The problem of “Othering” is the problem of the 21st century.
**Othering** is a generalized set of common processes that engender marginality and group-based inequality across any of the full range of human differences.
Rapid Change Produces Collective Anxiety

Changes in demographics, climate, tech, globalism, economics, pandemic

Leadership, meta-narrative, structures, organizing

Increase in anxiety

Fear, anger & othering

Empathy, inclusion & belonging

Connecting on similarities & common threads of identity

Leadership, meta-narrative, structures, organizing

Breaking

Bridging

Bonding

Connecting on similarities & common threads of identity
Examples of breaking

BREAKING:
Social ties among an exclusive group which explicitly pushes away from other groups who are seen as dangerous or a threat.

White Nationalism

Conflict Entrepreneurs

Examples of bonding

BONDING:
Social ties that link people together with others who are primarily like them along some key dimension. These are genuinely easier to build than bridging social capital.
Examples of bridging

BRIDGING:
Social ties that link people together with others across a cleavage that typically divides society; bridging expands the circle of human concern to build a more inclusive “we”

LGBT Movement

Community vigil in New Zealand (2019)
How do we bridge in a fragmented environment?

The solution to othering is bridging, not more othering.

While many groups may view “breaking” as a way of protecting themselves from external forces who seek to blame, injure, or divide, this response harms movements’ ability to build power. As we know, there is power in diversity, numbers, and transformation—all of which require cross-group engagement, not merely in-group bonding.
There are **short bridges** and **long bridges**.

Some bridges require more effort to build and maintain.

Others are a short distance.

“Bridges are made to be walked on.”
- bell hooks
Bridging / Sawubona

The heart of bridging is empathic/compassionate listening.

This does not mean agreeing.

But it does entail curiosity and willingness to see other's humanity.

What are your concerns, fears and sacred symbols?
The opposite of othering is not same-ing, but belonging; sort of.
Elements of Belonging

**Inclusion**
- Equity
- Absence of exclusion
- Accommodation
- Access

**Connection**
- Emotional / affective ties to people & places
- Sense of attachment, fondness, safety, or warmth

**Recognition**
- Demonstration that community or institution sees, respects & values various social identities

**Agency**
- Individual & collective capacity to co-create the environment and wield (shared) power
Othering & Belonging within Structures

We are all situated within structures, but not evenly. These structures are not neutral and interact in ways that produce differential outcomes.

Structures unevenly distribute benefits and burdens to various groups. Power gives us greater positive access to structures and more ability to shape structures.
From Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to Bridging and Belonging

Why move from DEI to Bridging and Belonging?

- We don’t want to just welcome people into existing structures
- We want people to co-create structures and institutions together
- We want to build systems that are welcoming to all and that everyone has a stake in, where everyone is represented and the work of bridging happens through co-creation

In Other Words: Co-creation Is Essential

"Create robust opportunities for public participation during planning, response, and recovery stages to address future shocks."

"Ensure all members of the community are included and create opportunities for all voices to be heard and respected."

"Carefully design communication strategies using trusted voices, storytelling, and other approaches that lead to greater public understanding and more effective actions."

Increase public participation and improve communication

From Preparing governments for future shocks: A roadmap to resilience
The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice (belonging)

–Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution." Speech given at the National Cathedral, March 31, 1968.
Universal Approaches

Government ‘not siding’ with one group over another
● Examples: minimum wage, universal health care

Criticism of unwarranted government spending
● 2013 Pres. Obama universal pre-K program, projected $12.3 billion each year

Exacerbate disparities and deepen inequality and injustice by pursuing a normative target
● Massachusetts’ 2006 statewide universal health care law
  ○ 95% of residents obtained health care insurance (84% national average)
  ○ Health care insurance provision did not translate into access to health care
Structures limit and enhance opportunity

We can define opportunity through access to:

- **Education**
- **Economy**
- **Transportation**
- **Food**
- **Housing**
- **Justice**
- **Healthcare**
- **Communication**

This is an issue of membership and belonging.
Targeted Approaches

Targeted policies are those that extend benefits or protections to a targeted group, and not to individuals outside of that group.

Examples:

- Social Security Old Age Benefits
- SNAP
- Affirmative Action
- Veterans Benefits (The GI Bill)
- Medicare/Medicaid

Targeted policies may be less expensive (consider Medicare for all v. public option), but by targeting a particular group, these approaches are often viewed as unfairly helping one group over another, seeding hostility and resentment.
Targeted Universalism (TU)

TU is focuses on **structures** (situatedness) & **outcomes** (impacts of structural changes).

