



The Kresge Foundation Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity Initiative: Evaluation Report

Prepared for The Kresge Foundation
by Spark Policy Institute and Ross Strategic
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THE
KRESGE
FOUNDATION

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Acronyms

Adaptation Planning Working Group (APWG)

Alliance for a Greater New York (ALIGN)

Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)

Center for Race, Poverty, and the Environment (CRPE)

Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO)

Community-based organization (CBO)

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA)

Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

Climate Action Plan (CAP)

Climate Resilience (CR)

Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity (CRUO)

Coalition for Communities of Color (CCC)

Community Leadership on the Environment, Advocacy, and Resilience (CLEAR)

Developmental Evaluation (DE)

Equity & Environment Initiative (EEI)

Greenhouse gases (GHG)

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)

Ironbound Community Corporation (Ironbound)

Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (Leadership Counsel)

Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP)

Metropolitan Transit System (MTS)

Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA)

Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)

New York City Environmental Justice Association (NYC-EJA)

North County Transit District (NCTD)

Organizing People/Activating Leaders (OPAL)

Photovoltaics (PV)

The Point Community Development Corporation (The Point)

Puget Sound Sage (SAGE)

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

Southwest Workers Union (SWU)

Social Cohesion Continuum of Relational Engagement (SCCORE)

Transformative Climate Communities (TCC)

Utility Pre-Craft Trainee (UPCT)

WE ACT for Environmental Justice (WE ACT)

Foreword

The Kresge Foundation is focused on expanding opportunities in American cities. Since 2014, our Environment Program has helped cities combat climate change and adapt to its impacts, with a focus on ensuring that everyone in a community shares in the benefits of those actions.

Climate change is impacting people in real ways – today. The long legacy of segregation has resulted in uneven environmental protections, causing people of color and people with low incomes to disproportionately bear the impacts of climate change. As we work to reduce the pollution that causes climate change and prepare for its impacts that can no longer be avoided, it is critical that we acknowledge, address, and seek to correct these painful truths and recognize that, in the face of these structural inequities, climate change becomes a threat multiplier.

In 2014, Kresge launched its Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity (CRUO) Initiative, a five-year, \$29 million effort, with the intent of prioritizing work led by advocates and organizers in urban communities facing disproportionate environmental burdens. We began with one central question in mind: **Would cities adopt different and more universally protective policies and practices to advance climate resilience** (defined by Kresge to include climate change mitigation, adaptation, and social inclusion) **if organizations deeply committed to equity were resourced to fully participate in the policy-formation process?**

In 2014 (and still today), the vast majority of climate-change-focused philanthropy supported large environmental organizations' advocacy efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A small group of funders supported climate adaptation; again, traditional environmental groups were the typical recipients of funding. Philanthropy was making scant investments in the equally important work led by organizations that are rooted in and accountable to low-income communities and communities of color. The CRUO Initiative was the Kresge Environment Program's first significant financial commitment to a cohort of such leaders and organizations.

Because investing in community-based organizations leading with equity in their climate-resilience work was new to Kresge, we invited a small group of experts in climate change, racial equity, and social change to serve as advisors to Kresge's Environment team. Several of them had contributed to the initiative's design, and they provided candid and extremely helpful guidance throughout the course of the initiative. We are deeply indebted to them.

We chose to support the initiative with staff and consultants who were knowledgeable about racial equity and skilled in navigating different cultural contexts. We did our best to work in authentic partnership with the organizations that became grantees, to honor their insights into what they needed for their work to move forward successfully, and to give them room to adapt their strategies as the context for their work shifted.

As you will read in this evaluation, the CRUO-funded organizations affirmed the value that community-based organizations grounded in equity bring to climate-change work. The organizations achieved meaningful policy wins in their local communities and regions and at the state level. Collectively, they contributed to a shift in how climate-resilience work is framed – they expanded the range of issues recognized as relevant to climate resilience and elevated the profile of equity within the climate-resilience field.

Kresge’s Environment team learned much through the CRUO Initiative. Beyond the key learnings noted in the evaluation, we observed the complex dynamics the CRUO-funded organizations must navigate in their work as well as the depth of resistance built into the systems they are attempting to influence. We saw up close how individual, institutional, and structural racism pose barriers to communities’ progress. We understood on a deeper level why issues such as development and displacement, immigrant rights, and public health are among the challenges that climate activists must address. And we came to appreciate more fully that knowing a community’s history is a prerequisite to planning for its future.

Throughout the years we worked together, we were impressed and humbled by the clarity, commitment, and passion that drove the advocates’ work. Their vision is for bold, transformative change that will bring about a just and climate-resilient future for all communities. It is a vision we should unite behind.

We extend our gratitude to all of our partners in the CRUO Initiative. We hope that the lessons learned from this work will inspire greater philanthropic investment in equity-driven climate-change work.

Lois R. DeBacker

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Executive Summary

Background on the CRUO Initiative

In March 2014, The Kresge Foundation's Board of Trustees approved a new Environment Program strategic framework that advanced a comprehensive approach to climate resilience, integrating climate mitigation, climate adaptation, and social cohesion. Kresge believed actions in support of these three core concepts of "climate resilience" would be most powerful when pursued together and designed to be mutually reinforcing. Critical to this strategic framework was the core value of working to advance equity across all three aspects of climate-resilience.

The Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity (CRUO) Initiative was the first significant multi-year effort of the Environment Program's new strategy. It was designed to demonstrate that large-scale, transformative change can and should be led by low-income urban communities. Through CRUO, Kresge sought to:

- Strengthen the capacity of community-based non-profit organizations to influence local and regional climate-resilience planning, policy development, and implementation to better reflect the priorities and needs of low-income urban communities in U.S. cities.
- Strengthen the climate-resilience field by supporting new equity-centered methodologies and approaches to climate-resilience policy and planning.

The CRUO investment signaled to Kresge's partners and the larger climate-resilience field that Kresge was prepared to leverage the foundation's many years of learning and its growing network of partners to advance equitable climate-resilience practices. Although CRUO included some common elements of traditional grantmaking, Kresge structured its investment to ensure that community-based organizations (CBOs) would have the opportunity to execute strategies resulting in direct benefits to their communities and advance learning that could inform the broader climate-resilience field.

Key Terms for CRUO Stakeholders

In this report, the evaluation references stakeholders of CRUO in the following ways:

- "CRUO CBOs" or "CBOs" refers to the primary place-based organizations directly funded by Kresge.
- "CRUO partner" and "partners" are community-based stakeholders and entities that worked in a substantive way with CRUO CBOs to advance the CRUO strategy. Partners that received funding from Kresge through CRUO CBOs are noted in Table 1.
- "CRUO communities" is used to describe the combined efforts or impacts of CRUO CBOs, partners, and community members.
- "Field-building organizations" refers to a set of national organizations supported by Kresge's Environment Program; several of these organizations collaborated and/or partnered with CRUO CBOs and partners to advance strategies.

CRUO Purpose and Design

Kresge made intentional choices in designing the CRUO initiative to both position CBOs for success and build learning into the process. Kresge began the initiative design process with a set of hypotheses about climate resilience and community-based work and how philanthropy could most effectively leverage resources and catalyze efforts to advance systems-level change. Kresge's working set of hypotheses were:

HYPOTHESIS 1: IF we resource CBOs who have a commitment to civic engagement and who authentically represent the priorities of low-income communities to systematically engage in climate-resilience efforts, THEN we will generate publicly-endorsed plans and policies that are more attendant to equity concerns and carry more public support.

HYPOTHESIS 2: IF CBOs are resourced to systematically engage in climate-resilience efforts to elevate the concerns and priorities of low-income residents in the communities in which they work, THEN we will strengthen social cohesion and connectivity in these places.

HYPOTHESIS 3: IF we lift and share lessons from place-based innovation in advancing climate resilience with a focus on civic engagement and the inclusion of low-income communities, THEN we will improve the effectiveness of the climate-resilience field as a whole.

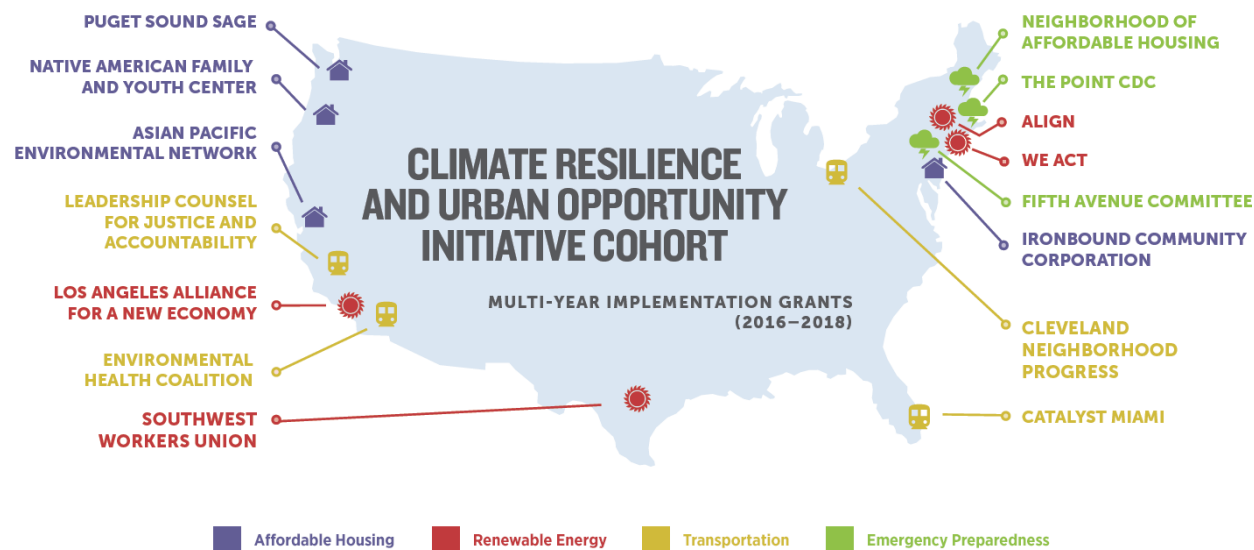
Kresge sought to harness lessons about how multi-year investments and diverse strategies in shifting political conditions could be structured and deployed to advance complex systems changes in low-income urban communities. CRUO investments were structured in ways that diverged from Kresge's past approaches to grantmaking. These ranged from a unique initiative design to new ways of engaging in the funder/grantee relationship. Kresge's approach to initiative design can be categorized in two ways: (1) decisions made to ensure that CRUO was adaptive and created space for emergent issues, including shifts in political or social context, climate events, or organizational changes within CBOs; and (2) decisions made to support learning at the local and national levels, across place-based CBOs and national organizations working to build the climate-resilience field.

The CRUO Cohort

The CRUO initiative was carried out in two phases: a nine-month planning phase followed by a three-year implementation phase. In 2014, Kresge issued an open call to invite non-profit CBOs to submit a letter of intent to participate in a planning phase and learning year for CRUO. The call was directed to CBOs with a strong track record of working in low-income, urban communities. Kresge sought CBOs that were interested in deepening their involvement and leadership in local or regional climate-resilience efforts. In 2015, 17 CBOs selected through the open call received nine-month planning grant awards of \$100,000 each and light-touch technical assistance, and also participated in a national convening. Following the planning year, Kresge awarded three-year implementation grants of \$220,000 each to 15 of the 17 planning grant recipients. The CBOs funded through the implementation phase represented geographies across nine U.S. states, and the grantees entered the cohort with diverse missions, scope and scale of services, and political contexts. The chosen CBOs' work was centered on equity. Though

they entered the CRUO Initiative with varying degrees of expertise on climate issues, all the CBOs demonstrated an interest in deepening their involvement and leadership in local or regional climate-resilience efforts and incorporating an equitable approach to climate resilience into their broader activities and agendas.

CRUO CBOs by Geographic Distribution



In addition to the 15 CRUO CBOs and their partners,¹ the Kresge Environment Program also invested in a group of non-profit organizations focused on climate resilience and/or equity issues working at the national level. Kresge supported these national, field-building organizations to work with CBOs to advance learning that could inform the field and ensure alignment of an equitable climate-resilience agenda. Specifically, Kresge hoped these linkages would:

- Increase local organizations’ technical knowledge and expertise around climate resilience and solutions.
- Support field-level learning from low-income urban communities about the kinds of equitable climate-resilience policy solutions that can be advanced with strong public input and support.
- Create partnerships to advance policies and plans at scale.

This level of intentionality led to some key partnerships and models that now have the potential to influence approaches to urban climate resilience.

¹ Most of the CRUO CBOs approached implementation by forging partnerships with other organizations in their communities.

Evaluation and Learning

The integration of evaluation and learning was central to CRUO and allowed Kresge and grantees to adapt and respond in an emergent manner to a rapidly-changing political and policy context. To address Kresge’s evaluation goals, the evaluation included two complementary designs: a *developmental evaluation* (DE) (2015–2017) and an *outcome evaluation* (2017–2019). During the early stages of the CRUO initiative, the developmental evaluation focused on elevating emergent feedback and insights to inform the ongoing design, evolution, and implementation of the initiative and to capture emergent lessons and insights. The outcome evaluation focused on assessing the impact of the overall strategy, with focus on CBO-supported work across the 15 CRUO communities. It also sought to identify lessons and insights that could inform future efforts supported by Kresge, peer funders, and the broader climate-resilience and equity fields.

Six learning questions were developed by Spark Policy Institute with input from the Kresge Environment Team to guide the shift to outcome evaluation:

- How did the actions and decisions undertaken by the Kresge Foundation influence the actions of the place-based and field-building grantees and contribute to their effectiveness at increasing climate-resilience while keeping equity at the center?
- To what extent have the contributions of and relationships between field building and place-based grantees created greater capacity and opportunity *in the broader field* to advance climate-resilience while keeping equity at the center of the work?
- To what extent have the relationships between and contributions of field building and place-based grantees created greater capacity and opportunity *among these organizations* to advance climate-resilience while keeping equity at the center of the work?
- To what extent have place-based grantees advanced climate-resilience while keeping equity at the center through:
 - Long-term, significant policy changes;
 - Short-term, small-win policy changes;
 - Signals of progress in the policy environment; and
 - Specific community-level changes?
- How did place-based grantees advance climate-resilience at scale while keeping equity at the center given complex political environments and competing community and organizational priorities?
- To what extent are place-based grantees positioned to continue growing climate-resilience in their communities while keeping equity at the center of their work, including the:
 - Strength of their partnerships;
 - Position in the policy environment;
 - Position in their communities; and
 - Organizational commitment to climate-resilience?

Consistent with a learning approach, data were collected throughout the CRUO initiative from a variety of sources including document review, annual CBO site reports, observation of annual CRUO convenings, surveys conducted pre- and post-convenings, facilitated dialogues with Kresge staff and consultants and the CRUO Advisory Committee, and media sources (e.g., newspapers, blogs, websites) highlighting CRUO communities' work. Data collection methods also included semi-structured interviews with multiple stakeholders, facilitated dialogues with CBOs and their constituents, and CBO site visits in the summer of 2018.

Key Impacts of the CRUO Initiative

CRUO's two-phased approach, the flexibility for configuring local partnerships, the use of developmental evaluation, and other factors contributed to an environment that emphasized learning, creative problem solving, adaptation, and meaning-making. The CRUO experience, including the local policy gains achieved by CBOs, demonstrates that finding meaningful solutions to address the impacts of climate change will require intentional, on-going action where philanthropy, national and grassroots efforts are working together to achieve equitable climate-resilience.

CRUO contributed in significant ways to changing the concept of climate resilience, who is affected, and how climate resilience solutions can advance and support social equity. CRUO was designed to advance work at the intersection of adaptation, mitigation, and social cohesion. Through work in the 15 selected communities, CRUO brought attention to the needs and priorities of communities often underrepresented in conversations about climate impacts and resilience solutions and helped to elevate the voice of community members in local processes relevant to climate-resilience.

CRUO demonstrated the value of intentionally integrating the needs, experiences, and skills of low-income urban communities in climate-resilience planning and implementation. CRUO stakeholders concluded that CRUO helped stretch the boundaries of the climate-resilience field to more intentionally consider the needs and experiences of low-income urban communities. Policies and plans that were advanced during CRUO show promise in this regard, both locally and at scale.

CRUO pushed meaningful systems and policy change. The initiative integrated technical knowledge, data capabilities, community voice, networks of networks, and linked investments in both community-based efforts and national issue-focused activities. The 15 CRUO communities, in partnership locally and nationally, developed a powerful set of policies, plans, and solutions that are continuing to drive meaningful systems change at multiple levels.

CRUO built and connected capacity across an entire ecosystem of organizations, helping these organizations to forge aligned and mutually-supportive strategies and action plans relevant to growing the climate-resilience and equity field. With the support of CRUO, CBOs and community members were able to identify, harness, expand, and use their capacities to grow their participation in policy and advocacy. Likewise, field-building organizations shifted how they develop solutions to be more inclusive of the experiences and priorities of low-income urban communities and to view CBOs as potential partners in developing and testing new approaches, tools, and insights. CRUO helped build the capacity of an ecosystem of organizations—the climate-resilience and equity field—by focusing beyond traditional grantmaking to support field-level peer-exchange and learning. CRUO also supported

organizations to develop longer-term strategies and capacities, while supporting organizations to adapt in a rapidly changing political context.

Key Insights and Lessons from CRUO

Based on the evaluation team’s experience and interpretation of the Key Learnings throughout the report, the evaluation team offers several insights and lessons related to (1) the value and impact of funding CBOs, (2) adaptive management, (3) the value of staff and advisory competency to bridge fields, (4) managing (and embracing) risk, and (5) ensuring sustainability of impacts. These insights are likely to be highly relevant to inform how philanthropic investors and their partners can enhance the likelihood of success of future complex social systems change initiatives—such as those focused on equitable climate-resilience.

1. Value and Impact of Funding CBOs

KEY INSIGHT: Local community-scale initiatives led by CBOs can provide a valuable testing ground for new approaches as well as tangible examples of what work and progress look like on the ground. These examples provide a crucial ingredient to support national field-building efforts by providing ripe opportunities to collaborate on research, narrative framing, national policy advocacy, and tool development.

