National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health

Centre de collaboration nationale des déterminants de la santé

Mind the Disruption

PODCAST EPISODE TRANSCRIPT & COMPANION DOCUMENT

SEASON 2 | EPISODE 4

Disrupting for Racial & Climate Justice

Episode released on:
March 26, 2024

Mind the Disruption is a podcast about people who refuse to accept things as they are. It's about people pushing for better health for all. It's about people like us who have a deep desire to build a healthier, more just world.

In the second season of Mind the Disruption, we explore **social movements for social justice:** groups of people working together to build collective power for change. Throughout the season, we delve into approaches for advancing racial equity, applying intersectionality, building community power and working together. In each episode, we name concrete actions that public health can take to work with others in service of social movements for social justice.

This episode companion document, available in English and French, provides a different way to engage with the podcast. It includes a written transcript of Episode 4 with key quotes, related resources and discussion questions to prompt reflection, sharing and action.

EPISODE 4
MARCH 26, 2024

SEASON TWO

HOST

BERNICE YANFUL

Bernice Yanful (PhD) is a Knowledge Translation Specialist with the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health (NCCDH), and she previously worked as a public health nurse in Ontario. Bernice is dedicated to advancing health equity with a particular focus on food systems.

PODCAST GUESTS*

IMARA AJANI ROLSTON

Dr. Imara Ajani Rolston is a social psychologist, policy-maker, and Associate Professor and Director of the Community Climate Resilience Lab at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health. Dr. Rolston has contributed to research and publications in the areas of HIV/AIDS, health promotion and community development, and has advanced racial justice and urban responses to climate change with the City of Toronto's Resilience Office and the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit. He has over 15 years of experience working across sub-Saharan Africa with organizations including the Stephen Lewis Foundation, Oxfam Canada and Greenpeace Africa.

DIANA CHAN MCNALLY

Diana Chan McNally (Dipl. CW, BFA, MA, MEd) is a front-line worker supporting unhoused people in Toronto's Downtown East side. As someone with lived experience of social services and homelessness, her work focuses on human rights and equity issues for people without housing, and particularly encampments. She is an alumnus of Maytree Canada and a fellow of the McNally Project for Paramedicine Research.

* Guests have provided the content for their introductions.

EPISODE DESCRIPTION

As Director of the Community Climate Resilience Lab, Dr. Imara Rolston recognizes that the climate crisis is a health emergency that will disproportionally impact racialized communities. Explore this episode to learn about how Imara and his team are bringing together non-profit leaders, grassroots leaders, academics and policy-makers and creating a Toronto-focused Racial Justice Climate Resilience Framework. Through this work, they are supporting cities to reckon with historical slavery and colonialism and integrate community-driven solutions. Community outreach worker Diana Chan McNally then reflects on opportunities for public health to improve community engagement efforts.

EPISODE 4
MARCH 26, 2024

SEASON TWO

IN THIS EPISODE

SEASON ONE

QUOTES FROM SEASON 1

JENNIFER SCOTT

I think if I go to work today, I'll die. (Season 1, Episode 1)

PAUL TAYLOR

There's been a series of injustices that have allowed some people to have food and allowed other people to struggle for access to food. (Season 1, Episode 5)

SAMIYA ABDI

People are stuck in this powerlessness paradigm. (Season 1, Episode 3)

HARLAN PRUDEN

Always ask yourself "Why?" (Season 1, Episode 6)

SUME NDUMBE-EYOH

There were times when I would think maybe I'm going to get fired, right? (Season 1, Episode 2)

SAROM RHO

It's the moment of refusal. (Season 1, Episode 4)

HEATHER LOKKO

If we're not intentional about creating some discomfort, things won't change. It will stay status quo, and that's not okay. (Season 1, Episode 8)

INTRODUCING SEASON 2

BERNICE YANFUL (NCCDH)

Hi. Welcome to the second season of Mind the Disruption. I'm Bernice Yanful. I'm a Knowledge Translation Specialist at the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, an organization that moves knowledge into action with the goal of better health for everyone. I've also worked as a public health nurse in an Ontario public health unit, and I recently completed my doctoral studies at the University of Toronto.

This season, we're talking about social movements for social justice: groups of people working together to build collective power for change and health for all. We'll dive into a range of topics with people from across Canada. We'll talk about the environment, immigration status, food, birth, disability and poverty. We'll talk about racism, ableism and colonialism. And we'll talk about solutions and the power of collective action.

In each episode, you'll hear from a disruptor — someone who refuses to accept things as they are. They see something that is unfair or unjust, and they take bold, courageous action, often in the face of active resistance. They work with others to disrupt the status quo because they have a deep shared conviction that a better world is possible. You'll also hear from a second guest, someone who will reflect on how public health can do things differently and better. At the end of each episode, we'll name some concrete actions that public health can take to work with others in service of social movements for social justice.

REBECCA CHEFF (NCCDH)

This podcast is produced by the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. We support the Canadian public health community to address the structural and social determinants of health and to advance health equity. We are one of six National Collaborating Centres for Public Health working across Canada. We're funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada. We're hosted by St. Francis Xavier University, which is located on Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw People. This podcast is part of our organization's commitment to confront intersecting systems of oppression and to reveal concrete opportunities to disrupt racism and colonialism. The views expressed on this podcast do not necessarily represent the views of our funder or our host agency.

CONSIDER THIS!

Before reading or listening to this episode, think about your current understanding of racial justice and climate justice.

- Where do you see racism and colonialism intersecting with the climate crisis?
- What have you learned about this at school, at work, in your life or in the media?

INTRODUCING THIS EPISODE

"Don't allow dominant discourses around climate to silence your willingness to bring legacies of racial injustice, legacies of Indigenous dispossession into conversations about climate all the time … in every space."

IMARA AJANI ROLSTON

BERNICE (NARRATION)

You just heard the inspiring Dr. Imara Ajani Rolston encouraging climate justice advocates to make the connections between systems like racism and colonization and the unequal impacts of the climate crisis. Imara is a strong believer that addressing the climate crisis requires community-driven solutions. This means nurturing trusting relationships and meaningfully engaging with communities. I'll speak with Diana Chan McNally, a long-time community outreach worker, to hear her thoughts on how to do just that.

Before we go further, let's zoom out to better understand the climate justice movement.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Heat waves in Montréal.

CAROLINA JIMENEZ (NCCDH)

Hurricanes in Louisiana.

REBECCA

Floods in Central Mali.

MIRO SIROIS (NCCDH)

Hailstorms in Italy.

CHRIS PERRY (NCCDH)

Smog in New Delhi.

NANDINI SAXENA (NCCDH)

Landslides in Petrópolis.

