Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program

Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program Summary of Public Comments:
Workshops and Listening Sessions April – June 2023

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Acknowledgement

The Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP) team is grateful for the time, effort, and wisdom contributed by all those who have participated to date, and by those who will inform this new program in the future.

Program Background

Extreme heat will impact every community in California and is a public health, climate resilience, and social equity problem. Climate change is causing more frequent and severe consecutive, unusually hot days and nights – known as extreme heat events. The effects of extreme heat vary widely across regions, communities, and even adjacent neighborhoods. Some areas that are accustomed to hot temperatures are experiencing even hotter conditions while other areas that have been historically cool are experiencing dangerous warmer temperatures.

ICARP's Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (EHCRP) coordinates the state's comprehensive response to this climate impact and provides funding for heat action planning –- creating frameworks to reduce the risks of extreme heat events and the Urban Heat Island effect – and project implementation in the most heat-burdened communities. The Program also drives the state's work to implement California's Extreme Heat Action Plan- a coordinated effort across State agencies to reduce the economic and health disparities that are exacerbated by extreme heat.

Key Feedback & Takeaways

To collect feedback on the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program's objectives, priorities, and overall design, the ICARP team held a series of public workshops during the spring of 2023. The following is a summary of the feedback received on how participants experience extreme heat and how EHCRP can better support them.

The Challenge

Extreme heat can impact people differently depending on how they are most vulnerable. For example, youth, people with labor jobs, older adults, people experiencing homelessness, people with chronic health problems, and people with disabilities are especially vulnerable to extreme heat. People with multiple vulnerabilities can experience compounding impacts of extreme heat.

Extreme heat has serious impacts on the mental and physical health of Californians. This is partly because extreme heatcan make other hazards of climate change more dangerous. For example, extreme heat can worsen the effects of droughts, wildfires and storms.

The design of buildings, neighborhoods, and cities can increase the impacts of extreme heat. Many Californians live, work, and play in buildings without air conditioning or proper weatherization. Some people cannot afford to pay utility bills if they run their air conditioning. Extreme heat sometimes leads to power disruptions, which endanger people who lose access to air conditioning, electric-poweredmobility devices, or medical equipment.

Limitedshade, greenspace, and public transportation make cities hotter and extreme heat events more dangerous. A lack of access to public transportation, community resilience centers, and supportive cooling centers increases the impacts of extreme heat.

Taking Action

Workshop participants from across the state identified the ways the EHCRP can support community led planning and infrastructure, community resilience, and funding accessibility:

Fund planning, social infrastructure, and physical infrastructure projects

Meaningful community engagement to understand each region's unique climate and infrastructure conditions should inform funded projects. EHCRP should focus on small scale pilot projects that develop best practices.

Participants identified the need for integrated heat action planning and a range of social infrastructure projects. Social infrastructure projects they mentioned include: public awareness campaigns, workforce development, and supportive services/materials before and during extreme heat events.

Physical infrastructure projects they identified include: the installation of active and passive cooling, supporting community resilience centers, implementing nature-based solutions and shade, installing cool surfaces, indigenous land stewardship approaches, and building resiliency to extreme heat induced power disruptions.

There is a need for projects that prioritize accessibility and uplift access and functional needs communities, including communities whose primary language is not English.

Facilitate Successful Partnerships

Long-lasting partnerships can build community resilience to climate change. Despite this, many communities do not have the organizational capacity or trust in government institutions to create successful partnerships.

EHCRP should fund early-stage partnership development and activities, work to build trust between organizations, and create connections between traditionally underrepresented and isolated groups, agencies, and organizations.

Increase Accessibility of Grant Funding

EHCRP can increase the accessibility of grant funding by conducting outreach and providing technical assistance throughout the application process. Additionally, EHCRP can reduce barriers for under-resourced communities by simplifying the grant application process, providing ample notification periods and publishing clear timelines.

