

Project C3-1

Social Equity, Environmental Justice, and the Urban Water Innovation Network

Thrust A

- Which people and places in UWIN regions bear more burdens and receive more benefits from current water systems and practices?

Thrust B

- Are the interests of underrepresented groups served by UWIN's proposed new political and technological solutions for urban water management?

Thrust C

- Do underrepresented groups participate meaningfully in the UWIN stakeholder groups that seek to foster sustainable urban water systems?

Thrust D

- What are the expected or observed impacts and co-benefits of UWIN sustainable water solutions on underrepresented groups?

The UWIN team decided at the outset that social equity and environmental justice will be high priorities in everything that we do, including research, education, and community engagement.

Fairness for everyone - in the allocation of affordable and clean water for drinking and recreation, in wastewater management services, and in protection from water hazards, such as storms and floods - is an essential feature that must be part of designing and managing sustainable urban water solutions.

UWIN recognizes that low-income and racial/ethnic minority individuals and communities have historically been and continue to be disadvantaged by the cost and quality of water, the placement of hazardous facilities in their neighborhoods, and the inaccessibility of attractive and protective water features.

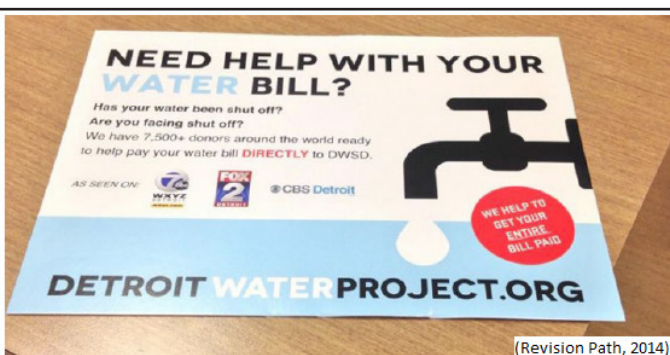
Our goal of promoting more equitable distributions of water resources and services in UWIN cities will be achieved in three ways:

- UWIN researchers will apply their scientific tools to understanding the inequities in existing urban water systems.
- We will train our students to study inequities as they pursue their research.
- We will widen the channels of communication with traditionally underrepresented groups by making every effort to engage their representatives as local stakeholders in UWIN cities as these stakeholder groups assess their region's current water needs, foster new ideas for change, and develop measures to evaluate progress in improved water management.





(Roy, 2015)



(Revision Path, 2014)



(Meeko, 2015)



(May, 2016)

The Social Equity and Environmental Justice (SEEJ) team will undertake two research projects that are strategically designed to strengthen the voices of underrepresented groups in UWIN:

1. The Household Survey of Pressures, Indicators, and Solutions will ask hundreds of socially diverse residents in the UWIN study regions about their uses of water and the impacts of water prices on their household budgets.
2. The SEEJ team will also conduct interviews with leaders of dozens of community organizations to determine what challenges and successes they have had in dealing with utilities, government agencies, and academic researchers in their communities. Interviewers will also ask participants to identify characteristics of a sustainable water system.



CONTACT US!

We want to hear from anyone who has information about water problems in low-income and minority neighborhoods and suggestions of people and community organizations that we should include in our interviews. Please contact us if you or some group you know would like to participate. Learn more here: <https://erams.com/UWIN/c3-1/>

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