CRUO demonstrated the value of having field-building initiatives include explicit investments in local initiatives to pilot and test concepts, approaches, and tools and to have living laboratories that national or issue-focused field-building organizations can work with and learn from. Field development is often propelled by work happening on-the-ground, complemented by national-level efforts to support and diffuse learning and approaches. Providing opportunities for field-building organizations to build relationships with CBOs and learn about how they solve problems to address their priorities can accelerate efforts to transform growing fields such as the climate-resilience field to embed equity.

KEY INSIGHT: CRUO demonstrated that there is real value for philanthropy in connecting partners across place-based investments and in engaging with them as “thought partners” to catalyze more comprehensive systems change initiatives.

CRUO’s design and implementation demonstrated compelling and innovative roles that philanthropy can play in complex systems change and field-building. In CRUO, place-based investments in CBOs provided more than examples of what equitable climate-resilience work can look like in communities; CBOs were connected in ways that supported broader field development, strengthened and accelerated learning and improvement across sites, and enabled real-time learning and adaptation between the funder and grantees. CRUO provides a powerful model for philanthropic strategy in which the funder and CBOs work together in a strategic thought partnership to design and influence larger transformational changes, such as efforts to position equity at the core of sustainability solutions.

2. Adaptive Management

KEY INSIGHT: There is value in creating lots of space and diverse mechanisms for organic, in-person peer-to-peer learning and technical assistance to support adaptive management by grantees.

As part of CRUO, Kresge supported diverse mechanisms to enable grantees—including both CBOs and national-field building organizations—to interact and learn from each other. Throughout the CRUO initiative, CBOs and partners remarked on the value of both the annual convenings and in-person peer-to-peer learning opportunities, such as peer site visits and special issue convenings.

KEY INSIGHT: Kresge’s approach to the CRUO initiative allowed for flexibility and adaptation, which was supported by the developmental evaluation, on-going advisory support, continued engagement with grantees as thought partners, and access to reserve funding.

Commissioning a developmental evaluation for CRUO created space for evaluative thinking and evidence to inform on-going strategy and implementation activities for CRUO. On-going engagement of an Advisory Committee created an important forum for discussing and testing emergent insights and ideas. Periodic interactions between Kresge staff, consultants, and grantees through site visits and convenings created space for dialogue about emergent needs and opportunities to adjust to address them. The availability of funding dedicated to peer-learning activities enabled Kresge to support emergent needs and opportunities, such as enhanced learning and exchange opportunities for grantees and focused policy implementation opportunities in some communities

3. Value of Staff and Advisory Competency to Bridge Fields

KEY INSIGHT: CRUO benefited from having staff and advisors with skills and experience that spanned both equity and climate-resilience fields, equipping CRUO to build bridges to integrate these fields and to navigate different cultural contexts in productive ways.

CRUO benefitted from having staff and Advisory Committee members who not only have experience and skills in equity and climate-resilience fields, but who also have valuable cultural and political competencies. This expertise and capacity helped ensure that the implementation of the CRUO initiative remained attentive to the social and cultural dimensions of building bridges and connections among grantees, experts, and stakeholders approaching the work from equity and climate-resilience lenses.

4. Managing (and Embracing) Risk

KEY INSIGHT: Kresge shaped the portfolio to focus on geographies where there was higher capacity and likelihood of success, while also including some higher risk places with more limited capacity and/or stronger political headwinds. This helped to enhance the overall likelihood of success for the CRUO initiative while creating opportunities to learn from work in more challenging contexts.

During the design phase of CRUO, the Kresge Environment team chose to intentionally focus in urban areas where there was already existing CBO capacity and ripe policy advocacy environments, which tended towards the east and west coast communities. At the same time, Kresge had an interest to test the CRUO hypotheses in a range of community contexts, including those where local focus on climate-resilience might be at different stages or politically positioned in different ways. This varied portfolio approach created important learning opportunities about what it takes to support equitable climate-resilience work in diverse contexts.

KEY INSIGHT: CRUO's two-phase grantmaking structure with planning and implementation grant phases allowed Kresge to explore opportunities in higher risk community contexts without committing multi-year investments in places that had low likelihood of success.

Planning year grants provided Kresge and CBOs an opportunity to work together during a full year to develop CBO's capacities and plans around equity-focused climate-resilience work. This approach enabled Kresge to pursue implementation investments with 15 of the 17 CBOs from the planning cohort, focusing on CBOs that had the greatest likelihood of successful implementation work. While the planning year provided the foundation with a helpful risk-management approach, the multi-year implementation phase investments provided CBOs with helpful certainty about revenue flows to enable them to make staffing and investment decisions.

KEY INSIGHT: Creating time and space to build relationships and trust among community-based organizations within and across communities, and with national field-building organizations, was important to enhancing the success of CBOs' work and of the broader CRUO field-building efforts.

Dismantling pervasive, systemic inequities in areas relevant to climate resilience requires the efforts of strong local partnerships and aligned regional and national networks of organizations. The design of CRUO created enough opportunity for formal and informal networking to allow relationships to grow over time. CRUO's reach into the climate-resilience field largely rested on relationships and networks between CBOs and field-building organizations, media efforts highlighting community-based work, and influence through coalitions to take some models to scale.

5. Ensuring Sustainability of Capacity and Impacts

KEY INSIGHT: Ensuring sustained impact (such as equitable climate resilience) requires looking beyond policy wins to support on-going policy implementation phases.

CRUO demonstrated that there is a growing capacity to advance climate-resilience policy and programmatic wins with equity at the center. Policy and program wins are important, but representatives from the CRUO CBO cohort indicated that assuring the full impact of these accomplishments will require substantial work in the subsequent design and implementation of policies and programs. Several CRUO stakeholders observed that hard-fought policy progress in advancing equity and justice can be easily unraveled or lost during the implementation phase unless there is on-going vigilance, advocacy, and engagement to ensure aspirations are realized in practice.

KEY INSIGHT: Funders can support sustained impact by CBOs with thoughtful exit strategies that support early discussions with CBOs to help them proactively plan for changes in future funding.

In major, multi-year initiatives such as CRUO, sustaining or advancing the transformational potential for investments can be enhanced by creating more time for discussions between funders and CBOs about opportunities for sustaining impact over time. Even when a funder is not able to continue investment in initiative CBOs, the funder can help CBOs think through ways to sustain the work and impact through new funding sources, lower resource levels, or creative implementation strategies.

Informing the Field

The learning that surfaced throughout the CRUO initiative has already begun to inform the Kresge Environment Team's work as the team moves to implement other initiatives. Kresge hopes that this evaluation will also inform peer funders interested in advancing climate work with an equity lens, as well as funders in other disciplines who are implementing community-based capacity-building efforts. Lessons learned from the CRUO experience suggest several considerations to support further development of an equitable climate-resilience field:

- Support capacity building across a strong network of CBOs with established track records of working on equity issues in low-income urban areas in order to grow and strengthen a movement capable of influencing climate-resilience policy decisions and implementation from the ground up.
- Prioritize larger, longer investments with built-in flexibility for how resources are directed to allow organizations to balance immediate and longer-term priorities and to adapt as they learn.
- Assess learning needs and structure responsive learning opportunities that get at what is most needed rather than broader, more generic, and pre-determined learning opportunities.
- Concurrently build the relationships and structures necessary to foster strategic partnerships at the grassroots level and within and across the broader field. This can strengthen design and implementation of adaptive and technical solutions to address climate-resilience and equity issues and allow groups to develop and elevate insights and tools for broader use.

Introduction to the Report

In July 2014, The Kresge Foundation (Kresge) launched the Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity Initiative (CRUO) to strengthen the climate resilience field to better reflect the priorities, needs, and realities of low-income people in U.S. cities. CRUO supported 15 sites in nine states in developing new models, methodologies, and approaches to climate resilience policy and planning to benefit low-income urban communities and put equity at the center of climate resilience. Evaluation and learning were integrated into the initiative early on, allowing Kresge and the CRUO cohort to adapt and respond quickly to community needs and priorities and participate effectively in the climate resilience field.

The initiative was carried out in two phases: a nine-month planning phase followed by a three-year implementation phase. In 2015–16, the early years of implementation, Kresge used developmental evaluation to inform critical decisions about the design and evolution of the initiative and to document what was accomplished and learned in this planning phase with CRUO communities. Developmental evaluation continued throughout implementation. In the middle of 2017, the evaluation team shifted its primary focus to conduct an outcome evaluation designed to build an understanding of how the strategies used by Kresge and CRUO CBOs and their partners impacted communities and the climate resilience field.

Overview of the Report

This report summarizes the key insights and lessons from the outcome evaluation phase of the CRUO initiative. The evaluation explored the local and field-level impact of the strategy as well as how the decisions made by Kresge about the initiative contributed to the broader impact of CRUO.

While the primary audience for this evaluation is The Kresge Foundation’s Environment Program, the evaluation also sought to generate insights for the broader climate resilience field and peer funders about what it takes to bring an equity lens to climate resilience work and what can be accomplished as a

Key Terms for CRUO Stakeholders

In this report, the evaluation references stakeholders of CRUO in the following ways:

- “CRUO CBOs” or “CBOs” refers to the primary place-based organizations directly funded by Kresge.
- “CRUO partner” and “partners” are community-based stakeholders and entities that worked in a substantive way with CRUO CBOs to advance the CRUO strategy. Partners that received funding from Kresge through CRUO CBOs are noted in Table 1.
- “CRUO communities” is used to describe the combined efforts or impacts of CRUO CBOs, partners, and community members.
- “Field-building organizations” refers to a set of national organizations supported by Kresge’s Environment Program; several of these organizations collaborated and/or partnered with CRUO CBOs and partners to advance strategies.

result. Community-based non-profit organizations (CBOs) that participated in the CRUO initiative are a secondary audience for this evaluation.

This report is organized into the following major sections:

- **Evaluation Methodology** This section describes the outcome evaluation approach, highlights questions that have guided this evaluation, and explains how evidence was collected. It also explains the ways in which the evaluation team engaged with key stakeholders to make sense of the data that emerged.
- **Impact of the CRUO Initiative Design** This section introduces the decisions Kresge made regarding the design of the initiative and reflects on how the design contributed to insights and learning during the initiative.
- **Impact of CRUO on the Climate Resilience Field** This section explores how the network and partnerships supported by Kresge, including both field-building organizations and community-based organizations, have influenced the broader climate resilience field.
- **Impact of CRUO in Local Communities** This section examines the policy progress made in CRUO communities and provides insights on how CRUO communities achieved policy progress. It also examines challenges related both to policy implementation and to learning about what it takes to create and sustain equitable climate resilience.
- **Learning from CRUO** This section summarizes key impacts and insights from CRUO that may be relevant to inform future work of Kresge’s Environment team, peer funders, and the broader climate resilience field.

Overview of CRUO

The Challenge

The impacts of human-caused climate change are already being felt in urban communities across the U.S. Severe weather events, flooding, heat waves, and changes in air quality are just a few of the ways climate change is increasing the physical, economic, and social strains on urban systems and populations. Low-income urban communities are often at the frontlines of these changes and experience a disproportionate level of impact from climate-related changes. Historic oppression and structural inequalities organized around race, age, income, and health impact a community's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate change impacts. Without proactive efforts to address equity concerns in resilience planning, climate change will reinforce and worsen current disparities, increase burdens on low-income urban communities, and diminish opportunities to find just and effective solutions to climate change.

CRUO Initiative

In March 2014, Kresge's Board of Trustees approved a new strategic framework for the Environment Program to advance a comprehensive approach to climate resilience that integrates climate mitigation, climate adaptation, and social cohesion. Kresge believed actions in support of these three core concepts of "climate resilience" would be most powerful when designed to be pursued together and mutually reinforcing. Critical to this strategic framework was the core value of working to advance equity across all three aspects of climate resilience.

CRUO was the first significant multi-year effort under the Kresge Environment Program's new strategy to demonstrate that large-scale transformative change can and should be led by low-income urban communities. Through CRUO, Kresge sought to:

- Strengthen the capacity of community-based nonprofit organizations to influence local and regional climate resilience planning, policy development, and implementation to better reflect the priorities and needs of low-income urban communities in U.S. cities.
- Strengthen the climate-resilience field by supporting new equity-centered methodologies and approaches to climate-resilience policy and planning.

In its RFP Kresge implicitly defined meaningful "equitable climate resilience" practices as those that:

- Address the disproportionate impact of climate change on low-income communities.
- Deliver benefits, beyond climate resilience gains, to low-income people and communities such as access to jobs, economic opportunities, meaningful civic engagement.
- Substantively influence public-sector led efforts to address climate change so that outcomes of such efforts are equitable for low-income communities.

- Generate models, approaches and methodologies for the climate resilience field of practice.
- Enhance the effectiveness of climate resilience efforts.

The CRUO investment signaled to Kresge’s partners and the larger climate resilience field that Kresge was prepared to leverage the Foundation’s many years of learning around urban sustainability, the environment, community-led processes, and its growing networks of partners to advance equitable climate resilience practices. Although CRUO included some common elements of traditional grantmaking, Kresge structured its investment to ensure that funded communities would have the opportunity to execute strategies that resulted in direct benefits to communities and to advance learning that informs the broader climate resilience field. [Appendix F: CRUO Total Spending summarizes Kresge’s total investment for CRUO.](#)

The Pescadero Gathering

In February 2014, Kresge Foundation brought together over 30 community-based and field leaders working at the intersection of climate resilience and equity for a multi-day gathering in Pescadero, California. The gathering was organized in partnership with the Emerald Cities Collaborative, Movement Strategy Center and Praxis Project. Designed as an intensive, experiential lab, the gathering focused on defining a new climate resilience vision grounded in principles of equity and informing the development of Kresge’s urban-focused climate agenda. In preparation for the gathering, interviews were conducted with the participants and a set of framing papers were prepared to situate the discussion within an integrated holistic resilience frame that put low-income and people-of-color communities at the center.

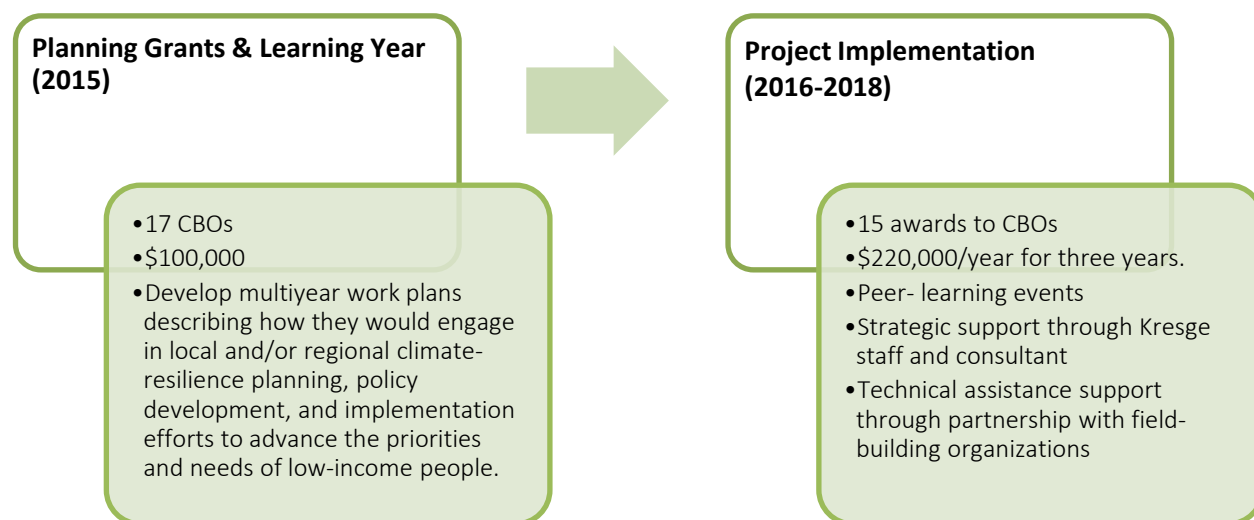
Through the gathering, participants affirmed the need for a clear vision of an equitable, climate-resilient future and began to explore the range of partnerships, policies, and practices that could help advance progress in the service of that vision. Participants lifted up climate change as a threat multiplier that exacerbated other social, economic and political inequities and made clear the need for leadership development and capacity-building investments in community organizations prepared to drive local climate responses rooted in equity. Key partners from the Pescadero Gathering contributed to a report in January 2015, titled *Pathways to Resilience: Transforming Cities in a Changing Climate*.

The dialogue and relationships that developed through the organizing process and the lab itself had a tremendous impact on the design and implementation of the CRUO. In particular, CRUO (1) advanced the equitable climate resilience frame that emerged through the gathering; (2) in alignment with the work of the gathering, the initiative prioritized leadership development and emphasized solutions that put low-income and people-of-color communities at the center; and (3) the foundation sought to recast its role as a partner, collaborator and co-learner in the manner Pescadero participants prioritized. In addition, leaders from each of the Pescadero gathering core organizing partners, along with other lab participants, became members of the Advisory Committee for CRUO, and several participants applied through a competitive application process and were selected as CRUO sites.

The CRUO Cohort

In 2014, Kresge issued an open call to invite non-profit CBOs to submit a letter of intent to participate in a planning grant and learning year for CRUO. The call was directed at CBOs with a strong track record of working in low-income, urban communities that were interested in deepening their involvement and leadership in local or regional climate resilience efforts. In 2015, 17 CBOs selected through the open call received nine-month planning grant awards and light touch technical assistance, and also participated in a national convening. Following the planning year, Kresge provided almost all the CBOs from the planning phase with three-year project implementation grants (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Phases of CRUO Investment



CRUO Communities

The 15 CBOs awarded project implementation funding varied with respect to mission, scope and scale of services, geographic location, and political context, as well as how they positioned their work in the community (see Table 1). To implement their strategies, most CBOs approached CRUO implementation in partnership with other organizations in their communities. The diversity of CBO missions, services, and approaches to partnership shaped the varied ways in which these organizations incorporated core concepts of climate resilience (i.e., adaptation, mitigation, and social cohesion) and equity into their work and programs.