Engagement Schedule

Event	Date	Registrants
Technical Advisory Council Listening Session	Friday, April 14, 203, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	140
Bay Area & Central Coast Listening Session	Tuesday, May 9, 2023 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	127
Los Angeles & San Diego Listening Session	Wednesday, May 10, 2023 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	137
General Listening Session #1	Tuesday, May 16, 2023 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	175
Sacramento & San Joaquin Valley Listening Session	Wednesday, May 17, 2023 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m	86
Inland North, North Coast, & Sierra Listening Session	Friday, May 19, 2023 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	43
Tribal Governments and Communities Listening Session #1	Wednesday, May 24, 2023 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	26
Inland Desert Listening Session	Tuesday, May 30, 2023 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	36
General Listening Session #2	Wednesday, May 31, 2023 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	54
Tribal Governments and Communities Listening Session #2	Thursday, June 8, 2023 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	21

Technical Advisory Council Grant Workshop

April 14, 2023, | 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 pm

The ICARP Technical Advisory Council (TAC) grant workshop featured a discussion among TAC Councilmembers and public participants about the following questions:

Question 1- What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities could this program support? What obstacles are in place that prevent communities who are vulnerable to extreme heat from implementing these activities?

Participants identified four main barriers to building heat resiliency in vulnerable communities:

1. Limited existing funding to pursue extreme heat resiliency projects
2. Lack of awareness of existing funding opportunities through OPR and other agencies
3. Lack of staff capacity and expertise to competitively peruse funding opportunities and implement heat resiliency projects
4. Minimal guidance and best practices on how to holistically build heat resiliency

They also identified several actions OPR can take to address these barriers in the development of EHCRP.

1. Provide comprehensive technical assistance throughout the grant application and implementation process.
2. Include and center vulnerable communities throughout the grant development process through in person and virtual engagement.
3. Create accessible resources that provide guidance on heat resiliency funding opportunities, best practices, and case studies.
4. Use EHCRP to fund a wide range of heat resiliency infrastructure and planning projects. Participants suggested that EHCRP consider multiple projects for funding, including social campaigns like extreme heat warning systems and social media campaigns, and infrastructure projects like permeable surfaces, shade structures, cool pavement, and residential home cooling solutions.

Question 2- The budget language for this program requires multi-stakeholder partnerships. What partnerships and collaborations do you think are needed for a project's success?

Participants encouraged the EHCRP to provide grant funding for partnership development and award applicants additional points for demonstrating thoughtful partnerships. Throughout the workshop, participants emphasized the importance of including and centering community members in grant projects.

They also identified groups who are particularly important to include in partnerships. This includes organizations that represent and serve vulnerable populations such as assisted care facilities and schools, community members with disabilities, local public health departments, utility providers, city planning departments, and local engineers.

Question 3- How can this funding work in coordination with other state investments? What opportunities exist to align this program so recipients can leverage other funding opportunities?

Participants suggested that the planning portion of this program can be used to prepare awardees to apply and receive funding from other sources. They highlighted the importance of connecting applicants with overlapping and adjacent funding sources.

Participants also identified multiple state investments wh. Thith connections to EHCRRP. These include CalFire Urban and Community Forestry Grants, the California Natural Resources Agency Urban Greening Program, the California Department of Community Services and Development Low-Income Weatherization Program, the California Energy Commission Equitable Decarbonization Program, and multiple Strategic Growth Council funding programs.

Listening Sessions

ICARP staff hosted nine public listening sessions throughout May and June 2023. This included two general audience listening sessions, two Tribal Government and Communities listening sessions, and five regional listening sessions to invite feedback on the following discussion questions:

- How does your community experience extreme heat?

- What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

- The statutory language for this program requires multistakeholder partnerships. In your experience what challenges or opportunities exist when it comes to partnerships?

- Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities, what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Below is a summary of the main themes from each listening session.

Daytime General Listening Session Discussion Takeaways

Thursday, April 7, 2022 | 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

How does your community experience extreme heat?

Some populations experience heightened risk to extreme heat. This includes:

- Farm and outdoor workers
- People with disabilities
- Older adults (>65 years of age)
- People experiencing homelessness
- People with pre-existing health conditions
- Students

Insufficient infrastructure within homes and public spaces threatens the health of communities. This includes:

- Housing without air conditioning or sufficient weatherization
- Lack of tree canopy and shade
- Insufficient public transportation infrastructure and services
- Inadequate access to cooling centers and community resilience centers

What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

Public Awareness and Education: Culturally competent campaigns, education, and extreme heat alerts in multiple languages.

Community Services and Engagement:

- Support cooling centers and community resilience centers that can maintain air conditioning during extreme heat events.
- Provide water and shade to people experiencing homelessness during extreme heat events.
- Strengthen workplace protections for farmworkers and other outdoor workers.

