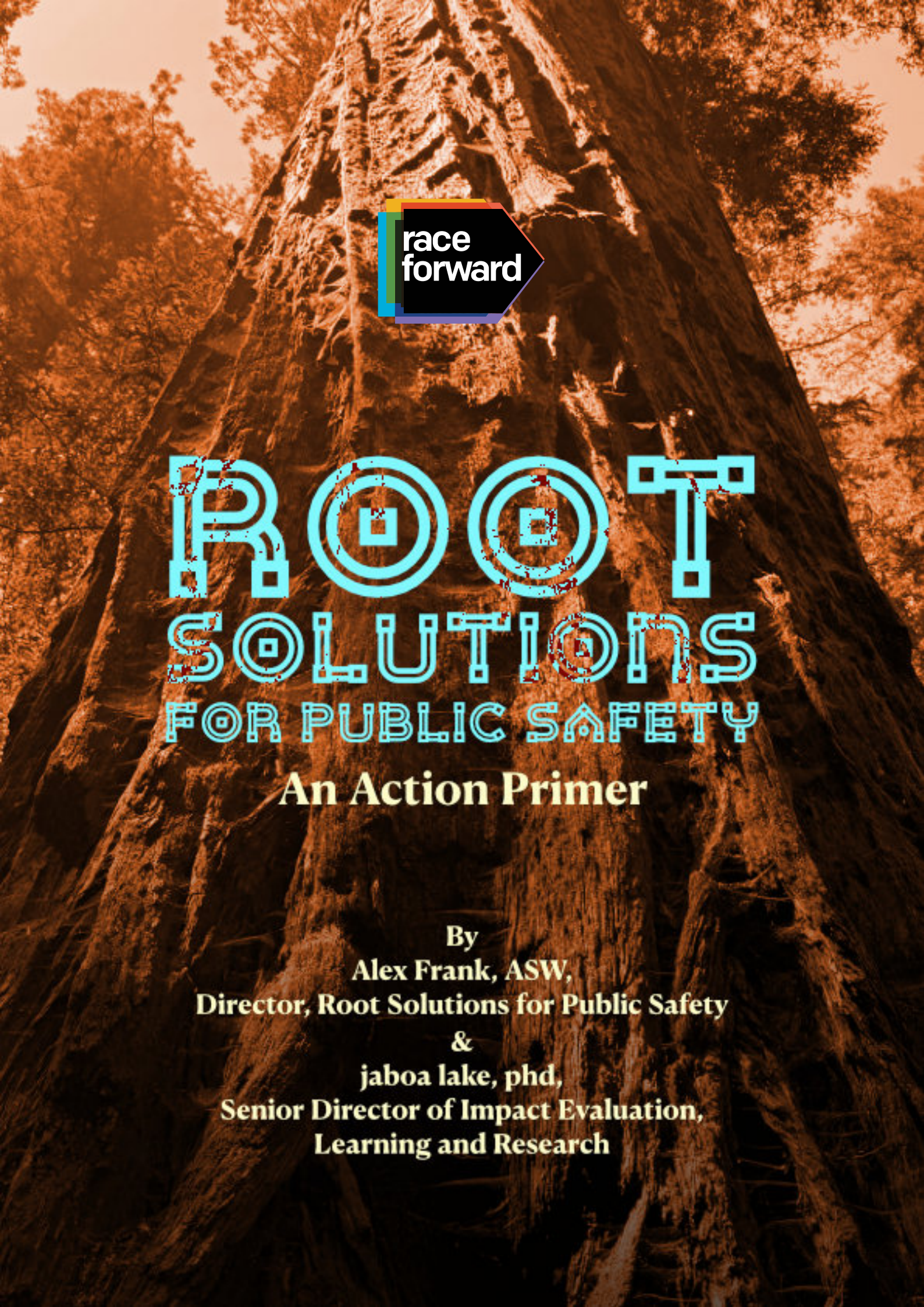




race
forward

ROOT SOLUTIONS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

An Action Primer

By
Alex Frank, ASW,
Director, Root Solutions for Public Safety
&
jabo lake, phd,
Senior Director of Impact Evaluation,
Learning and Research

CONTENTS

- 3 - Grounding
- 5 - Roots of Public “Safety”
- 10 - Roots of Collective Power
- 14 - Take Action by Getting to the Roots
- 25 - Rooting Place and Practice in History
- 27 - Partners, Contributors, and Referenced Organizations
- 30 - Resources and Citations

“As we stand between history’s pain and tomorrow’s promise, we need to choose courage over complacency.” – Stevie Wonder

APPRECIATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend deep gratitude to the MILPA Collective and Tracey Wells-Huggins for your steadfast partnership throughout this process. We are also thankful for the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with Ramon Vasquez (American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Mission), Chassidy Olainu-Alade (Sugar Land 95 Public Memory Project), Milton Carr (NOLA Historic Tours), Loretta Afraid of Bear–Cook and Tom Cook (Afraid of Bear – American Horse Tiospaye), Joel LaFrance, Salvador Madera (Rising Phoenix Film Works), Stacey Toussant at Inside Out Tours, along with many others. Your leadership and wisdom have fundamentally shaped the actions offered in this Action Primer.