MANDY WALKER (NCCDH)

Forest fires in the Yukon.

PEMMA MUZUMDAR (NCCDH)

Melting sea ice off Baffin Island.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

These are but a few examples of changing weather patterns and extreme events linked to a rapidly heating planet. The climate crisis, in tandem with other human-caused ecological changes, affects the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat and all the conditions of daily life. Many refer to the climate crisis as a health emergency, noting increased rates of respiratory, heart and Lyme disease; food system disruptions; and more.

Though the crisis affects everyone, not everyone is affected equally. Just like with any other complex health problem, the distribution of power and resources drives who is most vulnerable.

Around the world, there is a growing chorus of people drawing attention to the dangers of climate change and demanding urgent action. Greta Thunberg, Leonardo DiCaprio, Al Gore, you've likely heard these names before. They have become the faces of climate action, pushing for change. But have you heard of Xiye Bastida, Jacqui Patterson or Dr. Robert Bullard?

They, like so many others, are leading a movement for climate justice. A movement that centres the voices of people most affected by the crisis but often ignored by mainstream climate activism. Like people from Black, Indigenous and racialized communities.

Greenhouse gangsters vs. climate justice, the title of a 1999 report, provided one of the earliest known references to climate justice. Published by the U.S.-based Transnational Resource and Action Center, the report declared that global warming "may well be the largest environmental justice issue of all time." And it argued that corporate climate culprits like the oil industry needed to be held accountable for their role in driving climate change.

Since then, the climate justice movement has been taken up in different ways around the world. In North America, the movement rests on the shoulders of and connects with many other movements: Indigenous reconciliation, decolonizing climate action, Land Back, the civil rights movement, Black Lives Matter and efforts towards environmental justice.

You may remember Dr. Ingrid Waldron from our first episode of the season. Here she is talking about the importance of addressing racism in climate action:

INGRID WALDRON | The climate narrative is about how we are all impacted, yes. But we also have to talk about who's more impacted. And I think that's what White people don't like to talk about is who is more, disproportionately. Because once you talk about who is more, then there's this sense that we need to address their issues first. And yes, as far as I'm concerned, you do. If somebody is more vulnerable, then we should be addressing their issues first.

So while climate change impacts us all — we know it, we see it, we feel it, we see the heat waves, all of us — we can say it has nothing to do with race. The truth is, it does as well. (Recorded for Season 2, Episode 1, not included in the published version)

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Today's episode is all about connections. The connection between the climate and our health. The connection between being Black, Indigenous and racialized and experiencing the climate crisis differently. The connections that can be made across cities and across sectors.

Today's episode is also about the decisions we make to advantage some people and disadvantage others. The decisions that can prevent the climate crisis from getting worse, to better prepare for what's coming. And importantly, decisions to protect and support Black, Indigenous and racialized communities.

TALKING WITH DR. IMARA AJANI ROLSTON

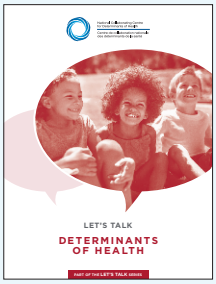
BERNICE

Imara is the founder of the Community Climate Resilience Lab at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, part of the University of Toronto. He is driven by the connection he sees between racial justice and a community's capacity for climate resilience. That is, to "*prepare, respond, recover and transform* in the face of [the] climate crisis."

Imara got his start working with Toronto youth. He then spent over 15 years responding to the HIV/AIDS crisis in sub-Saharan Africa. Through these experiences, Imara saw how past injustices connect to the problems in the here and now. How systems like slavery and colonization have dispossessed Black, Indigenous and racialized youth. Robbed them from connections to the land, language, Elders, cultural practices, educational opportunities and material resources. I wanted to know more about this and how Imara came to the climate justice movement.

Let's Talk: Determinants of health

NCCDH. [2024].



This document from the NCCDH's Let's Talk series promotes understanding of terms such as structural, social and ecological determinants of health. Through this resource, public health practitioners, scholars and students can reflect on the interconnected terms and how they can be applied in health equity-oriented practice.

BERNICE

I've heard you describe yourself as a scrappy youth worker, which I love, that descriptor, by the way. So how did you go from a scrappy youth worker, and what did that look like, to now working in climate action and resilience?

IMARA

I started as a youth worker in Regent Park. I started with an organization called Pathways to Education. And it was a very personal story for me, partly because I grew up as a youth with friends that are experiencing police profiling. I experienced intense police profiling as a youth.

And so what does it mean when you're a youth worker and folks are telling you that the response to increases in gun violence is policing? That is a tool for dispossession.

If you're in the AIDS pandemic and folks are telling you "abstinence, be faithful and condomnize," that is a tool for dispossession.

If you're in a climate conversation and folks are telling you merely technocratic responses to major climate fallout and climate crises are the answers, that is a tool for dispossession.

And so shifting the narrative through policy work, through radical action in all these different spaces becomes the work.

That's kind of the running red thread. That's how I went from being a scrappy youth worker who was trying to address the ways that I felt dispossessed as a youth by working with other Black youth ran into my work as someone working at the front lines of the AIDS response, and then open me up to a broader conversation about what is probably one of the biggest conversations for us globally, which is the climate crisis and climate injustice.

BERNICE

That's fascinating. So from what you shared, it sounds like you were working on different issues almost at the same time, simultaneously, and you started to see what their common threads were, right? The dominant narrative was putting the responsibility on individuals to act differently, but then you really saw the structural determinants of health at the root of all of these different issues.

IMARA

That's completely it.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

You just heard about the structural determinants of health, sometimes referred to as the root causes of health inequity. A group of researchers recently described these as the written and unwritten rules that drive patterns of advantage among different groups, like the values, beliefs, world views, laws, policies and practices that create advantages for those who are White and disadvantages for those who are racialized. And that create differences in health that are systematic, unfair and avoidable.

These rules are typically created by those who have more power in society, so it's no surprise that they are designed to maintain the status quo.

Imara saw these rules at play through his time as a youth worker in Toronto and again through his global health work abroad.

While in sub-Saharan Africa, he saw increasingly unpredictable rains; hotter, drier weather; disruptions to community food supplies. Changes largely caused by Western industrial nations who consumed and emitted more than their fair share of greenhouse gases.

When he returned to Toronto, Imara was primed to engage in the local climate justice movement.

