



# EQUITY-ORIENTED REPORTING OF POPULATION-LEVEL DATA

## Introduction

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Reporting on equity using population-level data to advance equity relies on the collection and analysis of socio-demographic data. That data is then used to look for differences in health outcomes that are associated with things like *homelessness, income, age, education, gender, geographic location, sex at birth, race and ethnicity, and Indigenous identity*.

However, it isn't just about collecting the data. Reporting on the data also has implications for how we understand it, what we pay attention to, and what the potential solutions to inequitable health outcomes are considered to include. Yet, understanding and assessing health inequities is constrained by inappropriate reporting practices. In other words, data reporting is not neutral- and advancing equity requires making equity choices in how we present and report on population-level data.

Many scholars and practitioners advocate for equity- and justice-oriented reporting of population health data, yet, there are few exemplars of this in practice. Following a rapid environmental scan, below we summarize the existing **recommendations** into **four** broad principles for equity-advancing data reporting.

## 1 Transparency and Action

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Ensuring the relevance and usefulness of reports, requires being transparent about the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and reporting demographic data stratifiers and what they represent in the context of the research question. This recommendation mirrors the Grandmothers' Perspective framework's focus on purpose. Further, by making clear a purpose for the report, it also prompts the report to include actionable recommendations to address identified disparities and inequities, to contribute to solutions.

## 2 Authentic partnering

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Generating meaningful and contextualized reports requires processes that engage partners at all stages of work, and maintain honest and open communication. Importantly, reports need to, recognize and honour the uniqueness of each community, and respect their history, culture and governance structure. This resonates with the Grandmother's Perspective that emphasizes respectful relationships, and attention to process, as a critical pillar of equity-oriented demographic data collection and use.





### 3 Multimodal data collection, analysis, and reporting

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Understanding how inequities are shaped by disparate, intersecting factors in any context and population, and reflecting those understandings in the reporting of data requires: (i) using multiple methods to collect data; and, (ii) accounting for contextual determinants in the collection, interpretation, and reporting of such data.

### 4 Strengths-Based and Solutions-Focused Language

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Avoiding retrenching and naturalizing inequities in reports demands the thoughtful consideration and intentional use of language to advance equity and focus on solutions. If inequities are identified, they should be accompanied by information on the known causes of those inequities and recommendations for action on the known causes. For example, reporting practices can avoid implied hierarchies in tables that represent the ethnicity of respondents (i.e. presenting White before other ethnicities identified in the population) while also clarifying that social locations are only relevant to health outcomes because of the inequitable distribution of resources, power and opportunities. Reports should also highlight the successes and strengths of populations- not just their deficits.

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