Organizational Assessment of U.S. Marine and Global Seafood Markets Grantees

Equity Practices and Policies

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WELCOME

Dear Colleagues,

The ocean conservation field is at an inflection point. How can we authentically advance equity issues in conservation, within the context of a global pandemic and racial justice reckoning?

The coronavirus pandemic has laid bare the long-standing and deeply rooted racial inequities in America. The killing of George Floyd and others, and the Movement for Black Lives have catalyzed a national conversation on racism. Individuals and institutions are examining and better appreciating how systems of laws, policies, and practices have and continue to erode prosperity and opportunity for Black people, Indigenous people, and communities of color.

This report focuses on the critical question: How is equity currently conceptualized and practiced in the ocean conservation field among U.S.-based organizations? To do this, our Global Seafood Markets, U.S. Marine, and Organizational Effectiveness teams partnered with Chris Armijo Consulting, to understand the state of equity within strategies and operations of our U.S.-based ocean conservation grantees. This report captures the results of that process and recommendations for how non-profit organizations and philanthropy can take concrete next steps to create a more equitable future.

Our goal is to understand and share organizational strengths around equity, as well as highlight growth opportunities for leaders across the field. When we started this project in 2019, the ocean conservation field was in the early phases of embracing the need to meaningfully address equity, but within months of launching this project, the confluence of a global pandemic and nationwide uprising for racial justice elevated the relevance and urgency of this work.

Now is the time to understand and advance equitable solutions together, as we cannot have true sustainability without social justice. We are grateful to our partners who volunteered their time, information, and experiences to inform this report. We hope this assessment informs and inspires organizations and donors in their individual journeys to embed equity in their strategies and operations.

In partnership,
The Packard Foundation's Global Seafood Markets, U.S. Marine,
and Organizational Effectiveness teams

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

With tremendous support from ocean expert grantees of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation's US Marine (USM) and Global Seafood Market (GSM) programs, the following equity assessment findings serve to illustrate how equity is conceptualized and practiced in the ocean conservation field. The goals of the assessment were to understand the status of organizational equity practices and policies, assess organizational readiness and commitment to equity, and capture lessons learned.

The assessment used a mixed-methods approach consisting of structured interviews with grantee organizations and a quantitative Organizational Asset and Needs Assessment (OANA) survey. The methodology design was informed by the assessment team's experience, experts from the field, and historical and current thinking about equity in field.

The "Key Findings" below summarizes findings derived from both methods, examining both internal and external practices of ocean organizations. The report also documents capacity building recommendations for the field, and elicit ideas for supporting further equity work in the sector.

Key Insights from Interviews

- There is no uniform conceptualization of equity - why equity is important, what equity entails, and how to address equity.
- While internal capacity is an important factor in addressing equity, intentionality is equally as important.
- Moving beyond conceptual and philosophical discussions of equity requires identifying a tangible (internal or external) practice to address.
- Community inclusion cannot be transactional or episodic. At its core, authentically involving under-resourced communities is an ongoing enterprise that requires sharing power.
  Equity is not a discrete project, but rather an ongoing journey that will raise hidden issues and require organizations to adapt to new processes, structures, and culture.

Grantee Capacity Needs

- Organizational leaders would benefit from training on issues of equity and learning cultures.
- Organizations new to equity need "starter kits," while more experienced organizations prefer support to develop and pursue equity plans/road maps.
- More resources should be allocated to recruit and retain diverse staff.
- Additional training is needed on key topics (e.g. race, implicit bias training, cultural competency) and on the "how's" (e.g. equity in orientation, caucusing across identity groups, etc.)
- Community coalitions and collaborations need dedicated efforts to create equity.
- Grantees expressed interest in cohort learning and one-on-one learning with organizations working on similar issues.

Leadership and Equity

- Leaders largely do not formally share their vision for equity internally or externally, nor communicate how equity can advance organizational missions and goals.
- Few leaders are evaluated on their progress on equity within the organization.
- Nearly three-quarters of leaders are dedicating resources and promoting cultures of learning.
- Both leaders and staff recognized the importance of leadership engagement for equity to be successful within the organization.

Board of Directors and Equity

- Boards generally lack diversity, and fewer than 33% of boards do not formally review the organization's progress on equity, conduct annual diversity assessment of the board, or evaluate the CEO/ED's progress in their annual performance evaluation.
- Forty-five percent of the organizations reported that their board of directors has not received equity training.
- Organizations noted that equity-focused governance practices (e.g., equity statements, board charters that include equity, etc.) are in their developmental stages.

Human Resources Policies and Practices

- Regarding annual evaluation of staff's progress on the organization's equity goals, 64% of organizations did not have a practice in place.
- A majority of organizations do not have formal plans or processes to recruit under-represented candidates, review staff diversity at all levels, orient new

staff to equity, or include equity in individual annual evaluations.
- Some grantees shared that diversity has not traditionally been at the forefront of their efforts, and lacked awareness of how to incorporate equity into their recruitment practices (e.g. avoiding hiring from insular and existing networks).
- Some organizations have or are in the process of instituting innovative approaches, such as applicant tracking systems, discovery questions to reduce implicit bias in the hiring process, and ensuring that executive search firms align with equity priorities. As applicant tracking systems, discovery questions to reduce implicit bias in the hiring process, and ensuring that executive search firms align with equity priorities.

Organizational Infrastructure and Equity

- Almost two-thirds of grantees had a staff committee focused on equity work, with 18% of the organizations having a formal equity plan.
- The majority of organizations have formal definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusion; few had definitions of community engagement, indigenous rights, environmental justice, human rights, and race/ racism.
- A majority of organizations reported "always" including equity in materials and resources such as job announcements and the mission; fewer "always" include equity in marketing materials and research briefs/white papers.
- Per the interviews, organizations most commonly incorporate equity into their infrastructure through equity committees and engaging with external consultants.

Staff Professional Development

- Less than 50% of the organizations reported having a formal professional development plan that incorporates equity.
- Most organizations have received training on diversity, equity, gender, implicit bias, inclusion, environmental justice, and race/racism; few had training on human and indigenous rights.
- While many grantees reported using a mix of learning methods/modalities including staff-wide trainings, workshops, conferences, and guest speakers, fewer shared how trainings fit within a comprehensive organizational equity plan.

Organizational Culture and Learning

- Organizations largely communicated having formal norms regarding team work and collaboration; many also have norms about openness to receiving and incorporating new information into organizational activities.
- Few organizations had formal norms that support a tolerance for risk, incentives for staff to try new approaches, and psychological safety on difficult topics (e.g. race, gender, human rights, etc.).
- Grantees recognized the importance of internal climate, behaviors, and norms; few had focused on or struggled with how to operationalize these practices.

Additional Findings and Takeaways from Internal Practices

- Interviewees found it difficult to point to specific outcomes of their organizations' internal equity efforts.
- Implementing internal equity practices raised a host of challenges.
- Contributing factors to successful operation of internal equity practices include: active leadership, empowered and decompartmentalized structures, intentionality to address organizational culture, development and implementation of an equity-focused data monitoring system, and collaborating with thought-partners or external consultants.

Policy, Advocacy, and Equity

- Integrating equity into external policy remains a work in progress; approximately 67% do not have formal equity-related outcomes in their policy strategies, processes to analyze the impact of policy on under-resourced communities, or strategic communication plans to raise the awareness of equity among key decision-makers and stakeholders.

Community Engagement and Equity

- Most organizations reported having established formal relationships with community leaders and/or organizers within under-resourced communities.
- Less than half reported any formality in plans to engage under-resourced communities and ensure under-resourced communities have decision-making authority in their strategies.
- Fewer than 25% have a formal process to include under-resourced communities in NGO coalitions or involve under-resourced communities in the design, implementation, or evaluation of their strategies.
- Operationalizing external equity practices largely

meant providing a seat at the table for under-resourced groups; organizations acknowledged while this practice is integral, it is insufficient for authentic engagement.

Strategy and Equity

- Over half of the grantees had formal equity-related goals in their strategies.
- Less than half of the grantees had a formal process to measure how to mitigate impacts on under-resourced communities, or for dispute resolution process and procedures.
- Less than 25% had a formal process to conduct social assessments, to understand the equitable sharing of benefits with under-resourced communities, or how to integrate customary, human, and indigenous rights in their strategies.

Evaluation and Equity

- Most organizations did not indicate the presence of formal evaluation plans, a formal team dedicated to evaluating progress on equity, or a formal process to integrate equity data into its strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from the assessment and best practices in equity informed five recommendations for funders, scientists, advocates, and equity practitioners as they continue to build an equitable ocean field and movement.

1. Invest in cultivating, providing continual support to, and elevating the voices of Chief Executive Officers/Executive Directors (CEO/ED) and emerging leaders to be the next generation of equity champions.

2. Invest in strategies that integrate cohort learning, peer-to-peer learning, and individualized coaching and training for equity.

3. Create flexible, core support grants in multi-year funding cycles, and include a cohort model with other GSM and USM grantees.

4. Establish an innovation fund that brings new learning and ideas in merging social and human dimensions with ocean conservation.

5. Establish a set of frameworks, beliefs, and practices that grounds and guides the field on the importance and urgency of connecting social and human dimensions with ocean conservation.

INTRODUCTION

In Fall 2019, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation funded an assessment to examine how grantees within its US Marine and Global Seafood Market were engaging in equity. The assessment sought to understand the status of equity practices and policies, assess organizational readiness and commitment, capture lessons learned, document capacity building recommendations, and elicit recommendations for how the Foundation can be responsive to the sector's interest in equity capacity building equity in achieving their missions.

The assessment sought to capture the breadth of equity practices, rather than deeply understand the role of equity on one particular issue or topic. While there is great value in deeper examination of issues related to organizational diversity, culture, and strategy, the goal of the assessment was to examine how the Foundation's grantees addressed equity across numerous domains of organizational practice and policy. The intent of this generalist approach was to provide a holistic understanding of the potential to create equity and clarify how staff and organizations can promote equity in achieving their missions.

DEFINING THE KEY TERMS
DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, JUSTICE, AND EQUITY

Diversity
is the collective mixture of differences and similarities that includes, for example, individual and organizational characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, preferences, and behaviors. (Society for Human Resource Management[1])

Inclusion
means welcoming and including a diverse range of people, and having their input and perspectives valued and considered within the context of a collective endeavor. (National Audubon Society)

Justice
is predicated on (1) equal right to most basic liberty compatible with that of others, (2) equalizing opportunity, and (3) aimed at benefiting least advantaged (Narloch et al 2013[2], Wilson and Howarth 2002[3])

Equity
is a multi-dimensional concept of ethical concerns and social justice based on the distribution of costs and benefits, process and participation, and recognition, underpinned by the context under consideration. Sometimes used synonymously with fairness or justice. (McDermott et al 2013[4], Sikor et al 2014[5])

Under-Resourced
means a community that has traditionally been excluded from conservation efforts; under-resourced backgrounds/ communities can include race, ethnicity, indigenous groups, gender, et al.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) have deep roots in the environmental and conservation movements – albeit on the margins of the traditional/mainstream movement through the environmental justice movement. Environmental justice has its foundation in the civil rights movement, grassroots activism to address the disproportionate placement of environmental hazards in under-resourced communities, Native American and Indigenous rights focused on land rights and exploitation, and labor rights advocacy to improve health and safety conditions in the workplace.[6] In October 1991, delegates at the National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit[7] and Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice drafted and adopted a set of environmental justice[8] principles focused on a respect for the Earth, self-determination, mutual benefit to resources, mitigating harm, equal access to resources, and the commitment to inclusive and collaborative solutions.

As in other fields and movements, EDI emerged due to a lack of attention to justice, as noted by Sanders and Pezzullo.[9] In part, these tensions existed based on philosophical points of view arguing that "nature should be protected for its own sake (intrinsic value)[10] and those who argue that we must also save nature to help ourselves (instrumental value)". Views on the environment are disproportionately shaped by "whiteness," where the predominant framework for environmental protection and conservation focuses on preserving "pristine wilderness, while blinding [environmental groups] to issues in environments where people live. This perspective hinders the ability of environmental groups to forge coalitions across race and class lines, [which] are necessary to challenge the practices of industrialism."[11]

By the 2000s, new voices and perspectives began changing the conversation. Critics of intrinsic approaches deemed intrinsic values as both untenable and impractical since environmental work "depend[s] upon competing socio political, cultural, and economic instrumental values that must be reconciled with conservation goals via value trade offs,"[12] Others recognized that "environmental quality is inextricably linked to that of human equality at all scales,"[13] and argued for a shift towards 'just sustainability' – "an equal concern with equity, justice and, ultimately, governance on the one hand, and environment on the other."[14]
Over the last decade, important progress toward creating equity in the conservation movement has continued to build on this work, with a key focus on diversifying the movement.[15] Advocates and activists described diversity as "one of the greatest challenges [the environmental movement] will face this century. In order to become an influential and sustainable movement for generations to come, [the environmental movement] it needs to successfully address its diversity crisis."[16] The trailblazing work of Dorceta Taylor, Maya Beasley, and Green 2.0 serve to both define the challenges and offer solutions; the work has included documenting the diversity of NGO organizations[17] and environmental funders,[18] understanding the diversity of environmental career pipelines,[19] creating diversity and retention road maps,[20] detailing challenges with executive search firms in hiring senior leaders,[21]and documenting issues of retention and promotion at environmental organizations.[22]

While considerable attention focuses on diversifying the field, new equity frameworks are emerging. Friedman et al.[23] have worked to synthesize years of definitional scholarship on equity, yielding a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between social equity and conservation through outlining 'equitable solutions', including more nuanced concepts:

- Distributional equity: understanding the cost, benefits, rights, etc. to communities,
- Procedural equity: involvement and inclusion of stakeholders in conservation approaches
- Recognitional equity: acknowledgment and respect for values, systems, etc. while in partnership with communities, and
- Contextual equity: consideration of cultural, economic, social contexts, etc. while engaging in conservation work

Researchers are developing evidence-based models to demonstrate the synergies and trade offs between equity and conservation outcomes, and how addressing both can yield successful environmental and social outcomes. [24,25]

Within ocean conservation, momentum is growing to embrace much of what has been happening in the larger environmental and conservation fields: "Across the ocean governance, management, science and