**TU rejects a blanket universal**, which is likely to be indifferent to the reality that different groups are situated differently relative to the institutions and resources of society. It also **rejects the claim of formal equality** that would treat all people the same as a way of denying difference.
The TU Framework

**Structural inequity** produces consistently different outcomes for different communities

**Targeted universalism** responds with universal goals and targeted solutions
# Targeted Universalism Steps

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td>Co-create a universal goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td>Assess the general population performance relative to the universal goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td>Identify groups performing differently with respect to the goal &amp; the overall population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong></td>
<td>Assess &amp; understand the structures that support or impede each group from achieving the universal goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong></td>
<td>Develop and implement targeted strategies so all groups reach goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong></td>
<td>Develop bridging messaging and stories that support strategies and engage bridging as a tool for implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.</strong></td>
<td>Evaluate progress and make adjustments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequently thought and sometimes asked questions

- Does T/U take the focus off of marginal communities such as blacks?
- Is T/U just a way to get around the SFFA case or to appease the right wing?
- Is T/U different from equity?
- What does co-creation mean?
Addressing power

- Who has the most power in the room?
- Who has the most space?
- Who has the most authentic voice?
- How is power being used?
- What are each parties’ sacred symbols?
- Whose perspectives shape both the “problem” and the “solution”?
- How can leaders reinforce marginalized voices and ideas?
- How can we bridge and link despite power differentials?
Stories and Narratives

Who’s in the stories? Who is left out? Who is telling the story? Who is the protagonist/villain? Who is the audience?

How do we expand our circles to include everyone in our stories and narratives?
Narratives and Goal-Setting

- Last year, OBI helped conduct a survey designed to test effective narratives (before SCOTUS ruled against affirmative action)
- Two narratives about race in college admissions were tested
  - (1) a **goal-framed** narrative that emphasized the opportunities some schools were trying to create
  - (2) an **outcome-based** narrative that emphasized the negative impact that an adverse SCOTUS decision would likely have on racial minorities
- The goal-framed narrative was more effective for all groups of respondents
# Narratives and Goal-Setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal-framed narrative (n = 909)</th>
<th>Outcome-based narrative (n = 1,043)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>136 words</td>
<td>137 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Goal-framed narrative (n = 909) 136 words**

A better future depends on people across walks of life respecting each other, working together, and doubling down on people’s chance at a good life.

It seems like all we hear about is division. But there are signs of progress.

We’ve seen that when colleges create opportunities, students across every race, ethnicity, and income step into them - whether it’s astronomy, engineering, medicine, teaching, or the arts.

For example, there’s been a recent growth in Black and Latino Americans majoring in fields like science and engineering. Colleges are creating new opportunities for people of all backgrounds, from students in rural areas like Appalachia to first-generation Asian Americans.

No matter how the Supreme Court rules, colleges should keep this up.

Let’s make sure our colleges choose opportunity over exclusion and all of us over some of us.

**Outcome-based narrative (n = 1,043) 137 words**

A Supreme Court ruling against affirmative action will harm a generation of Americans. It will almost certainly mean a steep drop in the number of students of color being admitted to selective universities. That’s what’s already happened in states that have outlawed affirmative action.

This Supreme Court ruling, made by six conservative justices, five of whom are white, will take us backward in our efforts to overcome the country’s shameful legacy of racism and racial inequality.

The U.S. still has a lot of inequality. Discrimination is alive and well. Wealthy and white areas are more likely to have high-quality, resourced K-12 schools - giving those students an advantage over everyone else. Rather than erase race, colleges need to level the playing field and make sure everyone has a fair shot at a quality education.
Ingredients of effective goal framing

1. An acknowledgement of where your audience is
2. An aspirational goal
3. Specific and vivid examples
4. The challenge or condition that needs to be changed
5. A call to action and/or reiteration of the goal
Strategic Messages

Reframe the conversation with a focus on the landscape—the **systems and conditions that support our collective well-being**. The landscape frame is supported by **values and principles** such as our interconnectedness, our duty to one another, and the greater good.

