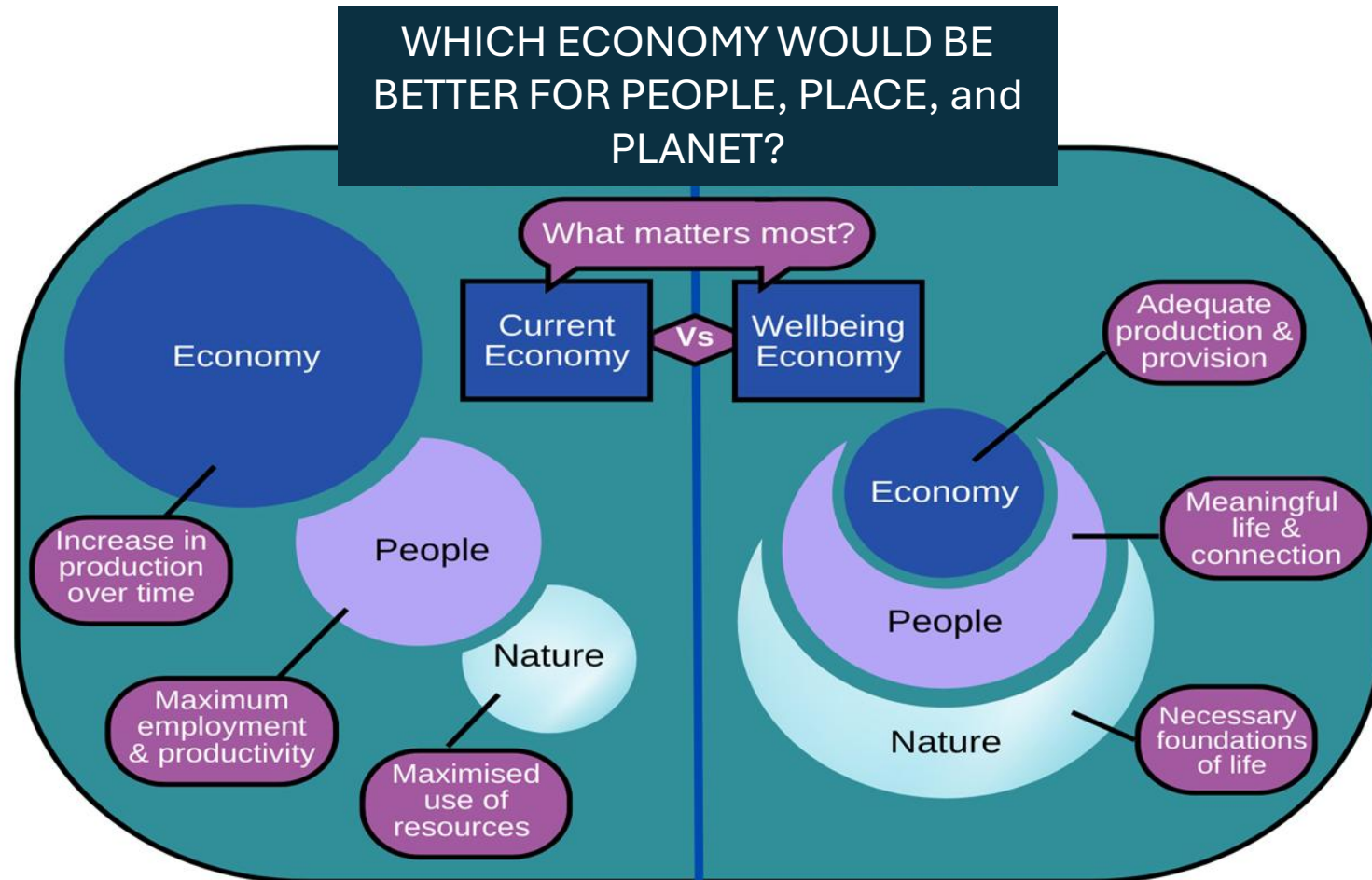
Majority worldwide now believe **capitalism doing more harm than good** and democracy is being eroded  
(Edelman 2020)

**68% of Americans** believe the economy should work in a way that prioritizes the **health and wellbeing of people and nature** rather than profits & wealth  
(Global Commons Alliance 2022)

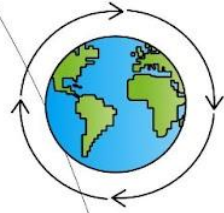
# The Wellbeing Economy Movement

People and planet not here to serve the economy

The economy is here to serve us!