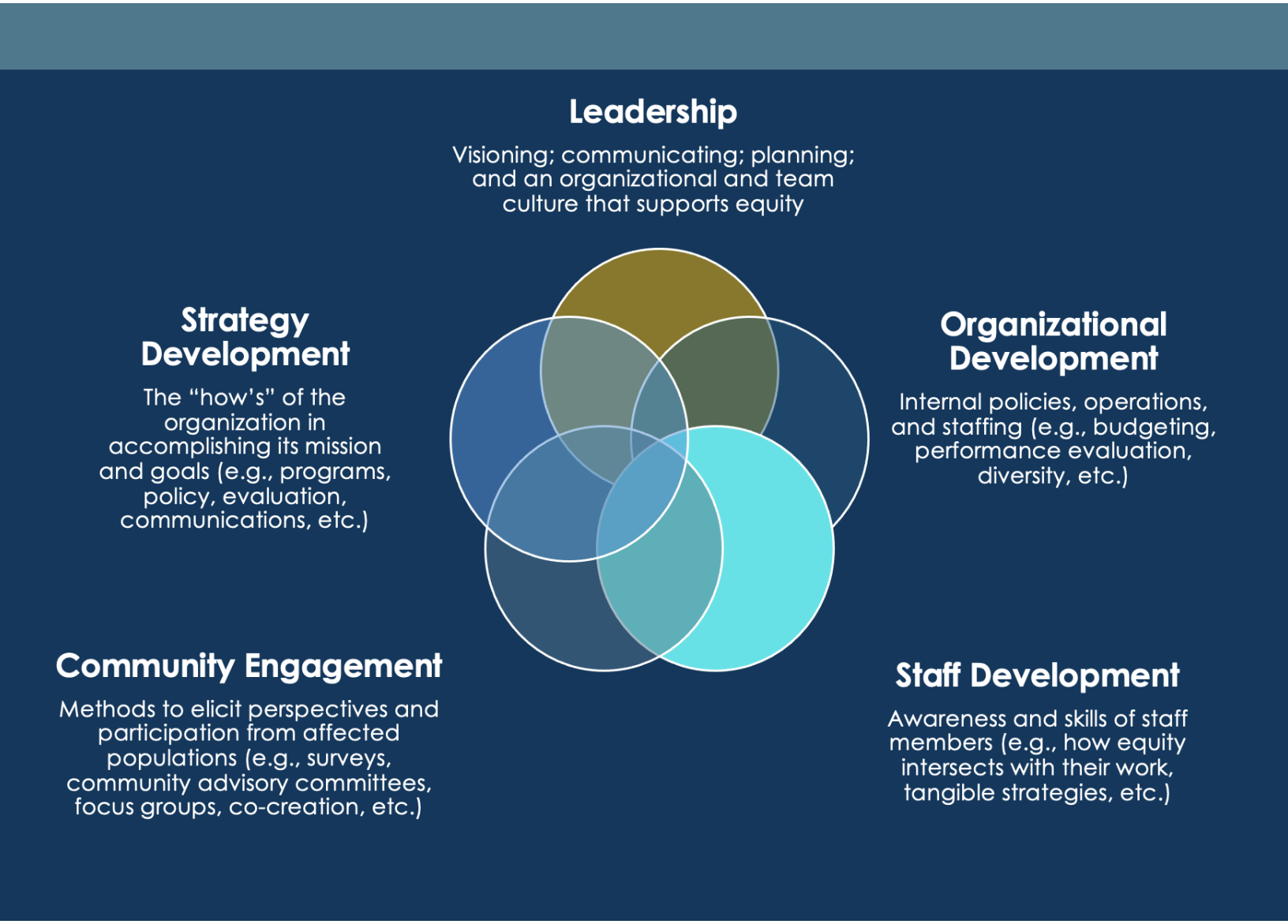
funding community, greater attention must be paid to issues related to social justice and inclusion in the pursuit of sustainable oceans."[26] Progress includes creating and using innovative frameworks that combine equity concepts and practices in Protected Areas,[27] addressing diversity,[28] growing the 'pipeline' of young ocean scientists and advocates,[29] engaging diverse audiences in the ocean conservation movement,[30] ocean and marine conservation NGO equity statements and values, and focusing on human rights in global seafood industries.[31]

The environmental and conservation fields have made progress in conceptualizing and operationalizing equity, which must be recognized and celebrated. To continue the field's evolution, it is necessary to understand the extent to which ocean conservation NGOs formally and systematically implement equity within their organizations, and with their external partnerships and stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

The assessment team used a theoretical framework consisting of five domains of equity, illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Domains of Equity within Assessment Framework



Terminology such as diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) or justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) are commonly used. For the purpose of this assessment, the team intentionally used equity as an umbrella term, with the understanding that diversity, inclusion, and other terms are strategies to create and inform equity. We defined equity as "a multi-dimensional concept of ethical concerns and social justice based on the distribution of costs and benefits, process and participation, and recognition, underpinned by the context under consideration."[32]

The assessment used a mixed-methods approach to obtain quantitative and qualitative data through an Organizational Asset and Needs Assessment (OANA) and grantee interviews. Both methods sought to assess a range of topics, including organizational leadership, human resources, organizational infrastructure, staff professional development, organizational culture and learning, policy and advocacy, community engagement, strategy, and evaluation. Additionally, the OANA and interviews teased out key lessons, capacity building needs, and recommendations to inform the Foundation's equity capacity building approach (additional information regarding the methodology used for the assessment is available in Appendix I).

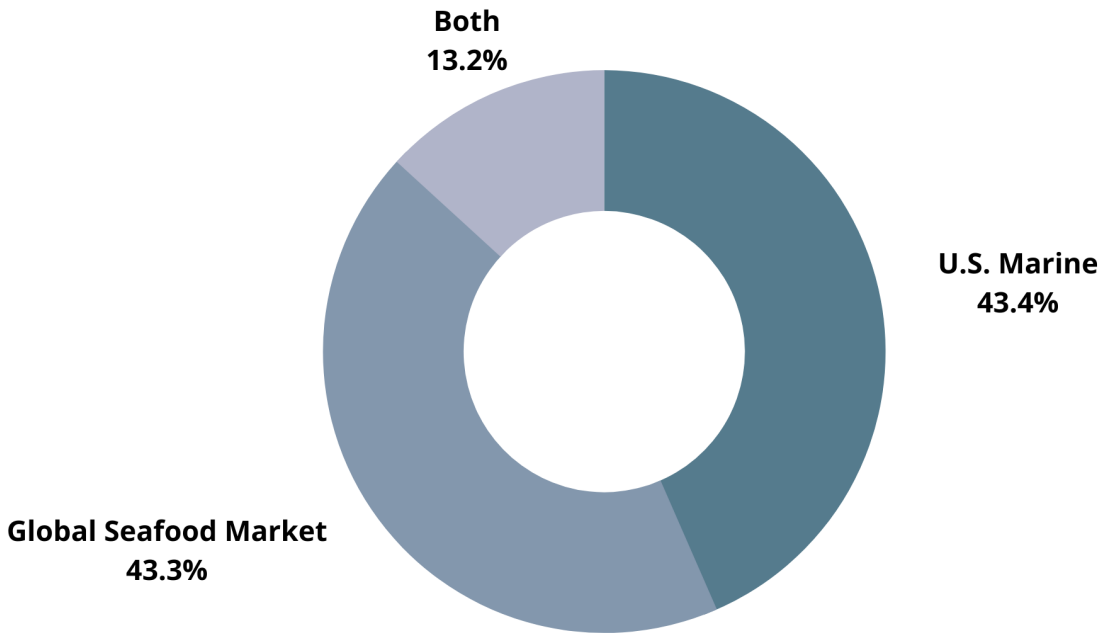
FINDINGS

Description of Grantees and Participation

Twenty-two (n=22) grantees completed the OANA, equating to a 56% total response rate. Of the 22 respondents, 59% (n=13) identified themselves as USM grantees, 23% (n=5) as GSM grantees, and 18% (n=4) as grantees of both programs (Table 1). On average, organizations have been in existence for 27 years, with an average of 154 staff per organization.[1] The vast majority of organizations (73%) had been engaging in or conducting equity work for over four years, with14% reporting three-to-four years of equity work, and 9% responding one-to-two years of equity work (Table 2, Appendix).

Table 1. Organizational Demographics

For which David and Lucile Packard Foundation strategy do you currently recieve funding?



Organization of Findings

Findings from the OANA and interviews are synthesized in four (4) sections:

1. Equity as an internal practice – Leadership, board of directors, human resources policies and practices, organizational infrastructure, staff professional development, organizational culture and learning
2. Equity as an external practice – policy and advocacy, community engagement, strategy
3. Key lessons from interviews
4. Grantee Perspectives on Capacity Building Needs (from interviews and open-ended OANA questions)

[1] Mean derived from 21organizations, excluding one outlier organization with over 4,000 staff; including this organization changes the mean to 334 staff.

Equity as an Internal Practice

This section highlights the ways in which equity manifested in grantees' internal policies and practices. These findings illustrate where and how grantees centered their efforts, as well as the gaps and challenges in internally operationalizing equity. Through the OANA, the assessment focused on leadership, board of directors, human resources policies and practices, organizational infrastructure, staff professional development, and organizational culture and learning.

In interviews, grantees focused on three primary areas of instituting internal equity practices: 1) human resources, specifically the recruitment and hiring of diverse staff, 2) integrating equity into board of director recruitment and governance practices, and 3) providing equity-focused training for staff and board.

LEADERSHIP AND EQUITY

Key Findings

- Leaders largely do not formally share their vision for equity, nor communicate how equity can advance organizational missions and goals.
- Few leaders are evaluated on their progress on equity within the organization.
- Nearly three-quarters of leaders are dedicating resources and promoting cultures of learning.
- Both leaders and staff recognized the importance of leadership engagement for equity to be successful within the organization.

The OANA and interviews revealed several equity strengths from the field, as well as opportunities for leaders of USM and GSM grantees (Table 3, Appendix). These data highlight common challenges for organizations, equity, and leadership. While leaders are often big picture thinkers and visionaries, equity still necessitates involvement of leaders and these were highlighted throughout the assessment process.

Table 3. Leadership and Equity

The Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director (CEO/ED):						
	Formal	**Informal**	**Has Not Shared**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Has dedicated resources (e.g., time, budget, etc.) for professional development opportunities for staff to build their knowledge and skills for equity.	70%	17%	4%	0%	0%	9%
Has communicated the importance of learning and continuous learning in our work.	70%	17%	0%	0%	4%	9%

OANA data indicated that leaders are not formally communicating to their organizations about the importance of equity to their organizations. Only 39% of Chief Executive Officers/ Executive Directors (CEO/ED) were formally communicating their visions for equity, while 48% are informally sharing their equity vision. In examining data on how focusing on equity supports their organizations in achieving its mission and goals, just over one-third of CEO/EDs (39%) were formally communicating on this, while 48% had informal approaches.

Using data to communicate progress on equity and including equity on CEOs/EDs' annual performance evaluations provide ample opportunities for growth for executive leaders. Slightly over half (52%) of the responding organizations indicated that their executive leadership have formally (26%) or informally (26%) communicated how the organization is progressing on achieving its equity goals, while 30% responded that their CEOs/EDs do not communicate the progress on equity goals. Across the responding organizations, the majority do not formally evaluate their CEOs/EDs (30% not at all, 26% informal evaluation) on the organization's progress on equity, but 17% of respondents did indicate formally evaluating their leadership.

Encouragingly, the OANA analysis indicated many important leadership practices, including that 70% of CEO/EDs have formally dedicated resources for professional development, and 70% of leaders have formally communicated the importance of building a culture of learning and continuous learning. These elements are important when considering an organization's readiness to incorporate equity and associated practices into its culture and programs. Organizations attempting to do so without strong encouragement or support from its executive leaders face even more challenges in this work.
In interviews, grantees uniformly discussed the importance of leadership in integrating and advancing equity within the organization, particularly the CEO/ED. Leaders were instrumental in not simply sponsoring or supporting equity-related activities, but also spearheading those efforts. Active leadership helped move equity from being an abstract concept to a tangible practice. Absent this leadership role, equity runs the risk of becoming a "check the box" exercise with no meaningful organizational impact.

Organizational leaders recounted how important it was for them to model the values of equity in their own work and actions. They consistently noted that a true organizational commitment to equity required constant attention and growth. One CEO stated, "*We've been at [equity] for a long time and to the point of honest assessment in progress, some parts we feel good about. That being said, we're not satisfied with our progress. There are parts that have gone more slowly and this year we've doubled down and made a bigger commitment to equity.*"

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EQUITY

Key Findings

- Boards generally lack diversity, and fewer than 33% of boards do not review the organization's progress on equity, conduct annual diversity assessment of the board, or evaluate the CEO/ED's progress in their annual performance evaluation.
- Forty-five percent of the organizations reported that their board of directors has not received equity training.
- Organizations noted that equity-focused governance (e.g., equity statements,mboard charters that include equity, etc.) practices are in the developmental stages.

It is not uncommon for Boards to have fewer equity practices in place as compared to staff and the operations of the organization. The assessment findings are emblematic of trends across NGOs. Boards play an important role with respect to an organization's governance and accountability; it is crucial to continue to build their capacity and engagement in equity.

The majority of organizations (n=20, 91%) were able to offer insight on the equity practices regarding the organization's Board of Directors (Table 4).

Table 4. The Board of Directors and Equity

The Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director (CEO/ED):	Formal	Informal	Has Not Shared	Not Sure	Cannot Agree	N/A
Reviews/evaluates how the organization is progressing on achieving its equity goals.	20%	40%	30%	0%	0%	10%
Conducts an annual diversity assessment of the board's composition.	30%	35%	35%	0%	0%	0%
Has a plan to recruit diverse candidates for open board positions.	55%	30%	10%	0%	0%	5%
Evaluates the CEO/ED's progress on equity in their annual performance evaluation.	15%	25%	50%	5%	0%	5%

Slightly over half (55%) of the respondents included formal mechanisms to recruit diverse candidates for open board positions. However, only 30% of Boards formally assess their diversity, with 20% formally reviewing how the organization was progressing on their equity goals. Half (50%) of the organization's Boards do not assess the CEO/ED's progress on equity in their annual performance evaluation. Nearly half of the organizations' (45%) boards had not engaged in professional development related to equity (Table 5, Appendix), with 30% of Boards having received training in diversity, and 25% in both equity and inclusion.