Championing public health amid legal and legislative threats: Framing and language recommendations

---

**Message Development**  
*Components of a message*

**Problem**  
*what’s wrong?*

**Values**  
*why does it matter?*

**Solution**  
*who should do what and by when?*

---

**Health care for immigrants example**

Despite our unique walks of life, the string that holds us together is the ability to care and love. There are hundreds of undocumented parents entering hospitals with their chronically ill children dealing with the stress of paying for debt. This stops families from pursuing holistic and quality care as giant medical bills begin to build. **Our proposal to fund the medical bills of undocumented families will guarantee healthier communities and generations. It takes one heart at a time to join the cause and completely transform the lives of our children!**

Adapted from: [https://www.bmsg.org/resources/framing-101/](https://www.bmsg.org/resources/framing-101/)
Support for DEIA initiatives is fragile

Views of DEI in the workplace vary along demographic and partisan lines
% of employed adults saying that in general, focusing on increasing diversity, equity and inclusion at work is mainly ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All workers</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian*</th>
<th>Ages 18-29</th>
<th>30-49</th>
<th>50-64</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>Rep/Lean Rep</th>
<th>Dem/Lean Dem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A bad thing</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A good thing</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither good nor bad</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Estimates for Asian adults are representative of English speakers only.
Note: Based on workers who are not self-employed and work at a company or organization with 10 or more people. Share of respondents who didn’t offer an answer not shown. White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.
Source: Survey of U.S. workers conducted Feb. 6-12, 2023.
“Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Workplace”

Views on racial discrimination differ by race, ethnicity and political party
% of U.S. adults saying when it comes to racial discrimination, the bigger problem for the country today is ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All adults</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian*</th>
<th>Rep/Lean Rep</th>
<th>Dem/Lean Dem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People NOT seeing racial discrimination where it really does exist</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People seeing racial discrimination where it really does not exist</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Estimation for Asian adults are representative of English speakers only.
Note: White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Share of respondents who didn’t offer an answer are not shown.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
Support for DEIA initiatives is greater than we might assume.
Other ways of indexing inequality

- Enrollment at a community college (or other institution that is more likely to enroll economically or educationally disadvantaged students)
- Financial means and socioeconomic status
- Neighborhood and/or high school
- Membership in a Tribal Nation
- Family background (incl. parental education level)
- Experiences of adversity, incl. discrimination
- Participation in service or community organizations
- Multilingualism
Ways of indexing inequity beyond identity

- Enrollment at a community college
- Financial means and SES
- Neighborhood and/or high school
- Membership in a Tribal Nation
- Family background
- Experience of adversity (e.g., discrimination)
- Participation in service or community organizations
- Multilingualism

Adapted from August 2023 Dept. of Justice / Dept. of Education memo
Join Our Newsletter!

Keep up with important news, updates on our work at OBI, and upcoming events.

Scan to sign up!

https://belonging.berkeley.edu/#email-signup-modal
Belonging Without Othering
by john a. powell and Stephen Menendian

Scan here to learn more!
https://www.sup.org/books/title/?id=37657
Upcoming Book Dec 2024

The Power of Bridging: How to Build a World Where We All Belong by john a. powell

Scan here to read more!

bit.ly/3V1Stnu
Appendix
The framework of targeted universalism has been a compelling framework for work in many different contexts. The sources referenced in this bibliography reflect this diversity of uses and application areas. Targeted universalism is a framework that focuses on policy and program design. The resources are almost all applied research and examples of implementation reflecting the principal focus of targeted universalism.

The first section lists primary resources. These are resources written by key figures developing the framework as defined by the Othering & Belonging Institute—most notably John A. powell. This section includes his 2009 foundational text detailing the concept consistent with current writing at the Institute. The following sections include publications that have drawn on the framework in some way. This reflects a diverse sample of different shades of application and conceptions of targeted universalism. It both provides instruction on the framework and how the framework contributes to efforts to expand the realization of equity and social justice.

This reflects a review of publication databases and other searches. The resources will be updated on an ongoing basis. We welcome submission of additional resources for consideration to include; please contact wendy_ake@berkeley.edu with responses.
Case Studies
Chicago Public Schools
THEORY OF ACTION

TARGETED UNIVERSALISM TOOL

Part 0 INTRODUCTION

What: Targeted Universalism is a tool designed to set goals, identify needs, and create plans for student groups unique to the setting- classroom, school, program, or event.

Why: The purpose of this summative tool is to set goals, identify needs, and create plans for student groups unique to your setting- classroom, school, program, or event.

When: This tool can be used by teachers, school leaders, and community-based organizations, etc.