Infrastructure and Technology:

- Efficient cooling systems, weatherization, and cool surfaces in public buildings and homes
- Microgrids and backup generators to improve resilience to extreme heat induced power disruptions
- Shade structures, increased tree canopy, and bus shelters to increase shade and reduce urban heat island

The statutory language for this program requires multistakeholder partnerships. In your experience what challenges or opportunities exist when it comes to partnerships?

Forming partnerships requires a significant time and economic commitment which may be a barrier for small public agencies, community-based organizations (CBOs), and historically disinvested communities. Some community groups may hesitate to work with local government agencies that have a history of harming disadvantaged communities and communities of color. This may exclude small, under resourced, and non-traditional CBOs and government agencies.

Despite these significant challenges to forming successful partnerships, participants noted that building partnerships can create stronger communities. They noted that involving community leaders in the planning and implementation process is important for fostering community trust and building community resiliency to heat

Participants asked that the EHCRP take the following actions to facilitate successful and equitable partnerships:

- **Capacity building and compensation:** Support partnership formation and capacity building as eligible funding activities. Provide sufficient time to form partnerships during the application process.
- **Outreach and engagement:** Host networking events to help facilitate partnerships and conduct direct outreach to vulnerable communities.

Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities, what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Participants shared that under-resourced communities face two main barriers to accessing grant funding: lack of awareness about funding opportunities and limited capacity and expertise to submit competitive grant applications. Participants proposed three main actions EHCRP could take to address these barriers:

Publicize funding opportunities: Proactively conduct outreach to inform under resourced communities on available funding opportunities.

Create accessible guidelines and application: Ensure the grant guidelines and application materials are simple and accessible. Some participants highlighted the importance of translating grant materials into multiple languages. Others shared the value of supporting long term operational costs for funded projects.

Application support and technical assistance: Participants shared that providing regular office hours and technical assistance throughout the application period is helpful for applicants with low staff capacity or expertise.

Evening General Listening Session Discussion Takeaways

Wednesday May 31, 2023 | 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

How does your community experience extreme heat?

Some populations experience heightened risk to extreme heat. This includes:

- Older adults (>65 years of age)
- People experiencing homelessness
- Low-income households
- Outdoor workers
- Indoor workers in unsafe environments such as truck driver and warehouse workers
- People who rely on powered medical devices
- People with disabilities
- People who are incarcerated

Insufficient infrastructure within homes and public spaces threatens the health of communities. Participants identified several examples, including:

- Limited access to air conditioning and inability to afford air conditioning due to high energy bills
- Power disruptions which may cause complications for people who rely on elevators
- Limited access to tree canopy, bus shelters, and shade
- Limited resources to open cooling centers, especially overnight facilities

What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

Participants identified several social and physical infrastructure projects that EHCRP should fund:

Social Infrastructure: Provide public health education, and use parks as key locations for providing water, shade, and activities during extreme heat events.

Physical Infrastructure: Support projects related to the built environment and electrification.

The statutory language for this program requires multistakeholder partnerships. In your experience what challenges or opportunities exist when it comes to partnerships?

Participants shared that partnerships can both strengthen projects and be difficult to maintain. Additionally, partnership requirements with local public agencies can hinder the success of CBOs.

Participants provided multiple actions the EHCRP could take to facilitate successful and equitable partnerships:

- Provide funding for partnership activities between CBOs and multiple public agencies.
- Create opportunities for smaller and underrepresented organizations to serve as partners on projects.
- Provide flexibility on partnership requirements.

Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities, what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Participants expressed that EHCRP should not require match funding and should provide advance pay.

Tribal Listening Session Discussion Takeaways

Wednesday, June 24, 2023 | 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Thursday, June 8, 2023 | 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

This section combines the feedback from both tribal listening sessions because the first tribal listening session had limited attendance.

How does your community experience extreme heat?

Some populations experience disproportionate or unique impacts to extreme heat. This includes outdoor workers and tribal members living in urban settings. One participant

noted the compounding impacts of extreme heat events, the urban heat island, and poor air quality in urban areas. Many tribes also have limited water and electricity access, which limits their ability to adapt to extreme heat.

The interconnection between climate impacts was a central theme throughout the session. Notably, participants highlighted the linkages between wildfire and extreme heat. They shared that some wildfire mitigation tactics such as clear-cutting trees lead to increased exposure to extreme heat. Multiple participants shared their experiences of being denied permission to conduct cultural burns on their land and losing land due to wildfire.