In interviews, several grantees prioritized equity in board recruitment and governance. Specifically, grantees sought to increase board diversity by recruiting more women and people of color. One interviewee noted, "As we are growing our board, we looked around the room and recognized the lack of diversity. If we want to reflect the change we want to see in the world, we need to be doing it inside the organization too." The absence of gender and racial and ethnic diversity on boards has been a common challenge among U.S. environmental organizations.[33] Though there has been progress in shrinking the disparity between men (62%) and women (38%), there still remain significant racial and ethnic disparities with Whites holding anywhere from 80%-95% of board positions.[34]

"[Having a diverse board] is living your values. It's showing your actual values at work every day. For the most part, it helps when talking to other organizations that I'm trying to partner with, because I can point to my board and say, 'We are serious about this, It's baked into our work and into our day-to-day."

In concert with increasing board diversity, some grantees also discussed how they sought to make equity a more central tenet in board governance. Though frequently characterized as a work-in-progress, interviewees described varying efforts to implement equity-focused governance practices, such as updating the board charter to include equity, creating a board-level equity statement, and working with an external consultant to identify how to integrate equity into board governance.

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Key Findings

- Regarding annual evaluation of staff's progress on the organization's equity goals, 64% of organizations did not have a practice in place.
- A majority of organizations do not have formal plans or processes to recruit under-represented candidates, review staff diversity at all levels, orient new staff to equity, or include equity in individual annual evaluations.
- Some grantees shared that diversity has not traditionally been at the forefront of their efforts, and lacked awareness of how to incorporate equity into their recruitment practices (e.g., avoiding hiring from insular and existing networks).
- Some organizations have or are in the process of instituting innovative approaches, such as an applicant tracking system, discovery questions to reduce implicit bias in the hiring process, and ensuring that executive search firms align with equity priorities.

Both interview and OANA data indicate a need for additional focus and prioritization on human resource policies and practices among grantee organizations – particularly those that seek to change the composition of the field. Over the last decade, calls for diversifying the field have intensified and with mixed results on whom and how organizations are heeding that call. Formal strategies that incorporate equity practices into human resources policies and strategies serve to both bring attention to the composition of staff and the strategies to diversify the staff.

Less than half of OANA respondents indicated that they were formally implementing human resource policies as defined by the assessment (Table 6). Forty-five percent of respondents formally address equity and its relationship to organization's mission and goals within the new staff orientation, with 14% informally addressing it, and 27% not addressing it at all. With respect to formal plans to recruit under-represented candidates, 41% had formal plan, 32% had informal plans, and 18% had no such recruitment plan. About one-third of respondents formally (36%) and another 33% informally had a process to review staff diversity at different levels of the hierarchy within the organization. Regarding annual evaluation of staff's progress on the organization's equity goals, 64% of organizations did not have a practice in place.

Table 6. Human Resources Policies and Practices

The Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director (CEO/ED):						
The organization:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Does Not Have**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Has a plan to recruit candidates from under-represented backgrounds.	41%	32%	18%	0%	0%	9%
Has a process to review staff diversity at different levels of the hierarchy within the organization.	36%	32%	23%	0%	0%	9%
New staff orientation addresses equity and its relationship to organization's mission and goals.	45%	14%	27%	5%	0%	9%
Staff are evaluated annually on their progress on the organization's equity goals.	14%	9%	64%	0%	5%	9%

Diversifying staff also emerged as a theme in interviews. The majority of interviewees highlighted the recruitment and hiring of diverse staff – specifically people of color – as a recurrent challenge in addressing equity within the organization. In the past, diversity was not at the forefront of hiring practices; grantees cited a range of reasons including the absence of attention to diversity, a lack of awareness in where to find diverse candidates, or adhering to the common practice of recruiting within their own social networks. These rationale reflect common institutional practices, such as homophily preference (the conscious or unconscious tendency to primarily interact with others who are similar to themselves), insular job networks, and relationship-based recruitment, which tend to prioritize expediency but can close off people of color from accessing employment opportunities.[35] In response, many interviewees reported that it was necessary to shift from a passive recruitment and hiring approach to a proactive practice that actively sought out diverse candidates.

"Proactive versus reactive is a good framing. Our applicant pool is not all that diverse. We realized that we need to reach out to some other channels, and reach out to be more proactive, and not just wait to see what comes to our inbox."

At the same time, attending to staff diversity operated across a spectrum, which in many respects mirrored where grantees were in their internal equity journey. For grantees at the beginning of their journey, integrating diversity in hiring practices focused on updating job descriptions to include a DEI statement or expressing a commitment to "cast the net broadly." Others applied a more active approach, such as instituting an applicant tracking system to monitor the diversity of candidates. A smaller subset of grantees adopted a more complex set of practices, e.g., one grantee integrated implicit bias practices into the hiring process:

"When there's an opening and we're getting ready to recruit, managers go through a set of discovery questions that helps them look at specific requirements, so we don't inadvertently screen out candidates that could be great additions to our team. We ask who's missing here? Who do we not have on our team that could help broaden our perspective? It's been a great way for managers to think through things that they may not be doing consciously but that can happen inadvertently."

Another grantee in the midst of an executive leadership search described how equity was intentionally baked into the recruitment and hiring process: "In our search, we want to bring together a pool of finalists that reflect diversity in every form and fashion. This intent was developed with the board and staff. [In selecting an executive search firm], we challenged each of the firms to explain their equity focus. Any search firm who was going to work with us had to share a common commitment to equity."

Beyond hiring and recruitment for diversity, a secondary issue grantees addressed was pay equity. A subset of grantees noted that they conducted a pay equity analysis within their organization in order to address disparities in compensation.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUITY

Key Findings

- Almost two-thirds of grantees had a staff committee focused on equity work, with 18% of the organizations having a formal equity plan.
- The majority of organizations have formal definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusion; few had definitions of community engagement, indigenous rights, environmental justice, human rights, and race/racism.
- A majority of organizations reported "always" including equity in materials and resources such as job announcements and the mission, but less so in marketing materials and research briefs/white papers.
- Per the interviews, organizations most commonly incorporated equity into their infrastructure through equity committees and engaging with external consultants.

Through interviews, it was clear that there was no single mechanism to implement internal equity, however grantees reported two common approaches. First, several grantees developed internal equity or DEI committees. Internal committees are a common approach to addressing organizational diversity and equity issues (Beasley, 2016). Committees were generally responsible for issues such as developing DEI statements, developing and overseeing the organization's equity goals and plans, and serving as a forum to raise equity-related challenges. In general, committees also sought representation from across the organization in order to attain an array of perspectives and experiences, and for committee members to feel as if they "owned" the effort.

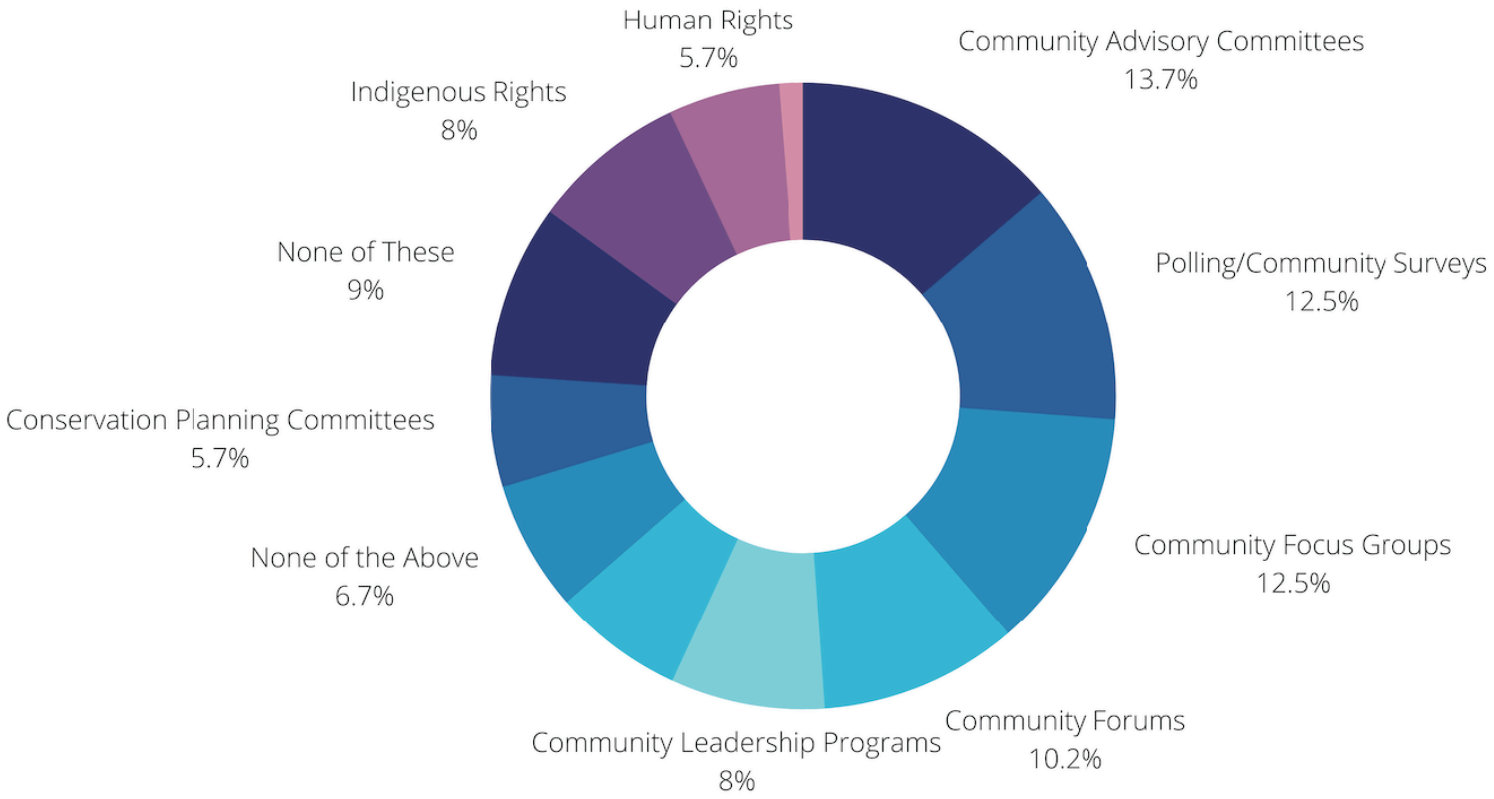
"It was important to have the equity committee owned by people at different levels in their careers and by different levels of the organization – management and non-management. [The committee] was really coming from the staff and being handed to the staff."

Second, some grantees hired an external consultant to lead and/or guide the organization through its equity efforts. Though resources to hire a consultant were described as "scarce" or "hard to come by," those that did noted the immense value a consultant brought in advancing internal equity practices. Consultants conducted organizational equity assessments, delivered trainings, and helped develop an organizational equity plan.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of OANA participants reported having a formal staff committee focused on equity work, with 23% reporting they did not have this type of committee (Table 7, Appendix). Most organizations (63%, n=14) noted having some form – whether formal or informal – of equity plan in place, with 45% of organizations having an informal plan (45%), and 18% a formal one; 36% of organizations reported having no equity plan. A number of organizations had organizational definitions (Table 8) of equity (59%), diversity (68%), and inclusion (59%). Fewer organizations had organizational definitions of other key terms including gender (41%), community engagement (36%), environmental justice (36%), human rights (27%), race/racism (27%), and indigenous rights (18%). Table 9 (Appendix) provides insight into how organizations are publicly including equity in resources and publications. Half or more of the organization indicated equity is "always" in job announcements (77%), the mission (55%), and the vision (50%). On the other end of the spectrum, only 14% of organizations indicated that equity was "always" reflected in their organizational marketing materials and research briefs/white papers.

Table 8. Organizational Infrastructure and Equality

The organization has formal operation definitions of the following:



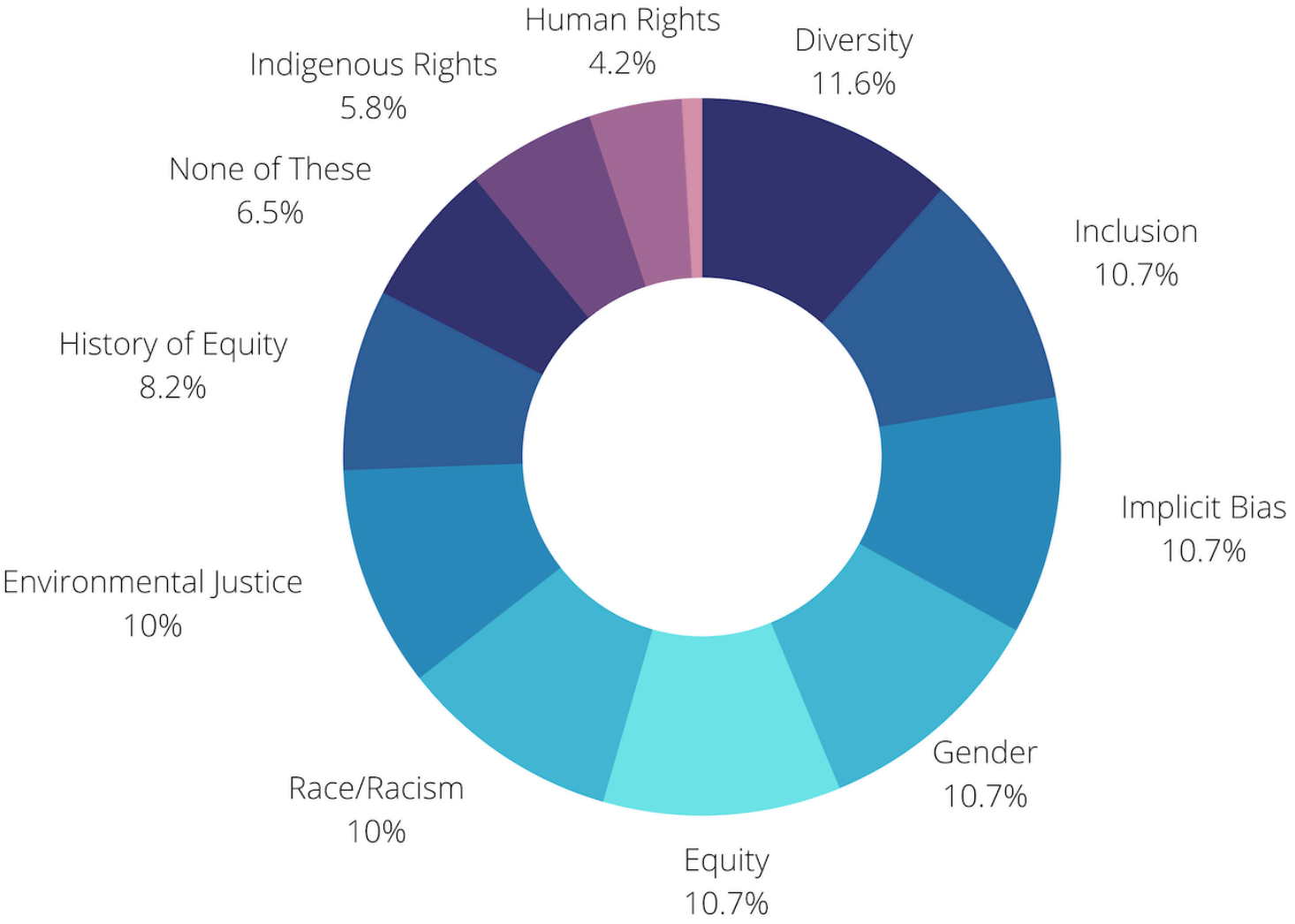
STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Key Findings

- Less than 50% of the organizations reported having a formal professional development plan that incorporates equity.
- Most organizations have received training on diversity, equity, gender, implicit bias, inclusion, environmental justice, and race/racism; few had training on human and indigenous rights.
- While many grantees reported using a mix of learning methods/modalities including staff-wide trainings, workshops, conferences, and guest speakers, fewer shared how trainings fit within a comprehensive organizational equity plan.

