

# CLIMATE CHANGE

A SOCIAL JUSTICE PROBLEM

# HOW IS IT A SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUE?

LET'S TALK ABOUT DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS

THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE **DISPROPORTIONATELY**  
**FALL ON UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES** WHO ARE LEAST ABLE  
TO PREPARE FOR, AND RECOVER FROM, HEAT WAVES, POOR  
AIR QUALITY, FLOODING, AND OTHER IMPACTS.

<https://www.axios.com/epa-report-climate-change-marginalized-communities-391492c7-bedf-4d98-9208-58e84ed03f48.html>

IN THE US, AIR POLLUTION IS **DISTRIBUTED UNEVENLY** AMONG  
THE DIFFERENT RACIAL GROUPS, WITH PEOPLE OF COLOR  
BEING HIT THE HARDEST.

63%

HISPANICS BREATHE IN 63%  
MORE POLLUTION THAN THEY MAKE.

AFRICAN-AMERICANS BREATHE IN  
56% MORE POLLUTION THAN THEY MAKE.

56%

# 17%

CAUCASIANS ARE EXPOSED TO  
**17%** LESS AIR POLLUTION THAN THEY MAKE.

<https://earth.org/marginalised-groups-are-disproportionately-affected-by-climate-change/>

PEOPLE OF COLOR ON AVERAGE ARE EXPOSED TO FAR HIGHER LEVELS OF AIR POLLUTANTS (PM2.5), **REGARDLESS OF REGION OR HOUSEHOLD INCOME.**

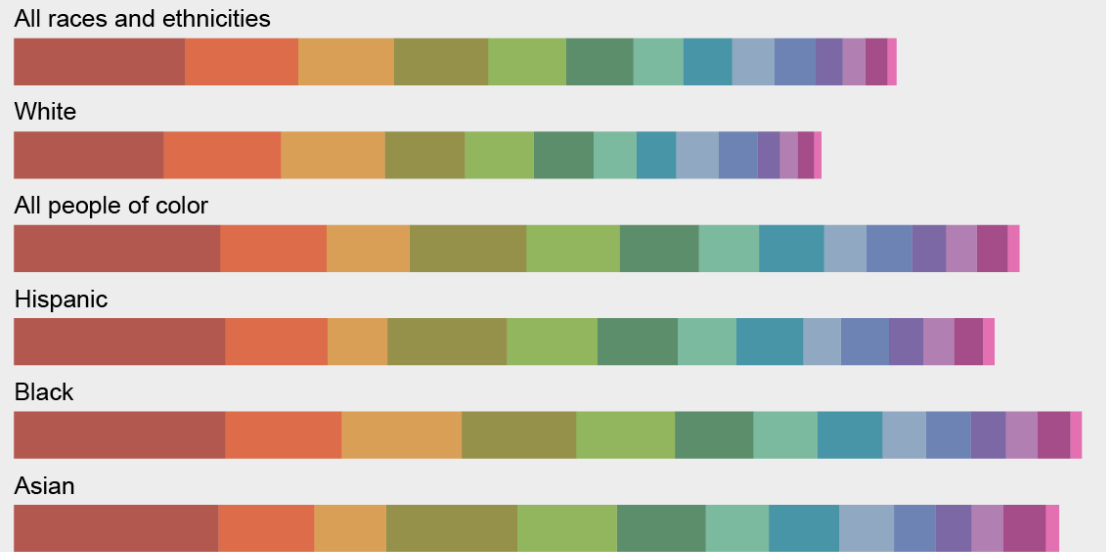
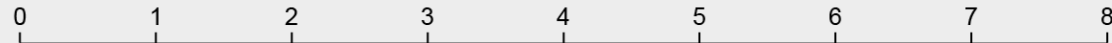
<https://earth.org/marginalised-groups-are-disproportionately-affected-by-climate-change/>

