

## The Equity Framework

The Equity Framework shows how to apply an equity lens to shift the root causes of inequity.

### Why use an equity framework?

- A shared way of looking at, and acting to change a problem, can make a lasting difference.
- Applying an equity lens helps identify what's not fair and why, so we can drive change.
- The Equity Framework shows how to apply this lens to make equity happen for Queensland and Queenslanders.

#### **A common framework for addressing inequity helps us:**

- Apply an equity lens consistently — embeds fairness as standard practice in design, policy and decision-making.
- Gain visibility — reveals underlying issues for good decisions and solutions.
- Optimise delivery — acts as a unifying tool to align efforts.
- Prevent unintended consequences — encourages flexible solutions for complex environments and diverse needs.
- Lean towards new ways — of thinking, acting, trusting, learning and sharing.
- Focus on systemic change for lasting impact — creates fair and equitable impact for all.

#### **The Equity Framework has three parts:**

- Part 1 is a model of Queensland's system of equity, to assist in understanding the problem differently.
- Part 2 highlights places to intervene to tackle root causes and create change at multiple levels.
- Part 3 shows ways to work differently to improve equity.

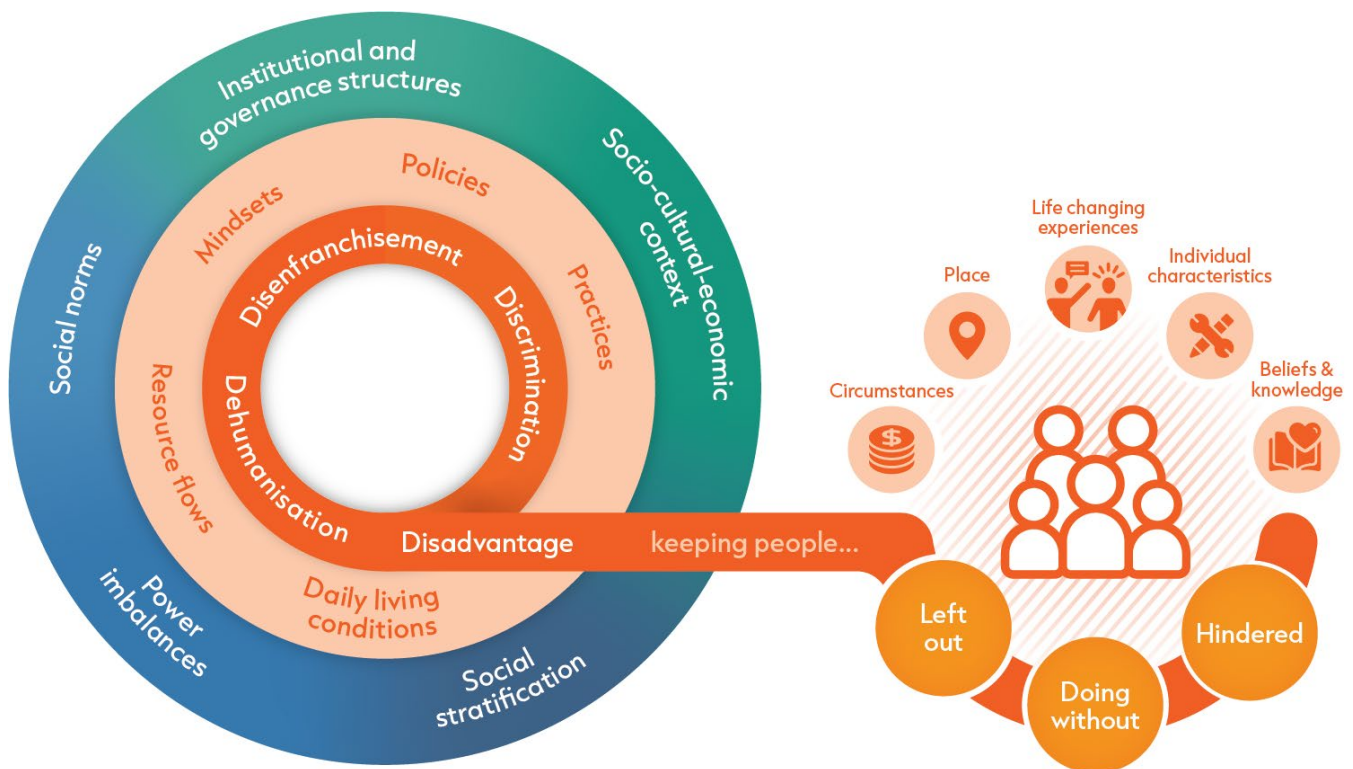
## Part 1: Understand differently

Recognise the root causes and dynamics of inequity.

*Use the model of our equity system to understand the underlying causes of unfair outcomes.*

There are often underlying causes of inequity which may not be immediately obvious but surround our daily lives. This model can help us understand:

- what is valued and believed.
- who was considered when designing policies, rules and services.
- if everyone has what they need.
- how context and characteristics influence, and are influenced by, inequity.



We might not always notice why things are fair or unfair. Using Part 1 of the Equity Framework, which is a model of equity in Queensland, can help make this clearer.

By looking at things differently and thinking about what makes them fair or not, we can keep moving towards a fairer Queensland.

### Our equity system

There are some underlying factors that affect our broader society:

- Our history and the culture we share.
- The institutions and decision-making systems that help manage and organise how things work in society.
- The expectations that people in a group follow.
- Groups being formed based on things like education, where a person lives, or income.
- That some views are more easily heard or valued.

There is another layer of societal structures that can influence whether things are fair for everyone:

- The way resources are shared.
- Ways of thinking, beliefs and attitudes that can affect how we treat each other.
- The rules and policies.
- The established ways we usually do things in organisations and communities.
- The conditions that surround where we live, learn, work and play and how they shape our lives.

These factors all influence each other.

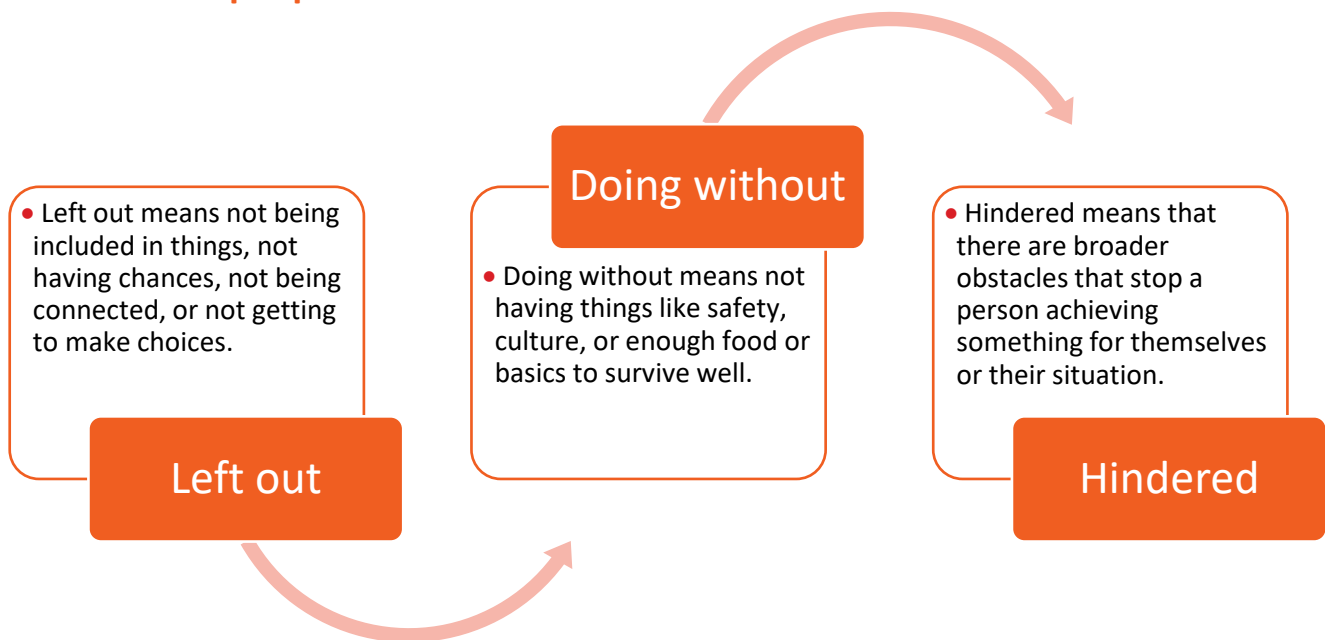
This creates a cycle that leaves some people out. That's why it's important to make changes throughout the whole system so that everyone has a fair chance.

