

Equity and Sovereignty Framework: *Definition and Importance*

I. Definition of “Equity and Sovereignty Framework”

- ▶ **Equity** in the philanthropic context often implies ensuring that resources are allocated in ways that redress systemic imbalances, providing everyone with the tools they need to thrive.
- ▶ **Sovereignty** relates to the inherent right of Tribal Nations to govern themselves, make their own laws, regulate their own activities, and do so without interference.
- ▶ Together, an equity and sovereignty framework emphasizes both the just distribution of resources and the respect for and strengthening of the self-governing powers of Tribal Nations.

II. Importance of the Framework

- ▶ **Self-Determination:** Sovereignty recognizes the inherent rights of Tribal Nations to decide their own destinies. This empowerment leads to more meaningful, sustainable outcomes than externally imposed solutions.
- ▶ **Corrective Justice:** An equity focus helps address past injustices and current disparities, ensuring resources go where they are most needed.
- ▶ **Holistic Development:** By integrating equity with sovereignty, the approach respects both the need for resources and the value of Native wisdom and governance.

| Advantages Over Traditional Philanthropy

III. Traditional Philanthropy vs. Equity and Sovereignty Framework

Traditional philanthropy often operates with a top-down approach, where donors decide what is best for beneficiaries, which can unintentionally perpetuate systemic inequities.

- ▶ **Shared Ownership:** The new framework ensures that Tribal Nations are active participants in decision-making, creating solutions that are rooted in their lived experiences.
- ▶ **Cultural Respect and Integration:** While traditional philanthropy may inadvertently sideline Native wisdom, the equity and sovereignty approach centers it.
- ▶ **Long-term Solutions:** Rather than temporary fixes, this approach seeks sustainable change, grounded in the unique needs and aspirations of each Tribal Nation.

| Core Values for Mainstream Philanthropy

IV. Translatable Values for Broader Philanthropic Efforts

- ▶ **Mutual Respect:** Recognize and honor the wisdom, values, and rights of all communities.
- ▶ **Partnership:** Move beyond mere donor-recipient dynamics to forge genuine collaborations.
- ▶ **Empowerment:** Ensure communities have agency in the decisions affecting them.
- ▶ **Holistic Approach:** Consider cultural, spiritual, and historical factors, not just economic or immediate needs.
- ▶ **Sustainability:** Aim for lasting change, not quick fixes.

The equity and sovereignty framework offers a path forward for philanthropy that is both just and effective. Intertwining the principles of justice in resource distribution with respect for tribal governance can lead to deeper, more meaningful transformations both within Tribal Nations and in the broader global community. The embrace of this framework by NCAIF signifies a visionary approach to positive change, one that other philanthropic entities would do well to consider.