IMARA

When I returned to Toronto, it started to change my perspectives and weave everything together. And so if you've come back to Toronto with a climate change lens — as a historically scrappy youth worker who understands how in some ways our city been built to purposely dispossess, knowing that the climate crisis is going to disproportionately impact Black and racialized and Indigenous folks in ways that we know, but that is being erased from the dominant conversation — you recognize that the major, major, major focus for you is to advance work alongside other people who have been advancing this work for a long time in the city, by the way, to centre disruptive change, transformative change and, in particular, racial justice, decolonizing work at the centre of the climate change conversation here in this city. And that's going to be the work.

The racial-spatial-climate divide

BERNICE

Tell me about the [Community] Climate Resilience Lab. You're the founder of that Lab, and it's through the University of Toronto, do I have that right?

IMARA

Yeah, absolutely.

BERNICE

So what inspired the creation of that Lab?

IMARA

When I returned to Toronto, I joined the City of Toronto as an Urban Fellow, and as a part of that role, you have the opportunity to work with two different teams. So I started with the Affordable Housing Office, and I learned a lot there.

But even more formatively, I ended up working with the City's ResilientTO team, which is the City's team that was developing the City's Climate Resilience Strategy. At that time, the Rockefeller Foundation, they were funding 100 cities across the world to advance their own climate resilience strategies, and the City of Toronto had signed up for that.

So as a part of a five-person team that was advancing that strategy and developing that strategy, but at that time, the North Star for me was the City of Boston. The City of Boston had developed a racial justice climate resilience strategy. And that's what I believed the City of Toronto should do because of the way we're structured. Because we have a racial-spatial divide. And a growing racial-spatial divide.

BERNICE

Tell me more about that. What is that?

IMARA

A while ago, there was a work around three cities that was talking about how the way our city was becoming polarized by income, with the centre being higher income and the outer suburbs being lower income. And that was intensifying over time.

As David Hulchanski's work started to progress, he started to see race being sort of a running factor through that research. And so it wasn't just an income-spatial divide in our city. It was a racial-spatial-income divide that was growing.

"It wasn't just an income-spatial divide in our city. It was a racial-spatial-income divide that was growing"

IMARA ROLSTON

And it's growing in a city that doesn't have a history of policy around redlining but certainly does have histories of systemic racism, divestment in neighbourhoods with higher populations of Black and racialized folks.

And so that was a major part of the work. And that's where I saw the connection between the City of Toronto and Boston. And that's why I thought a racial justice-oriented approach and focus for the City was really important.

I moved from the climate resilience team to the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit at the City of Toronto and recognized that there was no clear bridge between those policy spaces. The Anti-Black Racism Unit was doing massive and important work around everything from transforming policing to advancing food justice to a whole host of other pieces.

But climate wasn't an essential part of the conversation. And so the Lab was about breaking that conversation and taking that conversation outside the City for a moment to think about how we incubate a discussion about racial justice-oriented climate resilience through deep conversations with people that are thinking about this across North America. With the aim of advancing racial justice-oriented climate resilience work but in ways that bring together policy-makers, that bring together academics, that bring together not-for-profit leaders and grassroots leaders in a collaborative effort to do that.

So the idea is that it can't be the sole responsibility of policy-makers. It can't just exist in the space of not-for-profits. There have to be spaces, maybe like the Lab, that help co-curate spaces for that collaborative effort.

BERNICE

So cool. That sounds amazing.

And you mentioned that the city has a racial and income divide. How do those divides play into the impacts of the climate crisis?

IMARA

I think that's an important question, and I think it's about disproportionate vulnerability. The way we think about city planning, the way we think about gentrification are all pillars in climate vulnerability.

The fact that we have a food system that disproportionately harms the livelihoods of Black residents in Canada, and in particular Toronto, is a climate vulnerability.

The fact that we have a city that has not yet taken on the impacts of gentrification on historically Black neighbourhoods with historically high populations of Black residents is a climate vulnerability.

The fact that we see enforcement and policing as our response to community safety and well-being primarily, or historically we have up until more recently, is a climate vulnerability.

And when you take all those pieces together and recognize that those vulnerabilities disproportionately impact very particular neighbourhoods in the city, what you then see is a racial-spatial-climate divide. And it is yawning, gaping and growing over time.

And, you know, our realities in terms of the housing crisis that we're in right now, the ways that food injustice and food apartheid have increased since COVID-19 are all in many ways indications that we're going in the wrong direction.

There has been a massive amount of work in neighbourhoods led mostly by Black and racialized folks, led by Indigenous folks across these neighborhoods to rethink the way this Toronto space — Tkaronto — is shaped and operates and exists as a collective of people living in space and on land together. And so a lot of the work of the Lab is to tap into that leadership and tap into that experience and be *led by* the experience into the creation of visions for a reimagining of Toronto.

BERNICE

And what it can look like.

IMARA

And what it can look like.

BERNICE

Can you walk me through an example? You mentioned that housing inequalities, or inequities rather, is a climate vulnerability. How exactly is that a climate vulnerability?

IMARA

Yeah, so I can give you a perfect example. As a part of the Lab, we have something called the Reconciling Racial Justice and Climate Resilience Project. And in that project, we're talking to 105, you know, what we call key informants, but I'll say folks — academics, policy-makers, grassroots leaders across a bunch of different cities in North America.

We have been talking more recently to folks in Miami and New Orleans. And in Miami, we've been talking to folks about sea level rise and the way sea level rise is creating a new form of climate gentrification. Pushing the interest of developers who typically built on the coasts into areas like Little Haiti that were historically neglected and underinvested. And so what we're seeing is, we're seeing a housing market, in particular in the context of Miami, shifting its focus to neighbourhoods that have been historically dispossessed and marginalized, and we're seeing now climate gentrification in different ways.

But on top of that, we're seeing cities that have not developed the tools to take that on. That have not thought about how, from a policy standpoint, we intervene in the market system to ensure that gentrification doesn't disproportionately impact Black and racialized communities that are experiencing climate gentrification and by effect destabilize them over the long term, creating larger vulnerabilities as the climate crisis advances.

In New Orleans, we had the example of Hurricane Katrina historically. And we have talked to a lot of folks about the impacts that Hurricane Katrina had on the Ninth Ward, a historically Black neighbourhood again with a history of dispossession, underinvestment, but also with a massive history of organizing, action and community love that had defined it over a very long period of time.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Let's pause for a moment and talk about the concept of vulnerability. Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005. Black communities were made especially vulnerable to its impact. Why?

Because vulnerability has three main components:

- one's level of exposure
- how sensitive or susceptible one is to being harmed
- one's capacity to adapt to and recover from the situation

A closer look at what happened with Hurricane Katrina reveals that the evacuation plans for the area relied on several assumptions, like that residents:

- would have access to a car
- would be able to take time off work
- would have the financial resources to sustain themselves while evacuating and
- would have supportive networks and people to stay with out of town

This was not the case for many low-income residents, the majority of whom were Black. Because of these barriers, many stayed behind and were more exposed to the rising floodwaters than their wealthier White counterparts.

