

## Becoming Stronger Stewards of Well-Being & Equity

### **Who are Stewards?**

Stewards are people or organizations who work with others to create conditions that all people need to thrive, beginning with those who are struggling and suffering. Stewards have or want to develop an equity orientation in regard to purpose, power, and wealth.

### **Stewards understand that:**

- Purpose must be larger than oneself and one's organization
- Power must be built and distributed with others, not consolidated
- Wealth must be invested, not withheld, to create long-term value as well as address short-term urgent needs

System change doesn't begin with shifting policies and investment practices. The first step in effective system change is shifting mindsets and changing mental models. The policies and practices of any health system are based on certain deeply held beliefs and assumptions about how to best improve health and well-being.

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### **What is Well-Being?**

We can distinguish two related ways of viewing well-being:

- **Personal Experiences:** Individual perspectives and experiences that affect how we think, feel, and function, as well as how to evaluate our lives as a whole.
- **Vital Conditions:** Properties of places and institutions that we all depend on to reach our potential.

A nationally recognized measure of this concept asks people to rate their self-perceived well-being on a scale from 0 (worst possible life) to 10 (best possible life), both now and in the future. When combined, those ratings reveal who feels they are thriving, struggling, or suffering.

## What are the vital conditions?

Vital conditions are properties of places and institutions that all people need for health and well-being. They include a thriving natural world, basic needs for health and safety, humane housing, meaningful work and wealth, lifelong learning, reliable transportation, and, central to all of these, belonging and civic muscle.

Investments in these conditions are necessary to create an equitable, thriving future for ourselves and for generations to come.



### THRIVING NATURAL WORLD

#### Sustainable resources, contact with nature, freedom from hazards

Clean air, water, soil; healthy ecosystems able to sustainably provide necessary resources; accessible natural spaces; freedom from the extreme heat, flooding, wind, radiation, earthquakes, pathogens



### BASIC NEEDS FOR HEALTH + SAFETY

#### Basic requirements for health and safety

Nutritious food, safe drinking water; fresh air; sufficient sleep; routine physical activity; safe, satisfying sexuality and reproduction; freedom from trauma, violence, addiction and crime; routine care for physical and behavioral health



### HUMANE HOUSING

#### Humane, consistent housing

Adequate space per person; safe structures; affordable costs; diverse neighborhoods (without gentrification, segregation, concentrated poverty); close to work, school, food, recreation, and nature



### MEANINGFUL WORK + WEALTH

#### Rewarding work, careers, and standards of living

Job training/retraining; good-paying and fulfilling jobs; family and community wealth; savings and limited debt



### LIFELONG LEARNING

#### Continuous learning, education, and literacy

Continuous development of cognitive, social, emotional abilities; early childhood experiences; elementary, high school, and higher education; career and adult education



### RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION

#### Reliable, safe, and accessible transportation

Close to work, school, food, leisure; safe transport; active transport; efficient energy use; few environmental hazards



### BELONGING + CIVIC MUSCLE

#### Sense of belonging and power to shape a common world

Social support; civic association; freedom from stigma, discrimination, oppression; support for civil rights, human rights; civic agency; collective efficacy; vibrant arts, culture, and spiritual life; equitable access to information; many opportunities for civic engagement (voting, volunteering, public work)

## Belonging and Civic Muscle

is at the center because it is both a vital condition and a practical capacity that is necessary for equitable success in every other kind of work.

