National Collaborating Centre
for Determinants of Health

Centre de collaboration nationale
des déterminants de la santé

MOVEMENT-BUILDING FOR HEALTH EQUITY: A CURATED LIST

Movement-building for health equity involves a range of intersecting approaches[1] as well as ongoing relationships and intentional cross-sector alliances with organizations invested in social justice.[2,3] Movement-building focuses on broad-level systems change with a goal to amplify community-based efforts and change outcomes as well as contexts.[4] Different from the traditional and commonly used public health "management approach" of coordinating initiatives to improve systems already in place,[5] movement-building looks to dismantle current systems. As a result, an "inside/outside strategy" is needed, where "inside" public health works to build internal capacity for health equity action and "outside" public health strategizes with partners and communities to actively address power imbalance and structural factors at the root of health inequities.[3]

Social movements and grassroots social justice work are a part of the broader concept of movement-building for health equity. Public health can listen, learn and actively participate in social movements and work with grassroots and community organizers to influence social and structural determinants of health.[3] Public health plays an important role to augment the efforts of social movements and community action by supporting sustainable change in health equity values, policies and approaches.[6] Movement-building as equity-focused intersectoral practice necessitates that public health practitioners and decision-makers ask "how can we know whether our intersectoral processes are moving us towards a more justice-based public health?"[7(p383)] Considering communities as a "sector" and nurturing partnerships beyond formal institutions and professionally-based organizations[7] is essential.

The National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health (NCCDH) has compiled this list of resources to support public health in taking a movement-building approach to achieve health equity. The resources included in this curated list explore the intersection of social movements with movement-building, indicators for measurement and evaluation of movements, and actions for taking a movement-building approach to intersectoral work. The search for and choice of resources were guided by how they reflect specific application of a movement-building approach to public health and health equity.

This curated list describes 11 relevant resources organized into four categories: (1) Social movements, movement-building and health equity; (2) Guides to support a movement-building approach; (3) Organizational transformation for movement-building; and (4) Resource and knowledge hubs to inform movement-building. Additional resources for each category are also highlighted. This document represents a curated selection of resources including academic and grey literature, and it is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, MOVEMENT-BUILDING AND HEALTH EQUITY

How community organizing promotes health equity, and how health equity affects organizing

Pastor M, Terriquez V, Lin M. [2018].

This 2018 article[8] describes the "health equity frame" as a guide for community-organizing to address socioeconomic inequities. Health equity is framed as a basic human right not currently achieved in society, and it is explored in this article as an outcome, a connection and a healing practice. The article considers health equity as a flexible way of framing social movements to achieve universal health rights for all human beings while at the same time deconstructing social inequities. The authors draw from case studies to analyze the systemic change needed to achieve these goals as well as how to enable grassroot community organizations affected by inequities to build and promote their stories as evidence for change and ways to achieve it.


Social movements, social problems and social change

Yadav AK. [2016].

This 2016 academic paper by Yadav[9] explores the formation, logistics and emergence of social movements. The author distinguishes social movements from collective behaviour and explores the various types of social movements such as feminism, gay rights and systemic racism. The signs that social movement is needed within society and social movement theory are discussed. This well-organized paper explains the characteristics and stages of formation and success of a social movement to identify the steps needed to achieve change. In addition to analyzing key factors for success within a social movement, the paper emphasizes how to know the social movement has created impact and how to know there has been change within society.
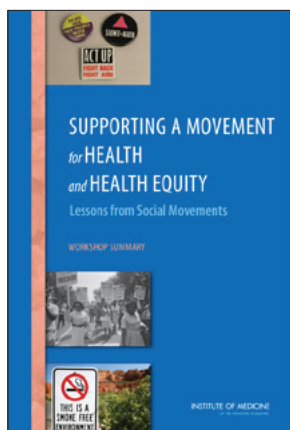
[Supporting a movement for health and health equity: Lessons from social movements: Workshop summary](#)

Mack A, Baciu A, Goel N. [2014].

This 2014 report from the Institute of Medicine[10] summarizes a workshop called Accelerating a Movement to Improve Health and Promote Health Equity. The workshop explored social movement strategies and elements of successful social movements. The report has sections for different themes that are common across multiple successful social movements, and it analyzes the way leaders mobilize action. Topics include practical lessons in movement-building, building public will for health equity, political exclusion and building democracy. Readers can use this report to learn how to support and enable productive conversations as well as build supportive relationships to further social movement action on health and health equity.
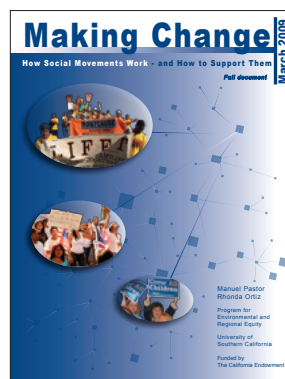
[Making change: How social movements work – and how to support them](#)

Pastor M, Ortiz R. [2009].