Table 1: Kresge Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity Initiative Cohort CBOs

Kresge CBO/CBO Partner	Location	Grant Focus Area
Alliance for a Greater New York (ALIGN) <i>Project Partners: NYC Environmental Justice Alliance; NYC AFL-CIO Central Labor Council; IBEW Local 3; Make the Road</i>	New York, NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community driven energy • Political and campaign development

<p>Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)</p> <p><i>Project Partner: Causa Justa: Just Cause</i></p>	Oakland, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community driven energy • Community stabilization
Catalyst Miami	Miami, FL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency response/preparedness • Sea-level rise • Leadership development • Public health
<p>Cleveland Neighborhood Progress</p> <p><i>Project Partners: City of Cleveland Sustainability Office, Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative; Kent State University; University of Buffalo</i></p>	Cleveland, OH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban flooding • Green infrastructure • Extreme heat and air quality
<p>Environmental Health Coalition</p> <p><i>Project Partners: Center for Policy Initiatives; 350.org San Diego</i></p>	San Diego, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-driven energy • Ports • Air quality • Transportation • Leadership development
<p>Fifth Avenue Committee</p> <p><i>Project Partners: FUREE; Red Hook Initiative; Southwest Brooklyn IDC; Pratt Center for Community Development</i></p>	Brooklyn, NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership development • Emergency response/preparedness • Community solar • Extreme heat and community health • Green job creation
<p>Ironbound Community Corporation (Ironbound)</p> <p><i>Project Partners: Clean Water Fund NJ; New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance</i></p>	Newark, NJ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality • Community stabilization • Urban flooding • Stormwater management
<p>Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (Leadership Counsel)</p> <p><i>Project Partner: Center for Race, Poverty, and the Environment</i></p>	Fresno, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate adaptation • Extreme heat • Air quality • Water quality • Leadership development • Public health
<p>Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)</p> <p><i>Project Partner: RePower LA Coalition</i></p>	Los Angeles, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-driven energy • Stormwater management
Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA)	Portland, OR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency response/preparedness • Community stabilization • Community-driven energy

<i>Project Partners: Organizing People/Activating Leaders (OPAL); Coalition for Communities of Color (CCC)</i>		
Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH) <i>Project Partners: UMASS, Maverick Landing Community Services; Urban Land Institute</i>	Boston, MA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea-level rise • Urban flooding • Climate adaptation
The Point Community Development Corporation (The Point) <i>Project Partner: NYC Environmental Justice Alliance</i>	The Bronx, NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-driven energy • Emergency response/preparedness • Air quality • Green infrastructure
Puget Sound Sage (SAGE) <i>Project Partner: Got Green</i>	Seattle, WA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community stabilization • Community-driven energy
Southwest Workers Union (SWU)	San Antonio, TX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality • Public health • Stormwater management
WE ACT for Environmental Justice (WE ACT)	New York, NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-driven energy • Leadership development • Air quality • Public health

Field-building Organizations

In addition to the 15 CRUO CBOs and their partners, the Kresge Environment Program was also investing in a set of non-profit organizations focused on climate resilience and/or equity issues working at the national level. Kresge supported the national, field-building organizations to work with CBOs to advance learning that could inform the field and ensure alignment of the climate resilience agenda. Specifically, the Foundation hoped these linkages would:

- Increase local organizations’ technical knowledge and expertise around climate resilience and solutions.
- Support field-level learning from low-income urban communities about how to develop policy solutions with public input and support.
- Create partnerships to advance policies and plans at scale.

Table 2: Field-Building Organizations and Area of Expertise

Field-Building Organizations	Area of Expertise
Center for American Progress	Climate research, policy development, and social cohesion

Clean Energy Group	Clean energy policy and applications
Climate Access	Climate data and framing
Climate Central	Climate data and resources
Earth Economics	Valuation of natural capital
EcoAdapt	Adaptation practices
Emerald Cities Collaborative	Just and inclusive local economies, energy democracy, and labor partnerships
Georgetown Climate Center	Climate policy
Movement Strategy Center	Community-driven planning and social cohesion
NAACP	Equity-centered climate policy and programs
Solar One	Solar energy and applications

CRUO in Political, Social, and Economic Context

To understand the findings and insights from this evaluation, it is important to recognize the rapidly-evolving political, social, and economic context in which the CRUO initiative was developed and in which the CBOs and their partners operated from 2015 to 2018. The 2016 U.S. elections occurred in the first year of CRUO implementation, elevating new challenges, pressures, and uncertainties. Some of the resulting contextual changes include:

- Abrupt change in direction for national and state policies relevant to climate change mitigation and resilience.** The new federal administration moved quickly to roll back Obama-era policies and programs on climate change and clean energy, shifting climate-focused policy advocacy efforts to a defensive stance. For example, the U.S. government reduced or eliminated major funding and technical assistance programs designed to support communities in planning for resilience or in implementing programs focused on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean transportation. The Clean Power Plan was scrapped, taking pressure off states to reduce power sector greenhouse gas emissions. Vehicle emissions and fuel efficiency standards were undermined, slowing progress in advancing clean transportation and addressing urban air quality. The imposition of tariffs on imported solar panels has increased costs and slowed solar energy system installations. Some state governments have also worked to curtail environmental protections, while others have rallied to bolster policies and programs to fill the role abdicated by the federal government.
- Change in direction for federal programs and funding relevant to community well-being and development.** National policy and budget changes have also affected programs focused on health care, affordable housing, and many other services that directly affect community well-being and development, particularly in low-income and vulnerable communities. These cuts in funding and increased targeting of low-income and vulnerable communities created additional pressures for CRUO CBOs to prioritize work on climate resilience work.

- **Change in direction for immigration programs and enforcement.** Changes in implementation and enforcement of immigration policies have directly affected low-income communities in many CRUO cities. This had significant implications for some CBOs and their communities and reshaped community priorities. The focus in many CRUO communities turned to ensuring the safety and security of community members.
- **Continued wealth creation and stratification in many large U.S. cities.** The rapid economic growth in many large U.S. cities, particularly those with growing technology sectors, has intensified displacement and gentrification pressures that directly affect low-income communities and threaten existing social cohesion.

The advent and intensification of these and other contextual factors during the CRUO initiative affected CRUO communities, CBOs, and partners in important ways. These contextual factors have elevated competing priorities and community needs for limited CBO attention and resources. Changes in national programs and funding have also affected grant resources available to CRUO CBOs and partners, despite increasing needs for services. At the same time, there have been continued reminders of the increasing severity of climate change impacts and the need for enhanced resilience. From hurricanes to fires to flooding, many U.S. communities (and more than a third of CRUO communities) have been adversely affected by climate impacts since 2015. It is in this broader context that the CRUO initiative has developed and these evaluation findings should be understood.

Evaluation Methodology

Kresge’s Environment Program team embedded evaluation into the design of the CRUO investment strategy in order to drive learning, adapt in response to new opportunities and challenges, and capture key insights to advance the field. The evaluation design was intentionally focused on distilling and telling the story of CRUO in the broader context of climate change resilience and the historic underinvestment in low-income urban communities.

The evaluation was designed around a set of interrelated goals:

- To provide a steady stream of information and data to identify key learnings about the design and implementation of climate resilience efforts funded through CRUO.
- To facilitate learning conversations with Kresge staff and consultants to identify necessary course corrections resulting from the key insights.
- To document what was learned and accomplished during the initiative that has broader application to the climate resilience field.

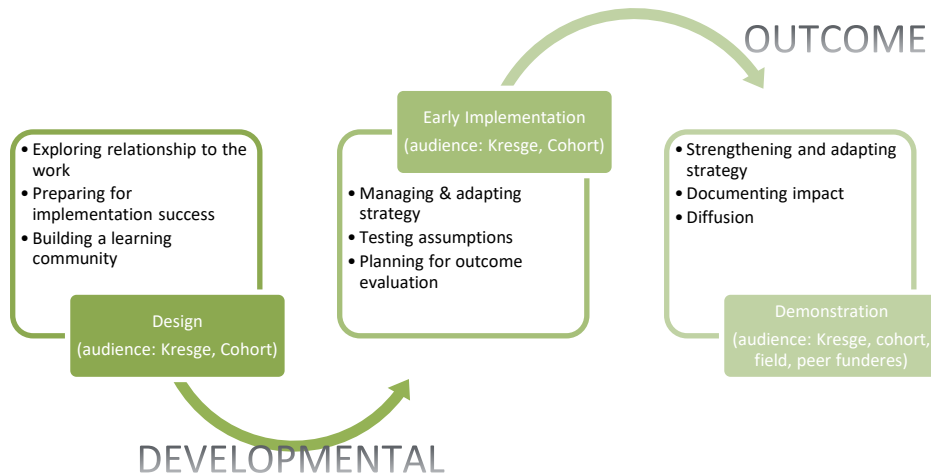
Through an RFP process, Kresge’s Environment Program sought to engage an evaluation team that would partner with Kresge for all phases of the initiative from planning and design through outcomes. The evaluation team chosen included Spark Policy Institute (Spark), Ross Strategic, and Fourth Quadrant Partners (4QP). Spark brought a depth of expertise and leadership in developmental evaluation to support real-time learning in the context of equity and community building efforts. Ross Strategic brought deep content knowledge on community-level climate mitigation and resilience as well as experience helping philanthropies and philanthropically-funded initiatives evaluate, learn from, and refine their climate-related work. 4QP’s national leadership on Emergent Learning (EL) and application of EL tools and processes in the context of equity and collective impact provided early support for Kresge. Spark and Ross Strategic made up the evaluation team for all phases of the project.

Evaluation Design

To address Kresge’s evaluation goals, the evaluation included two complementary designs: a *developmental evaluation* (2015–2017) and an *outcome evaluation* (2017–2019). The developmental evaluation focused on elevating emergent feedback and insights during the early stages of the CRUO initiative to inform the ongoing design, evolution, and implementation of the initiative and to capture emergent lessons and insights. The outcome evaluation focused on assessing the impact of the overall strategy, with particular focus on CBO-supported work in the 15 CRUO communities, and on identifying lessons and insights that could inform future efforts supported by Kresge, peer funders, and the broader climate resilience and equity fields (see Figure 2).

This section of the report describes the outcome evaluation methodology that informed the data collection for this report. A discussion of the developmental evaluation in helping shape the impact of the CRUO initiative is taken up in the following section: [Impact of the CRUO Initiative Design](#).

Figure 2: CRUO Evaluation Design



Outcome Evaluation

The outcome evaluation sought to generate insights across all CRUO communities at an initiative level and served as the primary evaluation design beginning in 2017, the second year of the implementation grants. The CRUO outcome evaluation prioritized two aspects. First, it focused on answering evaluation questions across communities based on self-reported experiences. Second, it worked to validate answers to evaluation questions for a targeted set of priority outcomes based on additional stakeholder data.

At the end of 2016, six evaluation questions were developed by Spark Policy Institute with input from Kresge’s Environment team to guide the shift to outcome evaluation. The evaluation questions on the following page were focused on (1) how the work of climate resilience with an equity focus was advancing on the ground, (2) how the relationships between field-building and CBOs were strengthening and influencing the broader climate resilience field, and (3) how Kresge managed the initiative influenced the effectiveness of both place-based and field-building work on climate resilience.

Data Collection and Analysis

Consistent with a learning approach, data was collected throughout the CRUO initiative from a variety of sources including: document review, annual CBO site reports, observation of annual CRUO convenings, surveys conducted pre- and post-convening, facilitated dialogues with Kresge staff and consultants and the CRUO Advisory Committee, and media sources (e.g. newspapers, blogs, websites) highlighting CRUO communities’ work. Data collection methods also included semi-structured interviews with multiple stakeholders, facilitated dialogues with CBOs and their constituents, and CBO site visits.

CRUO Initiative Evaluation Questions

1. To what extent have place-based grantees advanced climate resilience while keeping equity at the center through:
 - a. Long-term, significant policy changes;
 - b. Short-term, small-win policy changes;
 - c. Signals of progress in the policy environment; and
 - d. Specific community-level changes?
2. How did place-based grantees advance climate resilience at scale while keeping equity at the center given complex political environments and competing community and organizational priorities?
3. To what extent are place-based grantees positioned to continue increasing climate resilience in their communities while keeping equity at the center of their work, including the:
 - a. Strength of their partnerships;
 - b. Position in the policy environment;
 - c. Position in their communities; and
 - d. Organizational commitment to climate resilience?
4. To what extent have the relationships between and contributions of field building and place-based grantees created greater capacity and opportunity among these organizations to advance climate resilience while keeping equity at the center of the work?
5. To what extent have the relationships between and contributions of field-building, and place-based grantees created greater capacity and opportunity *in the broader field* to advance climate resilience while keeping equity at the center of the work?
6. How did the actions and decisions undertaken by the Kresge Foundation influence the actions of the place-based and field-building grantees and contribute to their effectiveness at increasing climate resilience while keeping equity at the center?

The primary sources of data for the outcome evaluation included:

Annual CRUO CBO progress reports. For the first two years of implementation (2016 and 2017), the evaluation team and Kresge co-designed a set of narrative questions for CBOs and their partners designed to help them reflect on what progress on their climate resilience work was made during the prior implementation year. Progress reports explored how CBO strategy adapted and shifted in response to changing conditions locally, regionally, and nationally, how the larger initiative was influencing CBO work, and what continued support CBOs needed from Kresge. The questions were adapted each year and submitted in written narrative along with financials.

Annual CRUO site interviews. Kresge and the evaluation team met immediately following the submission of the narrative progress reports to briefly discuss overall insights about site progress. Following this discussion, the evaluation team and Kresge co-designed a semi-tailored interview

protocol for a 60-minute end-of-the year interview with each CBO and their partners to reflect on the previous year of implementation.

In the final year of implementation, Kresge and the evaluation team adjusted reporting requirements to lessen the burden on CBOs and their partners, and to co-create a structure for talking about individual sites' accomplishments and learning. Instead of a written narrative final report, CBOs and their partners participated in a 60-minute interview with the evaluation team and consultant. In response to CBOs desire for Kresge to help their communities to "package" their CRUO work, a two-page site summary, co-created between the CBOs and the evaluation team, served as the final written progress report to Kresge. These are included in Appendix E: Site Summaries.

The written reports and interview transcripts were analyzed using a set of codes developed around the learning questions and anticipated outcomes. For 2016 and 2017, the evaluation team prepared a memo synthesizing findings and key themes. The evaluation team then debriefed this memo with Kresge, presented findings, and participated in a facilitated discussion with the Advisory Committee to provide additional context and insight to the learnings. The 2018 interviews were presented to the Kresge and the Advisory Committee and informed this final evaluation report.

Site Visits. The outcome evaluation was initially built around more than 26 outcomes looking at changes in the political environment, community, CBOs, and the broader climate resilience field. In 2018, the evaluation team facilitated a conversation with Kresge staff and consultants to narrow in on a priority set of eight outcomes to explore at site visits. Verification data was collected at these site visits to further explore outcomes from the perspectives of CBO staff not directly connected to CRUO, partners in the community, and community members. This was done to help understand the role of community in shaping the policy win, the strategies that drove policy wins, the win's equity components, and successes and challenges during policy implementation. Site visits also explored how CBOs were positioned to sustain climate resilience efforts. Appendix C: Evaluation Site Visit Methodology provides greater detail.

At least two members of the evaluation team facilitated each site visit which was scheduled for two days and had four components:²

1. **Interviews with staff members.** Interviews were 30-minute, one-on-one conversations with CBO staff to gather perspectives on commitment to and capacity for climate resilience and equity work. Up to three CBO staff members participated. Participants included at least one staff member directly working on climate resilience programs and projects and at least one staff member working in other issue areas where climate resilience and equity principles were being integrated.
2. **Community dialogues.** These facilitated dialogues were two hours in length and included six to eight participants. Participants were members of the community with a meaningful level of involvement in the CBO's activities, who had experience with the CBO's climate resilience and equity programming and advocacy work. The purpose of these dialogues was to understand the impact of CRUO projects and community perspectives on the CBO's commitment to climate

² As a supplement to the site visit data collection on the policy environment, the evaluation team facilitated a discussion about political inclusion and influence at the CRUO convening in September 2018.

resilience with an equity lens. They also explored community member perspectives on whether policymakers were considering how climate policy impacts communities on the frontline of climate change.

3. **Policy change dialogues.** These facilitated dialogues were one and a half hours in length and included six to nine participants who had worked directly on a selected policy win and could speak with specificity and depth about policy change. The group brought together for the policy dialogue included up to three participants from each of the following groups: CBO staff and leadership, community leaders, and partner organization staff. These dialogues explored how the specific policy win was achieved, whether and how communities were positioned for longer-term change given this win, and how communities are and/or will be holding policymakers accountable to equity in the implementation phase.
4. **Policymaker interviews.** These interviews were 30-minute confidential conversations with policymakers to better understand where CRUO CBOs are influencing decisions on equity-centered climate resilience policy. The evaluation team intended to engage two policymakers per site; one who was integrally involved in the selected policy win and one who had a working relationship with the CBO. The purpose of these interviews was to understand policymaker perspectives on how the selected policy win was achieved and if/how it set the stage for long-term policy change. Due to policymaker schedules and availability, the evaluation team was not able to schedule two policymaker interviews at every CRUO site.

Data collected at site visits were coded and analyzed around the prioritized outcomes. Analytic memos were prepared for each outcome and reviewed by all team members. Two core themes were selected as the focus for discussion at the final CRUO convening in September of 2018 to engage CRUO CBOs in helping the evaluation team further explore the data. The first theme was on advancement of policy wins and the drivers of these wins. The second theme explored the concept of community power and how CBOs think about meaningful inclusion and influence in policy processes. Using the analytic memos and the convening discussion, the evaluation team debriefed with Kresge around a preliminary findings memo before conducting the final set of interviews with CRUO CBOs and their partners.

CRUO Cohort and Field-Building Surveys. Pre- and post-convening surveys were administered in conjunction with annual CRUO grantee convenings to further enhance the learning and gather input from convening attendees about CRUO and learning needs. The final convening survey and a supplementary field-building survey explored organizations' perspectives on how CRUO influenced their equitable climate resilience practices and the broader field.