Launched in 2022, the Root Solutions for Public Safety project at Race Forward brings together justice-system–impacted leaders, community organizations, and government practitioners to develop public safety solutions that advance racial justice, grounded in history and guided by a north star of a world without jails, prisons, or detention centers. This project would not be possible without our partners.

GROUNDING

Across the United States, communities are grappling with a public safety landscape shaped by centuries of racialized harm, structural inequity, and state-sanctioned violence. While progress has been made, the underlying conditions that sustain mass incarceration, uphold systemic racism, and erode public trust remain largely unchanged. **At this moment we face a choice: continue to tinker at the edges of a system built on punishment with roots that extend back to the history of colonization, enslavement, and missionization, or commit to the deeper work of transformation.** We offer this Action Primer as a contribution to building root solutions for public safety as a set of practical, tactical, field-tested strategies for cultivating systems capable of accountability, healing, and genuine safety.

This Action Primer stems from years of partnership with jurisdictions, community organizations, and people directly impacted by the carceral system who are doing the hard and heart work to advance racial justice within structurally racist systems. It emerges from collaborations with jurisdictions that have participated in the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge and are part of the Racial Equity project Cohort: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Cook County, Illinois; Pima County, Arizona; and New Orleans, Louisiana, led with community partners who anchor this work: Why Not Prosper (Philadelphia), Total Community Action (New Orleans), Chicago ROAR (Cook County), and the YWCA of Southern Arizona (Pima County).

What is an Action Primer?

An *Action Primer* is a curated set of practical actions that jurisdictions and communities can use as they approach strategic planning and decision-making, with the understanding that each action can be expanded into deeper study and practice. Each action is a seed for deeper work, to be grown through future sessions, programs, labs, and publications.



The background of the entire spread is a photograph of dark, rich soil with several thin, light-brown roots extending downwards. The roots are more prominent in the top corners and bottom corners of the pages. The text is overlaid on a white, textured background that resembles crumpled paper.

ROOTS OF PUBLIC "SAFETY"

For decades, moments of national tragedy related to the criminal legal system have been met with calls for greater accountability and transparency of public safety systems. Emergent programs co-led by Race Forward and partners¹ unpack the social, historical, and contemporary realities of this dynamic including the many ways in which those calls have been ignored, upcycled, and unaddressed. To build root solutions for public safety, we need to look at this cycle and as Angela Davis says, “grasp things at the root.”

Systems of public “safety” claim to deliver accountability in response to harm. However, they often operate in secrecy, behind a literal wall, in geographically isolated places, and with opaque policies and reporting practices. This leads to racially targeted laws and policies that fuel negative stereotypes, justify individualized punishment-based interventions over systemic change, and limit how we envision community investments, solutions and repair. Generations of justice-system-impacted people, families, victims, and frontline staff have called for greater transparency and accountability.

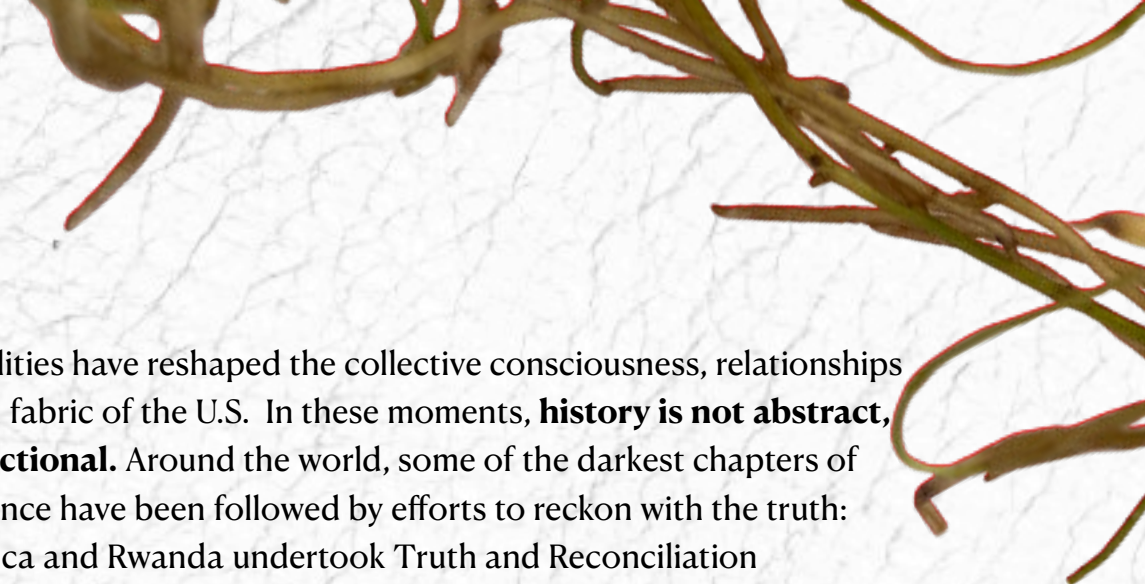
As a result, the U.S incarcerates more people per capita than any other independent democracy on earth.² Our system of mass incarceration and mass supervision has inflicted profound harm on Black and Indigenous people.⁴

5.5 Million people are currently under some form of carceral control. This includes...

- 2 Million people in jail or prison
- 2.9 Million people on probation
- 679,000 people on parole

Half of all Americans have a loved one who has been or is currently incarcerated.

