

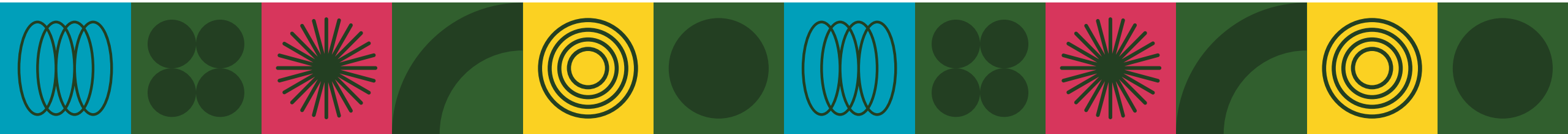


Being Well in Washington

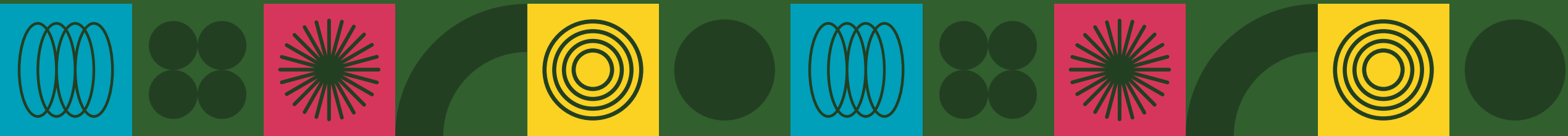
Building Well-Being Together in 2025 & Beyond

Lori Pfingst, PhD | Senior Director, Economic Justice Alliance

Faduma Fido | Lab Leader, People's Economy Lab



WHO & HOW



VISION

A Washington free of poverty and full of abundant opportunity, where everyone can experience joy, belonging and well-being.



MISSION

To advance policy, program and funding changes that ensure every Washingtonian can meet their basic needs, fully contribute their talents, and pass well-being on to future generations.

8 Strategies

Blueprint for a Just & Equitable Future: 10-Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty



1: UNDO STRUCTURAL RACISM & INEQUALITY
Understand structural racism, historical trauma and inequality, and undo their legacy in policies, programs and practices.



5: PRIORITIZE URGENT NEEDS
Prioritize the urgent needs of people experiencing homelessness, hunger, violence, substance use disorder or behavioral illness.



2: BALANCE POWER
Make equal space in decision-making for people and communities most affected by poverty and inequality.



6: BUILD A HOLISTIC CONTINUUM OF CARE
Build an integrated human service care system that addresses the holistic needs of Washingtonians.



3: INCREASE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
Target equitable income growth, education opportunities and wealth-building among people with low incomes.



7: DECRIMINALIZE POVERTY
Decriminalize poverty and reduce reliance on the child welfare, juvenile justice and criminal justice systems.



4: ENSURE FOUNDATIONAL WELL-BEING
Invest in social and economic conditions to promote the intergenerational well-being of children, adults and seniors.



8: PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK
Ensure a just and equitable transition to the future of work.

