Black Americans Facing Greater Inequality

The equality gap between black and white Americans widened in 2010, according to a recent study published by The National Urban League.

The bad news is twofold: the Equality Index is below the threshold level of 100 percent and the index value has declined. The index value being less than the threshold level has been driven by deficient socio-economic conditions, as both the Economics and Social Justice sub-indices are under 60 percent.

The Equality Index plummeted 0.6-percentage point from 72.1 in 2009 to 71.5 in 2010. The Economics sub-index drooped one-percentage point from 57.9 to 56.9. The decline in the Economics sub-index was mainly due to falling housing prices and insufficient access to loans. Likewise, the Health sub-index plunged 1.6 percentage points from 76.7 to 75.0. The drop in the Health sub-index was largely due to worsening children’s health conditions. While above 100, the Civic Engagement sub-index tumbled from 102.2 to 101.8. Such losses were partly offset by marginal improvements in sub-indices of Social Justice (from 57.8 to 58.0) and Education (from 78.3 to 78.9).

Figure 1: Change in Equality Index of Black America, 2010-2011
Since 2005, black Americans experienced improved equality in employment, health-care insurance, and arrest and incarceration rates. In contrast, they have seen growing inequality in poverty, school enrolment, educational attainment, and home ownership.

Source:

The State of Black America 2011, Executive Summary, The National Urban League