Table 11. Staff Professional Develpment

The organization has offered staff professional develpment learning opportunities on the following equity topics:



There was a plurality of grantees engaging in equity learning and development activities. However, it is important to note that organizations have largely not instituted formal equity plans for staff professional development. Staff professional development plans have important value to communicate the importance and intentionality of, and the link to the organization's internal and external equity goals. While two-thirds of organizations offered training on diversity, there is still opportunity to increase the number of organizations receiving training and the variety of trainings. Furthermore, while professional development (e.g., trainings, guest speakers, etc.) is a typical entry point to begin incorporating equity into an organization's work, more organizational training on equity-related topics is needed across USM and GSM grantees.

Fewer than half (45%) of OANA respondents reported having a formal staff professional development plan, 18% reported they had an informal plan, and 36% saying they didn't have a plan (Table 10, Appendix). The majority of grantee organizations offered staff professional development learning opportunities with regards to equity, including diversity (64%), equity (59%), gender (59%), implicit bias (59%), inclusion (59%), environmental justice (55%), and race/racism (55%). Topics less frequently addressed included human rights (23%) and indigenous rights (32%); 36% percent of respondents reported having received no training on either topic. Fifty percent or more of grantees reported training methods/ modalities in which organizations have offered equity training (Table 11) are staff-wide trainings (68%), workshops (68%), conferences (59%) and guest speakers (50%).

Interviews with grantees were consistent with findings from the OANA. Grantees implemented equity-focused trainings and workshops for staff including an array of topics, such as "Equity 101," cultural competency, implicit bias, undoing racism, and the history of equity in the environmental or conservation movement. In a few instances, trainings were part of a grantee's long-term formal equity curriculum, though in most cases, it tended to be episodic and less organized around an organization-wide equity plan. While instituting formal learning opportunities was viewed as useful for building awareness and knowledge, only a few grantees discussed how trainings were embedded within a comprehensive organizational equity plan.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND LEARNING

Key Findings

- Organizations largely communicated having formal norms regarding teamwork and collaboration; many also have norms about openness to receiving and incorporating new information into organizational activities.
- Few organizations had formal norms that support a tolerance for risk, incentives for staff to try new approaches, and psychological safety on difficult topics (e.g. race, gender, human rights, etc.)
- Grantees recognized the importance of internal climate, behaviors, and norms; few had focused on or struggled with how to operationalize these practices.

While diversifying staff and the board is critical to advance equity within an organization, it is only one facet of the larger patchwork of efforts needed to embed equity as a meaningful and sustainable internal practice. Focusing exclusively on diversity recruitment cannot come at the expense of concurrent efforts, especially organizational culture.[36] This is especially important for retaining people of color who may be discouraged or alienated from working in environmental organizations.[37]

The assessment data demonstrate a strong foundation of teamwork and collaboration across GSM and USM grantees (82%), including norms about being open to new information (59%) and valuing inclusivity (59%). However, fewer grantees noted having key norms essential to equity-oriented learning cultures, including a culture of risk tolerance (36%), innovation (36%), and the need to be free from retribution in raising or advocating for equity among colleagues (27%). These norms are crucial for allowing staff from marginalized groups to bring forth their lived experiences or innovative approaches to the organization's work.

DEFINING THE KEY TERMS
NORM

Norm

A norm is a set of rules for how staff are expected to behave in the organization

Table 13. Organizational Culture and Learning						
The organization has a norm:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Does Not Have**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
For fostering a culture of teamwork and collaboration.	82%	9%	0%	9%	0%	0%
Around tolerance for risk in trying new approaches.	36%	45%	14%	5%	0%	0%
That provides incentives to staff to encourage new approaches to its work.	36%	18%	41%	5%	0%	0%
Related to interest in, or openness to new information for how it conducts its work.	59%	23%	5%	9%	5%	0%
For inclusivity in its work.	59%	23%	18%	0%	0%	0%
To foster psychological safety around topics that can feel difficult to discuss, such as race, gender, human rights, etc.	27%	59%	5%	9%	0%	0%
To discuss difficult topics and their impact on our mission and goals.	45%	27%	27%	0%	0%	0%

Though many interviewees noted that organizational culture was integral to operationalizing the principles and practices of equity, few had directly attended to this need. An equity-focused organizational culture demands that norms and behaviors change, and that staff not simply assimilate to the prevailing culture.[38] While interviewees agreed with and consistently noted the importance of addressing the internal climate, behaviors, and norms that drive everyday practices and experiences, they struggled with how to address organizational culture through an equity lens.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS AND TAKEAWAYS FROM INTERNAL PRACTICES

Key Findings

- Interviewees found it difficult to point to specific outcomes of its internal equity efforts.
- Implementing internal equity practices raised a host of challenges.
- Contributing factors to successful operation of internal equity practices include active leadership, empowered and decompartmentalized structures, intentionality to address organizational culture, development and implementation of an equity-focused data monitoring system, and collaborating with thought-partners or external consultants.

Most interviewees noted that it was still too early to demonstrate measurable effects since they had just begun formalizing the process of integrating equity into the organization. Accordingly, grantees reframed "outcomes" to "progress" to more accurately reflect the ways in which they were improving.

"I think it's probably too early to tell [about outcomes], but this is the first time our organization has taken on a lengthy, formal process. It's a little early to say any thing from a causality standpoint, in terms of organizational level internal policy resulting in measurable change. It's not like 0 to 60 in measuring change. [Our equity work] has been happening for many years and in many ways, so it's not going to be start-stop. It's a question of degree and how comprehensive and how consistent. I t's a matter of degree."

How Grantees Viewed Progress on Internal Equity	
Having a structure and platform to raise equity issues and have difficult conversations (for grantees with an internal equity committee):	*"There have been tough conversations in our organization over the past 3 years and when you talk about progress it starts with inclusion and those conversations. The fact that we have conversations now that we would be uncomfortable having years ago is huge progress."*
Addressing diversity in the staff recruitment and hiring process:	*"In terms of applicants for new roles, it definitely, feels more quantitative by looking at the [diversity] scorecard that we established."*
Has communicated the importance of learning and continuous learning in our work.	*"This has helped us raise awareness individually where our blind spots are and how we need to change our work."*
Developing a common language to begin discussing equity challenges	*"We're beginning to develop language and mechanisms to use. There was a situation that arose that was relevant to our JEDI work. We recognized it, had language to use and could feed it back to our [equity] task force. There was an ability to talk about it that was understandable and where we could raise it within the organization."*

Interviewees discussed several barriers to adopting equity as an internal practice. Notably, they highlighted the struggle in how to facilitate staff conversations around equity, remarking that they often felt unprepared or uncomfortable. As one grantee stated, "We have done some external DEI workshops and people felt unprepared for the emotion. They were caught off guard and feelings were hurt on both sides. People felt they were attacked because of their best efforts. They were tossed into the limelight and weren't ready for it."

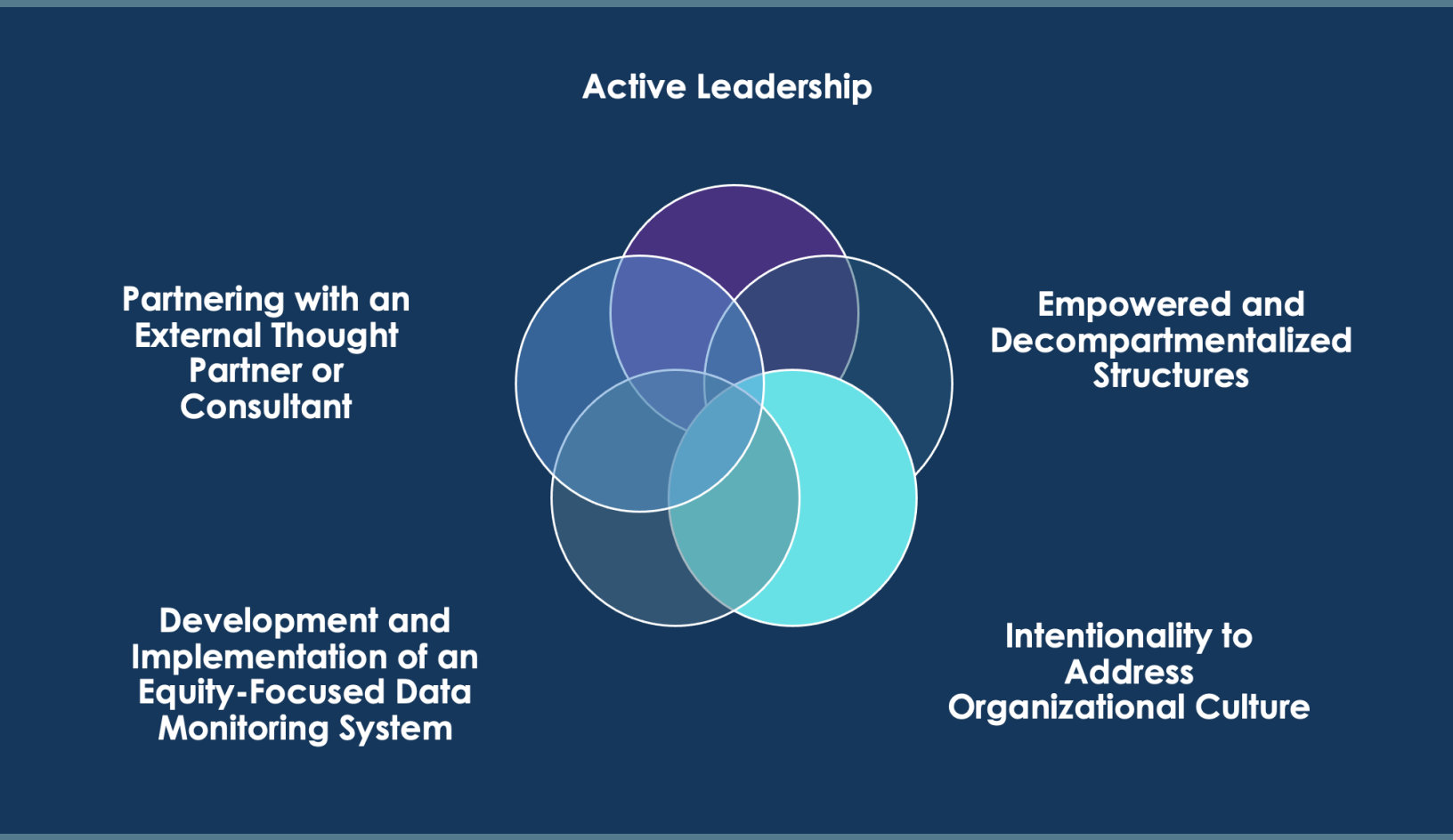
Another grantee discussed how the lack of equity expertise within the organization leads them to question if they are "getting it right," remarking, "I serve on the organization's equity] taskforce and everyone who serves on the taskforce regardless of their identities still feel like they're bringing their personal identities, not necessarily that expertise you [i.e., the equity consultant] have. It's a lack of equity expertise. It's feeling like, 'Do I have this right? Will I commit a microaggression?'"

For other grantees, the challenges were specific to their unique context. Grantees that operate internationally noted that staff located in other countries must navigate different cultural norms and values distinct from Western norms. For example, one interviewee stated, "We have one person in Japan and she's having a tough time because it's an extremely male-dominated work culture. There is a big disparity professionally in how women are viewed, so we contend with things like this." Another grantee described how an organizational structure with mostly remote workers makes it difficult to build an inclusive and welcoming environment, since staff have limited in-person interactions. Finally, coordinators of coalition-based grantees noted that they don't possess the authority to shape the focus of the coalition's work. The inherent structure of the coalition and the role of the coalition director largely constrained them from discussing equity unless it was raised by a coalition member.

"As a [coalition] coordinator, if there's a topic that people don't want to discuss…it's not like I'm the boss. If this was an organization and I'm the boss and I asked a question, people would have to answer. But, as a coalition coordinator, if I ask a question or bring up a topic and organizations don't want to answer the question, they won't answer the question. So, I have to pivot and ask a different question."

Figure 2: Contributing Factors to Successful Operation of Internal Equity Practices

Contributing Factors to Successful Operation of Internal Equity Practices
Taken together, findings revealed five interrelated factors that contributed to successfully operationalizing equity as an internal practice. These factors are certainly not inclusive of all the necessary elements to build the internal equity capacity of organizations; however, it reflects a set of starting points in which to target efforts. Moreover, it underscores the need to address multiple domains of support over an extended period of time, rather than addressing equity as an isolated or short-term effort.