Many others are confined in immigration detention centers, on house arrest, at involuntary mental health facilities, and other locations of control.²



These realities have reshaped the collective consciousness, relationships and social fabric of the U.S. In these moments, **history is not abstract, it's instructional.** Around the world, some of the darkest chapters of state violence have been followed by efforts to reckon with the truth: South Africa and Rwanda undertook Truth and Reconciliation processes, the Nuremberg Trials and U.S. commissions examining events such as the Greensboro Massacre and the Tuskegee experiments, and the U.S. engaged in a process of reconstruction after the Civil War. Each incomplete attempt, often shaped by the interest of the powerful and benefiting the people responsible for the atrocity itself, fell short of their promise of repair and built loopholes to continue to uphold systemic oppression.

In contrast, community-driven solutions recognize that **punishment does not lead to safety.** Approaches to public safety are built around a commitment to human dignity, anti-oppression, accountability, transformative justice, and collective liberation.⁵ True accountability and transformed systems prevent institutions from reproducing violence, ensures government is accountable to the public, builds structures that make future abuses less likely, and makes systems of punishment and control obsolete.

Drawing from a history of community-driven solutions and guided by this understanding we offer the following **Eight Actions** for organizers, community based organizations, and government institutions seeking to address the root causes of mass incarceration. These actions are not exhaustive, nor are they meant to be prescriptive; rather, they serve as a starting point for deeper dialogue, experimentation, and practice. Each Action carries both practical and tactical implications for government agencies and community leaders, and is accompanied by resources and organizations whose work exemplifies the principles at hand.

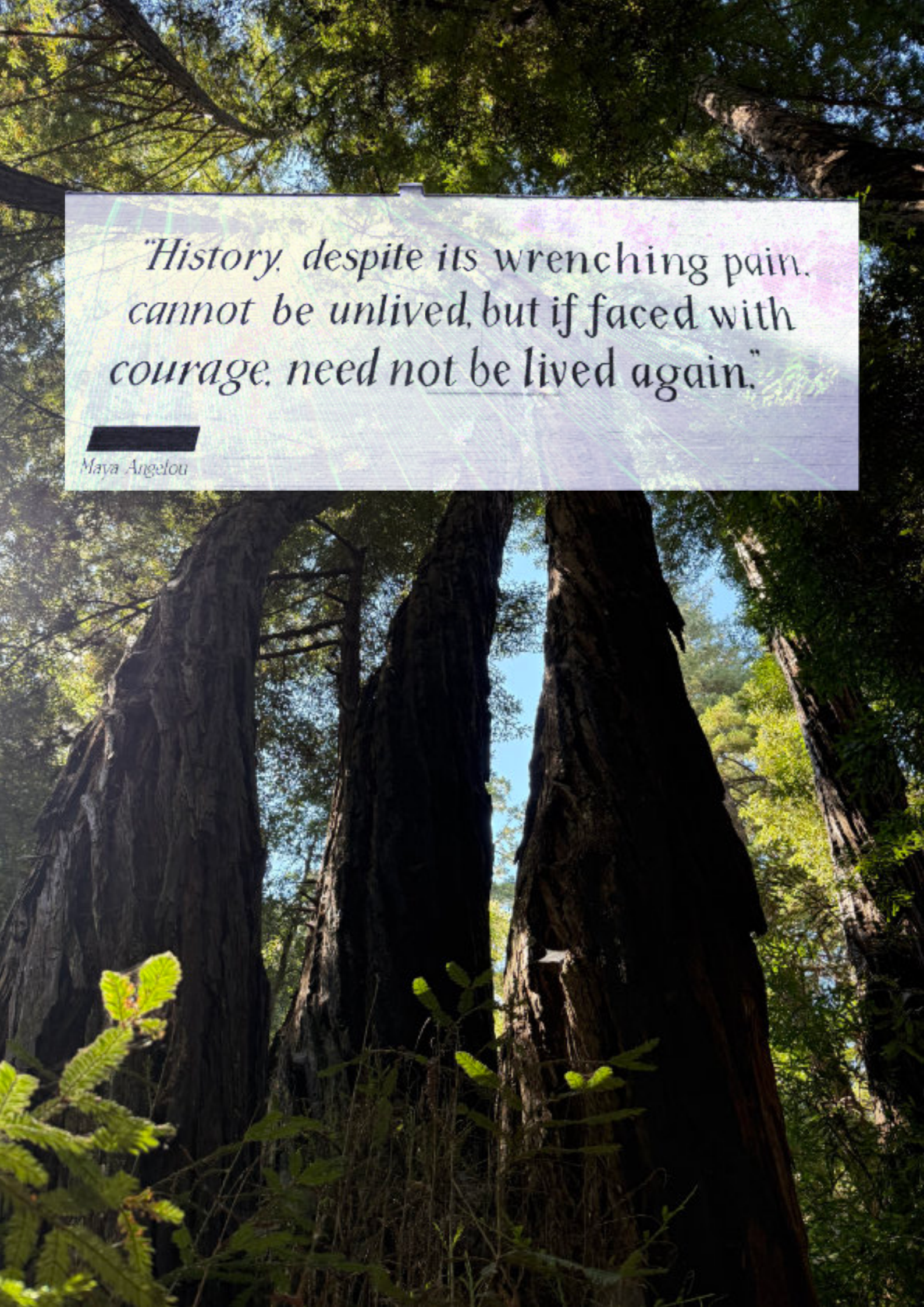
The Roots of Mass Incarceration in the U.S.