Black residents were actively blamed by decision-makers for not evacuating, and efforts to rescue survivors were deprioritized and delayed. Black residents were therefore more susceptible to the effects of the storm, unable to access basic needs like food, clean water and health care for an extended period of time.

The hurricane affected several public housing projects that specifically served the low-income Black community. Instead of rebuilding these projects, the city closed them and opened the door to private development. This meant that Black residents were unable to return to their communities, unable to afford housing and unable to recover from the hurricane.

IMARA

Hurricane Katrina, as we understood it, had a huge impact on the Ninth Ward in terms of the floods. And there are a lot of folks who have never been able to come back to New Orleans or the Ninth Ward because of the ways the city has decided to rebuild itself.

Again, you see a city that has not developed the tools to think specifically about the way climate is disproportionately impacting the housing outcomes of Black and racialized folks living in underinvested or historically marginalized neighbourhoods.

In the context of Toronto, I think there's no question that we have a housing crisis. There's no question that we have not yet developed the tools to effectively say that we are intervening in gentrification and displacement. And so that is a massive gaping hole. And that is a massive vulnerability.

Bringing together climate resilience and racial justice efforts

BERNICE

So you were working on the City of Toronto's climate resilience plan and you notice that racial justice gap. How does taking a racial justice lens make climate action work look different?

IMARA

I think in a few ways. One, I think we have to do the work of reshaping how we understand the climate crisis emerged in the first place so that we're creating the foundations for more robust conversations about how our city has to change.

One of the things that we always talk about in the Lab is about 1441, and about the beginning of the transatlantic slave trade, and about the ways that the creation of a global racial hierarchy and a global political and economic hierarchy — in terms of the creation of a Global South and a Global North, with the Global North building its wealth through extractive industries and polluting industries, with the Global South being more vulnerable — has shaped what we often refer to as a diverse Toronto, and the connections between those two things.

"One of the things that we always talk about in the Lab is about 1441 and about the beginning of the transatlantic slave trade.... How 1441 continues to animate the choices that we make in Toronto from a policy standpoint."

IMARA ROLSTON

And so I think, one, we have to talk about the legacies of racial injustice and how they live in Toronto. How 1441 continues to animate the choices that we make in Toronto from a policy standpoint.

And then I think the other piece is a racial justice-oriented approach and -rooted approach radically expands our scope of change. I think this is important because, at times, conversations about climate can be really focused on technical responses. And that those are important, right?

BERNICE

Can you give me an example of a technical response?

IMARA

I think the retrofitting of buildings is extremely important. I think having storm-water management systems that can deal with increased rains and intensity of rains and flooding is important.

I think having a conversation about how we reparatively plan our cities is different. Having conversations about how we develop policy frameworks that reshape the racial-spatial-climate divide is a very different conversation.

I think what can happen, and this is the running red thread through my youth work, through the AIDS prevention work, is that we can lose, I guess, the moment to a shrinking down of the conversation to just technocratic responses. And it means we won't be ready. And we won't do the difficult things.

"I think the retrofitting of buildings is extremely important…. I think having a conversation about how we reparatively plan our cities is different."

IMARA ROLSTON

And so when I think about some of the partnerships that we're nurturing in Scarborough and Jane and Finch: yes, the retrofitting of buildings and considerations around storm-water management are hugely important, but the way our city is structured is deeply problematic, and we need to be able to take that on in a very holistic way.

My perspective, and I think what I hear from folks in New Orleans, in Miami, in Oakland, in other places, is that this is the most important time to do huge, hard things.

It is the only time because it'll get away from us.

It is about saying something as simple, this is small, but something as simple as we need to figure out how we begin to bring all the race-based data and data measures that we have together across multiple factors, whether it be food, community safety and well-being, housing, etc., into one large framework that helps us project into the future so we can anticipate and have the power to predict who will be affected most and the worst, and plan accordingly from a reparative way.

BERNICE

From what you're saying, you mentioned that historical perspective is often absent from mainstream ways of thinking about climate action. So really rooting the work that you're doing and an understanding of the historical legacies of slavery and how that shapes the current picture in Toronto.

IMARA

Absolutely.

BERNICE

And going back to what you mentioned, how the mainstream actors in the space often say, "You know, this moment demands urgency, so we need to do these things like retrofitting, storm shelters" — or is that the language you'd use?

IMARA

And more — yes, yes, yes, those are just examples — and more. And they are all extremely important interventions, but not enough.

BERNICE

It reminds me of some reading I've been doing in the food system space. And when we think about food crises and our global food system in crisis, that this scholar Holt-Giménez, he says, you know, these moments of crisis, they can offer opportunities to really reimagine, rethink, go in a different direction, and we need to take advantage of these moments. When we realize the status quo is not working and we need new thinking and new action.

And so if we think of healthier futures, more equitable futures, what does that look like at the intersection of climate action and racial justice?

IMARA

I sometimes have hopes in cities, towns, communities and villages.

BERNICE

Okay. Not countries?

IMARA

Oh, I'll get there. Yeah, I do, I do. But I think that there are opportunities to be North Stars in our work, and by North Stars, I mean starting with the units of geography, space and relationships where we can advance the most transformative change.

And so my hope lies in the fact that what I'm seeing in, I think, cities like Toronto, what I'm hearing in cities like New Orleans as we talk to people, what I'm seeing in countries like Barbados and other countries that are small island states is a much more robust conversation about how our world needs to change.

I think we can't underestimate how important some of the things that we're seeing around Black food sovereignty in the city, led by fantastic folks at the City; the work that we're seeing in police reform in the city, led by fantastic folks in the City; and transformative thinking around community safety, well-being. The work that we're seeing across the Caribbean and now sub-Saharan Africa around reparations is hugely invigorating because it is pushing the conversation at the right and necessary moment.

And I see a lot of hope in that because I think there is a massive groundswell behind that work. It isn't just a few policy-makers or a few academics that are behind this. It is communities. It is people. It is Black folks. It is racialized folks. It is Indigenous folks. Pushing collectively, sometimes in an aligned way, towards the same vision for a transformative future.

You so often sometimes hear that there are not enough Black and racialized folks that are engaged in the environmental sector or engaged in conversations about climate. That's completely false.

And if anything, our conversations with folks across North America have taught us that there have been communities doing this work for a long time.

"You so often sometimes hear that there are not enough Black and racialized folks that are engaged in the environmental sector.... If anything, our conversations with folks across North America have taught us that there have been communities doing this work for a long time."