## The 4 Ds

The 4 Ds can happen, sometimes because of direct action, and sometimes because of unfair things hidden within the factors that influence our society.

- **Discrimination:** This means unfair treatment because of factors like race, gender, age or things that happened in the past.
- **Disenfranchisement:** This is when people are kept from having rights or being part of important things in society.
- **Dehumanisation:** This is when people are treated as if they're not as good as others.
- **Disadvantage:** This is when some people don't have the same chances as others because they have limits on things like income, opportunities, or how respected they are in society.

## Which means people are



When people are **left out**, **doing without**, or **hindered**, it affects them in different ways. It can affect their individual and family characteristics such as:

- Their circumstances, or what they have right now, like income, employment, or support from others.
- Place characteristics such as where they live and how they feel about their community and connection to place.
- Life changing experiences, like serious injury or illness, moving to a new place, or becoming a parent.

- Their individual characteristics and beliefs and knowledge, including how they view the world and how they react to things, based on who they are, their culture and what they believe in.

All these factors interact to create the system of equity in Queensland. As every factor influences and is influenced by other factors, changing one thing can cause ripple effects that bring about more changes.

## Part 2: Intervene differently

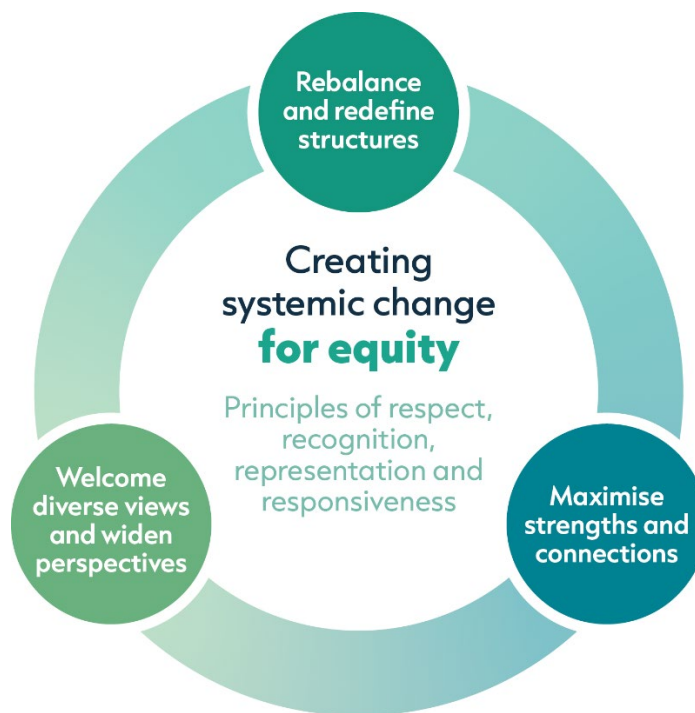
**Tackle root causes and create change at multiple levels.**

*Use Part 2 of the Equity Framework to guide real and lasting solutions.*

Despite our efforts, inequity persists. There may be additional opportunities to address the underlying reasons for inequity. Use Part 2 of the Equity Framework to create meaningful and lasting change by acting in multiple ways at once to address inequity.

There are three opportunities to act to create systemic change for equity:

- Welcome diverse views and widen perspectives.
- Maximise strengths and connections.
- Rebalance and redefine structures.