Moving from Participatory to Equitable Evaluation Practice in Outcome Evaluation

Equity was a core commitment of Kresge going into the CRUO initiative. The evaluation team was selected in part because of its capacity to demonstrate evaluation leadership in the context of equity. Although members of the evaluation team changed over the course of the evaluation, a commitment to participatory practices and attention to equity was continuous.

CRUO communities participated in each phase of the evaluation, from the developmental phase through to the outcome phase. There was ongoing data collection and touch points with CRUO communities, which provided feedback loops for the evaluation team to understand and make meaning of the initiative in the context of each site. The evaluation team participated in the Kresge grantee convenings where CBO staff were engaged in participatory sensemaking of the preliminary findings. Additionally, the evaluation team made every effort to consistently have the same evaluation staff working with each site to build rapport and carry forward previous knowledge of the site so that conversations were progressive.

The site visits were designed, in part, to elevate community perspective as to how the impacts of CRUO can be understood in a place-based context. Dialogues at site visits engaged non-CRUO staff, community members, and non-funded partners to document how policy change happened during CRUO and how policy change impacted community. Dialogues during the site visits were structured to be as inclusive as possible and included elements such as compensating community members for their time and participation in dialogues, using community-based translators, and providing safe spaces for community members to voice concerns about CBOs, policymakers, and the funder.

It is important to note that during the CRUO initiative, evaluation practices centered around equity were in a process of transformation as a result of collaborations between philanthropy and the evaluation field. Kresge is a co-leading organization of these efforts and the CRUO evaluation team is involved in efforts to advance what is becoming known as an [equitable evaluation framework](#). As the outcome evaluation team began planning site visits, these new equitable evaluation principles informed how the evaluation team moved forward with site visit design, data collection, analysis and meaning making. This occurred largely in the outcome phase of the evaluation rather than in earlier phases of the evaluation.

Impact of the CRUO Initiative Design

The CRUO investment was the first initiative launched following Kresge’s Board of Trustees approval of a new strategic framework for the Environment Program in 2014. This framework advanced a comprehensive approach to climate resilience that integrated climate mitigation, climate adaptation, and social cohesion and centered the inclusion and benefit of low-income communities. Kresge wanted to ensure that CRUO CBOs would succeed in their efforts, and the Foundation wanted to learn more about how to structure multi-year investments in shifting conditions in order to advance complex systems changes in low-income urban communities. The Foundation also sought to create opportunities for the rapid diffusion of learning throughout the initiative.

LEARNING QUESTION

- **How did the actions and decisions undertaken by the Kresge Foundation influence the actions of the place-based and field-building grantees and contribute to their effectiveness at increasing climate resilience while keeping equity at the center?**

KEY LEARNING: CRUO’s intentional design, which used a two-phased funding strategy (i.e., planning and implementation phases) supported by developmental evaluation, strategic thought partnership, and flexibility for configuring local partnerships, contributed to strong relationships and an environment among grantees that emphasized learning, creative problem solving, adaptation, and meaning-making.

Kresge made intentional initiative design decisions that enabled CRUO to have substantial impact at the community and field-building levels, despite occurring during a period of substantial change in the political context. CRUO’s design also created a strong and effective initiative that was well-suited to support multi-level field-building, seize emergent opportunities, mitigate risks, capture real-time learning and insights, and allow for adaptive management.

CRUO brought together several ways of structuring investment strategies that diverged from Kresge’s past approaches to grantmaking, outlined in Table 3, below. The CRUO experience suggests several effective design considerations to support an equitable climate resilience field:

- Support capacity building across a strong network of CBOs with established track records of working on equity issues in low-income urban areas to grow and strengthen a movement capable of influencing policy decisions from the ground up.
- Prioritize larger, longer investments with built-in flexibility for how resources are directed in order to allow organizations to balance immediate and longer-term priorities.
- Assess learning needs and structure responsive learning opportunities that get at what is most needed rather than broader, more generic, and pre-determined learning opportunities.

- Concurrently build the relationships and structures necessary to foster strategic partnerships at both the grassroots level and within and across the broader field to strengthen design and implementation of adaptive and technical solutions to address climate issues.

This section of the report examines the decisions Kresge made around the design of the initiative and how those decisions impacted the strategy of CRUO communities and the effectiveness of the field. The focus here is on the impact of the initiative design choices related to emergence and adaptability. Design decisions related to field-building and peer learning are addressed in the section Impact of CRUO on the Climate Resilience Field (page 33).

Table 3: CRUO Initiative Design Decisions

Design for Emergence and Adaptability
Developmental Evaluation (DE): Kresge embedded DE at the beginning to support planning and early implementation work that allowed for the adaptive deployment of strategy and created opportunities for learning for both Kresge and CRUO CBOs as the initiative unfolded.
Strategic Thought Partnership and Advisory Support: Acting as strategic thought partners, Kresge staff and consultants formed a relationship with CBOs beyond that of grantmaker/grantee.
Investment Structure: The structure of the investment, including criteria for selecting CBOs, phasing of the investment, and accommodation of diverse approaches, created space for CBOs to be adaptive and pursue agendas with longer-term goals.
Advisory Committee: An advisory committee of representatives of national field-building organizations provided Kresge with strategic guidance throughout the initiative to position CRUO learning within the equity and climate resilience fields.
Design for Field-Building and CBO Learning
Peer Learning: CRUO established formal opportunities for bringing the CRUO cohort together to surface insights and learning at an annual national convening and smaller, topic-specific convenings. Both offerings were designed to allow participants to network informally and establish relationships that could build over the course of the initiative.
Positioning of Field-Building and Community-Based Organizations: Kresge supported field-building organizations to work with CBOs to advance learning that could inform the field and help to align a broader, national climate resilience agenda. This level of intentionality led to some key partnerships and models that have the potential to influence approaches to urban climate resilience.

Developmental Evaluation

Developmental evaluation supported critical decision-making and adaptive management early in initiative implementation, enabling the funder and CBOs to navigate emergent challenges and opportunities in ways that strengthened the initiative and its impact. Given the newness and complexity of efforts to connect equity issues with climate resilience, the CRUO initiative was well-suited to the use of developmental evaluation (DE) approaches that could deliver real-time feedback during the early phases of the initiative, capture emergent lessons and insights, and guide evaluative inquiry in

ways that were well-connected to the learning needs identified by Kresge, the Advisory Committee, and CBOs. Kresge decided to embed DE into the initiative from the early stages of its implementation. The following textbox summarizes key elements of the DE approach.

DE activities were concentrated in the planning year leading up to the selection of the communities that would make up the CRUO cohort, as well as in the first year and a half of implementation (2015–2017). The timing of learning cycles was built around key decision points and milestones during the initiative. Each learning cycle ended with a learning memo, and a facilitated dialogue with one or more of the primary audiences for the learning.

How Developmental Evaluation Supported Kresge

The developmental evaluation team also worked closely with Kresge staff and its consultant to inform decision-making about rollout of the initiative. For example, the developmental evaluation helped Kresge identify areas where peer exchange and technical assistance would be beneficial, and the input helped inform the initiative design for the implementation phase. Kresge staff observed that the DE helped provide clearer “lines of sight” throughout the initiative, elevating specific opportunities and challenges being experienced in the moment and taking that into consideration in the broader arc of the initiative’s goals. Beginning in the planning year, Kresge staff and consultants developed and continuously refined lines of sight for each CBO. The lines of sight synthesized the Kresge team’s shared understanding of CBOs strategic direction and developmental challenges, and these syntheses were used to guide interactions with the CBOs.

At the end of the CRUO Initiative, Kresge reflected on its use of developmental evaluation and how it helped shape their decision-making. Table 4 summarizes some of the key observations from the Kresge team.

CRUO Developmental Evaluation Elements

- Working with CRUO grantees and partners to understand their strategy, the stakeholders involved, the types of questions they are asking, and the critical decision-points
- Jointly developing a plan for evaluation and learning that created space for new learning questions to emerge
- Diagramming theories of change for the CRUO community initiatives in partnership with CBOs
- Implementing rapid data collection and analysis cycles to inform the learning questions and to support adaptive design and management of the initiative
- Engaging in facilitated learning dialogues between CRUO community project sites, national organizations, and Kresge staff and consultants
- Implementing purposeful DE interventions (“in-the-moment learning activities”)
- Developing periodic memos to capture and summarize emergent insights and findings to support reflective discussions

Table 4: How Developmental Evaluation Influenced Kresge Decision-Making

Observations from the Kresge Environment Team
Sharpened Kresge's thinking about what needed to be accomplished
Surfaced assumptions and challenged hypotheses about how change happens and by whom
Through the development of theories of change and lines of sight for each site, provided tools critical to coaching, communication, and data collection
Revealed shortcomings in communications between Kresge and funded communities and helped reframe and sharpen communication
Gathered feedback on the learning that was coming out of convenings and technical assistance
Inspired Kresge to rethink reporting requirements to align with the learning questions developed by Kresge and the evaluation team as part of the developmental evaluation as a new practice for managing investments

How Developmental Evaluation Supported the CRUO Cohort

The developmental evaluation work early in the initiative sought to engage CBOs and partners, as well as field-building organizations, in identifying where learning needed to occur in order to advance a climate resilience agenda with an equity lens built around adaptation, mitigation, and social cohesion. Developmental evaluation activities during the planning year and early implementation helped explore how the components of climate resilience and equity were being operationalized. These activities also explored what sustainable climate resilience might look like for CBOs and their partners as they considered making a long-term commitment to climate resilience with equity at the center.

The developmental evaluation team and Kresge staff and consultants worked closely with CRUO CBOs to develop theory of change diagrams to capture their emergent thinking and strategies. The theory of change diagrams also served as a tool to clarify and communicate how CRUO CBOs would approach climate resilience work with an equity lens. The theories of change provided an early snapshot of thinking and strategy for each site. During end-of-initiative interviews, some CBOs shared that the theory of change was useful in setting up the work, but they did not use it as a guide during their implementation. The theory of change did serve as a tool for Kresge as they supported the work. At the end of the initiative, this tool helped CRUO CBOs and partners reflect on how their strategy unfolded and where adaptation had been necessary along the way. Many CRUO CBOs and their partners shared that they were surprised to find that they had accomplished much of what they had set out to do, they understood why they did not achieve certain objectives, and they believed having that plan put them on a path towards a larger goal.

Strategic Thought Partnership and Advisory Support

During the early phases of the CRUO initiative, Kresge and its consultants worked closely with CRUO CBOs to support and learn from their emergent work at the interface of climate resilience and equity, enabling more nuanced and effective strategy and support. The CRUO initiative was designed to be adaptive—both in design and management. To support adaptation and shared learning, Kresge put in

place structures and relationships with CRUO CBOs to support, encourage, and communicate quickly about how strategy was being deployed and what was being learned. One important part of the strategic thought partnership structure was embedding a community change consultant, Marian Urquilla, within the initiative who could work directly with CBOs to support strategy development and to navigate emergent needs and challenges. Site visits to communities during the planning year provided an additional opportunity for collaboration between the Kresge CRUO team, Kresge’s consultant, and CBOs to work through issues, challenges, and opportunities together in ways that enabled joint learning and supported adaptive approaches. The aim of this thought partnership was for CRUO communities to have access to resources at Kresge as their implementation unfolded in ways that they may not have anticipated at the beginning of the initiative. Several CRUO stakeholders noted that another key component was creating safe relationships in which asking questions, adjusting strategies, or seeking technical assistance were all a normalized part of the CBO-philanthropy relationship.

Radical shifts in federal policy and climate-related events (i.e., the various clampdowns on immigration by the federal government, Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, and the California wildfires) had a direct impact on CRUO communities during the initiative. In this context, the strategic thought partnership and adaptive frame of the initiative helped CBOs and their partners stay focused on a larger goal of climate resilience while being responsive and nimble when things did not work as planned. A member of the CRUO cohort commented that the adaptive approach meant they “weren’t bound by things they had proposed that might not be applicable in the [current] context.” Several CBOs also mentioned that flexibility in the grant process gave them the latitude to make changes as they went along and allowed them to “adjust the script as [they] learned.”

This interactive relationship between CBO and philanthropy represents a significant shift from more traditional philanthropic approaches that integrate only limited funder-grantee interaction during the work. Typically, CBOs receive funding from philanthropy to implement a preset plan that is aligned with a funder’s impact goals. As part of this agreement, they are asked to document that they followed the plan and met a set of outcomes. In the CRUO model built on strategic thought partnership, CBOs and their funder share accountability to pursue the best solutions to address the unique conditions of the community and then lift up valuable real-time learning and insights for the benefit of other audiences interested in advancing climate resilience agendas led by communities. This thought partnership is critical when advancing large scale change that is community-led.

Investment Structure

Key aspects of the overall structure of the CRUO initiative have been important in shaping its impact and success. These include the decision to work through equity-focused CBOs working in low-income urban communities with people of color, the selection of CRUO communities, the structuring of the initiative into two phases with a multi-year commitment, and flexibility to form community-based partnerships that could be tailored to work in local contexts.

Entering the Work through Equity-Focused CBOs

The initiative focused its investments on CBOs primarily led by people of color who already had a track record of working on racial equity issues in low-income urban areas. CRUO equipped these CBOs

and their constituencies to incorporate or deepen attention to climate resilience issues in their work.

In designing the CRUO initiative, Kresge sought community-based CBOs with proven track records in advancing progress on racial equity and social justice issues, as an alternative to seeking organizations whose work was already centered on climate resilience but lacked an equity focus. The aim was to support the selected community-based organizations to incorporate attention to climate resilience into their broader activities and issue agendas. The commitment to funding CBOs in low-income urban communities was intentional to demonstrating how policy work can be led from the ground up.

In the last two years of the initiative, conversations at the Advisory Committee meetings emphasized the importance of highlighting that community-based leaders of color can inform a climate resilience agenda. As the initiative came to an end, one national leader on the Advisory Committee commented that she felt CRUO had “lifted up the work at the intersection of climate and equity [and showed that] the work of grassroots is part of the real work. [CRUO] changed the concept of what resilience is and who is affected.” The CRUO approach was critical for Kresge, and for local communities as well. One CBO called out that CBOs often do not do a good job of making a case for themselves. As a result, many funders still do not see the value of organizing grassroots communities. As a national funder, Kresge helped to make the case to peer funders about why this work is important and that it does yield positive results.

Selecting CRUO Communities

While Kresge sought to select a diverse cohort of CBOs, factors such as local CBO capacity and the potential for climate resilience policy change opportunities largely constrained the investment to CBOs in coastal cities. CRUO communities were selected based on a range of factors, including identifying urban areas where there were established CBOs working on a portfolio of racial equity and social justice issues, and where there were reasonable nearer-term prospects for influencing policy issues relevant to climate resilience. These factors contributed to investment in many communities in urban areas in coastal states, including California, Oregon, Washington, New York, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Florida. This geographic clustering was likely influenced by the presence of more advanced policy reform and program development opportunities in states that have taken steps to consider climate change mitigation and resilience actions.

During the initiative design, the Kresge team had explicit discussions about the value of having a diverse cohort of CRUO communities, including some in more politically challenging contexts. The initiative design was sufficiently flexible to allow CBOs to partner with other local organizations, enabling some CRUO communities to build stronger coalitions to advance the emergent work. The initiative design also supported state and regional collaboration among CRUO communities, which supported the work of individual CRUO communities as well as state-level advocacy work. Where CRUO communities were clustered or policy environments were conducive, CRUO CBOs worked together to advance regional efforts, such as in New York and in California. Some CRUO communities, such as San Antonio, Cleveland, and Miami, were relatively isolated or only minimally benefitted from regional engagement with other CRUO communities. In discussion with CBOs and their partners, these CBOs reflected that there may have been a missed opportunity for the CRUO initiative to “think through learning across regions” more strategically.

Phasing of the Investment

By structuring the initiative investment to include a nine-month planning phase and a three-year implementation phase, Kresge was able to manage risks and adapt its strategy while enabling CRUO CBOs to make strong organizational commitments to climate resilience and equity work. The planning year and three-year funding cycle for the initiative provided consistent and reliable resources for CBOs to engage their community constituencies in identifying priorities and developing the leadership needed to influence an equitable climate resilience agenda. It also provided the time to reflect on big and complex issues that organizations faced in their respective contexts and to explore the best ways to approach those challenges before getting too tactical. One CBO's executive director said that the multiple years of funding at significant levels "allowed organizations to implement in the best way possible." Another CBO commented that the commitment and size of the award was necessary to meaningfully build capacity and make hiring decisions. The nine-month planning phase also afforded Kresge the opportunity to work closely with CRUO CBOs in the design of implementation phase activities, and to identify and mitigate more substantial risk areas. For example, Kresge opted not to support two CBOs in the implementation phase because they were unable to develop a long-term strategy that could leverage local interventions at a level of scale to produce systems change.

Although the investment itself allowed for nearly four years of funding (the planning phase and three years of implementation), as the initiative ended, many CBOs still felt they had more work to do and were not ready to sustain efforts on their own without additional support. Several CBOs expressed the hope that Kresge staff would network among peer funders to highlight CRUO work to help resource CBOs going forward. Numerous CBOs mentioned that they are looking for other sources of philanthropic funding on their own but acknowledged the inherent power of funders reaching out to other funders. One CRUO CBO staff mentioned the importance of "having funders vouch for your work in some way," and suggested that funder briefings including CRUO CBOs could be a way to ensure that the work continues. In addition, this CBO indicated that it would have been helpful if sustainability past the funding cycle had been considered earlier and more explicitly in the initiative design.

Accommodating Diverse Local Partnership Approaches

The initiative design was sufficiently flexible to allow CBOs to partner with other local organizations, enabling some CRUO communities to build stronger coalitions to advance the emergent work. The initiative design also supported state and regional collaboration among CRUO communities, which supported the work of individual CRUO communities as well as state-level advocacy work. In addition to the length and amount of funding, the structure of CRUO encouraged partnerships among community-based organizations in CRUO communities. CRUO communities were afforded substantial flexibility by Kresge in whether and how they approached partnerships. Several CRUO communities leveraged resources to bring partner organizations to the table in new ways. As one CRUO CBO staff member indicated, the CRUO funding created the space for organizations to experiment to "figure out what to do and how best to work together." Building that type of partnership takes a lot of time and experimentation, which is not often taken into consideration in grant cycles. In some cases, the partnerships that emerged substantially changed the nature of the work, extending work to new geographies and language groups and broadening from a mitigation or adaptation focus to a climate resilience lens.