1 **Active leadership** Grantees discussed the importance of leadership in promoting equity within the organization. Active leadership drives the process for organizational change while also creating a sense of urgency and accountability throughout the organization. Moreover, leadership is a core component of establishing a safe environment to address difficult topics that equity may surface. Equity-centered leadership is by no means an easy task; however, it is fundamental to operationalizing internal equity practices.

2 **Empowered and decompartmentalized structures** In concert with strong leadership, interviewees emphasized the importance of creating a structure, such as an equity committee, that allows staff across the organization to co-develop an organizational equity plan. An internal equity committee is a platform to identify internal champions, build awareness, and create momentum and accountability for addressing challenging topics, such as anti-racism or gender bias. However, committees must be empowered with the authority and decision-making to influence or institute organization-wide changes. Equity can too easily become compartmentalized as a committee-only responsibility, thereby alleviating others within the organization, especially leadership, from acting. In and of itself, a committee is insufficient unless it possesses organizational power and influence. To this end, one grantee organization that worked for several years to make equity an organization-wide practice, stated, "We have seen the shift from the equity work being decompartmentalized. And what I mean by that is its part of our overall work. There is an effort to think about how we run the organization through an equity lens and not just about the equity committee. [It's about] the whole organization."

3 **Intentionality to address organizational culture** Though most interviewees had not addressed organizational culture directly, those that did repeatedly emphasized its centrality in successfully fostering equity practices. An equity-focused organizational culture demands that norms and behaviors change, and that staff not simply assimilate to the prevailing culture.[39] As one grantee aptly noted, "There was a time when we were trying to diversify and our culture hadn't shifted yet. We were bringing people on board and they were miserable. We didn't attend to how the culture shifts with diversification." This sentiment underscores why creating culture change is a fundamental aspect of instituting equity. Culture reflects and amplifies the values of the organization and acts as the glue that shapes individual expectations and behaviors.

4 **Development and implementation of an equity-focused data monitoring system** The use of data to assess internal progress on equity was largely confined to tracking staff and/or board recruitment for diversity. Other progress indicators were largely drawn from anecdotal experience and reflections. While these data are crucial to understating organizational progress, it should be complemented by an array of other information – objective and subjective – and a formal system to monitor progress and demonstrate accountability. Beasley (2016, p. 20) highlights various equity measures to track, such as employees' utilization and/or awareness of resources, employee attitudes regarding diversity separated by demographics, the number of individuals who participate in equity-related activities, attitudinal changes in organizational culture, and actions taken by leadership to advance diversity and inclusion. Absent an equity-focused data monitoring system, it is difficult to accurately and systematically understand progress.

5 **Partnering with an external thought partner or consultant** Developing and implementing a robust, comprehensive internal equity plan can be daunting. Several grantees that possessed or allocated resources to hire an external equity consultant noted how valuable it was to have an outside thought partner to guide them.

> ***"We were fortunate to get a small grant to hire a consultant. We spent the last year working with them to interview the board, staff, and our chapters. They also conducted a series of trainings for us. For us, it was important that we don't go in it alone."***

Consultants not only provided content expertise, but a tangible road map to implement and sequence activities. Though rare, some grantees worked with an external consultant for an extended period of time (12-18 months), which they found instrumental in implementing a long-term equity plan. However, over time as organizations progress and different or new needs emerge, it may require a different consultant; for example, as one grantee shared, "We're experimenting with cross-caucus conversations. We've outgrown our current consultant and we need a consultant that can help us with this part of the journey in order to have really hard conversations [about diversity, equity and inclusion.]

EQUITY AS AN EXTERNAL PRACTICE

This section discusses how equity materialized in grantees' external practices, i.e., the programs and strategies grantees employed to achieve the mission and goals of the organization or project. As these findings illustrate, integrating equity into external strategies remain a work-in-progress.

POLICY, ADVOCACY, AND EQUITY

Key Findings

- Integrating equity into external policy remains a work in progress; approximately 67% do not have formal equity-related outcomes in their policy strategies, processes to analyze the impact of policy on under-resourced communities, or strategic communication plans to raise the awareness of equity among key decision-makers and stakeholders.

The majority (77%, n=17) of the 22 participating GSM and USM grantees reported working on policy and advocacy. While 29% of these grantees had formal equity-related outcomes within their policy strategy, 53% reported having informal outcomes; 12% reported having no equity-related outcomes within the organization's policy strategy (Table 14). Slightly more than one-third (35%) had a formal process to analyze how new or revised public policies impact under-resourced communities; 24% of organizations reported an informal process; 35% did not have a process. Approximately one-quarter (24%) of respondents had a formal strategic communication plan to raise key decision-makers' awareness about issues of equity. Fewer (18%) had similar formal plans to raise key stakeholders' awareness about issues of equity.

Table 14. Policy, Advocacy, and Equity

The Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director (CEO/ED):						
The organization has:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Has Not Shared**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Equity-related outcomes in its policy strategy.	29%	53%	12%	6%	0%	0%
A process to analyze how new or revised public policies impact under-resourced communities.	35%	24%	35%	6%	0%	0%
A strategic communication plan to raise key decision-makers' awareness about issues of equity.	24%	24%	35%	12%	0%	6%
A strategic communication plan to raise key stakeholders' awareness about issues of equity.	18%	24%	41%	12%	0%	6%

In the policy and advocacy realm, equity principles have yet to be formally or systematically incorporated across these organizations. Many of these strategies were either informal or were not at all in place. An "equity analysis" in public policy is a relatively new concept across disciplines, yet essential to understanding how these policies have equitable benefits across populations. The GSM and USM grantees clearly have some leaders on this front for this type of analysis; there is great potential to increase learning and practice across organizations through continual peer support, institutional investment, and technical expertise.

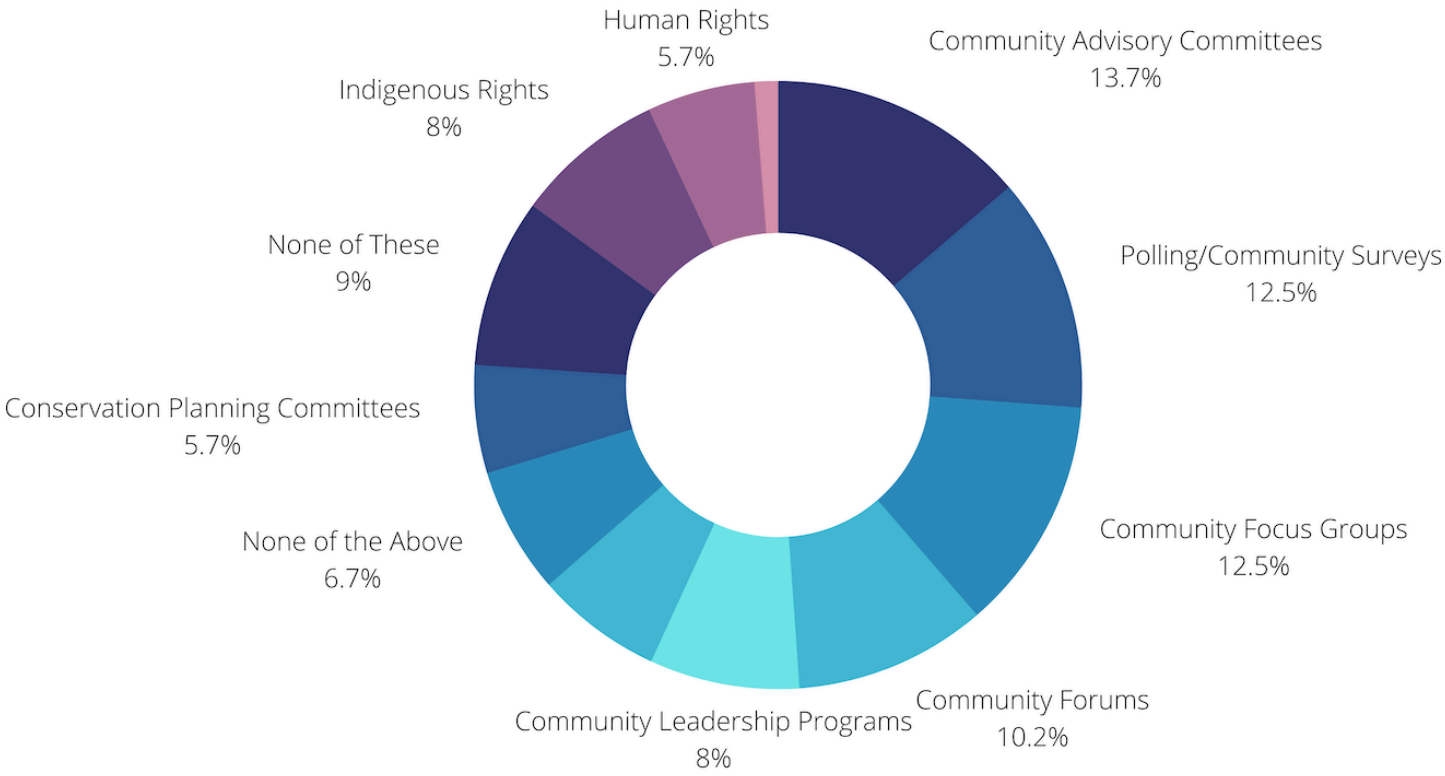
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EQUITY

Key Findings

- Most organizations reported having established formal relationships with community leaders and/or organizers within under-resourced communities.
- Less than half reported any formality in plans to engage under-resourced communities and ensure under-resourced communities have decision-making authority in their strategies.
- Fewer than 25% have a formal process to include under-resourced communities in NGO coalitions or involve under-resourced communities in the design, implementation, or evaluation of their strategies.
- Operationalizing external equity practices largely meant providing a seat at the table for under-resourced groups; organizations acknowledged while this practice is integral, it is insufficient for authentic engagement.

Table 17. Community Engagement and Equality

The organization uses the following methods to solicit feedback from under-resources communities:



There are clear opportunities available for organizations to bolster engagement efforts with under-resourced communities. Formal community engagement efforts are foundational to concepts of equity – involvement and inclusion (procedural), respect for all stakeholders (recognitional), and understanding communities past and present (contextual). As momentum builds in the ocean conservation field to embrace social dimensions and social outcomes, the assessment data demonstrate resources (e.g., financial, strategy realignment, etc.) and support (e.g., expertise, multidisciplinary staff, etc.) are needed for GSM and USM grantees to build their capacity.

Approximately two-thirds (64%) of the grantees reported having established formal relationships with community leaders and/or organizers that represent the voices of under-resourced communities (Table 15). Fewer than half (41%) of the grantees had formal plans

to engage under-resourced communities in its work (32% had informal plans). Forty-five percent (45%) reported no process to ensure that under-resourced communities have decision-making authority in its strategies, while 27% reported a formal process for this. Less than a quarter (23%) had a formal process to ensure representation of under-resourced communities in NGO coalitions or a process to share information with under-resourced communities as it relates to governance/conservation issues impacting them (23% informal processes, 23% had no process).

Few organizations (Table 16) had a formal process to include under-resourced communities in the design (27% formal, 23% informal, 27% no process), implementation (27% formal, 23% informal, 23% no process), and evaluation (23% formal, 5% informal, 45% no process), of their work. Half or more of the grantees use a variety of methods to engage under-resourced communities including community advisory committees (55%), community focus groups (50%), and polling/community surveys (50%). Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the grantees reported using "none of these" methods (Table 17).

Inadequate grassroots input and participation, especially from communities of color, has been cited as a fundamental challenge in the environmental movement. In part, this challenge is baked into the historical roots of the movement where the domain of environmental protection and preservation remained a middle-to-upper class and white-led enterprise.[40] As such, a misperception exists that low-income groups, people of color, and populations who are most vulnerable to environmental impacts are less interested or concerned about environmental issues.[41]

In interviews, grantees highlighted the importance of addressing this challenge directly. They discussed the ongoing process of trying to adopt more inclusive practices that give communities a stronger voice in planning and decision-making forums. Interviewees discussed how their organizations act as facilitators, educators, and direct funding supports so that community groups can participate in settings that had previously been unavailable or cut off to them. In some cases, this entailed convening community groups and providing a peer support network. In other cases, grantees provided travel stipends to attend advocacy forums; as one grantee noted, "Over the past several years, we have been working in partnership to try and ensure that tribal voices are being brought to the conversation with the State to influence changes in regulations and policies. We provide travel supports so representatives from tribes can go and meet with state agencies."

The attention to including diverse community voices reflects progress towards the recognitional dimension of equity – the acknowledgement and representation of distinct identities, values, histories and interests[42] (Friedman et al., 2018) – yet there is clearly still much work to do. One grantee described the conservation and environment movement, particularly the oceans field, as "Extremely white, elitist and upper class. I can count on two hands the number of people of color in leadership positions. By virtue of this, it's even more unwelcoming."

Four Dimensions of Community Engagement Grantee Interviews

1. **Ongoing relationship development tounderstand issues and needs**
2. **Decentralized governance structures**
3. **Co-creation of strategies**
4. **Mobilizing for action**

Too often, community participatory processes reflect a top-down governance model designed to serve the interests of those with power, authority and resources.[43,44] Certainly, engaging diverse and under-resourced groups is one element of implementing equity. However, meaningfully involving these groups necessitates attending to the processes and actions that underlie inclusive and effective participation; Friedman et al. (2018) conceptualizes this as the procedural dimension of equity, which entails how individuals and groups make decisions that are transparent and accountable.[45]

"Our work is built from the community outwards, so we start with the community and figure out the need. We want to do conservation work but we want to do it intentionally, in the sense that the community wants this work and wants to be involved. It starts there."

Several interviewees acknowledged the opportunity and challenge of not simply creating a seat at the table, but undertaking a continuum of efforts to foster meaningful community participation. Various frameworks have articulated the spectrum of roles, responsibilities, and influence public actors possess within community participatory processes. The International Association for Public Participation describes a spectrum that consists of five levels of participation and the public's influence in the deliberative process: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower (See Appendix III). Similarly, Callahan (2007) outlines the various roles citizens may adopt when they act as representatives in public governance processes[46]; these roles range from the citizen as client to the citizen as owner (See Appendix IV).