IMARA ROLSTON

Hopes for the future

BERNICE

I love that. And how do you see the work that the Lab does part of trying to create those futures that you described for me?

IMARA

A big part of our work right now is to develop a Racial Justice Climate Resilience Framework focused on Toronto.

We want to talk to 105 folks across 12 cities, some of them Canadian, some of them in the U.S., and distill all that wisdom, experience and knowledge into a framework that can pull together policy-makers, pull together grassroots actors, pull together not-for-profit leaders into the co-creation of a shared vision for what racial justice-oriented climate resilience framework could look like over the long term.

And we want to find ways for the framework to be a contribution to long-term work in one or two neighbourhoods with interested policy-makers, with community-serving organizations in that neighbourhood, with not-for-profits that have a vested stake in those neighbourhoods, and with grassroots actors and activists that have been talking about this stuff for time immemorial.

"That's where we start, you know, meaningful relationship, deep work over time, and then see where that takes us."

IMARA ROLSTON

We get asked all the time, how do you advance work in one neighbourhood when you're interwoven into a system of dispossession and a global whatever? But that's where we start, you know, meaningful relationship, deep work over time, and then see where that takes us.

BERNICE

Yeah, I love that. Then the hope is that these communities will serve as, like you said, exemplars of what this community-rooted climate resilience work can look like.

IMARA

Absolutely.

BERNICE

But one of my curiosities is when we think about the climate crisis, some of these tools or strategies, they're so linked or intimately linked with policy change. So by working in communities and being very place-based, how are you then trying to connect to some of these larger structures?

IMARA

I love that question. When I spent all that time doing research in South Africa in particular, I was following the Nelson Mandela Foundation's work around community dialogues, and it really started to make me think about the creation of space and multisectoral spaces for relationship, long-term strategic planning and community building.

A big part of the framework and a big part of our work over time with neighbourhoods, I think, is, one, helping draw policy-makers into closer relationship, one, with the idea of racial justice and climate resilience, but also drawing policy-makers into closer relationship with not-for-profit leaders, community service agencies and grassroots actors that value that work and value that focus.

How can public health address racial and climate injustice?

BERNICE

And you mentioned the value or the potential of multisector approaches. To talk about maybe one potential actor, public health sector, what could that look like in terms of this climate action movement?

IMARA

I think the public health sector has a hugely important piece in this conversation, particularly from the structural determinants of health standpoint. We've been really influenced by the work of Cheryl Holder from Miami, who is a medical doctor who came from the AIDS prevention background, who talks about the need to think about the ways that climate crises will show up in our health writ large. And in particular, when I say "our health," I mean the health of lower-income Black and racialized folks living in neighbourhoods that have a history of underinvestment and marginalization.

And so I think the public health conversation is hugely important. But I think what's really great and what we're seeing now is that public health is starting to take steps into conversations about anti-Black racism in more substantive ways.

"I think the public health sector has a hugely important piece in this conversation particularly from the structural determinants of health standpoint."

IMARA ROLSTON

BERNICE

Starting to. Yeah, they're starting, a little.

IMARA

Yeah, finally. Finally. But we need to ramp that conversation up and figure out how all the ways and all the tools that we have from a public health standpoint, health surveillance, etc., health system strengthening, can be a part of this conversation in a very practical way.

What role does public health play in an interlinked effort to address a climate crisis that is going to involve responses from the food system sector, responses from the community health and well-being sector? What's public health's place in all this? You know, we live in a world where we exist in amongst entrenched systems, right, that will need to be disrupted in very important ways. So I think the question for public health actors who are asking those questions is "What is your willingness for disruption in the midst of a climate crisis?"

"I think the question for public health actors who are asking those questions is 'What is your willingness for disruption in the midst of a climate crisis?'"

IMARA ROLSTON

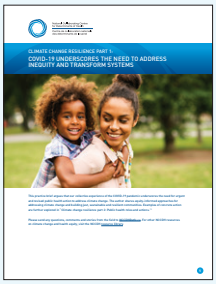
BERNICE (NARRATION)

The NCCDH has identified concrete roles for public health to address systemic inequity and build community climate resilience. These include:

- building awareness, support and capacity
- establishing a strong knowledge base and
- collaborating with partners outside of public health

Find out more in our episode notes [or in the accompanying text box].

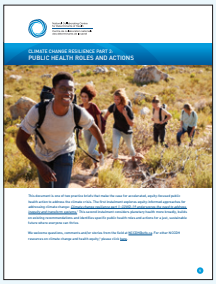
Climate change resilience part 1: COVID-19 underscores the need to address inequity and transform systems



NCCDH. [2021].

This practice brief is the first of two NCCDH resources that position the climate crisis as a health emergency and make the case for accelerated equity-focused public health action. This brief explores the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to the climate crisis. Key resources for building climate resilience are highlighted throughout.

Climate change resilience part 2: Public health roles and actions



NCCDH. [2021].

This second practice brief recommends concrete public health roles and actions for equitable, climate-resilient communities. It identifies three complementary pathways to both avoid catastrophic levels of global heating and address systemic inequity: (1) build a foundation for anti-racist, decolonized and equity-focused action; (2) establish and use a strong knowledge base; and (3) collaborate with non-health sector partners.

Reflections on racial and climate justice work

BERNICE

I have a few rapid-fire questions to end with, if that's okay?

IMARA

Sure, sure.

BERNICE

What would be your biggest piece of advice for someone who wants to get engaged in climate action with a racial justice lens?

IMARA

I would say, one, choose your lane. I think if you are getting involved and you're a person that cares about food and that's your jam and you want to transform a city that is bent towards food apartheid, that's your beginning point. Jump in.

I think if you are a person that has been fighting police brutality, you are a climate justice activist, that is a bridge.

So I would say, choose your lane, live in your lane, find your lane, and then move. Build a bridge between that and climate work.

And I think lastly, I would say don't allow dominant discourses around climate to silence your willingness to bring histories and legacies of racial injustice, legacies of Indigenous dispossession into conversations about climate all the time, in every way, in every space. There's no place where it's not relevant, and you'll be told that there are spaces where it is not.

> *"Don't allow dominant discourses around climate to silence your willingness to bring histories and legacies of racial injustice, legacies of Indigenous dispossession into conversations about climate all the time, in every way, in every space."*
>
> **IMARA ROLSTON**

BERNICE

And that's a form of pushback or resistance, right? Because people don't want to hear those things.

IMARA

It is. And erasure. In line with the type of erasure that we've been struggling against forever.

BERNICE

That's great advice.

What would you say has been your worst day in this work?