Colonialization: The policy and practice of seizing social and political control over land, imposing settler occupation, and exploiting Indigenous people and resources—often justified through Christian imperial narratives like the Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny. In the Americas, colonization enabled the genocide and displacement of Indigenous peoples and established systems of domination whose logics continue to shape today's carceral systems.

Chattel Slavery: The political and economic system whereby millions of African people were kidnapped, enslaved, and forced to labor on stolen lands by settler-colonists enforced through dehumanization, sale, and exploitation. Grounded in white Christian doctrines chattel slavery became the blueprint for legalized state control, family separation, forced labor, and a culture of punishment - structures that continue in today's carceral and racial caste system.

Missionization: The process and infrastructure built across the United States—particularly in missions and boarding schools—shaped by Catholic doctrine, Papal Bulls, and the ideology of “*kill the Indian, save the man*,” which sought to “make gente de razón” by replacing Indigenous cultures with a white, Anglo-Catholic worldview. These institutions functioned as sites of cultural genocide, confining and controlling Indigenous people through forced religious conversion, assimilation, land displacement, movement restriction, language erasure, and surveillance.





*"History, despite its wrenching pain,
cannot be unlived, but if faced with
courage, need not be lived again."*

Maya Angelou

ROOTS OF COLLECTIVE POWER

History has taught us that in the face of systemic oppression, change must be rooted in our collective power. From 2022-2025 Race Forward worked with four jurisdictions engaged in MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge, Racial Equity Cohort. They include New Orleans, LA; Cook County, IL; Philadelphia, PA; and Pima County, AZ. The work of the collective related to the work of the cohort which was aimed to advance racial equity within the pre-trial legal system in their jurisdictions. Twice a year we convened community partners and local government from these sites in a location of historical significance through Learning Exchange Retreats. The goals of the Learning Exchange Retreats were to:

-  *Deepen solidarity, resilience, and empathy across the cohort to support one another and the work of advancing racial equity within structurally racist systems.*
-  *Deepen our individual and collective understanding of the impact of racism, colonization, missionization, and enslavement in work practices by grounding in their historic and contemporary realities.*
-  *Develop context-and-needs-specific interventions using the GARE approach and other innovative methods, focusing on "inside" and "outside" strategies for systemic change.*
-  *Strengthen processes for collaboration, accountability, and collective impact across the cohort.*

Each 2-4 day Learning Exchange Retreat balanced time for rest and reflection with strategic planning and project innovation. The first half focused on **Placemaking** by engaging with the social, historical, political, and cultural context of the land we were on in the place we visited. The second half centered on **Practice** by applying those lessons to the site's ongoing work. In partnership with local elders, historians, formerly incarcerated leaders, and families impacted by the carceral system, we drew on the guidance history offered to shape individual and collective strategies for advancing racial equity in the pre-trial legal system. In this time we visited the following sites:

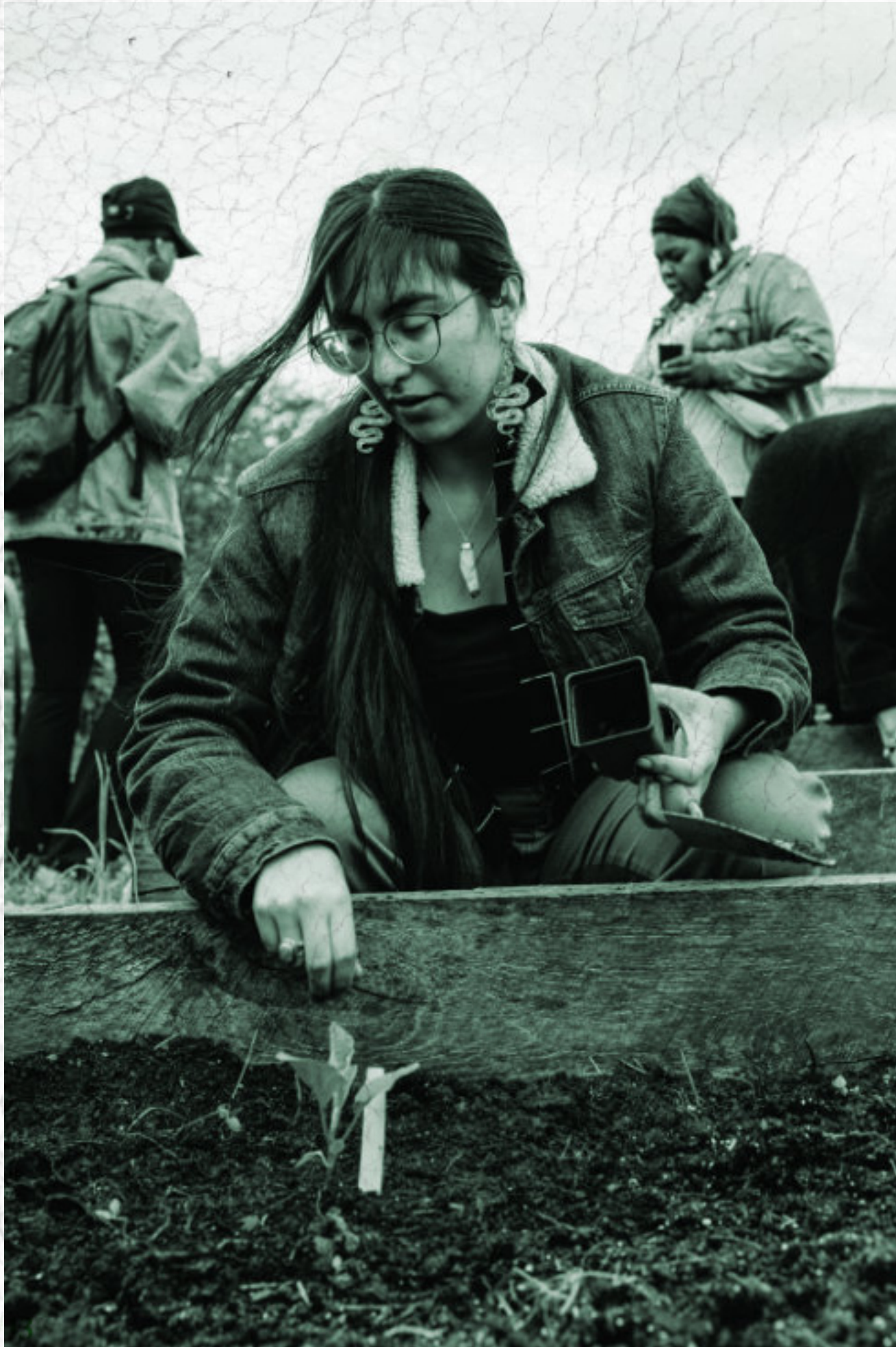
- 1) *Montgomery, Alabama*
- 2) *San Antonio, Texas*
- 3) *Charleston, South Carolina*
- 4) *Sugar Land, Texas*
- 5) *New Orleans, Louisiana*
- 6) *Chicago, Illinois*
- 7) *Briarcliff, New York*

This Action Primer pulls lessons from this collaborative process, as well as teachings from years of working in and with criminal legal systems across the country in partnership with currently and formerly incarcerated people, families, and staff. Each of the actions in this primer has been tested in different places at different times. We encourage readers to take what serves you, and leave what doesn't.

“These retreats have inundated me with emotions, experiences, and information[...] I now have a better understanding from a historical perspective, and from a different narrative of a historical perspective, of what the oppression of slavery and Reconstruction have led to.

This experience[...]allows us to analyze the nuances of how systemic racism took root in our area and address those challenges first, while understanding how similar patterns have unfolded nationwide. It's a clear and grounded approach to equity work that's deeply rooted in who we are and where we are.” - Government Partner





TAKE ACTION BY GETTING TO THE ROOTS

“It is no accident that when we first learn about justice and fair play as children it is in the context of telling the truth. The heart of justice is truth telling, seeing ourselves and the world the way it is, rather than the way we want it to be.” - bell hooks, All About Love

The following eight actions are not a checklist - they are concrete, implementable strategies. Leading with solutions designed by people most impacted by carceral systems, government agencies, community organizations, and advocates can strengthen accountability, deepen transparency, and build public safety rooted in healing rather than punishment. These actions reflect patterns we have seen across jurisdictions, lessons from community-led efforts, and strategies that have proven effective in confronting the root causes of harm.

The work ahead requires translating values, principles, and ideals into practice. **As you read through these, consider picking one to embed into your next strategic plan, organizational programmatic design or evaluation session, budget, or policy agenda and community demands.**





ACTION: Tell the Truth

Real transparency requires confronting the history of harm that shapes current public safety systems. Truth and Reconciliation processes, public memory projects, and survivor-led storytelling initiatives help institutions understand how past practices continue to influence present-day outcomes. Without this grounding, reforms risk addressing symptoms rather than root causes.

Truth-telling is individually transformative and systemically healing, and can take many forms: professional development, new staff training, collaborative historical research, or structured processes that bring system-impacted people and institutional leaders into dialogue. This approach equips decision-makers with the historical and cultural context necessary to understand the impact of their daily choices on the lives of their neighbors and community.