Part 1 GOAL SETTING + PURPOSE STATEMENT

Set an universal goal:

- I want to achieve this goal by [date].

Set an action plan:

- Think of continuous & sustainable ways when all students achieve the goal.
- Write 2 performance statements.
- Share, celebrate, & align with school community expectations.

What are the current graduation rates for each student group? (considering intersectionalities of race and gender)

What are the factors internal and external to the school that affect the experiences of different groups?

What are the neighborhood assets and challenges where students live and how might those affect their experiences inside or outside of school?

What are the different conditions and resources necessary for each student group to thrive?

What policies benefit or burden each student group?

Public Schools

Once we know how students are situated in relation to our universal goal, we can think about how to move forward. In order to move forward, we need to apply an equity lens that helps us understand what is necessary to advance equity.
Implementing Targeted Universalism

Case Study: King County, WA

PUBLICATION | DECEMBER 10, 2020 | BY WENDY AKE & TRACY LAM-HINE

Implementing Targeted Universalism | Othering & Belonging Institute

AND ADVANCING SOCIAL JUSTICE...

PRO-EQUITY MEANS

Defining outcomes for all, identifying obstacles faced by specific groups, and tailoring strategies and building on assets to address barriers targeted universals.

Demystifying systems of power, privilege and racial injustice in favor of equitable access to resources and decisions.

Focusing on the unique and place-based needs are greatest - such as low-income communities, communities of color, and immigrant and refugee populations.

Creating inclusive processes and including people early, continuously and meaningfully.

KING COUNTY’S PATH TOWARD PRO-EQUITY

Real Whitman's for Universal

Investing in a child's early development - building on the assets of each community - to establish a strong foundation for lifelong health and well-being for all children and families, experience improved outcomes and thrive, regardless of who they are and where they live.

Removing barriers to jobs that King County government for financially disadvantaged communities by improving employment policies to prioritizing language skills, building school to work pipelines, lowering class size, accessible career pathway, and taking out needs education requirements.

Providing low-income populations more equitable access to public transportation and other public assistance programs with King County OCS of the TeenMentor Program.

SO ALL PEOPLE HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO THRIVE

KING COUNTY INVESTS...

upstream, where needs are greatest,
in community partnerships,
with transparent and sustainable leadership.

WE DO THIS IN SIX AREAS OF GOVERNANCE

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Invest in community partnerships and collaborate with local, state, and federal partners.

WE REACH OUT TO EVERY KID AND FAMILY, ESPECIALLY THE MOST STRESSED.

COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

A critical part of our leadership role is to reach out to every kid and family, especially the most stressed.

WE ENGAGE EVERYONE IN A COMMUNITY-CENTERED APPROACH TO GIVE AND GET HELP.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community involvement is essential to our success.

WE GIVE THE GIFT OF HOPE.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community building is a key aspect of our approach.

WE ARE A RE newED ORGANIZATION.

THEORY OF CHANGE

OUR STRATEGIES

INVEST UPSTREAM & WHERE NEEDS ARE GREATEST

Moving upstream means:

- focusing on students, children development that powers mental, emotional and physical health later in life.
- preventing issues and problems from arising instead of treating the after effects and
- continually and expanding strategies that reduce's health, for the criminal justice system, and keep individuals alive.

We acknowledge that we need to approach that apply to a whole population can result in unacceptable gaps.

INVEST IN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- first, define goals for all, secondly, the local and federal policies to address.
- supporting populations, people of color, and immigrants and refugees.
- We acknowledge that wellness approaches that apply to a whole population can result in unacceptable gaps.

INVEST IN EMPLOYEES

King County government's greatest assets is our employees.

We dedicate to improving our focus of the county's value to our million residents.

In the last two years, we've taken the steps to improve the best service.

King County's ambition is to become the.

INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE

We are committed to make the impact of our employees who have historically lacked equitable access to jobs and development opportunities, and employees at lower pay scales.

ACCOUNTABLE & TRANSPARENT LEADERSHIP

Accountable and transparent leadership is crucial to effectively implementing the Strategic Plan. The success of this Plan and the accomplishment of the mission of the Department is fundamentally the responsibility of the leadership and Board of Directors.

We are committed to focusing our efforts on employees who have historically lacked equitable access to jobs and development opportunities, and employees at lower pay scales.