Participants shared that extreme heat and wildfire have significant negative impacts on mental health and trust in non-tribal governments. One participant expressed concern that extreme heat events impact mood and behavior, citing increased fights at their school. Others highlighted the mental toll, depression, and suicide resulting from loss of property due to wildfires. Finally, participants noted the lack of trust towards government agencies and utility companies due to historically harmful responses to wildfires.

Finally, participants noted the lack of staff capacity and expertise to respond to climate change threats.

What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

Participants emphasized that proposed solutions should address multiple climate hazards. They identified several social and physical infrastructure projects for potential funding, including:

- Shade structures
- Water system maintenance
- Climate hazard alert systems
- Tribal community resilience center that use existing tribal buildings
- Generators to use during rolling blackouts
- Tribal heat action plans
- Passive cooling strategies such as reflective window film

Several participants emphasized the importance of workforce development and youth leadership in proposed solutions. One participant discussed the need for business and marketing training to help tribes create businesses that use traditional land stewardship practices on privately owned land. Another participant shared the value of tribal youth empowerment and leadership programs, and the potential to include this in extreme heat mitigation strategies.

Finally, participants emphasized the importance of improving collaboration between state government and tribal governments, and including tribal knowledge in climate adaptation solutions. One participant emphasized the opportunity to incorporate tribal

and ecological knowledge and traditional land stewardship into modern infrastructure projects.

The statutory language for this program requires multistakeholder partnerships. In your experience what challenges or opportunities exist when it comes to partnerships?

Participants shared that tribes face unique and complex issues that project partners often do not fully understand. They shared that stereotypes often lead to tokenization of native communities. Despite this, one participant shared that working with agencies and organizations with a larger organizational and administrative capacity can help in the grant process.

Partnering and collaborating with governments and utility companies was a central theme throughout the listening session. Participants highlighted that government agencies and utility companies have historically banned tribal and ecological knowledge practices like cultural burns. They stressed the need for strengthened respect, acceptance, and integration of traditional land stewardship.

Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities, what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Throughout the session, several participants referenced limited organizational capacity to apply for and manage grant funding as a significant barrier to strengthening climate resiliency. They discussed the challenges faced in filling out grant applications within limited time frames and the support to build tribal capacity.

Participants proposed several actions that could support tribes in accessing grant funding:

- Provide advance notice and publicization of available funding opportunities. After releasing the Notice of Funding Availability, provide ample time to complete grant application.
- Support capacity building to assist tribes in responding to, applying for, and managing grant funding opportunities.
- Involve a tribal liaison with a deep understanding of local tribal issues to coordinate with, engage, and support tribes in grant application and implementation process.
- Do not require waivers of sovereign immunity and provide support for tribes if required.

Bay Area Central Coast Listening Session Takeaways

Tuesday May 9, 2023 | 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

EHCRP co-hosted this event with UC Berkeley and the California Department of Public Health. Presentations by both groups were included in addition to listening session content. Participants self-selected into group discussion rooms based on Central Coast and Bay Area affiliation. This summary includes separate findings based on the online tool responses and regional discussions.

During this session participants expressed that, while the Bay Area and Central Coast Regions do not experience as frequent or intense extreme heat as other parts of the state, they face an elevated risk because of limited social and physical infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of heat. Multiple participants also shared that regional microclimates make planning and response to extreme heat difficult.

Online Poll Findings

During the listening session, EHCRP staff received 57 online responses to the question "How does your community experience extreme heat?". While participation in the poll was only available to listening session attendees, the submissions were anonymous and multiple submissions were allowed. Each response was much shorter than verbal responses.

Vulnerable Populations: Participants highlighted an array of groups that experience one or more of the following: high exposure, higher than average physiological risk, and less capacity to mitigate the impacts of extreme heat. Groups discussed include:

- Farmworkers, outdoor workers, and indoor workers without air conditioning
- Older adults (>65 years of age)
- People experiencing homelessness
- People with pre-existing health conditions
- Children in schools
- People with disabilities

Individual Impacts: Participants also identified multiple individual impacts of extreme heat related to health, wellbeing, and economic stability. This includes:

- Mental health challenges, social isolation, decreased energy, and increased violence
- Physical health risk including heat related illness, increased emergency medical service calls, and threat to those with pre-existing health conditions
- Physical discomfort, especially during the night
- High energy bills

