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IMPACT MAPPING TOOL FOR ADAPTATION PROJECTS

CONNECT YOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES WITH BROADER COMMUNITY GOALS

This tool helps you and your team explore how your adaptation project can deliver wider co-benefits. It will help you to connect climate adaptation with broader community wellbeing, equity, biodiversity and more. It is meant as a starting point to inspire holistic, strategic thinking about potential outcomes and collaborators before developing a more detailed monitoring and evaluation plan.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

STEP 1

Start this exercise early in your project planning to help define objectives and align your team around shared impacts. Invite colleagues from other departments (e.g., Planning, Public Works, Health, Indigenous Relations) to complete this exercise together.

STEP 2

Review the *Impact areas and guiding prompts* to identify where your project may create benefits or connections.

STEP 3

Fill in the *Impact mapping summary table* as you work through the prompts to capture related community plans, departments and how strongly your project aligns with each impact area.

STEP 4

Summarize your strongest impact areas by linking your project outcomes to broader community goals.

STEP 5

Use this exercise as a bridge to more detailed monitoring and evaluation planning. Identify outcomes that could later be measured and reported to Council, funders or your community.

Tip: Start with a few impact areas that feel most relevant and revisit as your project evolves or new partners join.

IMPACT AREAS AND GUIDING PROMPTS



Public health and safety

Consider how your project contributes to public health and safety.

- 1 Will the project increase local knowledge of health risks and appropriate safety behaviours (e.g., promoting hydration or recognizing early signs of heat exhaustion)?
- 2 Could it help reduce negative health impacts during climate events (e.g., heat-related illness or respiratory issues), including for immunocompromised people or those with chronic health conditions?

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3 Could it help reduce strain on healthcare systems or emergency services (e.g., fewer hospitalizations due to public awareness or community partnerships reducing frontline demand)?

4 Could it help promote mental wellness and stress reduction through improved living conditions (e.g., increased green space or cleaner air)?

5 Could it help strengthen coordination with local health authorities or service providers to support at-risk groups during climate emergencies?



Social equity and community

Consider how your project strengthens community cohesion, accessibility and inclusion.

6 Will the project provide meaningful opportunities for equity-deserving groups to share lived experience and have influence over decisions (e.g., through advisory input or project leadership)?

7 Could it help reduce barriers to accessing essential services or resources (e.g., through mobile delivery or free transportation)?

8 Will it reach a broad audience by acknowledging cultural and language differences (e.g., tailored communications for newcomers or hosting gatherings at Friendship Centres)?

9 Will it create or enhance welcoming public spaces and/or programming that foster connection, especially for groups that may experience social isolation (e.g., older adults or residents living on lower incomes)?

10 Could it help reduce disproportionate climate impacts for equity-deserving groups or residents more exposed to hazards (e.g., renters in low-quality housing or outdoor workers)?



Knowledge and capacity building

Consider how your project builds skills, awareness and long-term community capacity.

11 Could the project help to promote public awareness about local climate realities, adaptation or emergency preparedness?

12 Will it create opportunities for intergenerational learning between youth and older adults (e.g., observed changes to the landscape or climate impacts on local ecosystems)?

13 Will it create volunteer opportunities, such as citizen science or planting activities, especially for youth?

14 Will it create training opportunities for community staff, residents and/or local organizations to develop new skills?

15 Will it include research partnerships that enhance understanding of climate risks and community resilience?



Ecosystem health and biodiversity

Consider how your project enhances local ecosystems, biodiversity and natural assets.

16 Will the project restore, improve or safeguard ecosystem functions?

17 Will it reintroduce or protect native species and manage invasive species to enhance biodiversity?

18 Will it prioritize the planting of climate-resilient plants to support long-term ecosystem function?

19 Could it help improve air or water quality?

20 Could it help prevent or reduce soil erosion or contamination?

- 21** Will it support natural asset management through inventorying, mapping and/or assessment?



Infrastructure and assets

Consider how your project safeguards and complements critical infrastructure.

- 22** Could the project help protect critical infrastructure against damage from extreme climate events such as storms, floods or heat waves?
- 23** Could it help reduce strain on grey infrastructure, such as storm drains and roadways?
- 24** Will it contribute to reliable service delivery and continuity of operations during emergencies?
- 25** Will it improve accessibility and safety for people with mobility challenges, such as people with disabilities, older adults and children, during extreme weather?
- 26** Will it include maintenance or design features that extend the lifespan of engineered assets?



Economic resilience

Consider how your project supports economic security and local livelihoods.

- 27** Could the project help reduce long-term community costs such as healthcare, infrastructure maintenance, wildfire response, evacuations or worker safety expenses?
- 28** Will it provide cost savings or revenue potential, such as energy efficiency?
- 29** Will it prioritize local hiring, procurement and small business opportunities?
- 30** Could it help protect local livelihoods or community assets (e.g., bioswales protecting agricultural water quality or shoreline restoration preserving beaches)?
- 31** Will it create self-sustaining systems that require minimal maintenance and lower operational costs over time?



Governance and collaboration

Consider how your project improves coordination and collaboration.