I don't know if that's a rapid question. I should work on those.

IMARA

Yeah, they probably heard that deep sigh from me!

Whenever I am reminded that we are not where we need to be, that is my worst day. The struggles that I think we've seen around just turning around the fossil fuel conversation is astounding.

What I characterize as a bit of a slowdown around commitments to addressing anti-Black racism across all spaces post-2020.

BERNICE

Yeah, absolutely, I see that too.

IMARA

And in some cases, backlash is always my worst day because I encounter that all the time. And so maybe what I'm saying is I'm having some—

BERNICE

Challenges?

IMARA

Challenges, yeah, yeah. But that is not without many, many moments to the opposite.

BERNICE

I was going to ask you that next. What has been your best day, would you say?

IMARA

I, and we as a team, there's a few of us, have had the opportunity to talk to now almost 40 folks, everywhere from activists in Boston to climate resilience policy-makers in Oakland to not-for-profit leaders in New Orleans. And I am always completely honoured and humbled by the wealth of knowledge, experience, commitment. I would characterize it as deep love for community that I hear echoed in every single conversation. Those are my best days because it reminds me that we are a movement and that we are the majority. And that is a bright day for me.

BERNICE

I love that, yeah, that's perfect.

What would you say has surprised you the most in this work?

IMARA

I think how ready folks are with solutions, not just ideas or perspectives on what needs to change but full-blown strategic solutions planned out over time, hugely informed by understanding of policy, practice and their municipal landscape.

BERNICE

Just looking for people to share it with, I would imagine.

IMARA

Just looking for decision-making tables that are willing to share and surrender power to people that have been thinking about this stuff for a long time. That's it.

When you speak to people, they're like, "Here's all the work we've done over the last 10 years to understand the issue. And here's the step-by-step plan that we need to get to where we need to be."

BERNICE

"We just want someone to hear us."

IMARA

"We just need someone to be accountable to us."

BERNICE (NARRATION)

It was great to speak with Imara about how the Community Climate Resilience Lab is connecting actors from multiple cities and sectors and supporting racialized communities to prepare for, recover from and thrive in the face of climate emergencies. Imara reminded us that community organizers often have detailed solutions to share if only decision-makers will listen.

TALKING WITH DIANA CHAN MCNALLY

BERNICE (NARRATION)

My next guest, Diana Chan McNally, is well suited to help me reflect on how to understand the root causes of a problem and support community-driven solutions. Diana is a long-time, Toronto-based community outreach worker. She's also a passionate housing justice advocate, educator and an excellent writer.

BERNICE

So I was googling you a little bit, and you've worn a lot of different hats and you've had a lot of different roles. And I've heard you describe yourself as a crisis worker. What drew you to crisis work, would you say?

DIANA

I'm someone who has experienced homelessness as a teenager, but I think for a long time I didn't want to acknowledge that or talk about it. But it is really, really fundamental to who I am and clearly what I do now. But I think it took me a long time to be like, you know what, this is actually kind of a good space and good work to do. And I really do believe in someone who's used services and been *really* let down by those services, I wanted to make sure that that didn't happen to other people.

BERNICE

Yeah, so that personal experience really informed the path you took.

DIANA

Yeah, I would say so.

BERNICE

So one of the reasons why we're so excited to have you on the podcast is because of the great community work that you do.

DIANA

Oh, okay.

BERNICE

And in public health, we often talk about community engagement. And I imagine there's not one model of effective community engagement, but there are probably a lot of wrong ways to go about it.

DIANA

Oh, sure, yeah!

BERNICE

I'm wondering if you can speak from your experience and what you've seen in terms of some of those wrong ways that it can happen.

DIANA

I mean, the population that I work with, again, people who are unsheltered, unhoused are rarely ever engaged on their situation and what would actually make sense for *them*. I've seen a lot that there were these kinds of coercive interview-style situations that happen, maybe focus groups, which usually only actually interview people that are deemed acceptable in terms of their behaviour. So they're

often people facing less barriers, a lot of barriers, but still less barriers than somebody who is facing arrest, psychosis, typically the kinds of folks that I work with. Those folks are *never* talked to.

Bad practices can also include just like not adequately honouring people's time and commitment. You should pay people if they're going to be participating. They're also living with poverty, so it would just make sense. That doesn't happen nearly enough and certainly not in adequate amounts. Giving somebody like a $10 Tim Hortons gift certificate is almost insulting, I think, rather than just like nothing, in fact. I would rather you give nothing or 50 bucks, but we don't often see that kind of thing.

We don't engage people in drop-in spaces. Rarely ever do we engage them on outreach services, on shelters. What we need to do is actually talk to people who live in the shelters and create a committee, some kind of mechanism that has real ability to have input and *control* over how the services are run. We expect that in other public institutions and services — that's normal — but in our work, you are never given that kind of voice.

> *"People who are unsheltered, unhoused are rarely ever engaged on their situation and what would actually make sense for them."*
>
> DIANA CHAN MCNALLY

Applying a structural lens

BERNICE

So, thinking about your personal experiences as well as the different professional roles you've had that have been, you know, oriented towards social justice in different areas, what do you think that people often get wrong when it comes to both understanding the issue of housing and homelessness as well as addressing it?

DIANA

I think we still view this as a problem with individuals. So we often talk about deficits inherent in people. We frame things through addiction, mental health issues. But why are people struggling with substances? Why are they feeling the way that they do? What are the structural issues that underpin that?

So I would say that's *really* what we get wrong. I find what happens is that people just, there's a lot of paternalizing, not really listening to what people need and not supporting them to get those things, when someone may not be ready for that. Not observing at all again. It's like, well, maybe they're using a lot because they have no housing. Happens a lot. So why don't we get that person housing and then we'll deal with things from there. So, rarely, rarely, rarely do we come at it from the upstream kind of perspective.

> *"We often talk about deficits inherent in people. We frame things through addiction, mental health issues. But why are people struggling with substances? Why are they feeling the way that they do? What are the structural issues that underpin that?"*
>
> DIANA CHAN MCNALLY

BERNICE

And I was listening to another interview you did, and you talked about thinking about housing as not only like a brick-and-mortar structure but thinking about it as like a home or sense of community. How do you think that reframing might help inform better actions as it relates to housing and homelessness?

DIANA

I think there is this real tendency to try and, you know, forgive my language here, but ghettoize people into spaces with other unhoused folks or people with experience of homelessness. More often than not, when I am talking to people, that's not what they want. They don't want to be around the same people that they've been around and, in often cases, they need to get away from in order to stabilize. But we don't provide them with that opportunity because NIMBYism, quite frankly, it's like you don't want—

BERNICE

Can you say that again? I missed that.