This 2009 document from the University of Southern California[11] presents 10 key elements of successful social movements, including vision, framework, governance and values, and it describes how these components create meaningful and effective social movements and social change. By categorizing certain aspects of a social movement, the document analyzes in depth what the motives and drivers are behind an impactful social movement. It also describes five key capacities for sustaining social movements and three key areas for investment, which include network and leadership development and metrics. The role of social movements to challenge power structures that produce inequities is a key focus of this document.

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

- *Marshall Ganz' framework: People, power and change* (date unknown)[12]
- *A multi-stage approach to social movements* (2014)[13]
- *Social movement-building for health equity* (2014)[14]

# GUIDES TO SUPPORT A MOVEMENT-BUILDING APPROACH
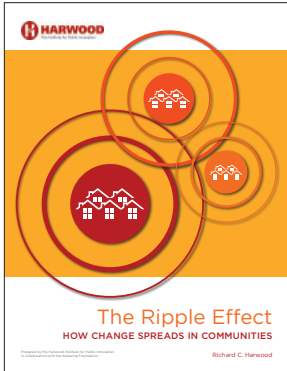
The ripple effect: How change spreads in communities

Harwood RC. [2015].

In this 2015 report, Harwood[15] describes the "ripple effect" as the way individuals and organizations create change through carefully planned events that result in a series of cumulative changes that influence social justice. He also identifies nine drivers that enable communities to create change on social justice issues, including building networks as "connective tissue," creating a new trajectory, changing the way communities work and sharing innovation. A case study of Battle Creek, Michigan demonstrates how the drivers of change and stages of community evolution worked to effect progress on issues involving child and family health inequities, as well as how communities worked together. Sustainable community change comes from shifting the narrative and belief of the community toward "change is possible" and taking time to learn from the community to avoid rushing social change.
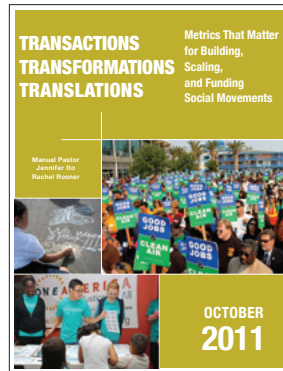
Transactions, transformations, translations: Metrics that matter for building, scaling, and funding social movements

Pastor M, Ito J, Rosner R. [2011].

This report by Pastor, Ito and Roser[16] describes a framework of metrics (indicators) to measure impact, progress and success of movement-building for social justice issues. The report describes metrics to measure progress on 10 common movement-building strategies including organizing, campaigns, communications, civic engagement, alliance-building and policy analysis. The report refers to "transactions" as quantifiable results within a movement that often don't reflect the deeper implications, and "transformations" as the results of how people, organizations and movements have evolved through the effort. It also offers eight recommendations for funders and the field to cocreate a set of metrics for measuring progress in social movement, such as development of leadership and metrics capacity, linking policy outcomes with broader social change, and documenting innovation and transformation. Organizations are encouraged to develop a common language and indicators that measure the progress and impacts of social movements to support sustainable funding as well as change.
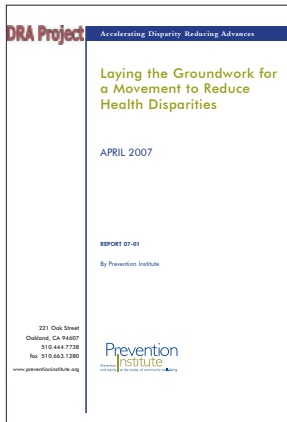
Laying the groundwork for a movement to reduce health disparities

Prevention Institute. [2007].

This report by the Prevention Institute[17] analyzes the key factors that support social movement-building within society, including attention, resource allocation and diligent strategy. To enable a diligent focus on common goals and mobilization of resources, the document presents the idea of "central intelligence." It also discusses key questions to identify next steps and serve as a starting point for movement-building, including political will, leadership and coordination. The report describes a *Trajectory of Health Disparities*, a visual representation or model of how health disparities are produced within society. This model depicts how root factors such as discrimination and oppression lead to environmental and behavioural factors that directly and indirectly influence use of medical services and result in health disparities. Using the model, the report presents a landscape of activities to reduce health disparities, including research, measurement, framing and policy. The report concludes by describing elements of successful movements such as clearly established goals, well-framed ideas to increase motivation, a loud community voice and strong leadership behind the movement.