Infrastructure and Resource Challenges: Participants emphasized that the social and physical infrastructure in the regions is not equipped to effectively protect and respond to extreme heat events. Infrastructure deficiencies fell into five main categories:

- **Lack of air conditioning:** This is particularly harmful in schools, single room occupancy buildings, multi-family buildings, homes occupied by older people, and assisted living facilities.
- **Power disruptions:** Power disruptions during extreme heat events have a negative impact on vulnerable communities, especially for people who rely on electronic medical devices or live in food deserts.
- **Transportation Challenges:** Extreme heat events make transportation, especially to work and cooling centers, difficult for those who rely on active transportation and public transportation.
- **Lack of greenspace and urban heat island effect:** Participants noted the lack of tree canopy, greenspace, and access to swimming/recreational water sources especially in low-income communities. They shared that the lack of greenspace also contributes to the urban heat island effect.
- **Lack of information and resources during extreme heat events:**
  - Shortage of cooling equipment including fans, portable air conditioning, and ice
  - Limited access to cooling centers
  - Lack of accessible educational materials and outreach on how to protect self from heat and access resources

Central Coast Breakout Room

Question 1- Additional Comments: How does your community experience extreme heat?

While most of the responses to this question were captured using the online polling tool, several participants provided additional verbal comments. One participant pointed out that the rural communities on the Central Coast experience different extreme heat impacts than more urban areas. Another participant shared that zoning ordinances that have encouraged the removal of greenspace have worsened the presence of the urban heat island effect in some areas.

Question 2- What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

Participants stressed the need to support of small-scale pilot projects to better understand the efficacy of adaptation solutions and develop best practices for statewide implementation.

Investment in social resilience was a key component of the discussion. Participants suggested three social resilience related implementation activities that could be funded:

- Accessible and multilingual public awareness and notification systems. These could include information to residents on how to reduce the cost of air conditioning
- Workforce development and support for residents whose jobs may be impacted by climate change
- Support for community members to access public resources

While physical resilience solutions were not the main topic of discussion, one participant emphasized the need for increased grid resilience and microgrid project. They also stated the need for state level support in electrification and solar panel installation.

Given time constraints, the Central Coast breakout room did not discuss the remaining questions. They were invited to add additional comments using the Post Workshop Poll.

Bay Area Breakout Rooms

Question 1- Additional Comments: How does your community experience extreme heat?

Participants emphasized that people experience intersecting and compounding vulnerabilities to climate change, and that extreme heat responses must focus on addressing intersectionality. Participants identified several groups with an elevated risk to extreme heat including:

- People with disabilities
- People with limited English proficiency
- Older adults (>65 years of age)

Housing conditions and power disruptions are key challenges during extreme heat events in the Bay Area. Specific concerns include:

- There are limited heat related protections for older adults living in assisted care facilities and mobile home parks.
- Evacuations during power disruptions pose a challenge for people who rely on elevators.
- Existing usage of cooling centers is limited and there are minimal nighttime supportive services for people who cannot safely be in their homes overnight.

Several participants also shared their concern that many people are forced to move from the cooler coastal neighborhoods to hotter inland neighborhoods due to the high cost of living. Regional response to extreme heat events between neighborhoods is difficult given the presence of microclimates.

Question 2- What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

Social resilience, network building, and accessibility: Participants highlighted the need for inclusion and accessibility in funded projects, such as projects focused on language justice, youth inclusion, and support for undocumented residents. Suggested projects included:

- Funding for community gatherings like block parties
- Public engagement campaigns
- Compensation for trusted community messengers like Promotoras

Physical Infrastructure: Participants expressed a need for increased funding for resilience hubs and weatherization/air conditioning in multifamily buildings.

Capacity Building: Finally, some participants highlighted specific areas where funding could be used to build organizational capacity. This includes:

- Technical assistance for awardees to ensure funded projects are accessible
- Funding for interagency collaboration
- Funding for CBO and partner staff time

Question 3- The statutory language for this program requires multistakeholder partnerships. In your experience what challenges or opportunities exist when it comes to partnerships?

One participant highlighted that partnership requirements have the potential to create long lasting networks to build community resilience to climate change.

Despite this, there are often siloes between government agencies, community-based organizations, and academia. Participants shared that partnership requirements for collaboration between government agencies are important for building stronger grants. Participants also emphasized the need to fund interagency collaboration and partner staff time.