### Welcome diverse views and widen perspectives

#### Apply

- Know your own worldview, biases and mindsets.
- Actively seek and explore the diverse views and experiences of others.
- Listen, learn, and be willing to integrate new knowledge with your own.

### What this can achieve

- Challenging ourselves to see the world differently can lead to more solutions.
- Acknowledging our own biases helps us treat everyone with respect.
- By seeking and learning from more and different perspectives, we can integrate new knowledge to better recognise barriers to equity and find ways to overcome them.

### Maximise strengths and connections

#### Apply

- Focus on strengths, resources and networks.
- Act with empathy and care.
- Support the whole person and the conditions around them.
- Join up and layer supports.

### What this can achieve

- Understanding leads to inclusive and compassionate solutions that grow connection and even greater strengths.
- Supporting self-directed lives, dignity and autonomy enables people to act and make choices that matter to them.
- Actions that are connected and flexible can meet immediate needs, while also helping to shift the surrounding conditions.

### Rebalance and redefine structures

#### Apply

- Identify what is creating unfairness within our systems and institutions.
- Realign and reimagine existing structures, policies and practices to remove unfair obstacles.
- Challenge bias, actively promote equity and inclusion, and share decision-making.
- Focus on social outcomes alongside economic outcomes when prioritising, investing and measuring.
- Intervene early to address root causes and prevent inequity.
- Act quickly to make changes if unintended consequences arise. This may require structures that allow agility.

### What this can achieve

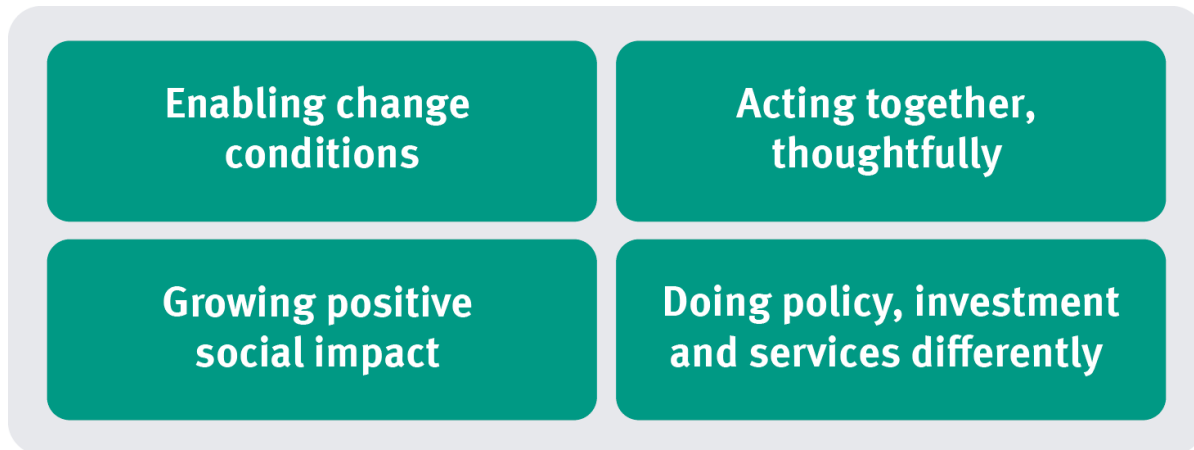
- Identifying patterns of discrimination or disadvantage can transform policies and practices to make things fairer.
- Questioning why things are the way they are (the status quo), can open new possibilities.
- Listening to people's experiences, co-creating solutions, sharing decision-making, and implementing policies and practices that promote equity and inclusion can help tackle bias.
- By balancing economic, social and environmental aims we can help to ensure equitable outcomes for future generations.
- By acting quickly to make changes to policies, programs and practices, we can help make sure they don't escalate inequity. Structures that allow agility can support early intervention.

## Part 3: Work differently

Work across sectors and systems, build relationships and embed the knowledge of lived experience.

*Use Part 3 of the Equity Framework to do things differently so impact can be amplified.*

Achieve more by working differently together to change the conditions that surround people where they live, learn, work and play.