Interviews revealed four dimensions of public participation:

1 **Ongoing relationship development to understand issues and needs**. For many interviewees, the process of community participation began with creating a listening-learning relationship with the community; this helped develop trust and was instrumental in identifying the issues and needs that most impacted underrepresented groups. Creating these relationships required long-term, iterative engagement: "It's not a simple to thing to figure out how to build a real partnership. You have to go and go again. You have to go multiple times. This type of model is important to us but it's also very resource intensive."

2 **Decentralized governance structures** Some grantees sought to institute a more decentralized governance model that permitted greater flexibility in addressing community problems while also bringing those who are closest to the problems into the decision-making process. For example, one grantee worked with fishers to develop a community-based governance mechanism through the creation of local cooperatives. The cooperatives were meant to organize and empower fishers in engaging the decisionmakers who traditionally have had more power in managing the fisheries. Similarly, another grantee developed community advisory committees, which consisted of diverse representation across race/ethnicity, age, and gender, responsible for informing the design and implementation of programs.

3 **Co-creation of strategies** Rather than having programs or strategies designed for communities, some grantees adopted the approach of working with communities at the outset of a project to devise goals, plans, and outcomes. Beyond listening and learning to communities, equity was envisioned as taking those data and stories, then working together to create strategies that addressed the 'lived experiences' and challenges community members faced.

> ***"We don't partner with our partners and say, 'Hey, let's go do this.' We sit down and talk about their expectations, preferences, hopes, and goals and we look at how we can make adjustments to our strategies so their goals are integrated into ours."***

4 **Mobilizing for action** A handful of grantees – primarily those focused on grassroots organizing – described how community participation must be translated into specific, community-based actions. These actions cannot be solely confined to program planning or strategy-level forums, but should also materialize in the on-the-ground activities where community members are mobilized for action. For example, two grantees provided advocacy trainings, communication toolkits, and organizing support so that community members could take direct action with local policymakers.

The four dimensions above were boiled down by one interviewee who works closely in and with community members, stating, "My work is as easy as approaching people and giving people the benefit of the doubt. It sounds super simple but that's it. We just need to approach people and given them the benefit of the doubt. Don't dumb it down. Don't be condescending. Give people an opportunity to get involved. And that's my work. My work is to create opportunities, provide information, and have those pathways for involvement."

Taken together, these four dimensions reflect both the actions and aspirations of operationalizing equity within the domain of community participation. In large part, interviewees focused on the first dimension, while it was far less common to envision community participation as a compendium of dimensions. Considerable work still needs to take place to implement community participation as an ongoing, multidimensional practice rather than an episodic activity where groups with power and resources descend into communities when it is convenient, then ascend away when their needs have been met.

Key Findings

- Over half of the grantees had formal equity-related goals in their strategies.
- Less than half of the grantees had a formal process to measure how to mitigate impacts on under-resourced communities, or for dispute resolution process and procedures.
- Less than 25% had a formal process to conduct social assessments, to understand the equitable sharing of benefits with under-resourced communities, or how to integrate customary, human, and indigenous rights in their strategies.

These findings suggest that emerging frameworks and ideas that translate equity into practice are still in their nascent stages. While equity is reflected in the majority of organizations' goals, fewer organizations have formally adopted practices reflecting social dimensions and outcomes. Issues such as human rights, having garnered international attention, still is not evenly practiced among grantees. Encouragingly, 41% of organizations indicated that they are informally integrating Indigenous rights, but 32% have no process in place.[2] These external-facing strategies present areas of opportunity for USM and GSM grantees for learning, strategy adaptation, and capacity building support.

DEFINING THE KEY TERMS HUMAN RIGHTS, INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Human Rights

iare rights inherent to all human beings; they include agreed-upon principles pertaining to every human beings' social, economic, civil, and political rights. Within the context of conservation, the U.N. Declaration 5 on Human Rights, and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples are especially relevant.

Indigenous Rights

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings; they include agreed-upon principles pertaining to every human beings' social, economic, civil, and political rights. Within the context of conservation, the U.N. Declaration 5 on Human Rights, and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples are especially relevant. Indigenous rights involve (1) processes being conducted in accordance with peoples' values and customs and with representatives of their own choosing, (2) adequate time for understanding, analysis and decision-making before activities commence, (3) whether information provided is adequate, objective, accurate, and accessible, and (4) whether consent is genuinely collective and freely given without coercion. Social impact assessments seek to analyze and manage the intended and unintended social consequences, both good and 10 bad, of an organization's planned interventions.

Social Impact Assessments

seek to analyze and manage the intended and unintended social consequences, both good and 10 bad, of an organization's planned interventions.

Of the GSM and USM grantees participating in the OANA, 55% of them reported having formal equity-related goals in their strategies (Table 18). Fewer than half (41%) had a process to integrate measures to mitigate impacts on under-resourced communities, with 32% having an informal process. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of organizations have formal processes to conduct social assessments, while 41% had no process in place to conduct social assessments. Similarly, 41% of grantees had no process to support a dispute resolution process and procedures for redress for under-resourced communities; 23% had a formal process. Just over one-quarter (27%) of grantees had a formal process to assess the equitable sharing of benefits with under-resourced communities; 36% percent of did not have a process at all. Slightly less than one-quarter (23%) of respondents formally integrate human rights into their strategies, with 18% formally integrating indigenous rights, and 14% formally integrating customary rights into their strategies.

Several interviewees described how equity was a concept that operated at the forefront of their planning process. They noted that historical and structural inequities – both intentional and unintentional – left under-resourced communities without the voice or power to influence environmental issues. As such, it was integral to build an equity lens into the design of their strategies from the outset. This intent occurred across a variety of issues, such as labor practices in the seafood industry, climate change advocacy, and tribal and indigenous rights.

"In our work, we seek to move policies and public funding with equity in mind. In our planning, we ask ourselves, 'How will those policies shape communities on the ground? Are those communities engaged at the onset in discussing what policies make sense? Are they involved in the implementation phase?' Though this isn't something we've infused across all our programs yet, this is how we want to do our work."

Conversely, communications were a common external strategy where equity materialized, as it was viewed as a way to elevate the voices of under-resourced groups. Interviewees deployed a variety of communication vehicles to highlight how environmental issues impact communities of color and communities in poverty. Examples included producing newsletters, op-eds and media stories, providing grants to support reporters at ethnic media outlets, and developing short films.

"Policymakers are used to receiving data behind why oceans or marine protected areas need to be protected, but they're not hearing from diverse communities on why it matters to them."

In interviews, the team asked grantees about the tension in addressing conservation goals while focusing on social and human dimensions. Interviewees largely characterized the tension as a false dichotomy, grounded in unnecessary divisions that ignore the interrelationship between the two goals. Saving nature and saving people should be part of the same paradigm; per one interviewee: "You're not saving anything unless you're working on human well-being. There is no sustainability if it doesn't include people." Equity may be a valuable lens in aligning these different paradigms by foregrounding the human and social inequalities that exist in industries, supply chains, and labor practices.

"In the end, you don't have a whale or shark deciding things. You have people deciding things. Until you have a whale or shark in the legislature, I don't see the point of keeping people out of it."

[2] N.B: This section contained high frequency of "not applicable" responses; this may skew the data.

EVALUATION AND EQUITY

Key Findings

- Most organizations did not indicate the presence of formal evaluation plans, a formal team dedicated to evaluating progress on equity, or a formal process to integrate equity data into its strategies.

Across all the OANA domains, grantees indicated that evaluation on equity was not often a formal or informal process or practice (Table 19). Fifty-five percent (55%) of respondents did not have a process to integrate equity evaluation data and results into its strategies. Half (50%) of responding organizations do not have a team dedicated to evaluating its progress on equity; 45% do not have an evaluation plan to understand the organization's progress on equity in its strategies.

Table 19. Evaluation and Equity

The Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director (CEO/ED):						
The organization has:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Has Not Shared**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
An evaluation plan to understand its progress on equity in its strategies.	27%	14%	45%	9%	5%	0%
A team dedicated to evaluating its progress on equity in its internal and external strategies.	36%	9%	50%	5%	0%	0%
A process to integrate equity evaluation data and results into its strategies.	23%	14%	55%	9%	0%	0%

Evaluation capacity and focus is a cross-field, NGO-wide challenge, and not unique to the ocean field. Resources, knowledge, and support on evaluation are essential, as equity is in a formative stage and it is critical to leverage data to demonstrate what is effective and working. These data about evaluation and equity demonstrate a need for increased investment to strengthen this critical component of advancing equity in ocean conservation. And to put simply, you can't achieve equity if you aren't measuring it.

ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS FROM INTERVIEWS

Key Additional Insights from Interviews

- There is no uniform conceptualization of equity – why equity is important, what equity entails, and how to address equity.
- While internal capacity is an important factor in addressing equity, intentionality is equally as important.
- Moving beyond conceptual and philosophical discussions of equity requires identifying a tangible (internal or external) practice to address.
- Community inclusion cannot be transactional or episodic. At its core, authentically involving under-resourced communities is an ongoing enterprise that requires sharing power.
- Equity is not a discrete project, but rather an ongoing journey that will raise hidden issues and require organizations to adapt to new processes, structures, and culture.

While most grantees understood the term "equity" and its relevance to the conservation movement, it was conceptualized differently. For some, equity centered on increasing diversity, while others focused on the inclusion of under-resourced groups. Though these are fundamental aspects, equity was not commonly framed as a multidimensional, interrelated concept or practice. There was no common framework or set of definitions and values that grantees could easily draw upon to express their equity-related experiences and perspectives. To some extent, equity was viewed as an activity, rather than a complex concept rooted in historical and structural inequalities.

Overall, interviewees expressed differing perspectives on the relationship between staff/ organization size and the capacity to engage in equity, especially as an internal practice. Some small organizations (e.g., 1-2 people) noted that the limited number of staff – hence lack of capacity – was a deterrent, stating for example, "We're ready to do more around equity, but we're just two people. We're committed to the work but we have our limits." In contrast, other grantees with few staff did not view the size of their organization as a hinderance to addressing equity, with one grantee noting, "[Equity] was there from the beginning of the organization. It was purposely created to be community-led conservation, so we never really had to do too much about [equity] because it's something we were conscious about from the beginning."

These contrasting perspectives does not imply that capacity is not a key variable in addressing equity, but it suggests that an organization's commitment and intentionality towards equity is equally as important. This raises questions for funders and grantees alike: How do you build the capacity for intentionality? Can you build the will and commitment of organizations to want to tackle equity?

One interviewee remarked, "I don't know if it's ever possible to feel totally ready. You have to get started." Moving from the conceptual to the practical is where the work happens and where actual progress is made. Interviewees discussed specific actions such as altering staff hiring practices to increase diversity, developing new communication practices to include under-represented voices, and facilitating opportunities for community groups to become more involved in decision-making forums. By taking action, organizations are forced to stop talking about and around equity and instead make tangible plans and decisions.

Under-resourced communities are too often left out of programmatic and policy decisions that directly affect their day-to-day lives. This imbalanced dynamic results from historical, structural, cultural, and political power differences that stratify those with resources and influence from those without.[47,48] This dynamic is not unique to the conservation field, but remains a highly prominent gap in addressing how equity materializes in communities.

As such, community engagement and inclusion requires an ongoing commitment that includes increasing the diversity of voices in planning and decision-making forums,

directly listening to and learning from those voices, and empowering those voices with authentic decision-making power. This multi-dimensional effort is labor and resource-intensive but can yield outcomes that are more aligned to the true needs and wishes of the community. One grantee summed this sentiment up by stating, "The closer you look to work with the community of consequence, the better. Our movement has to grapple with that."

Interviewees uniformly acknowledged that equity is long-term, difficult, and necessary work, and struggled with how to overcome these challenges. There is no instant recipe for equity. It takes time, commitment, and a willingness to unearth issues, often dormant or ignored, that otherwise would not have emerged. While the work is difficult at times, it ultimately strengthens what organizations do and how they work.

"I've been impressed how energizing this conversation is for people. People in the organization are here to make the world better, and now by addressing equity there's a whole additional way for how we tackle these issues and how we do this work. In addition to all the emotional exhaustion from wresting with these issues, generally I've seen people energized and excited to engage in this."

GRANTEE CAPACITY NEEDS

Key Findings

- Organizational leaders would benefit from training on issues of equity and learning cultures.
- Organizations new to equity need "starter kits," while more experienced organizations prefer
- support to develop and pursue equity plans/roadmaps.
- More resources should be allocated to recruit and retain diverse staff.
- Additional training is needed on key topics (e.g. race, implicit bias training, cultural competency) and on the "how's" (e.g. equity in orientation, caucusing across identity groups, etc.)
- Community coalitions and collaborations need dedicated efforts to create equity.
- Grantees expressed interest in cohort learning and one-on-one learning with organizations working on similar issues.

Grantees that participated in the assessment shared several recommendations to support their equity efforts via the organizational interviews and open-ended questions within the OANA. These recommendations aligned with the theoretical framework used in the design of this assessment – leadership, organizational development, staff development, community engagement, and strategy development. Responses from US Marine and Global Seafood Market grantees brought forth field building as an additional theme.

Self-Identified Capacity Building Needs	
Leadership	• *Training of CEOs/senior leaders and the Board of Directors on issues of equity (e.g. implicit bias, leading a diverse staff, etc.)* • *Training leaders on creating a culture of learning (e.g. psychological safety, allow for difficult conversations to take place, building community / improving staff relationships, etc.)*
Organizational Development	• Sharing equity "starter kits" for less experienced organizations • Supporting more experienced organizations in developing equity roadmap or plan • Providing resources and support to diversify and retain diverse staffs
Staff Professional Development	• Engaging staff in trainings on race, implicit bias training, cultural competency training in international contexts, the intersectionality of identities and issues, and advancing organizational equity without power or authority • Implementing the "how's" included all-staff training on equity, integration of equity into orientation, and using affinity groups/caucusing to discuss difficult topics
Strategy	• Integrating equity-focused deliverables (e.g. intervention outcomes, community engagement, etc.) • Translating equity into grantmaking practices for organizations • Integrating into equity across organizational strategies
Community Engagement	• Ensuring that equity is part of community coalitions and collaborations.
Field Building	• Facilitating collective learning to understand real world examples of equity in practice, etc. (e.g. via cohorts, a formal learning network, community conversations, etc.) • Facilitating one-on-one learning to connect with peers on specific issues outside a large group setting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The assessment's survey and interviews yielded five overarching recommendations for funders, scientists, advocates, and equity practitioners and consultants in the ocean field.