Advisory Committee

Leaders from the climate resilience field were included in the initiative design and strategy development process which served a dual purpose of strengthening the investment strategy and creating pathways for learning from the investment beyond CRUO communities. CRUO was guided by an [Advisory Committee](#), whose members worked closely with Kresge’s Environment Program as a sounding board for vetting ideas, while also helping ensure the Kresge Environment Program was focused on important and emergent issues as the CRUO initiative progressed. The Advisory Committee was the primary link between the work on the ground and what it meant for the broader field. Interviews with key stakeholders indicated that the advisory committee showed a great deal of ownership and pride in the work of CRUO. In final reflections on the initiative, Advisory Committee members led their discussion of impact with the language of “we” and “partnership.” This has a compounding effect on the field in that these leaders continue to refine their frameworks and develop agendas that are further informed by work done in communities.

Impact of CRUO on the Climate Resilience Field

One of Kresge’s initial hypotheses was that lessons from CRUO’s place-based innovation could help shift the climate resilience field towards a greater focus on equity and the inclusion of low-income communities. Early in the initiative design, Kresge identified an opportunity to facilitate greater interconnectedness between the cohort of CRUO CBOs and those organizations it was funding at the national level with expertise in climate and equity.

LEARNING QUESTIONS

The two learning questions explored in this section are intertwined and relate to the impact of CRUO’s equity lens on the climate resilience field.

- **To what extent have the relationships between and contributions of field-building and place-based grantees created greater capacity and opportunity *in the broader field* to advance climate resilience while keeping equity at the center of the work?**
- **To what extent have the relationships between and contributions of field-building and place-based grantees created greater capacity and opportunity *among these organizations* to advance climate resilience while keeping equity at the center of the work?**

KEY LEARNING: CRUO demonstrated that field building in emergent areas can benefit from linked investments, intentional partnerships, and peer learning between organizations working on the ground to advance a community agenda and organizations working to advance a national agenda, which can generate complementary and mutually-supportive changes locally and nationally.

In matching place-based CBOs and national field-building organizations, Kresge supported the emergence of a new set of strategies for community-based and national organizations to approach their individual work. CBOs were centered on equity and approached their climate resilience work with historical and root causes at its foundation; they adopted a wider menu of technical strategies and solutions to address climate impacts. Field-building organizations were more oriented towards climate resilience; they focused on incorporating equity and gaining a better understanding of solutions at the grassroots level.

At the beginning of Kresge’s CRUO initiative, the climate resilience field in the U.S. was relatively emergent; it has developed substantially since 2015, supported in significant ways by CRUO’s intentional design to (1) invest in climate resilience work in low-income urban communities, and (2) create space for place-based CBOs and field-building organizations to learn and work together. In launching the CRUO initiative, Kresge sought to signal that to be viable, climate resilience efforts must center on equity. CRUO was therefore intentional in its aim to contribute to the development of an equitable climate

resilience field by influencing the focus and work of the respective climate resilience and equity fields. There are several signals that CRUO influenced a more equitable climate resilience field between 2015–2018, including:

- CBOs working on equity and justice issues in urban areas across the U.S. had very limited focus on climate resilience in 2015; by 2018, CBOs in at least 15 communities in 9 U.S. states (supported by the CRUO initiative) had active programs and activities focused on advancing climate resilience with an equity focus
- Multiple reports and tools relevant to climate resilience and equity issues have been developed by diverse organizations since 2015
- Multiple references to equitable climate resilience work in earned media connected with CRUO community projects, publications, and presentations (see Appendix A: CRUO CBO Media Coverage and Resources for a partial list).

This section explores insights relevant to CRUO’s strategy to advance the climate resilience field, including Kresge’s intentional efforts to incorporate equity by supporting both CBOs and national issue-focused field-building organizations, as well as efforts to foster peer exchange and learning among CBOs.

Leveraging Community-Based and National Issue-Focused Partners to Influence the Field

CRUO demonstrated that field building in emergent areas can benefit from linked investments in both community-based efforts and in more national issue-focused activities. The evaluation found evidence that more intentional partnerships developed during CRUO contributed to shifts in areas, including:

- Catalyzing and shaping emergent discussion at national field and local community levels about how to advance climate resilience while addressing equity in communities
- Changing practices by opening a new menu of strategies for community-based and national organizations on how to approach their individual work
- Bringing attention to the social, economic, and political contexts that have the potential to limit capacities to advance change
- Influenced thinking and framing on climate resilience that allowed CBOs and field-building organizations to push past assumptions that inhibit progress and meaningful change.

Local and national-level work often occurs in parallel. Kresge wanted to not only impact climate resilience in low-income urban communities experiencing the disproportionately negative impacts of climate change, but to show how the climate resilience field can be more effective by centering the experiences of communities in developing and designing solutions. This integrative approach brings to bear a powerful set of resources (e.g., technical knowledge, data capabilities, community voice, networks of networks) that can alter the conversation and push towards meaningful systems change at multiple levels.

Many interviewees observed that efforts to build and advance advocacy and policy change fields in emergent topic areas—such as with equitable climate resilience—greatly benefit from investments at

multiple levels. For example, issue-focused organizations working at a national level to conduct research, define and frame issue narratives, develop tools, provide technical assistance, and advocate nationally for supportive policies can help define and elevate the field while building informational infrastructure that broadly supports field capacity development. At the same time, investments in place-based efforts can both inform national field-building work and help to translate concepts, tools, and narratives in more practical ways. Several interviewees noted that these “top down” and “bottom up” field development strategies complement each other well.

The CRUO Advisory Committee, whose members included representatives of national field-building organizations, reflected on the impact of CRUO in March of 2019. Members concluded that CRUO helped stretch the boundaries of the climate resilience field to more intentionally consider the needs and experiences of low-income urban communities. Advisory Committee members indicated that the interactions between CRUO field-building and community-based organizations have elevated the importance of advancing approaches to climate resilience in ways that center the needs of low-income and vulnerable communities.

Mechanisms for Building Field Capacity

The CRUO initiative sustained several mechanisms to foster relationships and support interactions and collaboration among and across CBOs and national field-building organizations funded through other portfolios within Kresge’s Environment Program through the length of the initiative, including:

- A series of annual convenings (2015–2018) that brought together representatives from CRUO communities and field-building organizations for interactive workshops and discussion sessions on topics that CRUO communities helped to identify
- Supplemental meetings, webinars and conference calls to share information on research and tools being developed by field-building organizations with place-based CRUO communities.
- Direct matchmaking of CRUO CBOs with field-building organizations to address focused capacity and technical assistance needs relevant to CRUO communities
- Allocation of \$20,000 in supplemental resources each year to each of the 15 CRUO CBOs during the implementation phase (\$60,000 total per CBO) to support their ability to work with field-building partner organizations and/or to learn from other place-based CRUO CBOs.

Several CRUO CBOs observed that it was helpful to have multiple pathways and mechanisms supporting interactions between place-based CBOs and field-building organizations. The relationships built during CRUO resulted not just in technical assistance within the funded grant period but in ongoing partnerships, among several organizations.

Peer Exchange and Learning

Peer exchange and learning was universally valued by the CRUO cohort. They were viewed as important mechanisms for building organizational capacity and creating a field and ecosystem capable of advancing a more aligned climate resilience agenda with a focus on equity. Kresge managed the CRUO initiative to leverage interactions between place-based CBOs and Kresge grantees from across the Environment Program’s portfolio involved in field-building efforts to strengthen climate-resilience in

low-income urban communities. Kresge also emphasized formal and informal peer exchange and learning among the cohort of 15 CRUO communities. Kresge supported peer exchange and learning through annual convenings, topical gatherings, periodic webinars and conference calls, matchmaking, and supplemental funding to support cross-project interactions and learning, among other mechanisms. In addition, Kresge partnered with a peer-learning consultant team in 2016 who incorporated a networked learning approach to the initiative to generate new insights, knowledge and innovation about CBOs, partners, and field-building organizations. The consultant team also supported peer-learning activities, many of which were sustained throughout the initiative.



Source: Kresge Foundation. 2018 CRUO convening participants.

All CRUO stakeholders interviewed reported that they highly valued and benefitted from the peer exchange and learning opportunities afforded through the CRUO initiative. Many CRUO community representatives indicated they found real value in the Kresge convenings, technical assistance, and other resources that created space to learn from peers engaged in similar work. Some CBO staff added that access to peer learning opportunities was at least equally valuable to funding resources to help build staff and organizational capacity through other mechanisms (e.g., formal training by third parties).

Staff from CBOs valued informal learning as much as formal learning and, in some cases, felt that organic learning opportunities were more beneficial than formalized learning approaches. Based on feedback from convenings, Kresge shifted to a more balanced approach where learning opportunities focused more on exchanges rather than training, and site visits facilitated more experiential learning. Several CRUO stakeholders noted that more formal learning through convenings and training webinars can be overscheduled and minimize opportunities for less structured interactions among participants.

Support for peer exchange and learning has played an important role in helping CRUO organizations understand that they are part of a large field of actors working on climate resilience and equity issues. Many CRUO CBO representatives indicated that the peer exchange opportunities, including the annual convenings, helped them recognize they are part of a larger field. CRUO convenings brought together community-based teams, not just individuals. These interactions with peers also helped to forge shared

language and understanding of the contours of the climate resilience field. One CBO representative credited Kresge's recognition of the need to build capacity not just for individual organizations, but for an ecosystem of organizations with aligned mission and issue focus. Another CBO representative noted that webinars provided by field-building technical assistance partners served as useful tools to help CBOs understand how similar work is playing out across the nation.

CRUO demonstrated that there are numerous best practices for supporting peer exchange and learning, and that adaptive approaches help ensure that learning mechanisms are well-matched to participant needs and to balancing burden and benefit. CRUO CBOs identified a range of practices and considerations that they believe are important to support productive peer exchange and learning. These include:

- *Peer exchange and learning requires access to capacity and resources.* Many CBO (and some field-building organizations) representatives noted the value in having dedicated resources to support their active participation in peer exchange and learning activities, such as travel funding to convenings. Some participants noted that even with these additional resources, CBOs and NGOs have many competing demands on staff time that make it difficult to take time out to learn and then strategically apply the learning.
- *In-person interaction opportunities are important to support ongoing remote interactions.* Many CRUO stakeholders credited the annual CRUO convenings with providing important in-person opportunities to establish relationships among participants in ways that built helpful foundations for subsequent remote peer exchange interactions. One CBO staff member mentioned that convenings allowed them to see the depth and breadth of people's work and their level of expertise and created space for them to subsequently follow-up and connect.
- *Multiple and varied mechanisms need to be created to foster interaction and peer exchange.* CRUO stakeholders observed that it is helpful to have diverse opportunities for peer exchange and learning. Several CBO representatives noted that it is helpful to have opportunities for one-on-one and small group discussions, and to create space for more introverted participants to engage and share their experiences and questions.
- *Redundant communication can be important for supporting peer exchange and learning.* Given the number of place-based and field-building partners participating in the CRUO learning community, repeated communications (including in diverse formats) can help ensure that participants better see potential learning partners and opportunities. Given that CRUO CBOs were introduced to numerous field-building organizations and resources early in the initiative, not all CBOs fully understood and appreciated partnership opportunities early in an initiative.
- *Direct matchmaking can help connect learning partners more quickly.* Foundation program officers and others who support an initiative can have unique vantage points that can help them identify funded communities who may benefit from more direct interactions and exchange. A few CRUO stakeholders noted that explicit introductions and matchmaking can help speed the process of connecting participants who may have productive learning interactions. There was not consistent interaction across the CRUO cohort with field-building organizations or each other. Some matches did not occur until later in the initiative.
- *Navigate peer exchange expectations that may be coming from multiple funders.* Several CBO representatives noted that funder-driven learning activities are increasing in number across

multiple funder initiatives and that significant time and resources go towards funder-driven peer learning, potentially leaving less time for on-the-ground work or to pursue emergent community learning needs. Some CBO representatives indicated that it can be helpful to identify and assess the peer exchange and learning networks that funded communities are already participating in to explore whether there are opportunities to align learning agendas and activities, to leverage multiple networks, or to reduce redundancy or burden.

Strengthening CBO Capacity for Climate Resilience

National field-building partners helped strengthen the capacity and impact of CRUO CBOs by providing training and consultation, tools and templates, and direct technical assistance. Many of the CRUO communities reported that they leveraged the resources of national field-building organizations to advance their work. Working with national organizations with technical knowledge and data resources, helped CRUO communities learn how to shape stronger data-driven advocacy strategies. Bringing together the technical expertise and resources of a national field-level organization with the voice of communities influenced how plans and models to mitigate and adapt to climate change were designed and implemented. For example, one field-building organization observed that they were able to support two New York-based CBOs—The Point and NYC-Environmental Justice Alliance—to productively shift their engagement with large, city departments. The survey respondent noted that the framing of information, data, and evidence to support community needs and concerns is important for enabling community voices to be heard by many governmental advisory and decision-making processes. The field-building organization and The Point were able to work together to re-frame their discussions with city departments (and supporting materials) to advocate for broader community well-being that looked beyond a single project to larger patterns of city-supported initiatives affecting the neighborhood.

Several survey respondents working in CRUO communities indicated that CBO partnerships with national field-building organizations enhanced the credibility of CBOs and their advocacy work in local planning and decisional processes.

Strengthening Field-Building Capacity for Equity and Inclusion

Working with CBOs has altered how some national field-building organizations conceptualize and approach their work, elevating attention to equity and inclusion issues in the climate resilience field. The evaluation found evidence that interactions with CRUO CBOs have contributed to shifting conceptions of the importance of including equity and inclusion issues in work on climate resilience among some national field-building organizations. In the survey of 11 field-building organizations supported by Kresge’s Environment Program conducted in early 2019, all seven respondents clearly indicated that their organizations’ work and interactions with CRUO CBOs has directly informed their conceptualization and approach to climate resilience work.

Several field-building organizations reported that, informed by interactions with CRUO CBOs, they are increasing their focus on equity, inclusion, and justice issues in their broader efforts to advance the climate resilience field. For example, one of the field-building organizations adopted Southwest Workers Union’s immigration rights work as part of their programming for climate-forced migration. Similarly,

the post-Hurricane Sandy policies and practices developed by Ironbound Community Corporation/New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance are now informing the equity elements of an emergency management toolkit of another field-building organization. Several field-building organizations indicated that as a result of interactions with CRUO CBOs, their attention to gentrification and displacement issues in the context of climate resilience has increased.

Several CRUO field-building representatives explicitly noted the value they have derived from periodic engagement with CBOs working in diverse, underserved communities. Some climate resilience field-building organizations indicated that they intend to continue efforts to regularly engage with CBOs beyond the CRUO initiative to inform and implement their work because these connections to communities allow them to describe and communicate more clearly how communities experience climate impacts and craft more meaningful recommendations. Survey respondents from several field-building organizations observed that as a result of the CRUO initiative they have a deeper appreciation and understanding of how to approach engagement with CBOs in ways that are more equitable, minimize extractive approaches, and leave CBOs with authentically beneficial capacities, resources, and tools.

Finally, representatives from several field-building organizations observed that their enhanced connections to communities directly impacted by climate change and working to elevate community voices and needs have energized and shaped their own efforts to grow and improve their organizations' field-building work.

Reflections from CRUO field-building grantees on the value of engaging with CRUO CBOs

“Working with the CRUO [CBO] cohort has helped us refine our methods to better describe and communicate how communities and individual residents experience climate change and ecosystem degradation, both physically and economically.”

“We've learned tremendously from the first-hand experiences of CBOs.... We've also learned how to effectively and equitably partner with place-based groups, lift up their voices and ideas, and jointly advocate solutions.”

“[Based on our experience with CRUO CBOs,] we intend to focus more of our efforts on direct interactions with place-based organizations as our source for on-the-ground expertise....”

We've learned tremendously from the first-hand experiences of place-based CBOs, including about climate impacts, environmental injustice, gentrification/affordable housing shortages, and lack of access to economic opportunities. This knowledge has helped us to craft meaningful policy recommendations that policy makers and local advocates support, including to expand access to clean energy and transportation, improve flood protections, build resilient communities, increase infrastructure investments in areas that need it the most, improve disaster preparedness, address gentrification, among others. We've also learned how to effectively and equitably partner with place-based groups, lift their voices and ideas, and jointly advocate solutions.

– Field-building Organization Staff

Working with CBO partners has strengthened the work of national field-building organizations by enabling them to reference practical examples and to test and improve concepts, information, and tools.

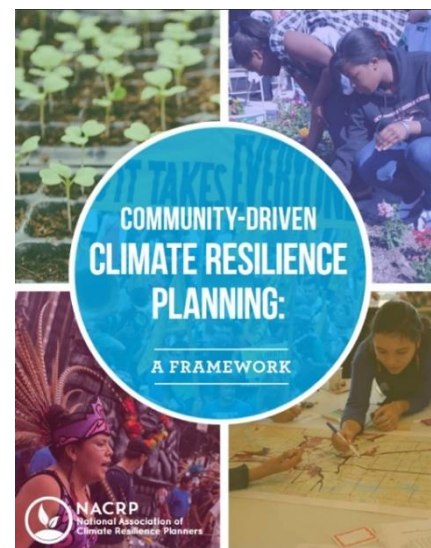
Several CRUO national field-building organizations reported that CRUO communities have provided useful examples of how communities can address climate resilience with an equity focus. One field-building organization indicated that CRUO CBOs provided “proof points around lessons learned and best practices in community engagement strategies related to community health, wealth, and climate resilience, which is being incorporated in our strategy work.” Another field-building organization stated that “we’ve been able to lift up examples of what [they] are doing to provide...models to follow in implementing resilience projects.”