- 32** Could the project help foster collaboration across departments, governments or community sectors such as schools, agricultural boards or health authorities?
- 33** Will it align with regional or provincial adaptation strategies to increase collective impact?
- 34** Will it leverage partnerships with post-secondary institutions or industry to integrate innovation and applied research?
- 35** Could it help strengthen data systems and sharing between departments and partners?
- 36** Will it pilot new collaboration or engagement approaches that could be replicated or scaled up elsewhere?



Reconciliation

Consider how your project advances Reconciliation and relationship-building with Indigenous Peoples.

- 37** Will the project create opportunities to co-design processes with local First Nations or Indigenous organizations?
- 38** Will it create opportunities to integrate traditional ecological knowledge in planning, design or monitoring, with respect for First Nations principles of ownership, control, access and possession (OCAP®) over data collection?
- 39** Will it celebrate Indigenous culture and history through storytelling, Indigenous place names, art or language integration?
- 40** Will it create space for cultural uses of the land, such as ceremony, teaching or healing?
- 41** Will it incorporate culturally important or traditional food plants that strengthen food security and local harvesting practices?
- 42** Will it support Indigenous youth mentorship and participation in Guardian or stewardship training programs?

IMPACT MAPPING SUMMARY TABLE

Use this table to capture how your project aligns with different impact areas.

For each area, note any relevant community plans or programs, assess how many of the guiding prompts apply, and assign a rating (high, medium or low) to reflect the strength or relevance of the project's impact. You may also identify key staff, departments or external partners to involve.

An example is provided for a heat safety outreach project that has strong alignment with the impact area of public health and safety:



IMPACT AREA Public health and safety

APPLICABLE PROMPTS

Tip: Refer to the prompt number(s) in the list above.

- 1 Will it increase local knowledge of health risks and appropriate safety behaviours?
- 2 Could it help reduce negative health impacts during climate events?
- 3 Could it help reduce strain on healthcare systems or emergency services?
- 5 Could it help strengthen coordination with local health authorities or service providers to support at-risk groups during climate emergencies?

COMMUNITY PLANS / PROGRAMS

- Emergency preparedness plan
- Regional health authority's heat response strategy

KEY CONTACTS / DEPARTMENTS

- Health and safety officer, public health department
- Regional health authority

RELEVANCE

- High

SUMMARY

This project contributes to public health and safety by reducing heat-related illnesses and hospitalizations through education, outreach and early wellness checks. This aligns with our emergency preparedness plan (goal 3: protect vulnerable residents) and the regional health authority's heat response strategy.



IMPACT AREA Public health and safety

APPLICABLE PROMPTS

Tip: Refer to the prompt number(s) in the list above.

COMMUNITY PLANS / PROGRAMS

KEY CONTACTS / DEPARTMENTS

RELEVANCE

SUMMARY

This project contributes to public health and safety by...



IMPACT AREA

Social equity and community

APPLICABLE PROMPTS

Tip: Refer to the prompt number(s) in the list above.

COMMUNITY PLANS / PROGRAMS

KEY CONTACTS / DEPARTMENTS

RELEVANCE

SUMMARY

This project strengthens community cohesion/accessibility/inclusion by...



IMPACT AREA Knowledge and capacity building

APPLICABLE PROMPTS

Tip: Refer to the prompt number(s) in the list above.

COMMUNITY PLANS / PROGRAMS

KEY CONTACTS / DEPARTMENTS

RELEVANCE

SUMMARY

This project builds skills/awareness/long-term community capacity by...



IMPACT AREA

Ecosystem health and biodiversity

APPLICABLE PROMPTS

Tip: Refer to the prompt number(s) in the list above.

COMMUNITY PLANS / PROGRAMS

KEY CONTACTS / DEPARTMENTS

RELEVANCE

SUMMARY

This project enhances local ecosystems/biodiversity/natural assets by...



IMPACT AREA Infrastructure and assets

APPLICABLE PROMPTS

Tip: Refer to the prompt number(s) in the list above.

COMMUNITY PLANS / PROGRAMS

KEY CONTACTS / DEPARTMENTS

RELEVANCE

SUMMARY

This project safeguards/complements critical infrastructure by...



IMPACT AREA Economic resilience

APPLICABLE PROMPTS

Tip: Refer to the prompt number(s) in the list above.

COMMUNITY PLANS / PROGRAMS

KEY CONTACTS / DEPARTMENTS

RELEVANCE

SUMMARY

This project supports economic security/local livelihoods by...



IMPACT AREA

Governance and collaboration

APPLICABLE PROMPTS

Tip: Refer to the prompt number(s) in the list above.

COMMUNITY PLANS / PROGRAMS

KEY CONTACTS / DEPARTMENTS

RELEVANCE

SUMMARY

This project improves coordination/collaboration by...



IMPACT AREA Reconciliation

APPLICABLE PROMPTS

Tip: Refer to the prompt number(s) in the list above.

COMMUNITY PLANS / PROGRAMS

KEY CONTACTS / DEPARTMENTS

RELEVANCE

SUMMARY

This project advances Reconciliation/relationship-building with Indigenous Peoples by...