DIANA

NIMBYism.

BERNICE

Oh, I don't know that word.

DIANA

Oh! Not in my backyard.

BERNICE

Oh!

DIANA

That's okay! Well, just to say, it's like people often are fighting against, quote unquote, poverty, low-income housing, respites or shelters in their area, and they don't want to know that people who have been on the street live in their neighbourhoods.

Community engagement and climate justice

BERNICE

I wanted to shift now to talk a little bit about the climate crisis, and we know that people who are and will be most impacted by extreme weather events caused by climate change are those who are unhoused or underhoused, and who tend to be disproportionately racialized as well. So, thinking about the climate crisis and its intersections with housing and homelessness, what might community engagement in those areas look like when it's done well or done effectively?

DIANA

I mean, doing this work, it's very clear to me that people are going to be severely impacted by the elements because they often are unsheltered and outdoors, but we don't really consider exactly *how much* they're going to be affected by that.

Asylum seekers, most of the people that I'm seeing, are coming from Africa. There is anti-Black racism that underpins that because we don't have the same treatment for these folks that we do for Ukrainians, for example. And what I'm seeing is *those* are the folks who are ending up on the sidewalk more often. They're coming from a completely different weather system, ending up here in this volatile, cold climate essentially, unable to mitigate really what they should be wearing, how do they keep their hands warm. We're seeing people don't know how to make sure that they can stay warm in their extremities so that they don't get trench foot, potentially frostbite.

It's pretty dire actually. But we don't think about it very much or think about what kind of infrastructure do we need that's climate ready so that *anybody* who's outdoors, and you could have housing somewhere else in the city, doesn't matter, but if you're caught in inclement weather, where are you going to go?

BERNICE

Yeah, absolutely.

DIANA

Right? That should be built into our public parks, that's what I think. You know, we should have all-seasons washrooms with heated rooms, with shelter from the rain.

I often look at public parks, for example, it's public land. Public land should exist for the public good. But when we look at what a park is used for, look at the infrastructure. You've got playgrounds, you've got picnic tables, community gardens, baseball diamonds. All of these things are for recreation or, in the case of a community garden, you're growing food and you're going to cook it at home. That means you have housing. This infrastructure indicates who is welcome in that park.

But why can't a public park be more? Why can't we talk to people who have to live in parks because we don't have the housing — and won't have it, importantly, for a very long time — about what it is they need to survive?

Good engagement means *talking* to these folks. And to do that, I think, in a systematic way. What I do is very anecdotal. It's just what I hear from people, but I'm not systematically researching what's going on. But I would love to see public health or the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration really do a systematic study essentially. I always hate to say let's do research instead of solutions, but we can't determine the right solutions until we do the research. So I'd like for them to actually do that systematic engagement.

> ***"But why can't a public park be more? Why can't we talk to people who have to live in parks because we don't have the housing — and won't have it, importantly, for a very long time — about what it is they need to survive?"***
>
> **DIANA CHAN MCNALLY**

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Diana gave me a concrete example of good community engagement. A few years ago, she played a key role in convening unhoused people living in park encampments with outreach workers, advocates and select city councillors.

Let's Talk: Community engagement for health equity

NCCDH. [2021].

Community engagement is an essential pillar of public health work, as seen in this podcast episode and many others. This document from the NCCDH's Let's Talk series emphasizes the importance of community engagement and describes how public health practitioners can build capacity to meaningfully engage with communities, build trust and develop ongoing relationships that lead to positive health and well-being outcomes.

BERNICE

I would love to hear about the secret meeting you convened in Christie Pits Park in Toronto. Can you tell me more about that?

DIANA

In 2021, we saw mass evictions in our public parks and about 68 people were removed from these parks, none of whom actually received housing. Some people just disappeared. A couple of people died. So there was violence to this. Roughly 40-ish percent did go into the shelter system; 75% of those people moved back outdoors within a couple of months. So, if the idea was that we were going to solve homelessness and get these people into adequate indoor space, it failed miserably.

We convened in the park with a couple of city councillors who were more amenable to talk about what did we want to happen? How did we want encampments to be engaged?

BERNICE (NARRATION)

The people who convened in Christie Pits Park came up with a set of concrete policy recommendations. But, even though they were ready with community-driven solutions, they didn't get the opportunity to have those ideas heard and debated at Toronto City Council.

DIANA

We got five councillors to support the policy recommendations, but ultimately, [Mayor] John Tory blocked it from being debated at Council. So it didn't go anywhere, in the kind of way that I presented it as these policy recommendations co-authored by all these people.

What we saw instead is that the City created what's known as the Dufferin Grove model. It took a lot of the elements of what we wanted to see, which is give people time and ability to make free and informed choices about what shelter and housing might look like for them.

"Give people time and ability to make free and informed choices about what shelter and housing might look like for them."

DIANA CHAN MCNALLY

BERNICE (NARRATION)

The City of Toronto describes the Dufferin Grove model as enhancing "existing outreach efforts at the park by having City staff work collaboratively with community partners at the advisory and operational levels." Diana observed that this model is not typical of all the City's community engagement.

BERNICE

So what worked well, do you think, in that Christie Pits example that you shared? What can we learn about community engagement from that meeting and kind of the aftermath of it?

DIANA

I mean, I think all policy needs to be developed with people impacted by that policy.

So it was really important for me to be able to gather the voice of people living in parks or who had recently moved out of a situation like that to understand what it is that they needed and to formulate that into, again, these policy recommendations going forward.

So, I think *that* was the success — is that it wasn't, again, me making an assumption or someone making an assumption about what was needed but instead being *very, very* deliberate about not just asking but, again, transcribing that into policy and then getting feedback multiple times about whether it made sense.

"I think all policy needs to be developed with people impacted by that policy."

DIANA CHAN MCNALLY

BERNICE

Oh, I love that. That's an essential step, right? Like asking, listening and then checking too, right?

DIANA

Absolutely.

BERNICE

And how did you bring people together for that meeting? Like how did you get the word out?

DIANA

There were a few activists that I was kind of working with and, you know, we were all very focused, laser focused on these encampment evictions because we just wanted them to stop so that the people we were working with would not be harmed or left dead effectively.

So it was convening these people who were already very present and very active in this work, but also finding people that we knew who had the capacity. I think that's one thing, you know, I don't like picking and choosing who should have input, especially based on my own biases. But if people are just in survival mode, they don't have necessarily the ability to reflect on policy issues.

BERNICE

Not the primary concern probably, right?

DIANA

They need some stability. And, you know, I'll always give the opportunity regardless, but I find that most people, if they don't have the capacity, they're just not going to engage anyway.