For example, experiences and case examples drawn from CRUO communities were included in a key resource developed by CRUO field-building partners, the Movement Strategy Center and its National Association of Climate Resilience Planners’ [Community-Driven Climate Resilience Planning: A Framework](#).

Several field-building organizations also reported that working with CRUO CBOs connected them with networks of community leaders that national organizations could partner with to elevate and highlight community voices. They noted that these community voices are important in advancing broader planning and implementation of policies and programs relevant to climate resilience. For example, one CRUO field-building organization observed that their work to influence the Southeast Florida [Regional Climate Action Plan \(RCAP\)](#) benefitted

Earth Economics: Tailoring Information and Tools to Address Community Needs

Kresge field-building grantee [Earth Economics](#) has historically focused on large-scale climate resilience issues, working with utilities and government agencies to enhance understanding of the value of environmentally-beneficial approaches. In partnership with Fifth Avenue Committee, The Point, and NYCEJA, Earth Economics refined their methods to better describe and communicate how communities and individual residents experience climate change and ecosystem degradation, both physically and economically. Through direct interactions with CRUO CBOs and interactive sessions at the annual CRUO convening, Earth Economics was able to provide more tailored technical assistance and resources to support CBOs. This helped CBOs communicate about the value of green urban infrastructure and countering financing and other obstacles raised by government agencies related to the cost-benefit of green infrastructure and other climate adaptation interventions. As a result, Earth Economics’ recent reports focus more on overall community well-being, vision, and resilience. These materials also attempt to weave the climate-generated issues into the many other priorities and challenges faced by vulnerable urban communities from toxins to income inequity. The CRUO experience has informed Earth Economics’ efforts to develop reports, tools, and place-based learning labs to support scaling of urban green infrastructure (see <https://www.eartheconomics.org/urbangi>).



from their efforts to connect with Catalyst Miami and enabled them to highlight and elevate the voices of community leaders to advocate for enhanced attention to community-identified needs. noted that the interactions with CBOs and community leaders supported through CRUO helped them craft meaningful policy recommendations that both policymakers and local advocates support. These policy recommendations focused on issues such as expanding access to clean energy and transportation, improving urban flood protections, improving disaster preparedness, and addressing gentrification issues.

Several field-building organizations commented directly on shifting their practices as a result of these experiences. For example, one reported evolving their communication methods, shifting from thick technical reports to shorter pieces more focused on overall community well-being, vision, and resilience.

Solar One: Benefitting from CBO Capacity-Building to Scale Impact

Kresge grantee [Solar One](#) has been working with building owners in underserved market segments to install rooftop solar photovoltaic (PV) systems through its [Here Comes Solar](#) program for several years. Through connections supported by the CRUO initiative, starting in 2016, the organization broadened its focus to include technical assistance to environmental justice organizations to advance broader community solar initiatives. Solar One established and built relationships with CRUO grantees—including WE ACT, Fifth Avenue Committee, and The Point. These partnerships have influenced how Solar One approaches their work. One key reason CRUO CBO grantees have been successful in advancing community solar initiatives is that they had enough funding to dedicate staff toward the community solar campaigns and projects. This knowledge has led Solar One over the past two years to pursue joint fundraising strategies for solar initiatives in partnership with local affordable housing and environmental justice organizations. They have found this to be a highly effective strategy for building trust and partner capacity—two critical ingredients for successful community solar initiatives. The CRUO experience has “helped us learn how important it is to follow the lead of the local organizations we support.” Since 2014, Solar One’s Here Comes Solar program has engaged thousands of people and resulted in more than 100 solar projects in hard-to-serve New York City markets, with a combined capacity of nearly two megawatts.



Impact of CRUO in Local Communities

CRUO was designed to build capacity within low-income urban communities across the U.S to address climate resilience and demonstrate how to advance an equitable climate resilience agenda that can be scaled and inform the climate resilience field. Kresge entered the initiative with two hypotheses about its investment in CBOs:

1. IF we resource community-based organizations with a commitment to civic engagement and who authentically represent the priorities of low-income communities to systematically engage in climate resilience efforts, THEN we will generate publicly-endorsed plans and policies that are more attendant to equity concerns and carry more public support.
2. IF community-based organizations are resourced to systematically engage in climate-resilience efforts to elevate the concerns and priorities of low-income residents in the communities in which they work, THEN we will strengthen social cohesion and connectivity in these places.

LEARNING QUESTIONS

There were three learning questions to frame evidence for understanding the impact of CRUO in local communities. These questions focused on what could be accomplished through community-led policy and systems change and what capacities were built to sustain efforts to advance climate resilience with equity at the center.

- **To what extent have place-based grantees advanced climate resilience while keeping equity at the center through:**
 - Long-term, significant policy changes;
 - Short-term, small win policy changes;
 - Signals of progress in the policy environment; and
 - Specific community level changes?
- **How did place-based grantees advance climate resilience at scale while keeping equity at the center given complex political environments and competing community and organizational priorities?**
- **To what extent are place-based grantees positioned to continue increasing climate resilience in their communities while keeping equity at the center of their work, including the:**
 - Strength of their partnerships;
 - Position in the policy environment;
 - Position in their communities; and
 - Organizational commitment to climate resilience?

There are three Key Learnings in this section that map to the three learning questions above. These Key Learnings are also identified later in this section with accompanying evidence and detail.

KEY LEARNING: CRUO CBOs were influential in advancing equity-centered climate resilience policies and plans that will directly benefit communities and help better prepare communities for future climate-related disasters.

These wins were important accomplishments because they represented the breadth of issues that need to be addressed concurrently in low-income urban communities in order to realize change at a systems level. In addition to advancing climate resilience with an equity focus, CRUO communities built the foundational networks and relationships to strengthen social cohesion.

KEY LEARNING: CRUO CBOs are building community leadership pathways to achieve political power and advance equitable climate resilience. These gains in building power advance equity and contribute to the sustainability of successes achieved under CRUO.

The path to policy wins during CRUO served to increase community power by bringing communities into the decision-making process and helping decision-makers understand the value of community inclusion. Through their efforts to advocate for and win policy campaigns, CRUO CBOs gained or further strengthened credibility with community, public agencies, and elected officials and increased their own capacity to do the work.

KEY LEARNING: CRUO CBOs have demonstrated that the foundation for sustainability lies in organizational commitment, fostering strong relationships across partnerships and networks, and maintaining inside game strategies.

CRUO CBOs have largely positioned themselves to sustain their work by adding staff capacity and aligning their organizational values and strategies around a climate resilience agenda. CBOs also recognize the importance of relationship building, and the networks and partnerships established with other entities and with policymakers during CRUO are key to continued efforts to advance climate resilience with equity at the center.

This section of the report focuses on how the on-the-ground strategy generated outcomes in policy and plans to advance equitable climate resilience and provided tangible benefits and increased social cohesion in CRUO communities. It also focuses on changes within communities and CBOs to sustain climate resilience efforts with an equity focus. The data collection in this section was drawn primarily from interviews and group dialogues with CBO staff members and community members.

Advancing Climate Resilience in CRUO Communities

KEY LEARNING: CRUO CBOs were influential in advancing equity-centered climate resilience policies and plans that will provide immediate tangible benefit to communities and help better prepare communities for future climate-related disasters.

During the planning phase of the initiative, each CRUO community created a theory of change to serve as a roadmap to strengthen climate resilience in their communities. Core to their individual strategies was the development and advancement of shorter- and longer-term policies and plans to help shape a more equitable climate resilience agenda that would result in tangible benefits for communities. By the end of the CRUO investment cycle, CRUO communities achieved a broad range of policy and program “wins” that demonstrate that equitable climate resilience is being championed at the grassroots level.

The evaluation team explored in-depth a significant “win” within each CRUO community in order to better understand what it looks like to influence climate resilience policies and plans where equity is at the center. CRUO CBOs were asked to select a policy or plan for this analysis, with the request that the selection:

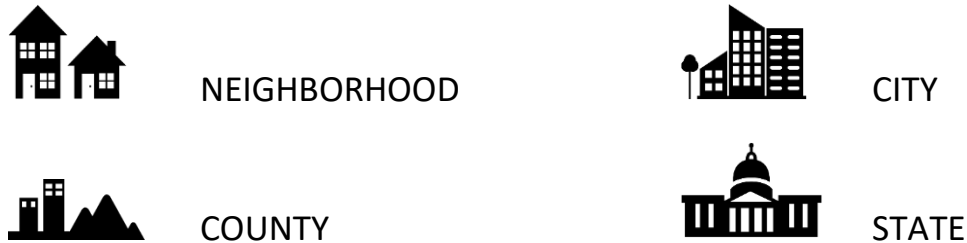
- Include explicit equity components in the language of the adopted policy or plan and/or in implementation of the policy or plan
- Reflect community priorities
- Represent populations most vulnerable to climate change in the creation, advocacy, language, and/or implementation of the policy or plan
- Align with the organization’s long-term climate resilience with equity strategy
- Be ready to move into implementation or was already being implemented.

Wins include both **Big P** and **Little p** policy. **Big P policy** is passed, adopted, or signed by an elected public decision making body or official (the State Legislature, City Council, Mayor, etc.) and inclusive of legislation, regulations, budget, comprehensive or master plans, ordinances, etc. **Little p policy** is approved or adopted by an elected or appointed public sector governing body or administrative agency (department of transportation, board of commissioners of the public utility, etc.) and is inclusive of guidelines, protocols, pilot programs, guiding principles, plans etc. Little p policies are often more influential on the practices of an administrative agency.

Table 5, below, highlights the policy wins that were the focus of policy change dialogues facilitated by the evaluation team during site visits in 2018. These wins were categorized by seven policy areas:









- Climate action plans and sustainability plans**
- Land-use planning**
- Energy security and clean energy infrastructure**
- Transportation access and infrastructure**
- Emergency response and disaster preparedness**
- Neighborhood stabilization and community development**
- Environmental justice (EJ)**








The wins are also categorized by four scales, indicated by the following icons:



These policy wins were important accomplishments facilitated by each CRUO CBO and their partners, but these were not the only policy wins during the initiative. Appendix E: Site Summaries includes two-page summaries of each CBO's accomplishments and lessons learned during CRUO, as well as a more extensive list of policy wins at each site. In the case of many of the policy wins, CRUO CBOs and their partners are continuing work on the implementation process to ensure that the gains made to advance equity are realized and/or are gearing up for subsequent campaigns for equitable climate resilience.

Table 5: CRUO CBOs Major Policy Wins

Climate Action Plans and Sustainability Plans		
Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)	Guiding Principles for Adaptation Planning Working Group (APWG): APWG guidelines are a decision-making tool to guide future development in East Boston and to create accountability for city and state agencies, quasi-public, and nonprofit organizations working in East Boston.	
Southwest Workers Union	San Antonio Tomorrow Sustainability Plan: A roadmap for improving quality of life and overall resilience while balancing the impact of major population growth by 2040 with existing economic, environmental, and social resources. Climate Action and Adaptation Plan: Aligned with the SA Tomorrow Plan and focused on greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets.	
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (Leadership Counsel)	Transformative Climate Communities (TCC): Community leaders developed the selected TCC Fresno proposal, which reduces GHG emissions and maximizes economic, environmental, and public health benefits for frontline communities. Leadership Counsel and partners leveraged other funds for a total investment of \$199 million with \$109 million for SW Fresno, a community with highly disproportionate toxic burden.	
Land-use Planning		
Cleveland Neighborhood Progress	Cleveland Tree Plan: An action plan for Cleveland’s urban forest to guide decision-making on tree planting, tree establishment, and tree management.	
Fifth Avenue Committee	Siting of Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO) Tanks: NYC Department of Environmental Protection expanded the CSO tank siting impact study area to consider impacts on public housing residents and ultimately selected a new location for the siting of an 8-million-gallon CSO tank for the Gowanus Canal superfund cleanup.	
Ironbound Community Corporation	Environmental Justice and Cumulative Impact Ordinance: Establishes a new development permit process that requires any new commercial or industrial project to undertake an additional review that makes public the amount and type of pollution associated with the project.	
Energy Security and Clean Energy Infrastructure		
Alliance for a Greater New York (ALIGN)	Public Power Campaign: Collaboration with NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services to ensure all public buildings are outfitted with renewable energy supplies, solar siting benefits frontline communities, savings from renewable energy are reinvested in low-income communities of color, and that these public investments in renewable energy create union jobs.	
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)	Community Solar Rooftops Pilot Program: Provides incentives for low-income homeowners to install solar panels to generate in-basin solar energy and lower their energy bills through the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	

Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)	Alameda County Community Choice Aggregation: Provides for local control over renewable energy and directs resources towards local development. CCA allows for pooling of electricity demand by participating communities and provides choices about the type of energy to purchase including renewable, low carbon emission energy.	
Transportation Access and Infrastructure		
Environmental Health Coalition	AB-805 County of San Diego Transportation Agencies: Re-allocates voting authority at San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), and North County Transit District (NCTD) based on population size and allows MTS and NCTD to place tax measures on the ballot.	
Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA)	HB 2017 Keep Oregon Moving: State omnibus transportation bill includes active transportation components that focus on low-income riders, including: \$125 million over 10 years for Safe Routes to School and \$15 million per year in perpetuity for cross walks, bike lanes, and sidewalks within one-mile radius of schools. Local transit authorities are required to plan, justify, and evaluate how they use funds for low-income riders and rebates are available for zero emission vehicle purchases for low income communities.	
Emergency Response and Disaster Preparedness		
The Point Community Development Corporation (The Point)	Hunts Point Resiliency Project: HUD awarded a \$20 million Rebuild by Design grant and the City of New York added \$25 million for a resilient energy project to address Hunts Point community preparedness issues and to provide community gathering space during climate events.	
Catalyst Miami	Miami Forever General Obligation Bond: Allocates \$400 million to address aging infrastructure and flood risk due to sea level rise with \$192 million for stormwater management projects, \$100 million for affordable housing, \$78 million for park improvements, \$23 million for road repairs, and \$7 million for public safety.	
Neighborhood Stabilization and Community Development		
Puget Sound Sage (Sage)	Equity & Environment Initiative (EEI): Seattle's Mayor launched the EEI in 2015, which led to the creation of an Equity & Environment Agenda that lays out four goals for impacted communities: (1) healthy environments for all, (2) jobs, local economies, and youth pathways, (3) equity in city environmental programs, and (4) environmental narrative and community leadership.	
Environmental Justice		
WE ACT for Environmental Justice	Environmental Justice Study Bill (Intro 359): Requires the City of New York to conduct a city-wide survey and analysis to identify EJ areas and to make the findings publicly available through an interactive EJ portal. Environmental Justice Policy Bill (Intro 886A): Establishes an Interagency Working Group to develop a comprehensive environmental justice plan, establish an EJ advisory board of advocates appointed by city officials, and require the Interagency Working group to consult with the EJ advisory board on the EJ plan. These bills will provide the city a comprehensive legislative strategy to address environmental injustices while combatting climate change and reducing health disparities.	

Social Cohesion in CRUO Communities

Kresge strategically defined climate resilience to integrate adaptation, mitigation and social cohesion.

Within the context of CRUO, Kresge described a socially cohesive community as one that *works towards the well-being of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalization, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust, and offers its members the opportunity of upward social mobility.* In this frame, social cohesion supports communities with formal and informal social safety nets and assists them in not only bouncing back but “bouncing forward” from the effects of adverse climate impacts.

Kresge entered the initiative hoping CRUO CBOs would move from thinking about social cohesion in a more structural way (e.g. community organizing and base building) to a more governance-focused framework. Figure 3, below is the framework developed by Kresge’s social change consultant, Marian Urquilla, and a field-building Advisory Committee member, Taj James, to communicate the desired shift to CRUO CBOs.

Figure 3: Social Cohesion Continuum of Relational Engagement (SCCORE) Framework



Many CRUO CBOs believed that their approach to community building and organizing and community development was itself the most essential social cohesion strategy. Only some cohort members were willing or able to substantively explore other dimensions of Kresge’s social cohesion framework. Signals of increased social cohesion can be found in the ways in which the CRUO cohort elevated community by creating leadership pathways and pursuing other activities that were directed at achieving greater community power. The evaluation surfaced the idea of a community leadership pathway spectrum which is described in the section *How CRUO Communities Achieved Policy Progress*, below. The way in which CBOs moved their communities along the community leadership pathway spectrum is another way of conceptualizing social cohesion that bears similarities to the SCCORE framework. In both the spectrum and the framework, the ultimate objective is for the community itself to gain political power.

Given the differing perspectives on social cohesion, and Kresge’s desire to be strategic thought partners rather than heavily manage the strategy of CBOs, the Foundation did not insist on implementation of any particular social cohesion framework. Unsurprisingly, evidence of the full spectrum of social cohesion varied across the cohort. There were a couple of CRUO communities that explicitly addressed social cohesion and showed evidence of increased social cohesion through:

- Strong neighbor-to-neighbor relationships to help communities respond to stressors
- Formation of new networks and partnerships and strengthening of existing networks
- Organization of networks to increase economic opportunity.

Each of these contributed to the design, development, and advancement of efforts to build climate resilience in communities. Likewise, success in moving initiatives forward further reinforced the strengthening of social cohesion.

Neighbor-to-neighbor relationships. CRUO communities provided evidence of growing numbers of community members attending town halls, rallies and events, and intergenerational efforts organized by CBOs and their partners to improve the lived environment and connect the importance of climate resilience to community priorities of housing, health, economic stability and safety. These substantive changes in participation signaled an increased sense of solidarity with others who care about climate issues, a higher awareness that climate resilience issues are community issues, and an increased understanding of the rights of community members to have a voice in decision-making.

In about a third of CRUO communities, community members explicitly expressed a connection to climate issues because they see the environmental vulnerability and environmental injustice that low-income communities historically and currently face. For example, the Fifth Avenue Committee community is united around issues exacerbated by climate change, such as mold in public housing now worsened by extreme weather events like Hurricane Sandy. A CRUO community member framed it this way, “Environmental justice and climate justice are important to my community because we have so much of these heavily-impacted industrial areas.”