How We Work



**Evidence-Based
Solutions**



**Learning &
Accountability**

**Radical
Collaboration**



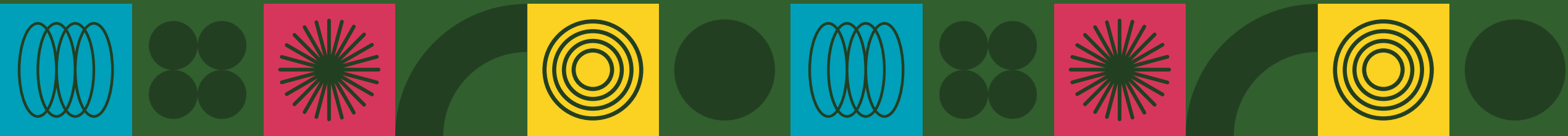
**Alignment &
Sustained Action**



Who We Work With



IMPACT





Impact

**270 POLICY, PROGRAM &
FUNDING ACTIONS**



**9TH LOWEST POVERTY
RATE IN NATION**



NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE



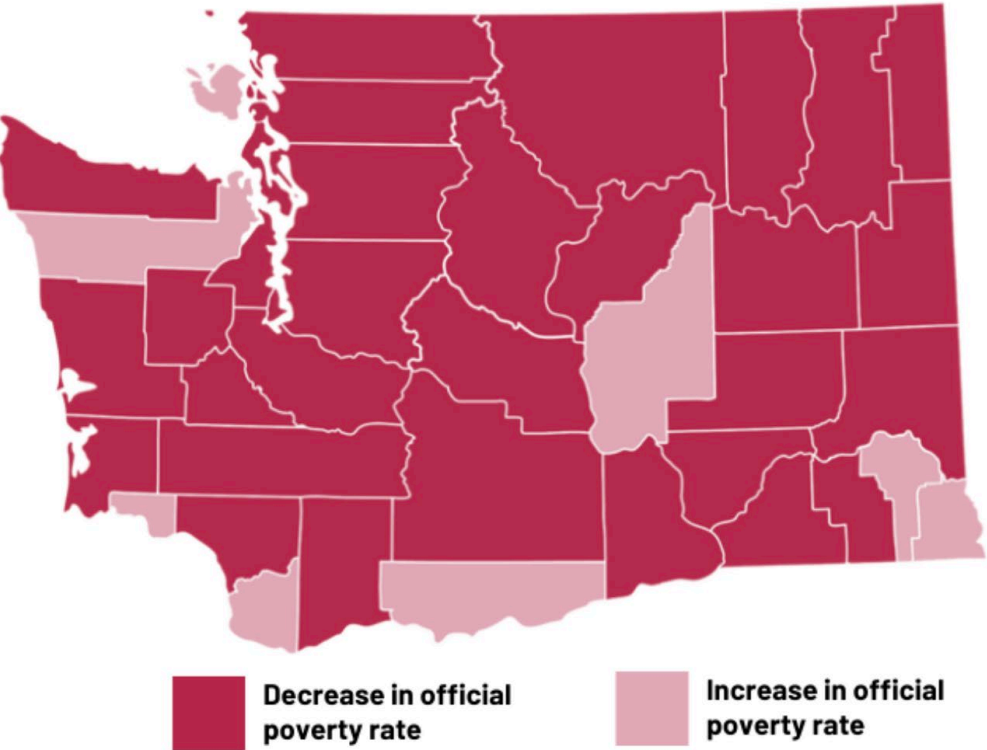
GAPS STARTING TO CLOSE

Impact

CHANGE IN OFFICIAL POVERTY RATE BY COUNTY

Washington State 2018-2022

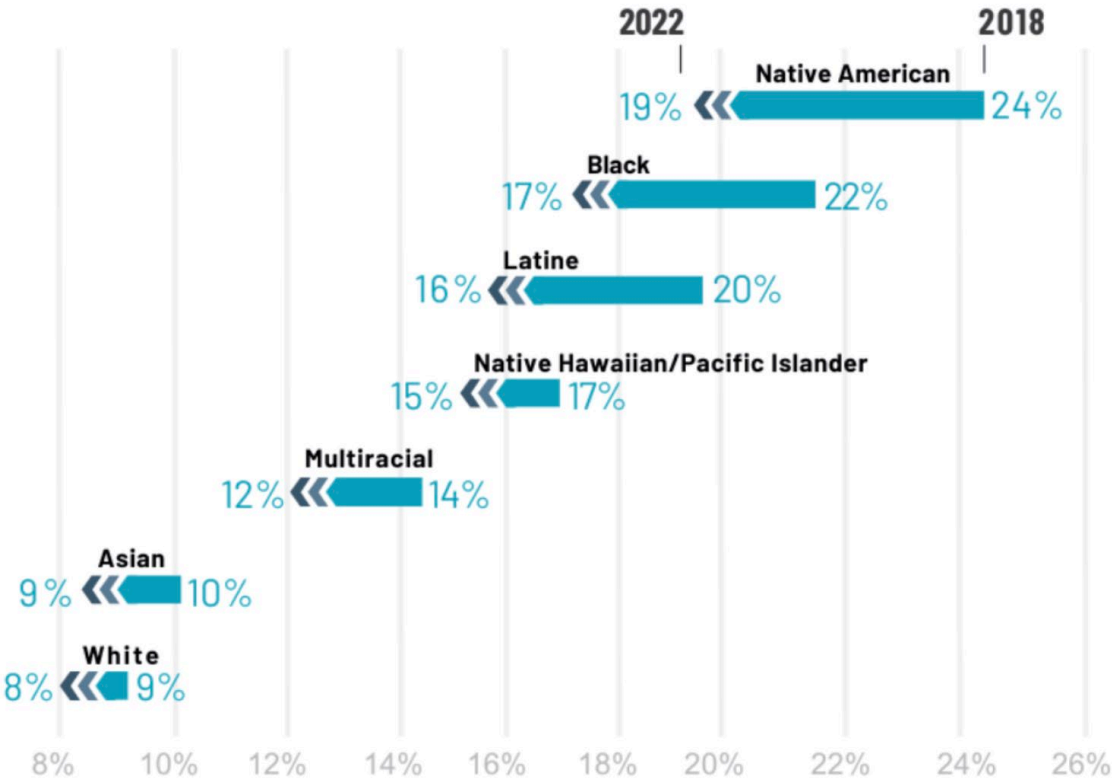
31 of the 39 counties in Washington experienced a decline in poverty rates between 2018 and 2022.¹