“I was born in NYC and lived there for over thirty years. Never once did I get the history the way we got it. I felt angry when I found out we were miseducated. It takes me to the power of narrative. We need to change the story.” - LER participant, community leader



ACTION: Protect the Truth

An Archive is a purposeful collection of records including documents, stories, artworks, images, zines, correspondence, videos, data, news clippings, physical space, or other materials. These records are used to document, remember, and make accessible the history, experiences, and decisions of people, communities, or institutions. Archives shape how knowledge is created and shared, whose stories are preserved, how they are interpreted, and how the past informs the present and future

Archival work is a powerful tool for accountability. Projects like the *After Violence Project (AVP)*, *Rikers Public Memory Project*, and the *Formerly Incarcerated Renaissance Museum (FIRM)* demonstrate how preservation ensures that the history of harm cannot be erased or rewritten. Archives safeguard the voices of survivors, document government actions and inactions, and provide an evidence base for educators, journalists, advocates, and policymakers working towards change. AVP offers practical tools for building trauma-informed archives including decision making guides, interview protocols, consent practices, and a readings/resource list. These materials are specifically designed to document state violence while prioritizing the safety and dignity of those involved.

When rooted in cultural practices and community leadership, archives also drive narrative change. Establishing independent, community-accessible archives—particularly those led by people most impacted by histories of harms—can prevent the state from burying inconvenient truths and help create a collective memory strong enough to resist repetition of harm. When people protect and share their histories, they shape not only what is remembered, but what becomes possible.

“It’s an eye opener to see others as similar though we are different. I learned that people don’t know who Native people are because it’s not written, not talked about. We included children in everything we do so that they hear everything we talk about. The moment we stop talking about our stories is when they die. Storytelling is a strategy.” - LER participant, community leader



ACTION: Build sites of public memory, repair, and healing

Across the U.S., sites of public memory exist in many forms: some are formally marked, others live only through oral histories passed across generations. Architecture is never neutral—the built environment reflects and reinforces our values as a society. Jails and prisons are physical manifestations of this truth, —funded by the public, governed by elected officials, and deeply influential in shaping the social, cultural, and physical fabric of a community. Unlike parks or libraries, they are rarely treated as civic spaces that demand visibility, oversight, and public accountability. Instead, they remain hidden. Recognizing jails and prisons as civic institutions forces us to confront a central truth: when we ignore the environment in which people are held, we sanction neglect, secrecy, and the devaluation of human life.

Governments, nonprofits, and community leaders can disrupt this invisibility by engaging architects who ground their practice in restorative justice, cultural memory, honoring truth, community healing, and placemaking. Designers such as *MASS Design Group*, and *Deanna Van Buren*, whose work centers restorative justice architecture, show how built spaces can be transformative. Their work offers a blueprint for creating memorials and public memory projects that confront state violence and lift up community resilience. Engaging values-aligned architects and public artists expands our imagination—and our accountability—reminding us that public spaces that generate safety and repair should reflect the worth of every person, including those behind the walls.



ACTION: Champion rooted and responsible reporting

Independent, investigative journalism is one of the most effective tools for uncovering abuse, neglect, and corruption. *The Marshall Project* and the *Prison Journalism Project* have shown how sustained reporting can shift policy, spark investigations, and amplify the voices of people most harmed by state violence. The *Prison Journalism Project*, which publishes work by incarcerated journalists, offers resources for journalists and media personnel on the outside to improve their reporting on the criminal legal system, including language guidelines, legal terminology, data sources, relevant state based laws and policies, contact and safety guidelines.

Governments should actively foster partnerships with the media to build trust and increase transparency of the conditions within their systems. Actions include granting journalists access to facilities, records, data, and interviews; eliminating barriers that restrict reporting; proactively engaging with journalists who have expertise in carceral systems; and providing pathways for incarcerated journalists to publish.



ACTION: Engage in participatory planning led by people most impacted by systemic harms

Accountability should be built with and led by people most affected by public safety systems: incarcerated people, people on probation or parole, people and families held in detention, people living in heavily policed neighborhoods, and their direct support such as families and communities. Participatory planning shifts decision-making power to those with lived experience, ensuring that policy and programmatic reforms respond to community needs rather than institutional convenience or carceral control.

Governments and nonprofits can implement models such as participatory budgeting where communities decide how to allocate portions of public funds. This demonstrates how decision-making can be democratized and tied to community-defined safety priorities and offer transformational solutions through resource reallocation. The *Truth Telling and Palabra* project at Rikers Island demonstrated how engaging young adults and frontline staff to co-create changes from inside facilities results in measurable operational improvements. Race Forwards *Co-Governance Toolkit* offers guidance for community and government partnerships to build multi-racial democracy across sectors including information for building the structures, agreements, and processes needed for such partnerships.

“I was [convicted and] kidnapped, served 24 years on a plantation again. I refocused and reexamined, got a new strategy to get myself out of prison. A lot of times we jump into the work because we have a passion, we have a strategy. We need to learn history to envision for our [futures].” - LER participant, community leader



ACTION: Advocate to end restrictions on family and community contact for incarcerated people

Over 50 years of rigorous research⁶ has consistently demonstrated that meaningful, ongoing contact with family and community improves outcomes across every measure of safety inside jails and prisons and increases transparency of conditions within carceral systems. Despite this, many institutions maintain punitive restrictions on visitation, phone calls, physical mail, programming, and community engagement—policies that are both inhumane and counterproductive and inhibit community safety solutions.