Strengthened networks. As community members became more aware of and educated about climate change, particularly about the effects of flooding, rising heat, droughts, and superstorms, they were motivated to activate neighborhood networks and relationships. For example, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress’s Cleveland Tree Ambassadors spent time in their neighborhoods talking to neighbors about tree health and the importance of preserving trees for the sake of air quality and cooling. In Portland, NAYA community members went door-to-door to encourage neighbors to join the fight for climate justice, relying on simple messages to clearly explain the intersection of climate resilience and equity and the potential benefits of climate resilience policies such as clean energy commitments or improved zero-carbon transportation access and infrastructure. Showing the community that they are the primary beneficiaries of policy wins that improve quality of life, reduce pollution and greenhouse gases, and even provide local jobs proved to be effective ways to galvanize community members across the CRUO cohort.



Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

CRUO strategies not only helped activate neighbor-to-neighbor relationships but positioned residents to influence the policy and planning process. For example, NOAH works to continually demonstrate that community knowledge and expertise, fueled by increasing social cohesion in the neighborhood, offers valuable insights and practical applications to the City’s agencies. To this end, NOAH hosted a community planning charrette that modeled the implementation of their Adaptation Planning Working Group’s (APWG) guiding principles on interconnectivity, inclusivity, and technical components. The bilingual charrette brought together planning professionals and agency representatives with community members to create innovative flooding and storm surge solutions for each of three East Boston geographic zones. NOAH’s efforts are based on repeated concerns from the community about the lack of individual and neighborhood emergency preparedness plans and research showing that communities with greater social cohesion tend to be more resilient in emergency situations.

Organization of networks to increase economic opportunities. In the case of CRUO, formal coalitions worked together to identify common or complementary needs and priorities of multiple constituencies and to shape holistic solutions. These efforts were not only designed to mitigate climate-related pressures and events but to strengthen economic opportunities, such as workforce development and jobs related to new clean energy infrastructure. Several of the plans and initiatives advanced in CRUO communities directly linked climate-related improvements to advancing infrastructure projects tied to green jobs. Many were also aligned with goals and priorities of labor organizations.

- APEN engaged community organizations, local businesses, and labor partners to shape the Community Choice Aggregation plan that creates solar installation jobs, allows for pooling of electricity demand in participating communities, offers choice around renewable energy purchasing, provides for financial tools that support energy efficiency programs, and permits ownership of rooftop solar and other renewable technologies and strategies.
- Environmental Health Coalition formed the Quality of Life Coalition that united labor, environmental, social justice, affordable housing, and transit organizations around the vision to invest public dollars in socially- and environmentally-equitable ways that support healthy communities and an inclusive economy while also addressing climate change.
- ALIGN joined with labor unions, EJ organizations, community groups and other allied advocates to form the Climate Works for All coalition, which drafted a report outlining ten proposals to make New York City more resilient, create green jobs, and cut greenhouse gas emissions. The coalition has prioritized two issues—mandatory large building retrofits and renewables on public buildings—and thus far New York City has committed to investing \$1 billion per year in retrofitting the City’s largest buildings for energy efficiency and to installing 50 megawatts of solar capacity on the 100 largest schools over the next five years. ALIGN and the



Environmental Health Coalition

Coalition are working to ensure that the City administration is held accountable for the commitments that it has made and follows through on implementation.

- LAANE participates in RePower LA, a citywide coalition of community groups, environmentalists, and small businesses anchored by LAANE, SCOPE, and IBEW Local 18 that advocates for equitable environmental programs and career-path jobs at the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP), the nation’s largest municipally-owned utility. Repower LA formed in 2011 in response to high unemployment in many of LA’s neighborhoods and the city’s unsustainable reliance on fossil fuels, with the objective helping make clean energy and good jobs at DWP accessible to all Angelenos while helping them lower their bills. A cornerstone of RePower LA’s work is support for the Utility Pre-Craft Trainee (UPCT) program, which was developed by IBEW Local 18, in partnership with DWP.

How CRUO Communities Achieved Policy Progress

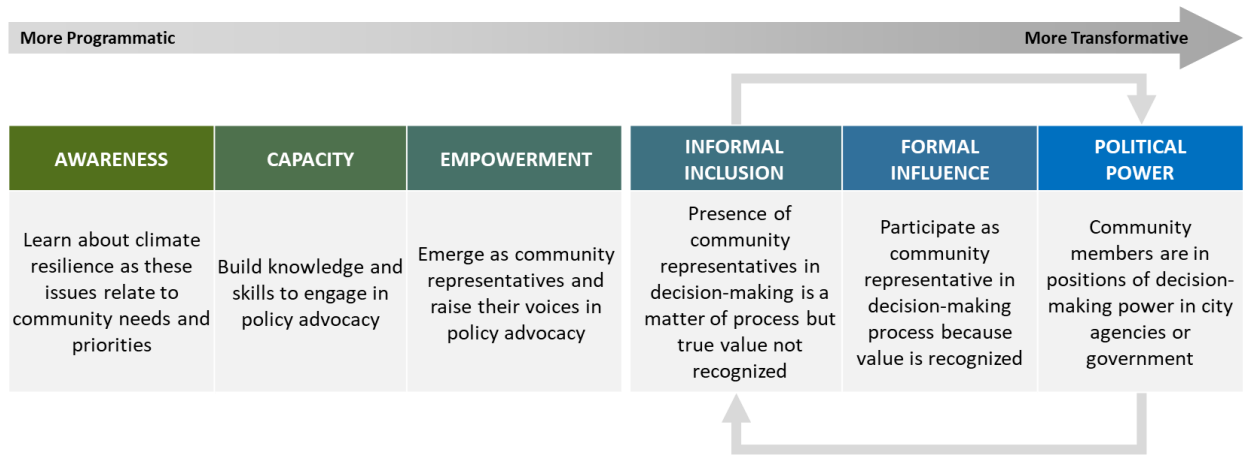
KEY LEARNING: CRUO CBOs are building community leadership pathways to achieve political power and advance equitable climate resilience. Building power advances equity and contributes to the sustainability of the success achieved under CRUO.

CRUO CBOs operated in complex political environments and often had to contend with competing organizational and community priorities. The evaluation identified a set of strategies CRUO CBOs and their partners undertook to influence the policy environment, build their own organizational and community capacity, and build credibility within the community and with public agencies and elected officials. In many cases, the strategies CBOs used to advance equitable climate resilience policy and practices change are themselves examples of equity in practice and can be thought of as outcomes of the initiative.

At the 2018 convening, members of the CRUO cohort indicated that for them, political power translates into members of the community holding positions of decision-making power. CBOs are using multiple strategies such as formal leadership programs and technical assistance to build political power. The evaluation team created the Community Leadership Pathways Spectrum (distinct from the SCCORE framework) to map these strategies, which move residents toward progressively greater power in governance and decision making.

Within the three years of CRUO implementation, many residents in CRUO communities moved from awareness of climate resilience issues to increasing inclusion and influence in decision-making spaces that could help position their communities for greater influence and power going forward (see Figure 4, below). In the first half of the spectrum, residents moved in a relatively linear fashion toward inclusion. The second half of the spectrum—inclusion to influence to power—proves to be more iterative and the distinction between “stage” each is less absolute.

Figure 4: Community Leadership Pathway Spectrum



1. Raising Awareness: Connecting the Dots Between Day-to-Day Realities and Climate Resilience

In communities with pressing and unmet basic needs, ongoing efforts to connect the dots between day-to-day realities and climate resilience are an essential element in raising awareness and sustaining community focus on climate resilience issues. CRUO CBOs and their partners recognized a need for effective framing that linked climate issues such as extreme heat, air quality, water quality and availability, lack of tree cover, traffic pollution, and dirty energy sources to community concerns like housing, jobs, transportation, cost of living, and health. Figure 4 illustrates the ways in which CBOs’ efforts to frame the connection between climate resilience and day-to-day realities were incorporated into the narratives of community members involved with CRUO.

AWARENESS

Learn about climate resilience as these issues relate to community needs and priorities

Figure 5: Ways CRUO Community Members Talk About CRUO Climate Resilience Work



Community members acknowledged many of their family members, friends, and neighbors were not able to talk about (or didn't understand) how these basic needs were connected to climate resilience. Community dialogue participants during one CBO site visit rated climate issues as very important, but also noted the community lacks a full understanding of these complex issues. They felt that increased outreach and education efforts would be needed to engage the community. One community member stated "Climate and environmental justice severely impact all of our lives and will more in the future. We have a lot to do around community education. How can we connect what we are doing in our daily lives to the land and community? How can we be resilient in the face of flooding and other threats and effects?" Thus, a critical role for CBOs has been to build an awareness and understanding of the interconnectedness of these issues.

Further complicating the connection between day-to-day realities and climate resilience is the accessibility of the climate resilience lexicon used to describe the components of climate change, the technical nature of solutions, and the sometimes-

abstract nature of academic models and frameworks for equity and justice. Community members at several sites noted the language of climate issues (such as "just transition" and "climate resilience") could be a barrier because these terms can be hard to decipher, relate to, and translate for the general public. Community members working with one CBO indicated that the term climate resilience, itself, is perceived as being part of white spaces and does not inspire communities of color to participate in environmental events. Conversely, in many cases, the everyday issues that resonate with the community—jobs, transit, housing, health, and safety—are not traditionally seen as climate resilience issues by predominantly white mainstream environmental organizations. However, these are the issues most CRUO CBOs have successfully framed in the context of climate resilience.



ALIGN

- The Point's involvement with the Hunts Point Resiliency Project has connected clean energy infrastructure and emergency preparedness to the Food Distribution Center located in the Hunts Points neighborhood, which is a major economic driver in the tri-state area and a major source of jobs in the community.
- ALIGN's efforts to ensure the installation of 50 megawatts of solar on 100 schools in New York City focused on the creation of local jobs and the reduction of asthma-inducing pollution from oil boilers, which directly impacts residents in adjacent communities.
- Catalyst Miami's Community Leadership on the Environment, Advocacy, and Resilience (CLEAR) program teaches community members about Miami's vulnerability to storms and flooding and addresses how poverty and discrimination can make communities vulnerable to climate change.

2. Building Capacity: Engaging Communities in the Policy Process

CRUO CBOs were intentional in the way they built capacity and elevated community voice and equity to shape an advocacy process that integrated community members in the development of policy and the execution of the advocacy strategy. Awareness of the issues led to a desire by community members to actively participate in identifying, planning, orchestrating, and leveraging opportunities to elevate their voice, needs, and priorities at the policy level. Community members not only built capacity to use and understand the technical tools for effective climate solutions but strengthened capacities to share their stories in front of policymakers from their own perspective and in their own language. This grounded the intended benefits of the policy in the needs of individuals and the community. CBO efforts to elevate community voice led to an increase in local capacity to articulate community priorities and pursue solutions that are locally and culturally significant as indicated in the table below (Table 6).

CAPACITY
Build knowledge and skills to engage in policy advocacy

Table 6: CRUO CBO Activities to Engage Communities in the Policy Process:

Influencing Activities	Examples
Identifying community needs and priorities to be addressed by the policy	NOAH worked with its community members to identify high, medium, and low priorities for planning and protection from potential climate change impacts, such as sea level rise and storm surge, with the goal of pushing for specific plans to be incorporated into city and agency capital budgets and creating funding streams to carry out the work.
Providing feedback on the drafted policy language and/or drafting policy language	Leadership Counsel supported Southwest Fresno community leaders in incorporating community feedback during the development of Fresno’s Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) proposal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and offer economic, environmental, and public health benefits to the community. Leadership Counsel and partners collaborated with the Strategic Growth Council to influence TCC statewide guidelines to require community engagement and support plans, and were successful in shifting \$38 million of the \$70 million Fresno allocation to Southwest Fresno.
Testifying at public meetings about the policy	Environmental Health Coalition staff, community members, and partners testified at public hearings in San Diego County as part of broader advocacy campaign that resulted in the defeat of a ballot measure that would have funded an interstate through several low-income communities, which would have decreased safety and increased pollution.
Contributing public comments and letters about the policy	APEN community members provided public comments on a Local Development Business Plan, which led to the passage of the Alameda County Community Choice Aggregation to advance robust workforce development and training opportunities inclusive of immigrant workers.

Using data to drive strategy and build credibility	WE ACT conducted research on microgrids and secured funding to deploy a demonstration project in East Harlem which will help build the long-term case with policymakers for microgrid systems as an alternative energy infrastructure.
Providing interpretation services to allow community members to advocate for themselves	LAANE's RePower campaign required extensive translation and interpretation services to make the campaign multilingual and accessible to the community, which ultimately allowed renters in low-income and vulnerable communities around Los Angeles to benefit from a community solar program.

Language was a major consideration for CBOs as they helped communities gain the skills and knowledge to fully participate in policy processes.

First and foremost, CRUO CBOs played an indispensable role in facilitating more equitable language access to information about policy issues and the

policy process, and dedicated their own resources (staff time, funding, etc.) to provide translation and interpretation services and accessible materials for community members about climate policy. The ability to engage with materials and the policy process in one’s first language promoted equity at personal, psychological, social, cultural, and cognitive levels. It proves to be a resource-intensive but crucial part of advancing equity. Where language access was prioritized, there was greater and more meaningful engagement of community members who might otherwise have been excluded from policy processes. Translation and interpretation contributed to a sense of empowerment among residents that they could help shape outcomes for their communities.

“Many of us never went to school or spoke to politicians; APEN trains in my own language and provides translation capacity. I can address issues affecting my family.”

– CRUO Community Member

Second, in some communities, climate policy language and strategy were explicitly reframed to advance equitable benefits for low-income urban communities. Although policy language varied in how explicitly it addressed equity, CRUO communities were able to influence how the policy or plans were shaped to more directly benefit low-income urban communities to (1) strengthen and prioritize the estimated effect of the policy on the communities that are often most impacted by climate change and (2) to deepen the ways in which disparities in these communities will be addressed through the policy.

Two examples include:

- Southwest Workers Union in San Antonio was able to ensure that explicit equity language was incorporated into the San Antonio Tomorrow Sustainability Plan very late in the process, but this subsequently helped set the stage for the integration of equity concepts into the city’s broader Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.
- The Equity and Environment Agenda advanced by Sage and Got Green and adopted by the City of Seattle has an explicit environmental justice frame that calls out the need for systemic changes. It states “We believe in environmental solutions that connect to and create economic and educational opportunities so that all communities can thrive. To do this necessitates

addressing past systemic injustice while creating proactive, transformational solutions for the future" (p. 4).

3. Fostering Empowerment: Increasing Credibility in CRUO Communities

CBOs contributed to increasing confidence and empowerment of community members regarding their right to play a role in policy and system change. Community members participated in and created opportunities to exercise this right and developed solutions that reflected their priorities in a way that advanced a climate agenda. In this stage of community engagement, CBOs helped community members identify, harness, and use their power.

EMPOWERMENT

Emerge as community representatives and raise their voices in policy advocacy

Community members reported writing-op eds, presenting and commenting at public meetings and rallies, lobbying in front of elected officials, speaking with elected officials on legislative days of action to raise the profile of community priorities, collecting signatures for ballot measures, and educating other residents about climate resilience with an equity lens. Community members moved beyond basic skills and were able to articulate the finer nuance between, for example, how energy costs impacted their ability to meet monthly expenses, or how too many trucks coming through a neighborhood polluted the air making it difficult to breathe. Community members became a voice letting policymakers know how decisions at a policy level impact community that do not have a formal seat at the table.

CRUO CBOs were able to build credibility and influence in diverse policy contexts that resulted in direct solicitation of CBO feedback from policymakers or other types of engagement that ensured the representation of community interests in policy processes. There appears to be a positive feedback loop between credibility with policymakers and success in advancing policy goals. For example, Leadership Counsel's and its partners' success working with the City of Fresno to earmark \$38 million (out of \$70 million of TCC funding from the State of California) for low-income communities in Southwest Fresno opened pathways to other potential wins because it brought significant resources to the jurisdiction that it had not been able to secure before. The win also attracted the attention of other cities in the region that want to learn from Leadership Counsel's and Fresno's experience and seek to work with Leadership Counsel to secure money for their own cities.

Building political credibility with policymakers is often dependent upon evidence of successful advancement of prior policies. For example, Environmental Health Coalition led a successful campaign to scale back freeway expansion. With this success, the organization earned the respect of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), which now considers Environmental Health Coalition a key stakeholder and therefore, invited Environmental Health Coalition directly into the region's transportation policy conversation.

CRUO CBOs formation of networks and partnerships across sectors and regions was critical for building constituencies around climate resilience efforts that had the will and credibility to influence decision-makers. These networks and partnerships are likely to remain activated to advocate for subsequent policy and practice changes to advance equitable climate resilience. All were critical to building a constituency for climate resilience efforts.

CBOs often engaged these partners in new, more climate-focused neighborhood, citywide, or statewide coalitions and advocacy networks, such as the Gowanus Neighborhood Coalition for Justice, the Miami Climate Alliance, the Oregon Just Transition Alliance, and the California Climate Equity Network. Across the CRUO cohort, CBOs spoke about how these new partnerships increased civic engagement for equitable climate resilience and connected the CBOs with new constituencies to fight for the long-term goals of equitable climate resilience. For many CRUO CBOs and their partners, it was the first time they had come together to work in an aligned manner on climate issues. Many of these networks and partnerships included non-traditional partners across sectors and issues beyond environmental justice including labor, faith, education, health, and direct services.

The accomplishments they achieved together through CRUO demonstrate the power of having allies working across issues to help increase the visibility and credibility with

CRUO CBOs helped build community member capacity to engage in the policy process

NAYA's Oregon Lead participants met at City Hall and went into chambers to role-play what it would be like to testify in front of a board or committee. One participant reported that just being invited into the spaces where policymaking happens was a powerful experience.