Question 4- Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities, what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Given the time constraints, one of the Bay Area breakout rooms did not complete this question. Related comments from prior questions are included in this summary. Participants were invited to add additional comments using the Post Workshop Poll.

Accessibility: Participants stressed the importance of producing culturally competent grant materials that are available in multiple languages and accessible to people who are blind, deaf, hard of hearing, or have low vision.

Outreach: Participants emphasized the need for targeted and intentional grant outreach. Outreach should focus on building trust between grant staff and potential applicants, and helping communities understand the potential benefits of participating in the program.

Application Development: Participants identified best practices for grant application development. This includes close coordination with other Office of Planning and Research and Strategic Growth Council grant programs, flexibility for applicants, and a pre-screening for applicant eligibility/project feasibility.

Los Angeles & San Diego Regions Listening Session Takeaways

Wednesday May 10, 2023 | 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Online Poll Findings

During the listening session, we received 39 online responses to the question "How does your community experience extreme heat?". While participation in the poll was only available to listening session attendees, the submissions were anonymous and multiple submissions were allowed. Each response was much shorter than the verbal responses.

Vulnerable Populations and Individual Impacts: Participants highlighted an array of groups who experience one or more of the following: high exposure, higher than average physiological risk, and less capacity to mitigate the impacts of extreme heat.

These groups include:

- Older adults (>65 years of age)
- People who attend or work at schools that lack air conditioning and/or shade
- Indoor and outdoor labor occupations
- People with pre-existing health conditions
- People who rely on public transit at their primary form of transportation
- People experiencing homelessness
- People with disabilities

Participants also responded that extreme heat causes heat related illness, has mental health impacts, and makes it dangerous to exercise outside.

Air Conditioning and Grid Resilience: The most common theme in the online poll was air conditioning access and grid resiliency issues.

- Many people do not have access to air conditioning in their homes.
- Residents cannot pay for the high utility bills associated with air conditioning.
- Power disruptions pose a significant risk during extreme heat events.

Publicly available cool spaces: Participants identified key deficiencies with access to cooling centers and shade. This includes:

- Limited public transit options to cooling centers.
- Lack of greenspace, shade, bus shelters, and tree canopy.

Breakout Room Findings

Question 1- Additional Comments: How does your community experience extreme heat?

Comments focused on in-home safety, transportation, and cooling center access. Aside from these themes, one participant also expressed that residents do not have access to basic protective items like ice packs and cold water.

Residential Safety: Participants emphasized that many homes in the regions are not equipped with air conditioning. Even residents with air conditioning are often unable to afford the expensive energy bills. Additionally, many living spaces, such as mobile homes, lack the weatherization or passive cooling to adequately protect occupants.

Transportation: Participants expressed that public transportation services are essential for many residents during extreme heat events, but existing infrastructure is unable to support the needs of the community. Residents of the regions spend time on air-conditioned busses to cool down. Despite this, those who are waiting for buses to arrive do not have adequate shade at the bus stops.

Cooling Center Access: The barriers to accessing cooling centers was a central discussion theme. Participants expressed that many local cooling centers have limited hours, which makes them less useful, especially for people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, one participant shared that there is a lack of public information and notification systems on how to access cooling centers and other resources.

Question 2- What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

Participants highlighted that the program should fund both long-range integrated heat action plans and emergency response plans. Participants also emphasized the need for technical assistance in planning grants, implementation grants, and partnership building.

Additional comments centered around specific physical infrastructure solutions and community involvement:

Physical Infrastructure: EHCRP should fund solutions to build resilience to extreme heat induced power disruptions including portable generators, utility assistance, and weatherization. Funding should also fill gaps in existing urban greening grants, support

the development of resilience hubs, and incorporate cooling materials such as cool roofs.

Community Involvement: EHCRP should fund projects that are community led or have meaningfully engaged with vulnerable populations from the beginning of project development. Additionally, EHCRP should support the use of trusted community messengers and community meetings.

Question 3- The statutory language for this program requires multistakeholder partnerships. In your experience, what challenges or opportunities exist when it comes to partnerships?

Participants emphasized the need for capacity building and support to develop and maintain partnerships and conduct interagency coordination between local governments and CBOs. One participant also encouraged EHCRP to fund organizations with experience working with community groups.

Question 4- Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities, what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Participants proposed several actions EHCRP could take to make the grant program more accessible:

- Conduct outreach to traditionally underrepresented communities.
- Provide advance pay.
- Lessen match funding requirement.
- Provide set asides for tribal and rural communities.