The Equity Framework identifies four key leverage points – the high-impact opportunities to work differently and make things fairer for everyone.

- Enabling change conditions.
- Growing positive social impact.
- Acting together, thoughtfully.
- Doing policy, services, investment and measurement differently.

### Enabling change conditions

#### Apply

- Support learning and questioning of the status quo.
- Allow for experimentation.
- Understand that change is interconnected and dynamic.

#### What this can achieve

- By building alliances, sharing learnings, and adapting as needed, we can better navigate the complexity of issues.
- Valuing learning, questioning, experimentation, and agility can help develop a culture that supports change and new ways of working.
- Taking action to support equity can trigger further actions that lead to significant progress or transformation.
- Many people acting at different places, both together and individually, can create three types of systemic change:
  - collaborative change — when people work together to create a bigger change than they could have alone (synergistic impact).
  - cumulative change — when small actions add up over time to make a larger difference.
  - ripple effects — where change can be made in one place and spread out to positively affect other parts of the system.



## Growing positive social impact

### Apply

- Intentionally choose to prioritise equity.
- Make space for new possibilities and? growth.

### What this can achieve

- Committing to equity and actively seeking ways to uphold fairness and address root causes of inequity can drive progress toward more equitable outcomes.
- Critical reflection, innovative thinking and being open to new and evolving perspectives can help create a shared vision for an equitable future and foster purpose in addressing inequity.
- Considering what's no longer working and nurturing existing seeds of change can support concrete steps toward more equitable outcomes.

## Acting together, thoughtfully

### Apply

We can collaborate effectively and deliberately to drive meaningful change.

- Work together on common root causes.
- Collaborate for change.
- Collect knowledge and co-create.
- Act conscious of bias.

### What this can achieve

- Acting together on the underlying factors driving different types of inequities helps tackle the deeper issues that are influencing the varied challenges needing change. Addressing common systemic issues can be effective.
- Collaboration for change is more than working together. Effective systems change thrives on shared leadership and momentum, relationships and trust, and a shared insight into the connections between parts of the system.
- Pooling knowledge, perspectives, resources and ideas can maximise impact. Actively involving diverse actors to generate solutions together (co-creation) enhances understanding, ownership, creativity, and problem-solving. We can build processes for ongoing learning and knowledge sharing to avoid duplication, fragmented efforts and making the same mistakes.
- Recognising bias, in ourselves or our institutions, allows us to be conscious of it and actively seek ways to counteract it, improving fairness and equity.

## Doing policy, services, investment and measurement differently

### Apply

- Develop and implement policy differently.
- Conceptualise, design and deliver services differently. This includes thinking about different ways of expanding services, where appropriate.
- Replicating successful initiatives to increase accessibility and reach more people (scaling up) can increase equity.
- Scaling out by adapting to new contexts or scaling deep by connecting existing services, using local strengths and engaging meaningfully with individuals and community, can also support equity.
- Choose where and how to invest differently.
- Measure progress and success differently.

### What this can achieve

- Ensuring that policy development is inclusive of diverse voices, adaptable, and takes account of the interplay of root causes, can create policies that span sectors, tackle systemic barriers and address inequity.
- Designing services in equal partnership with individuals and community helps ensure support can respond to social determinants and intersecting identities of individuals, while being accessible to all.
- Coordinating and integrating multiple services can offer holistic, strengths-based support for people and the conditions around them.
- Ensuring that investment targets underlying root causes, and exploring equity-oriented investment options, can support long-term change.
- Using diverse, strengths-based data and methods, as well as lived experience perspectives to guide collection and interpretation, can provide richer insights to inform systemic solutions.
- Looking for the signals of change— such as collaboration, enhanced relationships, and adaptation to meet intersecting needs—can highlight progress towards systemic change.
- Using data in a way that also serves the community, helps promote equity. This includes:
  - Open data practices that allow for access, sharing and combining data while protecting privacy.
  - Data sovereignty principles which allow communities and/or individuals to have ownership and control over their data, and that it is used in ways to benefit them.
  - Data democratisation which ensures everyone can access and use data well, regardless of their digital skills or resources.