1 **Invest in cultivating, providing continual support to, and elevating the voices of Chief Executive Officers/Executive Directors (CEO/ED) and emerging leaders to be the next generation of equity champions.** There are bright spots and opportunities for growth for current CEO/EDs from GSM and USM grantees; this is not uncommon for a field newly immersing itself into equity. Leaders could strongly benefit from communities of practice with a focus on an introduction to equity, definitions and frameworks, leading equitable organizations and cultures, internal and external best-practices, peer-to-peer learning and exchanges, and executive coaching. This recommendation also encompasses emerging leaders in the GSM and USM field. The interviews highlighted many were deeply knowledgeable and experienced with an understanding of the intersectionality of ocean conservation and equity without formal leadership positions in their respective organizations. The field would benefit from investing in these leaders. It is essential to foster pipeline opportunities for these leaders, including leadership training, mentorship from CEO/EDs, inclusion in equity and conservation demonstration projects, and training on effectively leading for equity.

2 **Invest in strategies that integrate cohort learning, peer-to-peer learning, and individualized coaching and training for equity.** Through the OANA and interviews, GSM and USM grantees expressed strong interest in learning from peer organizations on their lessons learned, successes, and opportunities to collaborate on equity. Cohort learning could bring value to the field by convening organizations to hear from thought-leaders, experts, and peers on a wide variety of equity issues. Peer-to-peer learning convenes leaders with an interest in specific organizational and external strategy issues (e.g. equity in Fishing Improvement Projects, leadership and equity, indigenous rights, etc.) to conduct cross-site visits or training to develop strategies and approaches. Individualized coaching and training serve to operationalize concepts learned from cohort and peer-to-peer learning, and supports the implementation of these practices in organizations. This model would require consistent, multi-year funding (e.g., three-to-five years) for organizations as well as an intermediary organization to coordinate the cohort.

3 **Create flexible, core support grants in multi-year funding cycles, and include a cohort model with other GSM and USM grantees.** Assessment interviews highlighted how general operating dollars have been crucial in advancing their organization's equity efforts. These interviews also revealed limitations for these discrete, pass-through dollars for training and/or consultants. Equity, as a general practice, is an organizational change management initiative. As such, these change management initiatives require on-going, long-term investment of staff and organizational time, planning, implementing, innovating, and evaluating and learning. Grant support that accounts for the complexities of equity adoption, so that funding can be used for consultants and trainers, staff time, materials, etc. Given that change management initiatives require changes to knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and practices, there is significant time commitment attached to these changes, requiring long-term funding (e.g. three-to-five-year cycles).

4 **Establish an innovation fund that brings new learning and ideas in merging social and human dimensions with ocean conservation.** Interviews and OANA results indicate that grantees are making progress on internal equity practices. The OANA data also showed that the translation of new equity learning and ideas into conservation practices is still in the nascent stages. As the ocean conservation field moves toward greater integration of issues such as community engagement, human rights, indigenous rights, and equitable

distribution of benefits, more investment is needed for innovating, demonstration projects, and disseminating learning with the field. The proposed innovation fund would provide support for deeper learning and evidence on single issue, single organization projects or cross-sector, intersectional issues related to social and human dimensions and conservation.

5 Establish a set of frameworks, beliefs, and practices that grounds and guides the field on the importance and urgency of connecting social and human dimensions with ocean conservation. Through the literature scan and assessment results, a tension persists between the philosophies that "nature should be protected for its own sake (intrinsic value) and…that we must also save nature to help ourselves (instrumental value)." This assessment did not examine the depth or breadth of this thinking in the GSM and USM fields. However, these tensions were prevalent in the interviews with both grantees and experts. With a changing climate, embracing instrumental values, enlisting new and diverse voices in ocean conservation, and building public will across constituencies and demographics is an environmental and political necessity. Funders, scientists, and advocates should articulate definitions, frameworks, and practice implications as well what this means to the future of the field. While there will ultimately be trade-offs in both conservation and social outcomes, this will bring the field in alignment with other fields grappling with these same "trade-off" decisions in their own disciplines.

LIMITATIONS

Given the response rate and total numbers of organizations that participated in the assessment, there are two important analysis implications. First, the higher response rate from USM grantees and grantees who have been engaging/conducting equity work for over four-years means that any general conclusions drawn from the OANA data overall is more heavily skewed toward those two demographics. Second, this created a challenge for drawing valid field comparisons (e.g., USM versus GSM, newer versus more experienced with equity). There was no comparative analysis across using these two variables – strategy and length of time engaged in equity – in this report. Specifically, we opted not to conduct crosstab analysis on any of these variables due to the generalizability challenges. Inferring about trends or differences from the small sample (5-6 responses) does not allow for appropriate or statistically valid trends.

CONCLUSION

While thought-leaders at the margins have expressed the importance of equity in conservation efforts for decades, there is renewed momentum in the last decade to forge ahead. Much of what we have learned has focused more broadly on environmental and conversation fields, which has included the ocean conversation organizations. This assessment was a crucial first step in understanding how equity is being operationalized among David and Lucile Packard's US Marine and Global Seafood Market grantees.

Organizational Assets and Needs Assessment (OANA) data and reflections from grantees provided critical insight into where the field is making key advancements in equity and where the field still has an unrealized potential. Leaders in the field are mainly engaging their staff in learning opportunities, developing equity committees to advance this work internally, and engaging with experts in the field to help them move the needle on their equity work. In a bigger picture context, these organizations are expressing their beliefs and values that social outcomes and human dimensions have a place in ocean conversation. They understand the synergies and tradeoffs of these two dichotomies, and understand the balance, rather than the incongruity.

While a growing number of individual and organizational leaders continue to strive for balance, there are many opportunities to advance. The assessment clearly shows more

and stronger leadership on equity is essential. Organizational and staff behaviors and practices that value social and human dimensions and conversation success will need better alignment. The how, what, and who to fund demonstrates organizations' values and priorities in creating equity. As we strive to be equitable in our work, under-resourced and marginalized communities cannot merely be invited to the table; they must be authentic partners in the work.

With this assessment, advocates, funders, scientists, and the oceans community have additional data to understand the landscape of and the leadership challenge for the field. Data alone will not be the catalyst. However, data plus the will and leadership of the field can create a human and natural world that values equity and the Earth together as one.

APPENDIX I: METHODOLGY

The assessment team developed the interview and assessment protocols in three stages. To start, the assessment team interviewed five (5) conservation experts focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion either as consultants or within their respective organizations. The purpose of these interviews was to inform the design and ensure the relevance of the tools developed for this assessment by gaining better understanding and context for equity in the environmental sector. Second, the assessment team designed the qualitative (Appendix I) and quantitative data instruments (Appendix II), informed by tools previously used by the assessment team, existing equity frameworks, and additional research. Finally, the assessment team collaborated with the David and Lucile Packard Foundation to review, refine, and finalize both the OANA and the interview guide.

In collaboration with staff from the Packard Foundation, the assessment team previewed the assessment via two webinars in December 2019 to grantees from the Foundation's U.S. Marine and Global Seafood Market strategies. Foundation staff highlighted the motivation and purpose of the assessment as a whole, and introduced the assessment team. The assessment team spoke in more detail about equity, the assessment framework, the format of the assessment, how grantees could participate (structured interviews, OANA), and general timelines for the assessment. After the webinars, the assessment team sent emails to points-of-contact at each grantee organization to send guidance for participating in either or both the structured interviews and the OANA.

For key interviews, the assessment team selected 20 organizations as a sample of grantees across both the US Marine and Global Seafood Market strategies. Organizations that agreed to participate in the interview process received instructions on how to prepare for the interview, including convening a team for the interview and reviewing the questions in advance. The assessment team conducted one-hour interviews by phone or video conference with either individuals or teams from the organizations. After the interviews, the assessment team generated transcriptions from the interviews for qualitative analysis.
US Marine and Global Seafood Market grantees had the opportunity to participate in the Organizational Asset and Needs Assessment (OANA). Some funded projects or coalitions did not participate because many questions within the OANA pertained to formal organizational policies and procedures, which did not apply to those certain projects or coalitions. Participating organizations received guidance on how to complete the assessment, including convening a cross-disciplinary team, scheduling a meeting with that team to complete the OANA, engaging in a consensus model that generated one answer for each OANA question, and submitting answers to the created online survey (via SurveyMonkey). The OANA contained 53 multiple choice questions and eight (8) open-ended questions. To ensure confidentiality of responses, only the assessment team had access to individual interview notes and OANA assessments. As communicated to both the Packard Foundation and the grantee organizations, data contained in this report is only reported in aggregate and/or with deidentified quotes.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Letter of Interest Objectives
David and Lucile Packard Foundation

- Status of work on EDI issues within organizations
- Organizations' readiness and commitment to these issues
- Lessons learned
- Capacity building recommendations
- Experience with change management initiatives

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Opening

1 What was your reaction to Packard's announcement that they are integrating equity more explicitly into the Marine conservation and Seafoods Markets strategies?

Organizational practices

Shifting gears to your organization, we have some questions around your past and current efforts to address equity in your organization. And we'd like to take this from two different vantage points: 1) The internal – that is, any efforts to address equity within your organization's internal practices, such as staffing or particular policies or practices and 2) The external – that is, any efforts to institute equity as an external practice within your programs or strategies.

Internal Practices

2 How has equity been addressed in your organization as an internal practice? (e.g., Changing policies and procedures? Diversifying your workforce? Organizational committees focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion?)

a. What worked and why?
b. What didn't work and why?

3 As you think about the issue of equity, how have your leaders (i.e., CEO, Board) discussed equity and its relationship to your work?

a. How have your leaders demonstrated their commitment to equity in the organization's vision, mission, goals, and strategies?
b. Can you provide examples of how your organization's leaders have demonstrated their commitment to equity?

External Practices

4 As you think about equity within your programs or external strategies – in other words, the work you do to achieve your organization's mission and goals – how has equity influenced or informed this work?

a. What worked and why?
b. What didn't work and why?

5 Community voice and community engagement (i.e., how you are engaging with and elevating underserved and underrepresented communities in the conservation field/ community) is a central part of operationalizing an equity framework.

a. Is or has community engagement been a component of your organization's programmatic work?
b. Can you describe what this has entailed?
c. How this has influenced your programs/strategies?

Organizational Readiness, Commitment and Assets Related to Equity

6 How would you describe the level of readiness and commitment across the organization to focus (more) on equity in your internal strategies?

7 How would you describe the level of readiness and commitment across the organization to focus more on equity in your external strategies?

8 What assets do you feel you have in place to engage in or strengthen equity in your organization? These assets could include key staff, dedicated positions, leadership, organizational vision, organizational culture, or the integration of equity into current or future strategies.

Lessons Learned

9 What lessons learned (successes and failures) do you have with respect to promoting equity in your organization (as both an internal and external practice)?

Capacity Building Support and Recommendations

10 What types of capacity building training or support would your organization like to engage in to take its next steps on equity? What would the content of that capacity building support entail? (e.g., what would you want to learn?)

a. Ideally, what would the structure of that support look like for your organization (e.g., cohort-based, 1-1 coaching, peer-to-peer)?
b. At what level do you think this support should be targeted (e.g., leadership, field staff, all staff, board)?

11 What ideas or recommendations do you have for Packard on how best to integrate equity into its capacity building grantmaking?

Final Comments, Reflections, and/or Feedback

12 As you think about equity within your programs or external strategies – in other words, the work you do to achieve your organization's mission and goals – how has equity influenced or informed this work?

a. What worked and why?
b. What didn't work and why?

APPENDIX III: OANA SECTION DESCRIPTIONS

1 **Leadership and Equity** Leaders play a critical role in advancing equity within organizations. Without their support and sponsorship, equity initiatives can become a challenge. This section focuses on how the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director (CEO/ED) communicates, plans for, and engages in the organization's equity work. The goal of this section is to understand how formally or informally the organization's CEO/ED are leading on the issue of equity.

2 **The Board of Directors and Equity** Collectively and individually, members of the board are leaders in advancing equity for the organization. Their fiduciary and accountability roles for the organization and the CEO/ED provide them with an important leadership function for equity. These questions are focused on how and what the organizations are learning about equity and how are they holding the CEO/ED accountable to equity.

3 **Human Resources and Practices** This section focuses on the organization's human resources policies, practices, and procedures, including the staff composition and how the organization assesses and/or evaluates staff on issues of equity.

4 **Organizational Infrastructure and Equity** Organizations engaging in equity work typically incorporate a number of resources to initiate and maintain the momentum of the work. This section seeks to understand what systems or structures the organization has created for equity work.

5 **Staff Professional Development** This section focuses on what the organization offers to its staff for professional development opportunities regarding equity.

6 **Organizational Culture and Learning** Organizational culture plays a critical role in supporting and advancing the organization's equity efforts. This section seeks to understand the formal and informal organizational norms (e.g., spoken or unspoken agreements or principles) that guide how the organization's leadership and staff behave and make decisions. Formal norms are explicit and documented agreements or principles that guide the behavior of staff and leaders. Informal norms speak more to general support for changing practices, but the support is not formally documented in organization-wide agreements or principles.

7 **Policy, Advocacy, and Equity** For organizations with a focus on public policy and advocacy work, we are interested in how staff conceptualize, plan for, and operationalize equity in their work. Questions focus on if and how organizations integrate equity into these efforts.

8 **Community Engagement and Equity** Organizations focused on conservation work engage with under-resourced communities in different ways. This section seeks to understand some of the specifics of how and the extent to which the organization practices community engagement.

9 **Strategy and Equity** This section seeks to learn about the external strategies of organizations and how they are integrating equity into their strategies. This includes assessments, planning, focus on under-resourced communities and their rights, and understanding benefits/impacts on under-resourced communities.

10 **Evaluation and Equity** As organizations regularly measure progress toward their goals and impacts, this section focuses specifically on organizations' use of evaluation data in the context of their equity efforts.