Governments should expand, not limit, opportunities for connection. This includes eliminating unnecessary visitation barriers, reducing or eliminating call fees, supporting community-based programs inside facilities, and ensuring incarcerated people can maintain ties to family, culture, and community. Such access is a direct indicator of a system's commitment to transparency and accountability—and a proven strategy for promoting well-being, reentry success, and long-term safety. *Justice 4 Families, Families Against Mandatory Minimums, Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Youth*, and the *Essie Justice Group* are organizations doing the hard and heart work to support families with an incarcerated loved one by advocating to change harmful policies that sever connection and make communities less safe.



ACTION: Make data transparent, accessible, and actionable

Public agencies often hold extensive data on use of force, deaths in custody, grievances, staffing levels, disciplinary actions, and program participation—yet this information is frequently shielded behind bureaucracy or released in ways that are inaccessible to the public. The Death in Custody Reporting Act of 2013⁷ required state agencies to report quarterly on the number of people who lost their lives while “detained, arrested, en route to incarceration, or incarcerated in state or local facilities or a boot camp prison”. However, it was never fully implemented,⁸ further cementing the very culture of secrecy it was intended to disrupt. Lack of transparency undermines accountability and makes meaningful community-driven oversight impossible.

Governments can begin to address this by publishing regularly updated, user-friendly datasets by removing unnecessary barriers to public access, engaging communities in data interpreting and determining next steps, and integrating community recommendations of what data is collected and how. It is not enough to just know - data transparency must be paired with a commitment to act on what the data reveals. When communities and institutions analyze data together, they can identify trends, reveal new findings, intervene early, and hold systems accountable for progress.



ACTION: Make policies clear, concise, and accessible

Internal policies in public safety and corrections systems are often buried in hundreds of pages of dense legal or bureaucratic language. This obscures accountability, shuts out community oversight, and makes it difficult for staff and system-impacted people to understand and consistently apply the rules.

Governments and carceral systems can improve transparency and accountability by rewriting policies in plain language, reducing unnecessary length, and making all policies publicly available. North Dakota's reforms⁹—condensing policy documents, streamlining policies into plain language, and making them accessible to the public—illustrate how clarity supports fairness, consistency, and transparency. When policy is understandable, it becomes implementable by frontline staff and enforceable by communities.



ROOTING PLACE AND PRACTICE IN HISTORY

“We cannot be a people or nation of integrity without the whole story. It disintegrates us, we lose whole pieces of ourselves. How do we reintegrate ourselves?” - Community leader, LER participant

History is everywhere, and anyone can begin by engaging with the history in their own neighborhood. Every community sits on layered histories of migration, dispossession, resistance, and survival. Paying attention to these layers is an essential step toward understanding the systems we have inherited and the futures we are responsible for shaping.

Here are a few suggested practices to begin taking Action:

-  **Notice the names of parks, roads, and buildings**— these are often the first clues to the stories, struggles, silences, and acts of resistance that shaped the world you live in today.
-  **Ask questions about how these spaces came to be**- Who built them? What and whose story do they tell? Do they reinforce oppression or incite connection?

-  **Reimagining what our neighborhoods, cities and towns, and regions could look like**- What infrastructure is needed to serve community safety needs? What ancestral practices can we re-implement? Who is needed to make these decisions, build these systems, and vision this new world?

-  **Explore and uplift community-driven systems and solutions that meet public safety needs**- Where have alternative systems been built by communities facing repression, state violence, organized abandonment?¹⁰ What needs do these programs and grassroots experiments meet that contribute to safer communities?¹¹

Above all, these measures must be designed and led by those most harmed by the carceral system, with government agencies taking a supporting role from community direction. This shifts the center of gravity away from institutional self-protection and toward survivor-defined justice. Truth-telling can be a deeply healing act—but only when grounded in rigorous social, political, and historical analysis. The work may feel daunting, but inaction is far more dangerous. The first step is to start: to “choose courage over complacency” and to commit—imperfectly, persistently—to building a public safety landscape rooted in accountability, healing, and collective liberation.



PARTNERS, CONTRIBUTORS, AND REFERENCED ORGANIZATIONS

- After Violence Project. afterviolenceproject.org
- Chassidy Olainu-Alade, Sugar Land 95 Public Memory Project. fortbendisid.com/sugarland95
- Chicago ROAR, Cook County, IL. crossroadsantiracism.org/chicago
- Deanna Van Buran, Designing Justice + Designing Spaces. designingjustice.org
- Essie Justice Group. essiejusticegroup.org
- Equal Justice Initiative: The Legacy Sites. legacysites.eji.org
- Families Against Mandatory Minimums. famm.org
- Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Youth. fflic.org
- Formerly Incarcerated Renaissance Museum, Philadelphia, PA. www.why-not-prosper.org/the-firm.html
- Justice 4 Families. www.justice4families.org
- Loretta Afraid of Bear–Cook and Tom Cook, Afraid of Bear – American Horse Tiospaye. www.tiospaye1847.org
- Mass Design Group. modelofarchitecture.org
- The Marshall Project. www.themarshallproject.org

