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PROJECT WORKPLAN TEMPLATE

COMMUNITY HEAT RESILIENCE

HOW TO USE THIS TEMPLATE

This project workplan template provides a basic framework for small communities to plan, resource, design, implement and monitor a **heat safety outreach project for community heat resilience**. Activities, objectives and timelines may vary from project to project. Communities are encouraged to use this template as a starting point and adapt it to local needs and capacity where necessary.

The goal is to produce a well-structured workplan that:

- Provides a clear roadmap for the project team and partners
- Establishes a realistic timeline with key deliverables and involved parties
- Breaks down larger activities into specific, actionable steps
- Identifies potential risks and strategies
- Reflects local priorities and lived experience

Assumptions

1. Residents have had the opportunity to share input regarding community heat resilience prior to this specific project (heat safety outreach) being selected.
2. Engagement with equity-deserving groups and residents who are disproportionately impacted by extreme heat, including older adults, people with chronic health conditions, low-income households and individuals with disabilities, is prioritized. See [*Equity Considerations*](#) on page 2 for details.
3. Heat safety outreach will be informed by a qualified climate and health expert advisor, selected through a request for proposal (RFP) process.
4. The community has access to relevant, accurate and sufficient data regarding human heat-health risk (e.g., social demographic, health, weather and climate, land use, building).
5. The project will be completed within approximately 12 months.

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Certain residents may experience greater vulnerability¹ during extreme heat events due to systemic barriers and limited access to cooling resources. This document uses the term “equity-deserving” to describe individuals and groups who are disproportionately impacted—whether by lack of adequate housing, health challenges

or limited access to safety information. Equity-deserving identities often overlap, meaning a person may belong to multiple categories, compounding their vulnerability during climate events, power outages or service disruptions. Early, meaningful and ongoing engagement is essential to support the needs of all residents.

Examples of groups who may experience increased vulnerability to extreme heat include the following:

GROUP	HEAT VULNERABILITY
Indigenous communities ²	These residents may belong to First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities. They may face systemic inequities, health disparities, and geographic or cultural barriers to cooling resources.
Black and racialized communities ³	Due to systemic inequities and historic underinvestment, these residents may live in neighbourhoods with reduced tree canopy, limited shaded spaces or fewer cooling options. These conditions can increase exposure to extreme heat and heighten the risk of heat-related illness.
Older adults (ages 65+) and people with limited mobility	These residents are more susceptible to heat-related illness and mortality due to reduced thermoregulation, chronic health conditions and social isolation. Physical limitations can restrict access to cooling resources, wellness checks or safe spaces.
People living on lower incomes or experiencing housing insecurity	Limited financial resources and/or a lack of adequate housing can prevent these residents from accessing fans, air conditioning or transportation to safe areas.
People with chronic health conditions or mental health challenges	Individuals with illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease or respiratory conditions are at higher risk during extreme heat. Those experiencing depression, anxiety, schizophrenia or other mental health challenges may have reduced awareness of heat risks or limited social support.
Newcomers/ non-English or non-French speakers	Language barriers, social exclusion or mistrust of authorities can limit access to critical heat information and support.

1 Sandbox. 2019. “Words Matter: The Use of ‘Vulnerable’ in Health Care and Public Health – Unity Health Toronto.” Unity Health Toronto. August 30, 2019. <https://unityhealth.to/2019/08/words-matter-the-use-of-vulnerable-in-health-care-and-public-health/>.

2 Canadian Climate Institute. 2023. “Community Is the Solution – Canadian Climate Institute.” Canadian Climate Institute. June 12, 2023. <https://climateinstitute.ca/publications/community-solution-2021-extreme-heat-emergency-experience-british-columbia-first-nations/>.

3 The ENRICH Project. 2025. Workshop report for ANS Climate Justice Project. <https://www.enrichproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Workshop-Report-for-ANS-Cimate-Justice-Project.pdf>

GROUP	HEAT VULNERABILITY
Remote or socially isolated residents ⁴	Older adults or others with limited social networks may not receive warnings or assistance during heat events. Distance from services or infrastructure can delay receipt of alerts, kits or wellness checks.