APPENDIX IV: DATA TABLES

Table 1. Organizational Demographics	
For which David and Lucile Packard Foundation strategy do you currently receive funding?	
U.S. Marine	59%
Global Seafood Markets	23%
Both	18%

Table 2. Organizational Demographics	
How many years has organization been conducting equity work?	
<1 year	0%
1-2 Years	9%
2-3 Years	0%
3-4 Years	14%
4+ Years	73%
We have not been conducting equity work.	5%

Table 3. Leadership						
The Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director (CEO/ED):						
	Formal	**Informal**	**Has Not Shared**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Has a vision for organization's equity work	39%	48%	4%	0%	0%	9%
Has communicated how focusing on equity supports our organization in achieving its mission and goals.	39%	48%	4%	0%	0%	9%
Has dedicated resources (e.g., time, budget, etc.) for professional development opportunities for staff to build their knowledge and skills for equity.	70%	17%	4%	0%	0%	9%
Communicates (e.g., with data, evaluations, etc.) how the organization is progressing on achieving its equity goals.	26%	26%	30%	0%	0%	17%
Has communicated the importance of learning and continuous learning in our work.	70%	17%	0%	0%	4%	9%
Annual performance evaluation includes the organization's progress on equity.	17%	26%	30%	9%	4%	13%

Table 4. The Board of Directors and Equity						
	Formal	**Informal**	**Has Not Shared**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Reviews/evaluates how the organization is progressing on achieving its equity goals.	20%	40%	30%	0%	0%	10%
Conducts an annual diversity assessment of the board's composition.	30%	35%	35%	0%	0%	0%
Has a plan to recruit diverse candidates for open board positions.	55%	30%	10%	0%	0%	5%
Evaluates the CEO/ED's progress on equity in their annual performance evaluation.	15%	25%	50%	5%	0%	5%

Table 5. The Board of Directors and Equity	
The organization's Board of Directors has been engaged in professional development learning opportunities on the following equity topics:	
Diversity	30%
Environmental Justice	20%
Equity	25%
Gender	10%
History of Equity	10%
Human Rights	20%
Implicit Bias	20%
Inclusion	25%
Indigenous Rights	15%
Race/Racism	20%
None of These	45%
Not Applicable	15%

Table 6. Human Resources Policies and Practices						
The organizations:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Has Not Shared**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Has a plan to recruit candidates from under-represented backgrounds.	41%	32%	18%	0%	0%	9%
Has a process to review staff diversity at different levels of the hierarchy within the organization.	36%	32%	23%	0%	0%	9%
New staff orientation addresses equity and its relationship to organization's mission and goals.	45%	14%	27%	5%	0%	9%
Staff are evaluated annually on their progress on the organization's equity goals.	14%	9%	64%	0%	5%	9%

Table 7. Organizational Infrastructure and Equity						
The organizations:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Has Not Shared**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Has a staff committee focused on equity work.	64%	9%	23%	0%	0%	5%
Has an equity plan.	18%	45%	36%	0%	0%	0%

Table 7. Organizational Infrastructure and Equity						
The organizations:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Has Not Shared**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Has a staff committee focused on equity work.	64%	9%	23%	0%	0%	5%
Has an equity plan.	18%	45%	36%	0%	0%	0%

Table 8. Organizational Infrastructure and Equity	
The organization has formal operational definitions of the following	
Community Engagement	36%
Diversity	68%
Equity	59%
Gender	41%
Inclusion	59%
Indigenous Rights	18%
Environmental Justice	36%
Human Rights	27%
Race/Racism	27%
Race/Racism	20%
None of These	45%
Not Applicable	15%

Table 9. Organizational Infrastructure and Equity						
The organization reflects equity in the following materials and/or resources:						
	Never	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Most Times**	**Always**	**N/A**
Annual report	14%	9%	9%	5%	27%	36%
Job Announcements	0%	0%	0%	14%	77%	9%
Mission	36%	0%	5%	0%	55%	5%
Organization's Marketing Materials	18%	9%	27%	14%	14%	18%
Research Briefs/White Papers	14%	5%	41%	5%	14%	23%
Strategic Plan	14%	0%	5%	14%	36%	32%
Strategic Goals	9%	0%	9%	18%	45%	18%
Value Statements	9%	0%	9%	9%	41%	32%
Vision	27%	0%	0%	0%	50%	23%

Table 10. Staff Professional Development						
The organization:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Has Not Shared**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Has a plan for staff's professional development plan on equity	45%	18%	36%	0%	0%	0%

Table 11. Staff Professional Development	
The organization has offered staff professional development learning opportunities on the following equity topics:	
Diversity	64%
Environmental Justice	55%
Equity	59%
Gender	59%
History of Equity	45%
Human Rights	23%
Implicit Bias	59%
Inclusion	59%
Indigenous Rights	32%
Race/Racism	55%
None of These	36%
Not Applicable	5%

Table 12. Staff Professional Development	
The organization has offered the following opportunities for staff professional development on equity:	
Guest Speakers	50%
Staff-wide Trainings	68%
Book/Article Clubs	41%
Conferences	59%
Workshops	68%
None of These	14%
Other	23%

Table 13. Organizational Culture and Learning

The organization has a norm:	Formal	Informal	Does Not Have	Not Sure	Cannot Agree	N/A
For fostering a culture of teamwork and collaboration.	82%	9%	0%	9%	0%	0%
Around tolerance for risk in trying new approaches.	36%	45%	14%	5%	0%	0%
That provides incentives to staff to encourage new approaches to its work.	36%	18%	41%	5%	0%	0%
Related to interest in, or openness to new information for how it conducts its work.	59%	23%	5%	9%	5%	0%
For inclusivity in its work.	59%	23%	18%	0%	0%	0%
To foster psychological safety around topics that can feel difficult to discuss, such as race, gender, human rights, etc.	27%	59%	5%	9%	0%	0%
To discuss difficult topics and their impact on our mission and goals.	45%	27%	27%	0%	0%	0%

Table 14. Policy, Advocacy, and Equity

The organization has:	Formal	Informal	Does Not Have	Not Sure	Cannot Agree	N/A
Equity-related outcomes in its policy strategy.	29%	53%	12%	6%	0%	0%
A process to analyze how new or revised public policies impact under-resourced communities.	35%	24%	35%	6%	0%	0%
A strategic communication plan to raise key decision-makers' awareness about issues of equity.	24%	24%	35%	12%	0%	6%
A strategic communication plan to raise key stakeholders' awareness about issues of equity.	18%	24%	41%	12%	0%	6%

Table 15. Community Engagement and Equity						
The organization has:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Does Not Have**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
A plan to engage under-resourced communities in its work.	41%	32%	9%	5%	5%	9%
A process to share information with under-resourced communities as it relates to governance/ conservation issues impacting them.	23%	27%	27%	5%	0%	18%
Established relationships with community leaders and/or organizers that represent the voices of under-resourced communities	64%	18%	5%	0%	5%	9%
A process to ensure the representation of under-resourced communities in NGO coalitions focused on conservation issues that impact their communities.	23%	23%	27%	5%	5%	18%
A process to ensure that under-resourced communities have decision-making authority in its strategies.	27%	9%	45%	9%	0%	9%

Table 16. Community Engagement and Equity						
The organization reflects equity in the following materials and/or resources:						
The organization has a process to include participation from under-resourced communities in the following ways:	**Formal**	**Informal**	**No Process**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Design	27%	23%	27%	9%	5%	9%
Implementation	27%	23%	23%	9%	9%	9%
Evaluation	23%	5%	45%	14%	5%	9%

Table 17. Community Engagement and Equity	
The organization uses the following methods to solicit feedback from under-resourced communities:	
Community Advisory Committees	55%
Community Leadership Programs	32%
Community Forums	41%
Community Focus Groups	50%
Conservation Planning Committees	23%
Polling/Community Surveys	50%
Town Hall Meetings	27%
None of the Above	27%

Table 18. Strategy and Equity						
The organization (has):	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Does Not Have**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
Equity-related goals in its strategies.	55%	23%	18%	5%	0%	0%
A process to conduct social assessments in under-resourced communities in areas/ geographies of focus.	27%	0%	41%	18%	5%	9%
A process to integrate human rights into its strategies.	23%	14%	32%	14%	5%	14%
A process to integrate statutory and customary rights to resources for under-resourced communities in its strategies.	14%	27%	36%	0%	0%	23%
A process to integrate indigenous rights into its strategies.	18%	41%	32%	0%	0%	9%
A process to integrate measures to mitigate impacts on under-resourced communities into its on-going strategies.	41%	32%	14%	0%	0%	14%
A process to assess the equitable sharing of benefits with under-resourced communities as it relates to its on-going strategies.	27%	18%	36%	5%	0%	14%
A process to support a dispute resolution process and procedures for redress for under-resourced communities into its strategies.	23%	0%	41%	9%	0%	27%

Table 19. Evaluation and Equity						
The organization (has):	**Formal**	**Informal**	**Does Not Have**	**Not Sure**	**Cannot Agree**	**N/A**
An evaluation plan to understand its progress on equity in its strategies.	27%	14%	45%	9%	5%	0%
A team dedicated to evaluating its progress on equity in its internal and external strategies.	36%	9%	50%	5%	0%	0%
A process to integrate equity evaluation data and results into its strategies.	23%	14%	55%	9%	0%	0%

APPENDIX X: INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, SPECTRUM OF PARTICIPATION

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

APPENDIX VI: ROLES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES

Role	Principal Characteristics of the Citizen
Citizen as client	Dependent on the bureaucracy; Defers to the expertise of professionals; Relationship is grounded in the compliance of citizens
Citizen as customer	Focused on customer service and responsiveness of the institution; Adopts a consultative role; Are afforded greater choice rather than being entirely reliant on the institutional choices presented to them;
Citizen as citizen	Feels empowered; Are engaged participants in the deliberative process; Focuses on collective interests rather than individual self-interest
Citizen as co-producer	Collaborates with institutional leaders to solve problems and get things done; Shares responsibility and accountability with institutional leaders; Focuses on the process of partnership
Citizen as owner	Controls the decision-making process; Responsible for the development and delivery of services; Relationship is grounded in the compliance of professionals

APPENDIX VII: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GRANTMAKING FROM GRANTEE ORGANIZATIONS

Key Findings

- Reflect equity's long-term approach with long-term funding.
- Detach capacity-building funding from a project deliverable by providing core support for organizations to address equity.
- Direct capacity-building resources to organizations that are embedded in or directly connected to under-represented and under-resourced community voices.
- Support organizations working to address the staff and leadership pipeline, especially to include more people of color.

The interviews also asked grantees to offer recommendations to the Packard Foundation, with the understanding that many of these recommendations may apply to other grantmaking organizations, for how best to integrate equity into a capacity building grantmaking strategy.

While grantees lauded the Foundation's interest and commitment to strengthening organizations' operating capacity, they consistently stated that to build sustainable equity capacity requires long-term funding beyond a one-year capacity building grant. Grant cycles are often short-term, which hampers the ability of organizations to develop and implement internal practices and external strategies with an equity lens. This work is difficult, long-term, and resource-intensive. Among the many capacities needed, it requires external expertise and for internal structures and cultures to be built or changed. Long term-funding provides the necessary stability to fully and deeply engage in equity; as one grantee stated, "We have to be prepared to not just open deep boxes and say, 'Good luck, grantees.' This work can't be sprinkles on top." Similarly, some grantees said that the amount of capacity building grants need to be large enough to engage in equity over the long-term. For example, one grantee described how limited funding compromised their ability to contract with an external DEI consultant, "We struggled to find consultants to do the work with us. The grant we received was relatively small and it felt like we shortchanged consultants and our own work, especially in developing a multiyear plan."

"My top recommendation is to commit to a long-term funding horizon, whether this is a pot of money for 10 years or something like that. I don't think you need to make a 10-year commitment to an organization but make a commitment to the goal of advancing equity. Change occurs slowly and it's not going to happen if you don't know the support is going to be there. Organizations need this funding stability."

Grantees reported that addressing equity in the context of a project grant can be challenging because funder expectations tend to center on delivering a specific project deliverable. For the most part, these deliverables and the associated project-based funding did not permit grantees the flexibility to address equity in an explicit way, particularly as it pertained to addressing internal equity practices. Accordingly, equity either takes a backseat or organizations pull from general operating funds, which creates additional financial pressures; as one grantee noted, "We have to squeeze equity funds out of anything we can." For small organizations with limited auxiliary resources, this challenge is especially acute. Creating general operating equity funding affords grantees greater flexibility, financial stability, and dedicated resources.

"Right now, when we think about our equity work, we are in funding buckets. We have to make choices between core funder-driven tasks versus how we engage in community-focused equity work. I'm excited for this not to a be a choice but a complementary piece, so that we're not trading against the work."

Interviewees recommended that capacity-building resources targeted at addressing equity be directed toward amplifying efforts to build ongoing relationships with communities and robustly addressing community participation. While these resources are valuable across many types of organizations, coalitions and projects, it is especially important for small grassroots groups that are already embedded in and working with communities.

"There are a lot of amazing small organizations that are grassroots, and they are the ones working with people on the ground. They are the groups making sure that the people who need to be reached are being included. It's important to make sure that funding is filtered to these organizations, which have direct connections to those voices and perspectives."

Equity is as much a pipeline challenge as it is a capacity building issue (Taylor, 2014); therefore, if funders wish to support organizations and the broader field, they must address the obvious lack of diversity in the workforce, particularly amongst organizational leadership. Some grantees have begun to focus its programs on building a stronger pipeline through leadership training initiatives or internship programs, but there is still a considerable vacuum for people of color to step into formal leadership positions

Funders, like the Packard Foundation, possess the resources and reputational power to elevate equity as a more prominent issue in the field; as one interviewee succinctly stated, "When funders talk, people listen." Messages and expectations from funders send signals to grantees about the level of commitment required for equity to be a key element of their work and not an optional add-on. Grantmakers should emphasize this point in their communications and grantmaking commitments, and be transparent, authentic, and accountable.

"We see now the gentrification of environmental justice (EJ). All of a sudden everyone is environmental justice, and it's not about adding a letter. Environmental justice was born out of specific failure of the environmental movement to include and work for people of color. You can't just decide as a majority white organization that you are now EJ. Funders have to create the space for this work to happen and to telegraph this message to grantees so that they put in the work."

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