### Pollution Sources

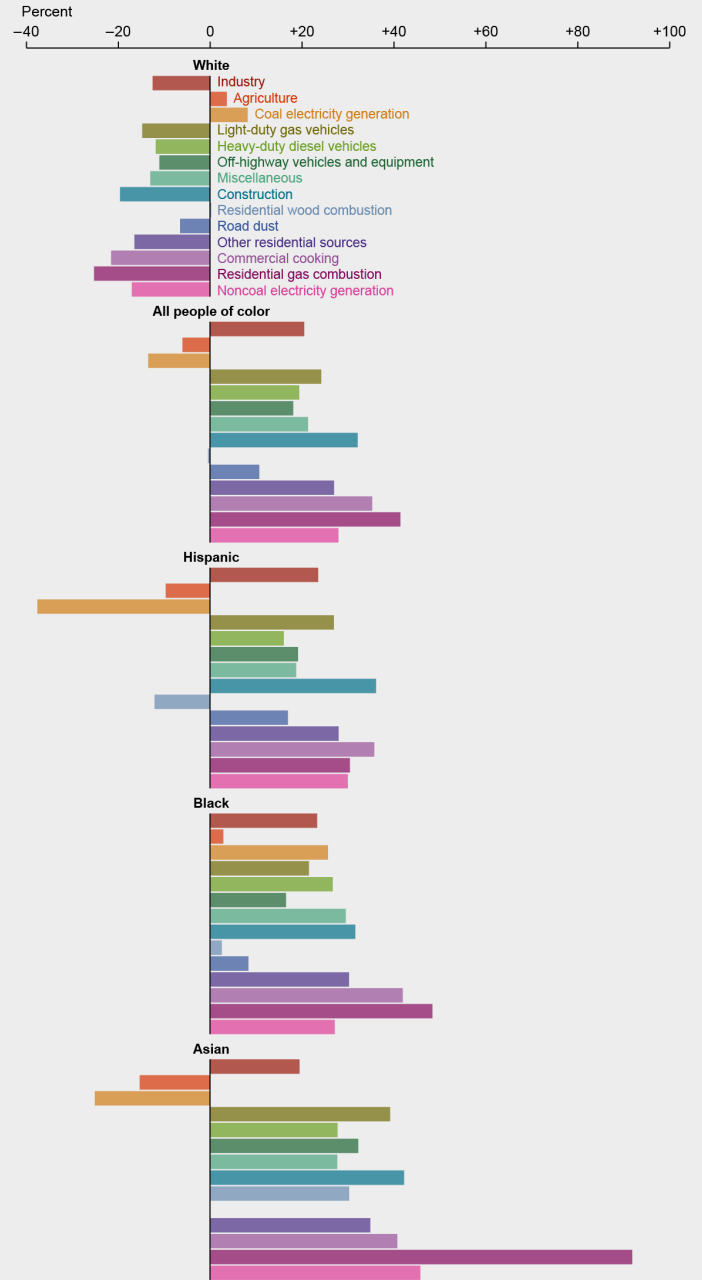
- Industry
- Agriculture
- Coal electricity generation
- Light-duty gas vehicles
- Heavy-duty diesel vehicles
- Off-highway vehicles and equipment
- Miscellaneous
- Construction
- Residential wood combustion
- Road dust
- Other residential sources
- Commercial cooking
- Residential gas combustion
- Noncoal electricity generation

### Annual Exposure to Fine Particulate Air Pollution

Micrograms per Cubic Meter



### Disparity in Exposure, Compared with Population Average





DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES HAVE HIGHER RATES OF HEALTH CONDITIONS SUCH AS **HEART DISEASE, DIABETES, ASTHMA,** AND **CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD)**. HEAT STRESS CAN EXACERBATE HEART DISEASE AND DIABETES, AND WARMING TEMPERATURES RESULT IN MORE POLLEN AND SMOG, WHICH CAN WORSEN ASTHMA AND COPD. **MOREOVER, DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES OFTEN LACK ACCESS TO GOOD MEDICAL CARE AND HEALTH INSURANCE.**

CLIMATE CHANGE DISPLACES  
THE MOST **VULNERABLE**

IMPACTS ON MIGRATION

## IMPACTS ABOUND

- REDUCTION IN **LABOR HOURS** DUE TO EXTREME TEMPERATURES.
- MINORITIES MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN LOW LYING AREAS AND AT **HIGHER RISK OF HURRICANES AND FLOODING**.
- MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN “**HEAT ISLANDS**” AND LESS LIKELY TO HAVE MITIGATING RESOURCES, LIKE AIR CONDITIONING.
- THIS JUST SCRATCHES THE SURFACE.

<https://www.axios.com/epa-report-climate-change-marginalized-communities-391492c7-bedf-4d98-9208-58e84ed03f48.html>

<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/personal-finance/communities-of-color-and-climate-change/>

SO WHAT CAN WE DO?

# LISTEN

TRUE, ACTIVE, MEANINGFUL AND ACTIONABLE ENGAGEMENT

# ENGAGE

- TALK DIRECTLY WITH DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES.
- IDENTIFY THE REAL LEADERS.
- MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE.
- VALUE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.
- EDUCATE COMMUNITY ON ISSUES.
- LISTEN TO INPUT.

# EMPOWER

- GIVE COMMUNITY A MEANINGFUL SEAT AT THE TABLE.
- TREAT THEM AS A CRITICAL ASSET, NOT A BOX TO CHECK.
- AMPLIFY THEIR VOICE.
- EMBRACE THE HETEROGENEITY OF EXPERIENCES.
- EMPOWER THOSE ENGAGED TO ENGAGE OTHERS.

# IMPLEMENT

- INCORPORATE COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS.
- CONTINUALLY CHECK BACK WITH COMMUNITY TO CONFIRM YOU'VE HEARD THEM CORRECTLY AND GET FEEDBACK ON SOLUTIONS.
- LOOK PAST COST-BENEFIT ANALYSES FOR DECISION MAKING.



CONTINUE TO SEE CLIMATE CHANGE  
THROUGH A SOCIAL JUSTICE LENS