CHANGE IN OFFICIAL POVERTY RATE BY RACE & ETHNICITY

Washington State 2018-2022

Every racial and ethnic group in Washington state experienced a decrease in the official poverty rate between 2018 and 2022, with accelerated declines among people of color.¹



What People Are Saying

"The less people worry about affording food or rent, the more they can focus on school, work and family."

~Cami Feek,
Commissioner,
Employment Security
Department

"People experiencing poverty have the knowledge and expertise to guide the state toward a just and equitable future."

~Drayton Jackson,
Alliance Co-Chair

"Economic justice is health justice."

~Dr. Umair Shah
Former Secretary,
Department of Health

"Poverty is a policy choice. We can end poverty in Washington and the 10-Year Plan is the way to do it."

~Juanita Maestas,
Emeritus Alliance
Co-Chair

"The collaboration with the Alliance has worked because it is anchored by a unifying purpose of honoring the lived experiences and expertise of frontline communities."

~Faduma Fido,
People's Economy Lab

"Less poverty is an economic win for the state, the peace of mind economic stability gives families is priceless."

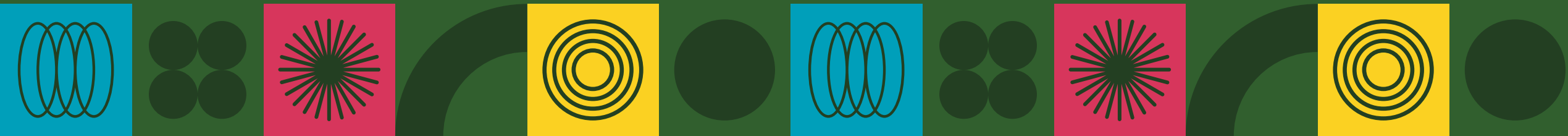
~Drew Shirk, Secretary
Department of Revenue

"The Alliance is absolutely mobilizing change because of how they have done their work."

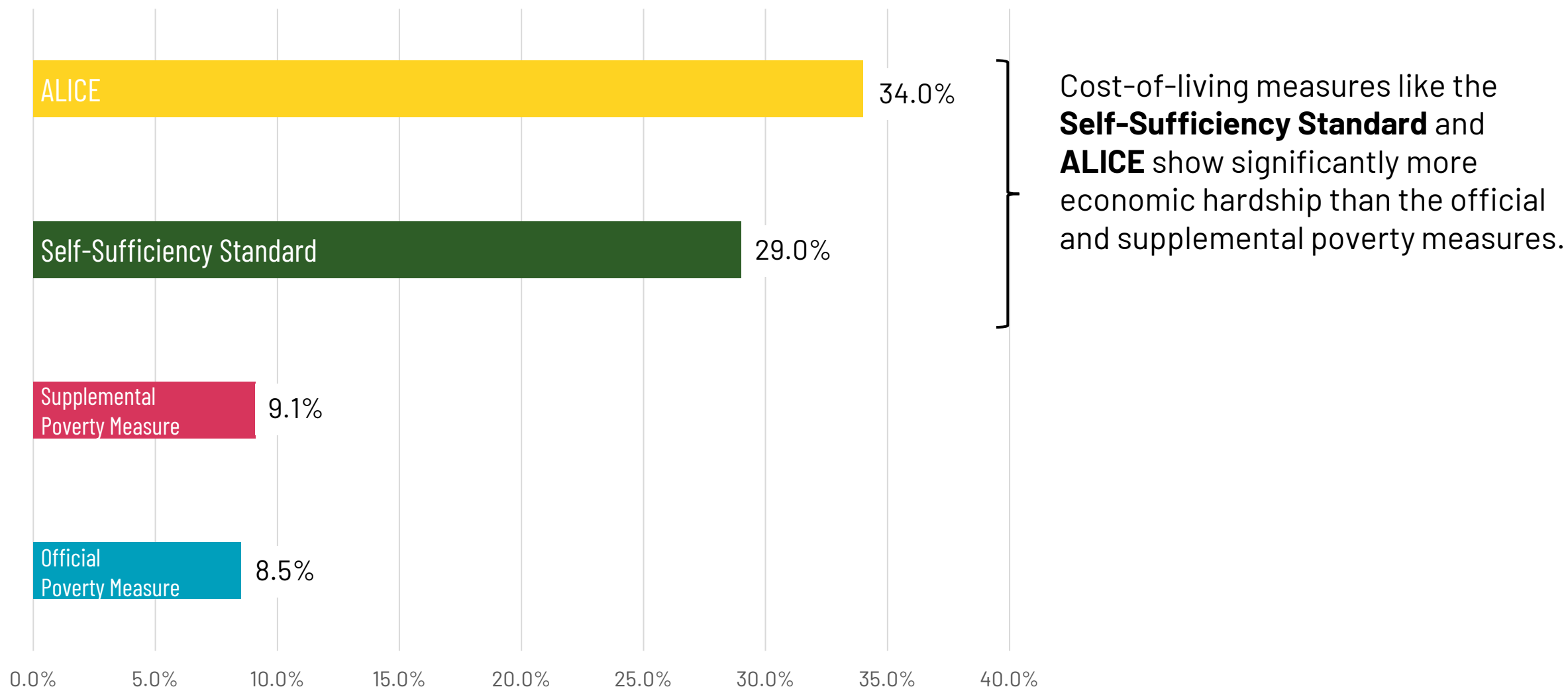
~Dona Ponepinto,
President/CEO, United
Way Pierce County