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

- *The social change ecosystem map* (2020)[18]
- "Part 6, Building a global movement. Chapter 17, Sustaining action beyond the Commission on Social Determinants of Health" (2008)[19]
- *Movement building canvas* (2016)[20]

ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION FOR MOVEMENT-BUILDING

Building a movement, transforming institutions: A guide for public health professionals

PolicyLink. [date unknown]

This web-based guide from PolicyLink[4] offers tools and resources on movement-building frameworks, language, guiding principles and case examples. PolicyLink is a US-based research and action institute working to advance racial and economic equity. Resources in the online guide are organized into eight categories of strategies to integrate equity into movement-building: defining health equity, leadership, organizational capacity, leveraging capital, partnerships, research, framing and advocacy. Each strategy includes promising practices to embed equity in practice, tools and examples of how the strategy has been used in practice. Calling out racial inequities as a guiding principle and outcome is framed as an opportunity to address widespread health inequity at an institutional level. Tools may be downloaded and applied across a number of settings. Users can submit tools and resources to be considered for inclusion into the "living" guide for use by public health, community members and organizations, and academic partners including researchers.
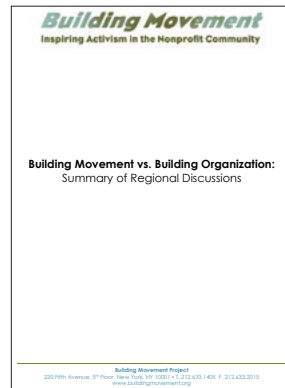
Building movement vs. building organization: Summary of regional discussions

Building Movement Project. [2001].

This summary report from the Building Movement Project[2] describes a series of regional meetings across the United States that explored how movement-building intersects with the work of social change organizations. Findings centre around challenges experienced by organizations working toward social change, the importance of vision and organizational structure, movement-building approaches to social change work, and future funding opportunities. Supports identified by social change organizationsas integral to movement building include advocacy, exploring emerging issues, research capacity, relationships with funders, and bridging across generations and levels. Internal characteristics of organizations that successfully support movement-building are described as well as challenges to sustaining momentum and vision. The document presents the process that informed the early development of the Building Movement Organization. The learnings can be used to inform other organizations that are developing strategies and structures for movement-building for social justice change.

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

- *Movements vs. organizations* (2015)[21]
- "Watershed events and changes in public order management systems: Organizational adaptation as a social movement outcome" (2016)[22]
- *Building movements, not organizations* (2015)[23]

RESOURCE AND KNOWLEDGE HUBS TO INFORM MOVEMENT-BUILDING

Tamarack Institute

The Tamarack Institute[24] is a registered charity focused on collaborative strategies for community engagement and participation to build capacity, reduce poverty and deepen community connections. As a "connected force for community change" across Canada, Tamarack focuses on **five main community change practices**: Collective Impact, Community Engagement, Collaborative Leadership, Community Innovation and Evaluating Impact. **Four formal networks** are part of the Vibrant Communities initiative: Communities Ending Poverty, Cities Deepening Community, Communities Building Youth Futures and Community Climate Transitions. **Key posts** explore how movement-building compares with collective impact, emerging change and movement-building, and how a movement-building lens can strengthen community engagement around complex problems like equity. A comprehensive tool called *Collective impact 3.0: An evolving framework for community change*[5] guides the shift towards movement-building to dismantle current systems and structures through the amplification and support of community-based efforts by formal organizations across sectors. Numerous other resources related to movement-building, community engagement and social justice are also offered in both French and English.

Human Impact Partners

Human Impact Partners (HIP)[25] is a US-based non-profit organization that works to bridge public health with community-based movements to build power and advance health equity. HIP's theory of change is based in deep engagement of public health, levelling unequal power distribution, transforming government and dismantling systems of advantage and oppression. The online *Health equity guide* offers practical guidance in four categories of strategic practices: build internal infrastructure, work across government, foster community partnerships and champion transformative change. For each strategic practice, the guide provides suggested actions to advance equity and case studies of how public health has concretely addressed health equity. Specific strategic practices include engaging directly in movements and health equity movement-building to champion transformative change. HIP also profiles activities and materials in the areas of equity-related research, capacity building and advocacy, and it provides numerous products and resources related to community safety, economic security, equitable built environment and other determinants of health. The Public Health Awakened network connects thousands of public health professionals focused on social justice and health equity, and HIP's strategic plan for 2020-2024 provides a roadmap to areas of impact and growth that can serve as a model for adaptation by other public health organizations.

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

- *Building Movement Project*[26]
- *The Social Change Agency*[27]
- *Movement building*[28]
- *The Praxis Project*[29]

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