Sacramento & San Joaquin Valley Regions Listening Session Takeaways

Wednesday May 17, 2023 | 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

How does your community experience extreme heat?

During the listening session, we received 46 online responses to the question "How does your community experience extreme heat?". While participation in the poll was only available to meeting attendees, the submissions were anonymous and multiple submissions were allowed. Each response was much shorter than verbal responses. This section outlines findings from the online poll and accompanying verbal responses.

Intersecting Impacts: The regions experience frequent and intense extreme heat events. In addition, the region copes with air pollution and reliance on personal vehicle use. Wildfire, air quality, and drought are worsened as a result of extreme heat.

Some populations experience heightened risk to extreme heat. This includes:

- People experiencing homelessness
- Older adults (>65 years of age)
- Farmworkers- Farmworkers often lack access to water, breaks, and shade and are afraid to advocate for their rights. Participants expressed concern that existing farmworker heat protections are not adequately enforced.

Extreme heat can lead to health impacts including:

- Negative mental health impacts
- Physical health impacts including asthma and valley fever
- Increased emergency department visits
- Increased exposure to certain types of fungi

Limited Air Conditioning Access: Residents of these regions have limited access to air conditioning in their homes. Some people who have air conditioning units in their home may not be able to use them because of high energy costs. Additionally, community operated cooling centers incur high energy costs. Finally, power disruptions limit usage of air conditioning during extreme heat events.

Greenspace and Outdoor Conditions: Some residents in the region have limited access to greenspace and shade, which also contributes to the urban heat island effect. Even those who do have access to greenspace may not be able to use it, as the hot conditions often prohibit residents from spending time outside. Additionally, the heat can stress trees and lead to wildfire conditions.

Transportation: Extreme heat in the region limits active transportation and stresses existing transportation infrastructure like busses and roads. There are insufficient bus shelters in the region.

Question 2: What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

Participants identified physical and social infrastructure projects that EHCRP should fund. Funded projects should address the unique needs of rural communities and work with communities to inform solutions.

Social Infrastructure: Participants emphasized the need for:

- Community led extreme heat outreach and education
- Assistance and education for home solar installation and weatherization
- Funding and assistance for language justice work

Physical Infrastructure: Participants emphasized the need for:

- Funding residential cooling systems, especially in farmworker housing
- Projects that address the high cost of air conditioning and build resiliency to power disruptions
- Nature based solutions like tree planting and increased native plant accessibility

Question 3: The statutory language for this program requires multistakeholder partnerships. In your experience, what challenges or opportunities exist when it comes to partnerships?

Use trusted networks such as the Community Advisory Board, and community meetings to build partnerships.

Provide flexibility:

- While high-capacity public agencies can assist local CBOs in partnerships, participants encouraged removing partnerships requirements with public agencies.
- Allow CBOs to receive funds directly.
- Account for the time it takes to form partnerships in grant application.
- Encourage clear definition of partner roles, but avoid requiring a strict partnership agreement.

Question 4: Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities, what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Participants proposed multiple actions EHCRP could take to make the grant program more accessible to under resourced communities.

- Remove or limit match funding requirements.
- Minimize eligibility requirements to grant program.
- Allow space for justification for communities that don't fall under definition of disadvantaged community.
- Provide application technical assistance.
- Keep application simple and concise.
- Provide advance payment.
- Allow for alternative means of information sharing in application such as site visits.
- Allow flexibility in definition of "regional" and "local".

Inland North, North Coast, Sierra Regions Listening Session Takeaways

Friday, May 19, 2023 | 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Online Poll/Question 1- How does your community experience extreme heat?

During the listening session, we received 17 online responses to the question "How does your community experience extreme heat?". While participation in the poll was only available to meeting attendees, the submissions were anonymous and multiple submissions were allowed. Each response was much shorter than verbal responses. This section outlines findings from the online poll and accompanying verbal responses.

Vulnerable Populations and Individual Impacts: Extreme heat can impact mental and physical health and leads to increased emergency room visits. These impacts are amplified by intersecting climate impacts such as wildfire and poor air quality.

Participants highlighted that older adults are at higher risk of extreme heat health impacts. They also identified that youth are at risk, especially given that many of the rivers and lakes they have traditionally used to cool down are impacted with cyanotoxins which limits their ability to swim.

