



**Project Brief on
Sunrise Water Authority**

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2023.

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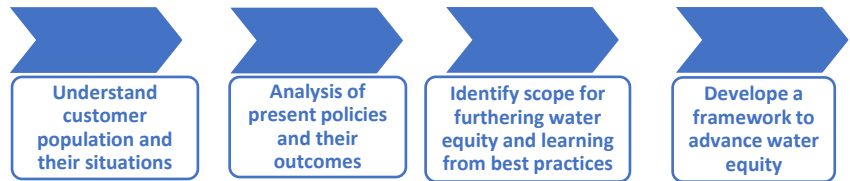
Project Proposal: Develop a strategy for Sunrise Water Authority to advance equity in water service deliveries.

Goals: The project's primary goal was to create a framework to identify key social equity requirements to improve customer service. The water equity framework for Sunrise Water Authority aimed to be developed based on socio-economic research findings of customer population, equity need assessment, and best practices evaluation.

Action Plan: The project developed an action plan, which followed the following steps sequentially to accomplish its goals:

1. Conduct basic socio-economic research concerning those we serve to analyze the demographic composition and present a brief overview of the population.
2. Review the general practices and procedures related to customer services at Sunrise Water Authority.
3. Analyze the relative impacts on potentially marginalized groups from an equity-centered perspective.
4. Develop a framework to identify critical social equity requirements to improve customer service.
5. Review "best practices" followed by similar public agencies/utilities for policy learning.
6. Assess gaps/areas for improving social equity in customer service delivery.

Action Plan Flow Chart:



Main Takeaway

1. Social equity is about creating fairness and inclusion across all elements of the communities we serve. Water equity, thus, encapsulates approaches to solving the challenges that address previous imbalances in levels of service and participation.
2. Sunrise Water Authority provides services primarily to the residents of Happy Valley City and some parts of Damascus. The demographic and socio-economic data analysis findings indicate that the community Sunrise Water Authority serves has better income distribution than other cities.
3. When ethnic and racial composition presents notable diversity in the customer population, utility providers must consider translation facilities for their service information. Again, when the customer population has a high education attainment rate, most people have fewer challenges accessing the service information.
4. A vital access Indicator for water equity is the rate of cutoffs for nonpayment in terms of the percentage of service accounts that were shut off at least once during the previous year. Sunrise Water Authority's statistics indicate no negative impact of the rate increase on

Households as the cutoff rates didn't increase proportionately with the rate increase since 2021.

5. To Identify the scope for furthering water equity, it is essential that utilities evaluate their standing on equity grounds based on the three water equity pillars framework.
6. For Sunrise Water Authority, based on the demographic and socio-economic research on its community served, and its equity needs assessment, sustaining adequate funding for maintaining the present affordable rate structure and expanding customer assistance programs are priority scopes for advancing equity.
7. Developing water equity projects requires long-term and short-term planning for sustainable progress on equity issues.

Challenges

There were several challenges for me throughout the project duration, which are:

1. Lack of readily available equity-related data for analyses. A new dataset was created for analysis.
2. Coordination with other utilities for best practices analysis was challenging. Finding a connection or establishing a connection took longer than expected.
3. Time limitations created additional challenges for attaining project goals in a timely. Multi-tasking and spending extra time in weeks are often required.
4. Response from community partners was slow due to a lack of prior communication, which hindered the outreach effort.

Strategies for Overcoming Challenges

1. Establishing clear communication with the team and management helps in advancing the progress.
2. Using the link of other fellows to reach out to other agencies was very helpful.
3. Seeking additional resources in advance helped in collecting the required data timely.

Results

Based on the demographic and socio-economic research findings and the equity needs assessment of Sunrise Water Authority, a comprehensive framework is developed to strategize the action plan for advancing water equity. The framework is developed based on three essential pillars of water equity. The framework uses the research findings and insights of the US Water Alliance and best practices of many utilities across the USA. The framework outlines the strategies for achieving water equity under each pillar. The framework can be operationalized in three steps, which propose short-term and long-term strategies for attaining water equity by Sunrise Water Authority.