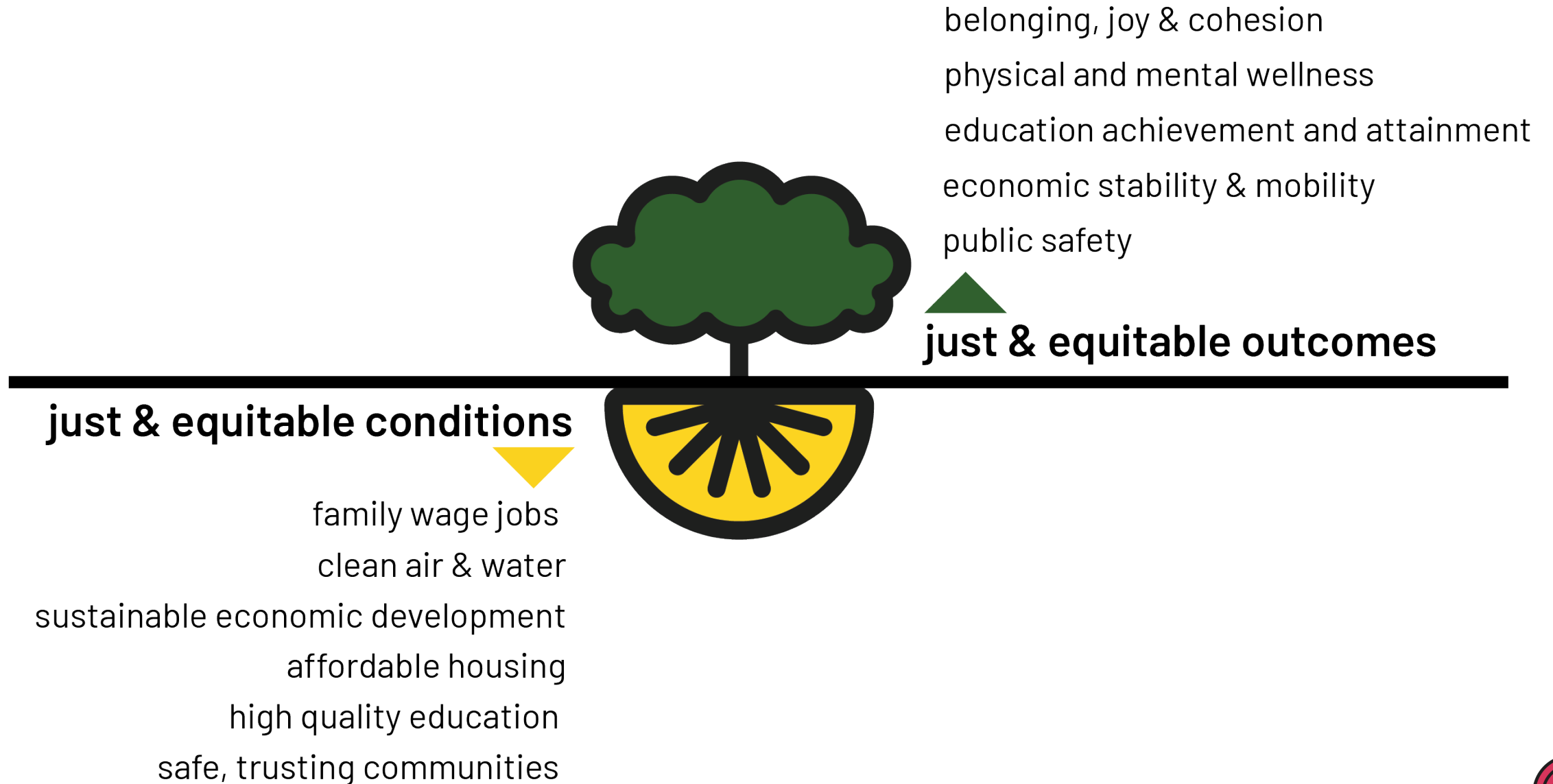
WE NEED YOU



Plenty of Poverty Above the Poverty Line



What's in the Soil Bears the Fruit





well-being

/welˌbēiNG/ noun

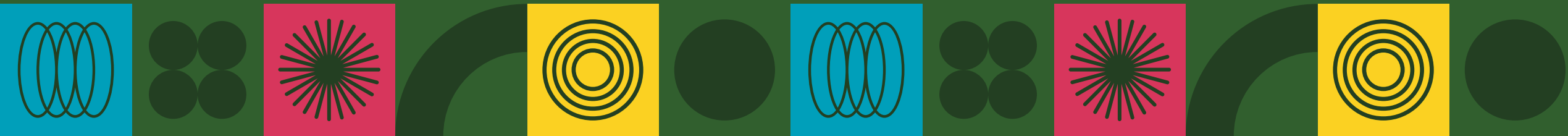
the state of being healthy, happy or prosperous





COMMUNITY ASSEMBLIES

Co-Governance & Well-Being



JUST FUTURES



Washington State Community Assembly Pilot



- Community Assemblies are a series of learning and discussion sessions led by trusted community-based organizations
- Attended by community members who carry high levels of environmental and economic burdens
- Community raises important local issues and develops solutions through policy proposals
- Funded by the Climate Commitment Act

Community Assemblies:

A tool for deep collaboration

In fall 2024, Just Futures piloted **six Community Assemblies** as a tool for collaborative governance that centers community leadership and lived experience.

Just Futures' objective to center those furthest away from economic benefits aligns with **Strategies 2 and 4 of the 10 Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty**.



Image credit: BMAC leads a Community Assembly in Walla Walla

Closing the disconnect between government and community

Collaborative governance

- Builds trust and engagement in democracy
- Creates more effective outcomes when investing public money and making laws.



Image credit: ECOSS leads a Community Assembly in Beacon Hill on the effects of extreme weather events.

Role of Government