One participant also noted that the health of animals is compromised during extreme heat effects.

Energy and Cool Space Access: Participants shared that there is limited access to air conditioning in the regions and that they often can't afford to use air conditioning usage because of high utility costs. Additionally, residents' health is compromised by extreme heat induced power disruptions which lead to air conditioning shutoffs.

Additionally, participants shared that there are not enough cooling centers in the region, and that existing cooling centers are underused. Finally, there is not adequate public warning systems before and during extreme heat events.

What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

Participants shared that funded projects should function as small scale pilots to help develop best practices for extreme heat relief in rural areas. They also stated that funded projects should have co-benefits with other climate impacts such as air quality.Participants encouraged that this program fund comprehensive heat action plans developed through partnerships between local governments and communities. They also proposed multiple physical infrastructure projects including:

- Reflective pavement installation
- Solar infrastructure for use during extreme heat induced power disruptions
- Cooling activities and infrastructure targeted towards youth
- Community resilience centers

The statutory language for this program requires multistakeholder partnerships. In your experience what challenges or opportunities exist when it comes to partnerships?

Building partnerships and relationships between organizations can have a strong positive impact on the community. EHCRP should work to promote the potential benefits of the grant program to encourage participation in partnerships. Finally, working to build trust and partnering with trusted messengers is important to encouraging positive partnerships.

Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities, what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Participants emphasized that many communities do not have the staff capacity or expertise to apply for and administer grants. They suggested several actions EHCRP can take to make the program more accessible to these communities:

- Provide application technical assistance.
- Publicize the grant opportunity to ensure communities with lower capacities are aware of the opportunity.
- Create consistency across Office of Planning and Research grant programs.

Inland Deserts Listening Session Takeaways

Tuesday, May 30, 2023 | 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

How does your community experience extreme heat?

Some populations experience heightened risk to extreme heat. This includes:

- Agriculture, warehousing, and construction workers
- People with disabilities
- Older adults (>65 years of age)
- Additionally, extreme heat impacts the natural environment, native species, and the Salton Sea.

Housing and living conditions in the region are dangerous for many residents. Furthermore, many residents in mobile homes do not have access to adequate air conditioning. Across the region, many people cannot afford to use air conditioning because of prohibitively high energy bills.

It is often too hot outdoors for residents to safely spend extended time outside. This is worsened by the urban heat island effect in areas like the Eastern Coachella Valley where there is a rapid expansion of urban development.

CBOs and local agencies are already acting to reduce the harms of extreme heat in the region. For example, they have ongoing tree planting initiatives, summer school programming, and housing relocation assistance programs to keep communities in the Island Deserts region safe.

What type of extreme heat planning and implementation activities and needs could this program support?

Participants emphasized the need for funding that includes social resiliency projects, nature-based solutions, and physical infrastructure solutions. Whenever possible, these projects should include workforce development. Proposed solutions include:

- Providing residents with physical materials to lessen the impacts of extreme heat
- Services to help residents lower cost of energy bills
- Weatherization and energy efficiency assistance for residents of older buildings
- Energy efficiency and grid resiliency infrastructure projects
- Cool surface implementation
- Providing accessible transportation to cooling centers
- Urban greening and tree planting in schools

The statutory language for this program requires multistakeholder partnerships. In your experience what challenges or opportunities exist when it comes to partnerships?

Building trust between community members, CBOs, and agencies is essential for successful partnerships. Participants highlighted several opportunities for improved partnership:

- Creation of a lower funding option or predevelopment track to assist with partnership formation and capacity building
- Meet and greet style networking events to make connections between government agencies and CBOs.

Question 4: Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities, what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Participants proposed several actions which could support applicants in accessing grant funding:

- Provide advance pay.
- Simple reporting requirement
- Allow for a variety of tools for determining community vulnerability.
- Funding staff time for grant application and administration.

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Next Steps and Contact Information

ICARP is incorporating the collective input described above into the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program's draft guidelines.

If you have any comments or questions, please reach out to the ICARP Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program team, icarp.grants@opr.ca.gov, or visit the ICARP Grants Program Webpage for future updates on the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (https://opr.ca.gov/planning/icarp/grants/).

Acronyms

CBO- Community Based Organization

EHCRP- Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program

ICARP- Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program

OPR- Governor's Office of Planning and Research

SGC- Strategic Growth Council

TAC- Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program Technical Advisory Council