Source: EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universal Goals: King County, WA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child &amp; youth development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic development &amp; jobs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment &amp; climate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Vision for Baltimore
Vision for Baltimore (V4B) is a targeted strategy that helped students who were not getting vision screening and the follow-up care they needed. At the same time, the program helped students who were failed by existing systems, as the resources were made available to everyone and ended up serving even more students.
Seattle Public Schools
Seattle Public Schools Strategic Plan

Mission: Seattle Public Schools (SPS) is committed to eliminating opportunity gaps to ensure access and provide excellence in education for every student.

Universal goal: Every Seattle Public Schools’ student receives a high-quality, world-class education and graduates prepared for college, career, and community.

Targeted strategy: SPS is focused on African American boys and teens meeting academic goals, which will result in greater academic success for all students.

“We believe that an intentional focus on African American males will ultimately benefit every student. We will refine our systems and structures that will ultimately be used to better meet the needs of students throughout SPS. We will also learn how to develop and provide differentiated efforts to meet the needs of specific populations, allowing us to better serve the needs of additional student populations.”
Help Me Grow
Help Me Grow (HMG): A Model of Targeted Universalism to Advance Equity and Promote the Well-Being of All Children

Using targeted universalism as its strategy to pursue equity for families with young children, HMG aims to realize a universal goal:

All families with young children have easy and quick access to the resources and services they want and need in order to best support their children’s development, health, and well-being.

HMG provides all families with a comprehensive, cross-sector, integrated early childhood system that connects together all service professionals, child health providers, and families in order to advance developmental promotion, early detection, referral, linkage, and follow-up.

HMG is accessible to all families within a community or state and also designs and implements specific approaches that work best to engage, partner with, and serve the distinct and unique families that live in a particular community or state.

Applying Targeted Universalism to Early Childhood: The Help Me Grow Model

If we aim to provide all families with:

- An early childhood systems model that engages, partners with, and serves families through implementing and measuring specific approaches targeted to a particular community or state;
- A comprehensive, cross-sector, integrated early childhood system that connects all service professionals, child health providers and families, and
- Free, quick and easy access to this system within a community or state;

...then we:

Create a broad coalition of partners committed to a universal goal and leveraging data to continually identifying which groups are not getting the resources they need and why.

Advance universal prevention and minimize gaps in developmental promotion, early detection, referral, linkage, and follow-up.

Establish universal access with targeted outreach to create equal opportunity for underserved, disenfranchised populations.

...so that all children attain positive health and developmental outcomes.

HMG: A Model of Targeted Universalism to Advance Equity and Promote the Well-Being of All Children

Barriers HMG attempts to address:

- Existing programs in health, early care and education, economic assistance, and family services are rarely integrated.
- Accessibility often depends on location, and many have strict eligibility criteria such as income, location, diagnosis, or cost.
- Historical, institutionalized, and structural racism has been evidenced to deter families of color from seeking services.
- Early childhood policies and processes are highly fragmented and difficult to navigate, with confusing points of entry that are particularly problematic for those experiencing adversities such as poverty, systemic racism, cultural disenfranchisement, geographic isolation, and violence.

How HMG addresses barriers:

HMG is an evidence-based model that effectively promotes early childhood system-building efforts. Making sure the unique needs of different groups of children are met requires a systemic approach to organizing the currently fractured landscape of services. Rather than being a stand-alone program, it builds on existing programs to ensure seamless, coordinated services for families with young children.

HMG ensures that

1. families have professional support in accessing services easily and quickly (Centralized Access Point)
2. the community understands and promotes child development (Family & Community Outreach)
3. child health professionals are supported in their efforts to monitor children's development and help families get connected to supports that they want and need (Child Health Care Provider Outreach)
4. data are being used to constantly improve systems of care for families (Data Collection & Analysis)

Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness
The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

Biden Administration Calls for 25% Cut in Homelessness by 2025

The Biden administration’s new strategic plan to address homelessness includes a focus on equity and a promise to help cities build more housing.

As the strategies outlined in this plan are implemented, USICH will work with a broad range of stakeholders to adopt a “targeted universalism”35 framework that promotes a universal reduction goal with targeted and tailored solutions based on the structures, cultures, and geographies of certain groups to help them overcome unique barriers. USICH recognizes that tailored solutions are needed for specific populations and geographic areas and that individuals and families experiencing multiple barriers often require special consideration and resources. USICH also recognizes that the federal government will need to rely on those most impacted by the policies and strategies promoted in this plan to design the tailored actions and guidance.