Community Assemblies allow community and government to learn together

- Government gains insight into challenges and solutions building from the lived experience of frontline communities
- Community members learn how to better navigate policymaking to improve their well-being
- At many Community Assemblies, community identifies priority issues and then government agency staff join to discuss programs and resources



Image credit: BMAC. Community Assembly Participants discuss mental health resources in Walla Walla

Beyond Traditional Community Engagement

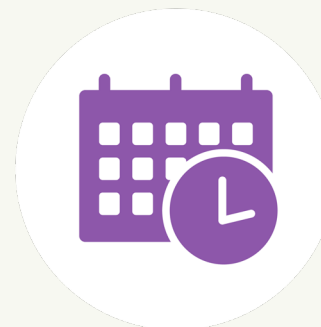
Community Assemblies

**Activate
people with
lived
experience**

**Provide
Structure &
Support for
Participation**

**Build Trust with
Government
Partners**

**Demystify
Policy Making**



Three Months

Outcomes

**Grassroots insights to
create more targeted
and effective
programs**

Invest \$5.5 Million to Expand Collaborative Governance

- Build skills for civic participation
- Improve policy and programs with lived experience
- Make Washington more resilient to economic and environmental challenges.



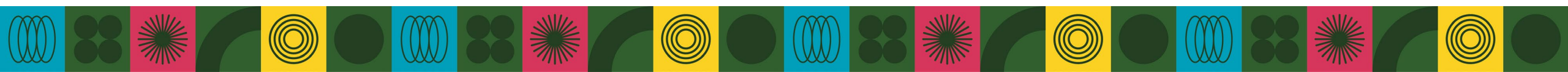
Image credit: ECOSS leads a Community Assembly on building civic muscle with inter-generational gatherings.



What does well-being mean to you?

What do you think of community assemblies as a tool?

What opportunities do you see for collaboration?



Be well and thank you!

www.waeconomicjusticealliance.com
www.peopleseconomylab.org/category/just-futures-project/