- MILPA Collective. www.milpacollective.org
- Milton Carr, NOLA Historic Tours, New Orleans, LA. tourneworleans.com/new-orleans-tour-guide
- Prison Journalism Project. prisonjournalismproject.org
- Ramon Vasquez, American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Mission. aitscm.or
- Rikers Public Memory Project. rikersmemoryproject.org
- Salvador Madera, Rising Phoenix Film Works. risingphoenixfilmworks.com
- Stacey Toussant, Inside Out Tours, New York, NY. insideouttours.com
- Tracey Wells-Huggins, Raw Wisdom LLC. raw-wisdom.org
- Total Community Action, New Orleans, LA. tca-nola.org
- Why Not Prosper, Philadelphia, PA. why-not-prosper.org
- YWCA of Southern Arizona, Pima County, AZ. ywcatucson.org



RESOURCES AND CITATIONS

⁵brown, a. m. (2015). What is/isn't transformative justice? adriennemareebrown.net. adriennemareebrown.net/2015/07/09/what-isnt-transformative-justice/

City of Philadelphia. Participatory Budgeting. www.phila.gov/programs/participatory-budgeting/

DeWeaver, E.S. (2025). Ghost in the Criminal Justice Machine: Reform, White Supremacy, and an Abolitionist Future. The New Press.

⁵Dixon, E., & Piepzna-Samarasinha, L.L. (2020). Beyond Survival: Stories and Strategies from the Transformative Justice Movement. AK Press.

¹Frank, A. (2024). Building Root Solutions for Public Safety. www.raceforward.org/system/files?file=2024/06/Root%20Solutions%20Brief_Final_LiveLinks.pdf

Geraghty, S., & Velez, M. (2011). Bringing transparency and accountability to criminal justice institutions in the South. *Stanford Law & Policy Review*, 22(2), 455–488.

⁴Ghandnoosh, N. (2003). One in Five. The Sentencing Project. www.sentencingproject.org/one-in-five

Gomez, J., Wells-Huggins, T., Frank, A., & Andrews, N. (2022). Truth telling and Palabra: A project at Rikers Island. MILPA Collective. milpacollective.org/truth-telling-and-palabra-a-project-at-rikers-island

H.R. 1447 - 113th Congress (2013-2014): Death in Custody Reporting Act of 2013. www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/1447

Interrupting Criminalization & National Black Women's Justice Institute.

Diversion Derailed. www.interruptingcriminalization.com/resources-all/diversion-derailed

⁸The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights & The Leadership Conference Education Fund. (2023). Civil Rights report release: Groups chronicle failures of reporting deaths in custody. civilrights.org/2023/02/22/civil-rights-report-release-groups-chronicle-failures-of-reporting-deaths-in-custody

Moore, C., & Burdette, L. (2024). Co-Governance Tool. Race Forward. www.raceforward.org/system/files/2025/05/Co-Governance-Tool-Multiracial-Democracy.pdf

⁴Rovner, J. (2025). Youth Justice by the Numbers. The Sentencing Project. www.sentencingproject.org/policy-brief/youth-justice-by-the-numbers
Safety and Justice Challenge. <https://safetyandjusticechallenge.org>

⁴Sawyer, W., & Wagner, P. (2025). Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie 2025. Prison Policy Initiative. www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2025.html

³Schenwar, M., & Law, V. (2020). Prison by Any Other Name: The Harmful Consequences of Popular Reforms. The New Press.

Madley, B. (2019). California's first mass incarceration system: Franciscan missions, California Indians, and penal servitude, 1769–1836. *Pacific Historical Review*, 88(1), 14-47.

Muñoz Martinez, M. (2018). The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas.

monicamunozmartinez.wpcomstaging.com/book

NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Framework for Public Safety. www.naacpldf.org/framework-for-public-safety

⁹North Dakota DOCR. Data dashboard. dashboard.docr.nd.gov/us-nd

⁴Uggen, C., Larson, R., Shannon, S., Stewart, R., & Hauf, M. (2024). Locked Out 2024: Four million denied voting rights due to a felony conviction. The Sentencing Project. www.sentencingproject.org/reports/locked-out-2024-four-million-denied-voting-rights-due-to-a-felony-conviction

Van Buran, D. (2025). The Good Things We Could Do With Our Closed Prisons. www.governing.com/management-and-administration/the-good-things-we-could-do-with-our-closed-prisons

Viquera, N., lake, j., & Salas Pujols, J. (2025). Narrative Strategy Primer for Weaving our Interconnected Futures. Race Forward.

⁵Movement for Black Lives. (2020). Vision for Black Lives. m4bl.org/v4bl

⁵One Million Experiments. Community-Based Projects that Expand Our Ideas about What Keeps Us Safe. millionexperiments.com

⁶Wang, L. (2021). Research roundup: The positive impacts of family contact for incarcerated people and their families. Prison Policy Initiative. www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2021/12/21/family_contact

²Widra, E. (2024). States of Incarceration. www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2024.html

¹⁰Wilson Gilmore, R. (2022). Abolition Geography: Essays Towards Liberation. Verso Books.

Graphic Design by Merawi Gerima



ROOT SOLUTIONS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

An Action Primer



**SAFETY+JUSTICE
CHALLENGE**

Supported by the John D. and Catherine T.
MacArthur Foundation

**For more information, please contact us at info@raceforward.org,
or visit our website at raceforward.org.**