# Wellbeing Economy “Picnic Blanket”



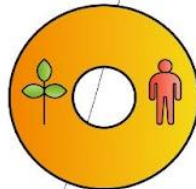
## CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Transform production and consumption processes to reuse resources, design waste and pollution out of the cycle, and regenerate the natural world. The primary ways to do this are recycling waste for new production or using waste for conversion to energy.



## ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

Ensures equitable distributions of economic power through democratic management of economy via policy, social enterprises, and community wealth management.



## DOUGHNUT ECONOMICS

Supports the design of economic systems that ensure necessary social foundations, while respecting planetary limits.



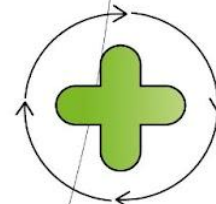
## COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

Identifies 'anchor' economic institutions with strong linkages to the local economy, to foster 'bottom-up' and inclusive development.



## COMMON GOOD ECONOMY

Evaluates business success not by profits, but rather by their contribution to the 'common good' and alignment with values of Dignity, Social Justice, Environmental Sustainability, and Transparency.



## CORE ECONOMY

Recognises central importance of economic activities that occur amongst families, friends, and communities, which are non-monetised and driven by values of love, empathy, responsibility, and care.



## REGENERATIVE ECONOMY

Focuses on building an economy that mimics nature by regenerating the social and ecological assets needed for wellbeing.



## SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

Promotes the expansion of economic activities and behaviours that are based on principles of reciprocity, cooperation, and solidarity.



## FOUNDATIONAL ECONOMY

Advocates for the use of public policy to secure the supply of basic goods and services to all people in a sustainable manner (e.g. socially and environmentally responsible).

# Alignment with Wellbeing Work Internationally, Nationally & in WA

Opportunities in 2026?

- ❖ Movement to measure the economy by looking at the quality of peoples' lives and the quality of the environment (climate, water, pollution, etc.)
- ❖ Narrative build
- ❖ Iterating on the 10-Year Plan
- ❖ Weaving of networks in WA state
- ❖ Collaborative partnerships with wellbeing/the vital conditions
  - 9 ACH regions
  - Tribal efforts
  - Other aligned movements
  - Policy, program and budgets
- ❖ Convenings
- ❖ Future Generations Bill or Wellbeing Caucus
- ❖ Socialization with new state leadership, new partners, etc.



# 10-YP Refresh Emergent Themes

## OPIOID AND FENTANYL CRISIS

Address the intersection of addiction, economic stability, and community wellbeing

## THE TRANSGENDER EXPERIENCE

Align with trans well-being framework developed by the University of Washington

## TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

Strengthen the focus on tribal sovereignty and centering tribal voices  
Bolster tribal practices, languages and cultures

## ENVIRONMENT & POVERTY

Explore alignment with environmental justice and sustainable solutions  
Access to clean water, reduction of environmental hazards, and air pollution

## DEMOCRACY AS A FOUNDATION

Explore alignment with environmental justice and sustainable solutions  
Access to clean water, reduction of environmental hazards, and air pollution

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Explore impact of artificial intelligence on the economy, society, and the environment

## DIGITAL EQUITY

Align with the Digital Equity Workgroup

## IMMIGRANTS/ASYLEES

Understand changing landscape and rights for Washingtonians  
Enhanced partnership with government workgroups and community organizations

# VMCC

- Diverse leadership across unlikely partners is critical
- Creating new systems to improve people, place and planet are key!
- Relationships AND process are critical
- Ability to work with others
- Passion, passion, passion
- Learning mindset

## Discussion

We are constantly iterating.

**As we evolve and respond to emergent themes and needs, what do you recommend we focus on?**

**How can our data dashboard be useful for you? Collectively tracking vital conditions?**

**What does partnership/alignment look like for you?** Blogs, meetings, other? Learning series opps.

**Legislative efforts?** Craft messaging or co-crafting messaging. Legislative support and priorities for the current cycle or next.

**Federal opportunities?**

**Aligning with other networks within WA state government and in community?**

# Thank you!



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(Yes, three first names, three last names and  
three unisex names)

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