Examples of equity considerations for a heat safety outreach project include the following:

PROJECT PHASE	Planning and resourcing
Equity considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage local Indigenous communities and knowledge holders (e.g., Elders, Tribal Councils, Métis local representatives) early to incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and/or to co-design the project. Prioritize engagement with residents disproportionately impacted by extreme heat such as older adults, people with chronic illnesses, and people living on lower incomes or experiencing housing insecurity. Ensure outreach to equity-deserving populations, including newcomers and non-English/non-French speakers, to gather input on project priorities. Actively include youth, older adults, Indigenous Peoples and people with disabilities. Work with equity-deserving communities to determine what success looks like and translate it into measurable objectives aligned with project goals.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language, literacy or digital barriers can make project materials difficult to understand. There may be a lack of accurate data on local populations. There may be limited capacity of community organizations to participate in planning. There is potential mistrust of government or health authorities among equity-deserving groups.
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use multiple engagement methods (e.g., in-person workshops, door-to-door surveys, social media campaigns, radio announcements) to reach diverse audiences. Aim for the engagement team to reflect the diversity of the community being engaged. Engage local community leaders, advocacy groups or seniors associations to act as trusted liaisons/champions. Offer honoraria to Indigenous contributors who share TEK, to acknowledge their time and expertise. Align with the principles of the OCAP[®] framework⁵ (ownership, control, access, and possession) and co-develop a simple protocol or memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Indigenous partners. Provide training and mentorship opportunities for volunteers so that participation can contribute to job skills development. Include equity or social impact criteria in RFP to promote social procurement and maximize community benefit.

4 Kovats and Shakoor. 2007. "Heat Stress and Public Health: A Critical Review." Annual Review of Public Health 29 (1): 41-55. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.29.020907.090843>.

5 The First Nations Information Governance Centre. (2014). Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP[®]): The path to First Nations information governance. Ottawa, ON: The First Nations Information Governance Centre. https://fnigc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/5776c4ee9387f966e6771aa93a04f389_ocap_path_to_fn_information_governance_en_final.pdf.

PROJECT PHASE**Design****Equity considerations**

- Tailor outreach strategies to reach populations with limited digital access or literacy.
- Allocate resources to support accessibility (e.g., translation, mobility assistance).
- Incorporate culturally relevant messaging and imagery.
- Design wellness check protocols that respect the privacy, safety and dignity of participants.

Challenges

- Outreach tools may not reach remote or digitally disconnected residents.
- Budget constraints may restrict accessible materials or multilingual support.
- Volunteers may have limited experience in equity-informed outreach practices.

Guidance

- Pilot messaging with representative community members to ensure clarity and appropriateness.
- Work with community liaisons and local organizations to validate designs.
- Provide training on equity, cultural safety and trauma-informed approaches for volunteers.

PROJECT PHASE**Implementation****Equity considerations**

- Provide paid or supported roles for community members from equity-deserving populations where feasible.
- Ensure equitable access to cooling kits and wellness checks.
- Provide culturally safe engagement during all outreach activities, and gather continuous input from Indigenous communities and equity-deserving groups to enhance program delivery.

Challenges

- Language barriers may hinder communication with diverse communities.
- There could be physical accessibility challenges for people with mobility limitations.
- Some residents may feel resistant or skeptical about public health guidance.
- There may be barriers to volunteer participation among equity-deserving groups due to transportation issues, work schedules or caregiving responsibilities.

Guidance

- Offer door-to-door, phone or in-person check-ins to reach isolated residents.
- Track and adjust outreach strategies in real time to address gaps in access.
- Offer stipends, childcare and transportation support for volunteers.
- Work through community liaisons and local organizations who have established relationships with skeptical audiences.

PROJECT PHASE**Monitoring and evaluation****Equity considerations**

- Collect disaggregated data to identify which groups are benefiting and who is missing out.
- Involve Indigenous and equity-deserving participants in evaluation and reporting.
- Use feedback loops to adapt future outreach to better reach vulnerable populations.

Challenges

- There may be a risk of volunteer fatigue or high turnover.
- There may be data privacy and sensitivity concerns.
- It may be difficult to ensure meaningful participation from equity-deserving groups in monitoring and evaluation activities.

Guidance

- Ensure all data collection follows ethical and privacy standards.
- Incorporate participatory evaluation methods, such as community feedback sessions.
- Adjust future projects based on feedback to improve equity outcomes.

PROJECT WORKPLAN: COMMUNITY HEAT RESILIENCE

PROJECT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Planning and resourcing

ACTIVITY 1

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 2

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 3

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 4

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 5

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 6

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 7

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 8

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Design

ACTIVITY 1

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 2

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 3

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 4

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 5

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 6

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation

ACTIVITY 1

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 2

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 3

Objectives

Timeline

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Involved parties

ACTIVITY 4

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Involved parties

ACTIVITY 5

Objectives

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Involved parties

ACTIVITY 6

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Monitoring and evaluation

ACTIVITY 1

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 2

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 3

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

ACTIVITY 4

Objectives

Timeline

Deliverables

Involved parties

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

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