But we knew people who did have that stability. So it was networks through activists and through my own work, bringing people together to talk about what they needed.

BERNICE

Your point about bringing people together who have the capacity to engage, I think that's so important. I do wonder though, how do we then make sure that the subsequent plans, recommendations are also in service to the people who are currently in survival mode and who don't have the capacity to engage in that moment?

DIANA

I will always ask for that feedback and that input. But often I won't get it because people are just thinking about living for the day or even the next hour. And fair enough. I think you just have to be diligent in attempting to get that information, not extracted from them, but give them the opportunity to offer that information for everyone's learning and for better policies. But to, again, not necessarily expect that you're always going to get it, but you got to keep trying.

BERNICE

You got to keep trying.

And I think it also goes to the importance of community engagement not being a one-time consultation, right? It needs to be continuous. It needs to be based on relationships. And so, if someone can't engage at that moment because of what they're experiencing, it doesn't mean that, you know, 6 months down the line or what have you, that they couldn't do it then, right?

DIANA

Yeah, absolutely.

How can public health improve community engagement practices?

BERNICE

What do you think the field of public health needs to know about community engagement?

DIANA

You know, with public health, when I see how they interact or think about homelessness and homeless people, they are still using that lens of individual deficit. We think there's something wrong with you, there's a pathology versus let's look at all the things that people are deprived of at a systems level and how that would actually benefit them.

A really good thing happened last year where it used to be that warming centres would open at minus 15 degrees Celsius—

BERNICE

What? That's so cold.

DIANA

It's so cold! You can get trench foot in like 5 degrees. It's slightly better now it's minus 5 degrees.

BERNICE

Oh, that's much better.

DIANA

So we had a good win there, but it took years. *Years*. You just said, "That's so cold." You know it's inadequate, but we had to convince public health for years.

BERNICE

Why was that? Was it just the funding? Or did they cite financial reasons?

DIANA

Nope. I just don't think that they saw this as a public health issue. I think they see this as something that the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration should deal with. But if we call extreme weather alerts, that's a public health alert, so it should trigger a response, which means that public health has responsibility here. I don't think they wanted to take responsibility for that. And so it just took so long and arguing and arguing. Frostbite — I've had people's fingers and toes fall off at work and I've picked them up. That's messed up.

BERNICE

That's messed up.

DIANA

It's messed up. That's the reality of what happens when you don't have a really good public health lens on exposure.

Again, climate crisis, we're going to see more extreme weather. So it shouldn't even be triggered by a temperature. It should be triggered by inclement weather. Weather that is potentially harmful for people like hail, like freezing rain, which may come at above-zero temperatures. We should have a better way of triggering these kinds of services and spaces in a much more flexible way, but we don't.

BERNICE

Absolutely.

Just a wrap-up question. What are your hopes in this area in terms of community engagement? So, if you could imagine that, you know, everyone was doing community engagement well, what would that look like? What would that sound like?

DIANA

I mean, it would prioritize, again, people who are the most impacted by policies.

You know, when we have budget time or whatever, you can depute to the Board of Health. It needs to be a lot more accessible than it is.

So when these things get rolled out, I don't know, some kind of policy idea gets rolled out at the Board of Health, for example, it's like, okay, well, we have it within the structure of Council. If it's dealing with homeless people, do they know about it? Who did you hear from in order to even draft this kind of policy? And if you're getting expert advice from public health on this policy, who did they talk to? I would love to see that — instead of just this echo chamber of experts and politicians — we invite people more into that process.

So that's what I would like to see because I don't want to have this job anymore, let's be real. I don't want to be doing this work anymore. I'm tired. I don't think my sector should exist at all. I want to put myself out of the job, but we can only do that if we actually re-create policies that make sense for people and don't leave them on the streets in poverty.

EPISODE TAKEAWAYS

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Imara made some great points. The past and the present are connected. Slavery and colonization created the conditions that make Black, Indigenous and racialized communities particularly vulnerable to the climate crisis. Engaging in climate justice means daring to repair this damage.

To build climate resilience, racialized communities need more than buildings retrofitted and new storm management systems. They need justice. That means fair wages, affordable homes and more.

Finally, decision-makers need to share power so that community climate resilience strategies centre the needs of Black, Indigenous and racialized communities.

My conversation with Diana really drove home that last point. She encouraged public health to improve community engagement practices, to be accountable to people living on the margins and to ask "What do you need to survive?" And importantly, "What do you need to thrive?"

Production for this episode was led by Pemma Muzumdar and me, Bernice Yanful, with contributions from Rebecca Cheff and Carolina Jimenez.

Check out our episode notes for related resources on climate resilience and community engagement.

PEMMA MUZUMDAR (NCCDH)

Thanks for listening to Mind the Disruption, a podcast by the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health.

Visit our website nccdh.ca to learn more about the podcast and our work.

This season of Mind the Disruption is hosted by Bernice Yanful and is produced by Rebecca Cheff, Carolina Jimenez, Bernice Yanful and me, Pemma Muzumdar. The Mind the Disruption project team is led by Rebecca Cheff, with technical production and original music by Chris Perry.

If you enjoyed this episode, leave us a review! And share the link with a friend or a colleague. Hit the "follow" button for more stories about people working with others to challenge the status quo and build a healthier, more just world.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Hello Mind the Disruption listeners. We're taking a bit of a break. We'll be back soon for Episodes 5 and 6. Check out our website nccdh.ca for more information.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

We encourage you to work through these questions, on your own or in a group, to reflect on this episode and make connections with your own context.

INITIAL REACTIONS

- What is something that surprised you in the conversations with Imara and Diana? How did you feel as you were reading or listening to this episode? What prompted these feelings? How can you use them to fuel action?

CONNECTING THIS TO YOUR CONTEXT

- Reflecting on your local context, what makes some people more vulnerable than others to the climate crisis? What are the health impacts? Have you observed a racial-spatial divide?
- What factors facilitate community climate resilience? How can you support this locally?
- Diana highlights both common pitfalls and promising practices in community engagement. How does this compare to current practice in your organization?

DISRUPTING FOR A HEALTHIER, MORE JUST WORLD

- Imara asks, "What is your willingness for disruption in the midst of a climate crisis?" and advises, "Choose your lane, live in your lane, find your lane, and then move. Build a bridge between that and climate work." What is your lane? And how can you build a bridge to both racial and climate justice?
- How are public health priorities usually determined? What are opportunities to disrupt this process and better respond to the needs of communities who have been structurally marginalized?

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The NCCDH is hosted by St. Francis Xavier University. We are located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw People.

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