Naya

Environmental Health Coalition's community members reported they highly valued their participation in the SALTA environmental health leadership trainings for the knowledge they gained about the way local decision-making happens. SALTA is a web-based, interactive leadership development curriculum that provides community leaders with skill-building training in community organizing, policy advocacy, building power, community health, environmental justice and effective communication. Community members learned how to conduct a power assessment to think through an issue, identify the desired outcome, and identify potential allies and opponents. They also learned how to speak to other community members and organize the rest of the community around an issue; how to speak to elected officials, including developing talking points and telling a personal story; and how to identify injustices in the community that need to be addressed.

policymakers but also to create collective advocacy power for climate resilience efforts. For example, in Newark, efforts to provide heat relief were stalled in the Mayor’s office, but in partnership with faith-based and other community organizations, Ironbound Community Corporation was able to advance a city-wide expansion of cooling centers and launch a community awareness campaign. In San Antonio, Southwest Workers Union and local allies coordinated Accountability Forums during the 2017 Mayoral election to create space for candidates to talk about issues like health, air quality, transparency, and climate action. These forums gave the community an understanding of where the candidates stood on relevant environmental issues.

CRUO CBOs formed networks and partnerships with a broad range of entities

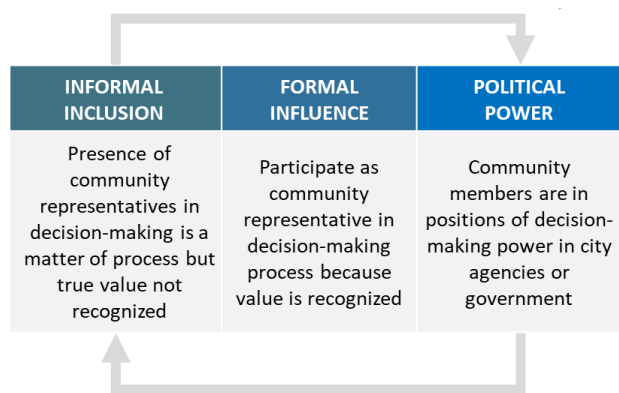
- Labor organizations
- Neighborhood associations and councils
- Immigrants’ rights organizations
- Small businesses and business improvement districts
- Community development corporations
- Local planning agencies
- Youth organizations
- Solar installation companies
- Faith-based organizations
- Art and media organizations
- Women’s organizations
- Public health allies

Moving from Inclusion to Power

After four years of the initiative, most CRUO communities are just beginning to experience inclusion in local climate resilience planning and policy processes. As stated above, the second half of the spectrum—inclusion to influence to power—proves to be more iterative and the distinction between each is less absolute. There are signals that CBOs have made progress toward gaining political power during the grant period, but true systems change takes longer than this initiative and requires funding grass roots and grass tops work concurrently.

The CRUO cohort defined inclusion as having a “seat at the table” in policy development, rulemaking, and implementation, including processes that:

- Allow communities to help shape agendas
- Support bidirectional communication and compromise
- Provide for adequate time to communicate with community members
- Engage impacted communities
- Provide accommodations for participation.



Inclusion took two forms: (1) informal inclusion and (2) mandatory, sometimes perfunctory, inclusion. Informal inclusion seemed to occur when CBOs had an insider ally (e.g., a policymaker who checks in with a CBO leader for their perspective on an issue), whereas mandatory inclusion of community members appeared more formal. For example, in Cleveland, the formal appointment of climate ambassadors to planning groups signaled to community members that they were being heard. Multiple CRUO community representatives expressed concern about mandated inclusion of community, noting that mandated inclusion risks being perceived as simply an effort to “check a box” fulfilling a requirement and moving on without transforming the process or product of deliberation in any meaningful way.

Community members and policymakers both recognize the importance of representation by community in at least documenting support for decisions. However, public systems are almost always unequipped to support community representation in meaningful and authentic ways, such as conducting community outreach to encourage attendance, providing accessible written materials related to the policy, or pushing for or providing accommodations that allow for diverse participation in public processes (e.g., rotating locations and schedules for meetings, providing language interpretation or childcare, etc.). This tension reinforces discomfort and distrust at both the grass tops and grass roots levels. CRUO representatives articulated that it is too easy for the public sector to feign inclusion, but true influence and power are not easily manufactured. The CRUO cohort equated influence with self-determination, including making the rules and setting the priorities and boundaries that ultimately shape policy and investment.

Some CRUO CBO staff believe they have some semblance of influence now as signified by requests for briefing, elected/appointed attendance at events, requests that they review documents, etc., but noted that the ultimate objective for CRUO communities is to self-govern, to serve as leaders and staff of decision-making and budgeting entities, and to have political power. In several CRUO communities, there was progress towards this end:

- Leadership Counsel and Building Healthy Communities partnered to develop community leaders and support them in securing board positions. One participant won a seat on a local parks and recreation board and another was appointed to Fresno's bike and pedestrian committee.
- Sage and Got Green community members reported these organizations activated and engaged them to move into progressive leadership roles at the city and county, which is beginning to institutionalize climate resilience with an equity lens and diversify the voices working for progress in Seattle.
- The former Associate Director of Environmental Health Coalition is currently a City Council member in San Diego and was elected Council President in late 2018. She is also Chairwoman of the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System.
- A LAANE community member was appointed by the City to a board to elect a ratepayer advocate. These are significant but still modest gains; political power is not something CRUO communities feel they have accomplished.

Sustainability of the Work Accomplished Under CRUO to Advance Climate Resilience

KEY LEARNING: CRUO CBOs have demonstrated that the foundation for sustainability lies in organizational commitment, fostering strong relationships across partnerships and networks, and maintaining inside game strategies.

Sustainability of a climate resilience agenda with an equity lens requires internal organizational shifts that center climate resilience at the level of organizational policies and practices and staff capacity. The evaluation identified three core internal shifts made by almost all the CBOs that demonstrated increased commitment to climate resilience:

- Increasing staff capacity to address climate resilience and equity
- Aligning organizations' values and strategies around a commitment to advance climate resilience with equity at the center
- Maintaining inside game strategies with decision-makers.

All three of these shifts contribute to the foundation established by CRUO that will allow communities to sustain the work.

“The way that this work carries on is investing in organizations that do organizing and will building. They are the local experts invested in the win—in implementation and the ongoing advocacy efforts to make sure investments come back to the community. The investment in leadership development and organizing is the space where all of this carries the work and expertise as well as supporting organizations that have professional staff and organizers who provide that expertise. It is super exciting to think about this knowledge bank that gets accessed, but then having that access translate to community’s experiences and vice versa is a space that the Foundations could advance environmental justice principles.”

– CRUO Community Staff Member

Staff Capacity

Staff capacity took two forms. One form was building staff capacity to be adaptive. To maintain both a focus on the long-game and be responsive to changes happening in the political and environmental context, CBOs identified ways to build internal capacity to be adaptive and responsive. For example, APEN worked to transform organizational capacity by making decisions faster and creating more impactful campaigns through individual staff member coaching, all-day staff trainings, and team coaching. Catalyst Miami hired coaches/consultants to work with staff on equity and diversity training and drafted their own definitions to internally guide staff thinking and action on these issues.

A second form of internal capacity development was identifying and using resources to hire more staff and train more staff formally and informally to elevate and deepen their understanding of the impacts of climate change and the opportunity to advance equitable climate resilience policy. Sage entered the cohort with very little explicit focus on climate work. By the last year of CRUO funding, 25% of the Sage budget was dedicated to climate work, and the organization hired two additional staff for its climate team in August 2018. NYC-Environmental Justice Alliance, a partner of The Point and ALIGN in New York City, hired a Resiliency Planner (now Associate Director) to help further advance a climate resilience agenda and to work closely on initiatives supported across partner organizations. CBOs also indicated that peer learning and “learning by doing” helped build a climate resilience vocabulary.

Strategy and Values Alignment

Another mechanism for institutionalizing commitment to equitable climate resilience is to embed it into the plans and practices that guide the organizations. Got Green incorporated climate resilience and the frame from the *Our People, Our Planet, Our Power* report into its strategic plan. Climate resilience and environmental justice have become a major priority, outlined clearly in Cleveland Neighborhood Progress’ strategic plan. Cleveland Neighborhood Progress now has a greater understanding of how its vision of community vibrancy and communities of choice link to climate resiliency.

NAYA built relationships within the organization across internal teams, developing an advocacy and policy team with stronger collaboration across departments to work more concretely on policy and advocacy than in the direct service organizations history.

For CRUO CBOs already working at the intersection of environment and equity in some way at the start of the initiative, Kresge’s CRUO investment helped broaden their climate scope and amplify organizational efforts to advance climate resilience policy and build capacity to strengthen and support their efforts at greater scale. For example, Fifth Avenue Committee reshaped some of its key strategies to identify funding sources and legislative backing to address local public housing needs given anticipated land use changes, broader policy shifts, and environmental investments happening in their community. Catalyst Miami refined parts of their theory of change that related to resilience and removed program silos to accommodate its climate resilience agenda more holistically.

Maintaining the Inside Game

The election of aligned leadership in CRUO cities has created new opportunities to access and influence policymakers and leaders on issues of climate resilience. Throughout the initiative, several CRUO communities saw the election and appointment of leadership aligned with the aims of climate resilience within state and local government, including San Antonio City Council members, New York City Council members and County Executives, New Jersey’s new Governor, Newark’s new Sustainability Director, and



Cleveland’s new Chief of Sustainability. In a number of these cases, newly-elected leaders have invited CBOs to participate on transition teams, task forces, working groups, and advisory or steering committees related to equity and environmental justice, clean energy, just transition, transportation, and climate change adaptation.

In establishing relationships with city-level leaders, CRUO CBOs emphasized the need to build relationships across multiple offices within a city, recognizing that, in most cities, decisions on complex issues are made jointly by the leaders of multiple departments or agencies. In such an environment, a single relationship is not enough to successfully advance a policy position or to maintain the relationship during turnover. For example, in advancing action in response to flooding and sea-level rise, NOAH interacts with the Mayor’s office, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (the regional planning agency), Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Massachusetts Port Authority, the Office of Emergency Management, the Boston Sewer and Water Commission, the Parks Department, the Public Health Commission, and the City of Boston Environment, Energy, and Open Space Department. Although working across these entities takes considerable time and resources, maintaining relationships with leaders across different domains in the city creates additional insights into decision-making processes and various leaders’ priorities that can be leveraged into regional resilience efforts.

Policy Implementation

CRUO communities found greater success in advancing climate resilience policies and plans than in driving accountability in implementation. Ensuring equity in implementation is complex and will take considerably more time than the life of the CRUO investment. Transformative policy and systems change is multi-pronged and takes time; continued investment is needed to realize and sustain change in the implementation phase. The climate-related and equity benefits of the policies and plans advanced during the CRUO initiative for CRUO communities may take years to be felt and fully understood. Ongoing support for organizations and communities to sustain the work by building knowledge and skills to shape implementation and increasing community leadership and know-how to participate in the system are both critical to climate resilience efforts.

One way CBOs continue to support and advance implementation of gains made and/or hold policymakers accountable is through the formal and informal opportunities for ongoing inclusion and influence demonstrated in the early implementation of CRUO. In the more structural dimensions of community influence (see Figure 3), community members and/or CBO representatives serve alongside policymakers or directly consult with policymakers via formal roles on advisory bodies for rulemaking,



NOAH

implementation, and/or accountability. In some communities, policymakers and officials meet with community members to gather their input but community members do not have a formal advisory role or community engagement structures are limited to submitting public comments about policy implementation. These mechanisms provide one vehicle for accountability. Examples of this approach include:

- The Point’s appointment to the New York Governor’s Environmental Justice and Just Transition Working Group helps ensure that new state legislation, policies and initiatives incorporate a strong representative environmental justice leadership body that identifies disadvantaged communities to be prioritized for investment and provide a platform for community governance.
- Catalyst Miami pushed city officials to ensure that the \$400 million Miami Forever Bond includes a Citizens’ Oversight Board that represents the interests of the community and has a say in how bond money is allocated. Members are required to live in the city and have no conflicts of interests with potential bond projects.
- In Portland, NAYA, OPAL, and CCC successfully advocated for Tri-Met’s Public Transportation Improvement Plan Advisory Group to include community, youth, senior, persons with disabilities, and environmental justice representatives.
- Three Southwest Workers Union community members serve on the City’s Climate and Equity Technical Working Group, which is creating a framework for assessing San Antonio’s Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.



SWU

Barriers to Implementation

Although CRUO communities have generated mechanisms to help support implementation, there are still considerable barriers to maintaining equity in climate resilience policies and plans after “the win.” These barriers include:

- Lack of formal accountability measures
- Implementation delays in the policy process and the overall slow nature of bureaucracy
- Ongoing shocks and challenges in CRUO communities.

Lack of formal accountability measures. Overall, experience has taught CBOs and their partners to question the commitment and integrity of policy processes. They are concerned that community

members will be left out of the rulemaking, implementation, and accountability processes and that equity components will not be prioritized in rulemaking and budgeting. Even where there are vehicles for including equity in the policy, communities pointed to common barriers hampering the intent of the policy in implementation. These include ongoing inaccessibility of advisory meetings for community members (due to both scheduling and language access challenges), the countervailing and often overwhelming influence of powerful actors such as developers and real estate interests, and limited budgets for advisory bodies.

By and large, the exemplar policy wins achieved by CRUO CBOs do not have formal accountability measures to ensure adherence to the equity components of the policy. Aside from securing formal roles on advisory bodies for community members and CBO representatives, there are only a few examples of CRUO communities being able to encourage or create accountability mechanisms for the implementation of policy wins. NAYA and its partners OPAL and CCC are working to influence the process by which the Oregon Transportation Commission will review transit agencies' plans for using funds to benefit low-income riders. In addition, NAYA is working to ensure equitable implementation of The Portland Clean Energy Fund, a new \$30 million a year revenue source directed to low-income people and communities of color for energy efficiency upgrades, home weatherization, rooftop solar, job training, local food production, and green infrastructure. A grant committee comprised of nine city residents with diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds will oversee competitive proposals for use of the funds. The Point, in partnership with NYC-Environmental Justice Alliance, was successful in ensuring that Guiding Principles of Implementation developed by the Hunts Point Resiliency Advisory Working Group were included in the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Request for Proposal and finalized contract, thereby holding the City and the selected consultants accountable to community priorities. Environmental Health Coalition released a comprehensive report in 2018 that assesses how effectively the City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan (CAP) has invested in low-income communities of color since the CAP's adoption in 2015 and provided recommendations on how the City can do better. In addition, Environmental Health Coalition has called for the adoption of a Climate Justice Scorecard to ensure that equity components of the CAP are implemented.

Slow nature of bureaucracy.

Implementation in CRUO communities is also hampered by slow processes throughout the implementation timeline: long waiting periods between policy adoption and the work to begin implementation; slow funding processes; slow policymaker response to appoint representatives to advisory bodies; and/or other long bureaucratic and political processes.

For WE ACT, implementation of the Environmental Justice policy bill has been held up because the City Council has not nominated representatives to the Environmental Justice Board of Advocates. For Fifth Avenue Committee, progress towards siting CSO tanks in the local



We Act

community's preferred location depends on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) timeline, the seizure of land for the CSO tank site, completion of the project design, and local rezoning.

Competing priorities. Lastly, CBOs and their partners often had to divert resources from long-term strategy to meet immediate needs, particularly when faced with issues like extreme weather events, threats of deportation that affected their membership, loss of health care services, displacement, and gentrification. For instance, Hurricane Irma had a direct impact on Catalyst Miami's community and the organization shifted focus to providing basic services and information to community members in the aftermath. Immigration crackdowns in San Antonio resulted in Southwest Workers Union directing staff time and capacity towards assisting their community and the families impacted by sudden deportations. All of these barriers that CBOs and their communities faced during the initiative slowed down long-term progress on climate resilience work.

Beyond Policies and Plans: CRUO CBO Capacity and Ongoing Implementation

There is much more work to be done to ensure that equity remains front and center in policies and plans that address the impacts of climate change on communities. More than a handful of CBOs expressed concern about their own ability to sustain the work going forward. As one staff stated, "The hardest part is the [policy] implementation. That's when the dollars start drying up. It's not glamorous, it's hard work. You have a small handful of technical experts who are doggedly applying the policy and the headlines go away. But that is where the work really is." Several organizations emphasized that "things don't transform in three to four-year periods," and that while they have been able to build out robust strategies, it will take several more years and further investment from philanthropy to see the changes they envision. Although not a comprehensive solution, Kresge heard CBOs concerns about ending the initiative and responded with some additional funding to CBOs to extend the work beyond the final year. CRUO CBOs were invited to apply for funds to advance implementation of policy wins and scale existing efforts. In addition, CBOs were also offered the opportunity to propose collaborative efforts across funded communities to advance learning or regional/state-level policy efforts. (See Appendix D: Supplemental Grant Funds for a brief description of CRUO communities funded to pursue implementation efforts.)

Financial resources are certainly key to sustainability, but the foundation of sustainability lies in other aspects of the CRUO strategy and outcomes. CBOs are also focused on continuing the following efforts.

Ensuring equity in policy implementation: While there are signals in some CRUO communities that the commitment to climate resilience with equity at the center will be carried forward to implementation, many CBOs are already working on aspects of policy implementation while concurrently pursuing the next policy win. Several CBOs feel they are spread too thin to efficiently and effectively shape implementation.

"It is important to look at the bigger picture and invest in the community and not just in a moment."

—CRUO CBO Staff Member

Creating leadership pathways to achieve equitable climate resilience: The significant cohort of CRUO community members engaged through the leadership pathway effort is an important outcome of the CRUO investment and a key to sustaining and scaling the work after CRUO. CBOs continue to support community members to develop their capacities along progressive levels of participation in the policy process. This ranges from raising awareness about the connections between climate resilience and equity to everyday community concerns all the way to full participation by community members in elected positions.

Supporting networks and partnerships for equitable climate resilience: During CRUO, CBOs activated existing and built new networks to focus on equitable climate resilience. Based on discussions with CBOs and their partners at site visits, these networks and partnerships appear likely to remain activated to fight for subsequent policy and practice changes to advance equitable climate resilience, which will be critical to sustaining the work accomplished under CRUO. CBOs will need to continue to convene, grow, and facilitate community members and partners to stay motivated and inspired to take collective action. Maintaining this level of engagement effectively will be a significant body of work going forward.

Commitment to climate resilience with an equity focus: CBOs have aligned organizational values and strategies with their commitment to climate resilience, as evidenced by alignment of organizations' strategic plans and mission statements and adopting internal practices that reflect the values of climate resilience and equity. In addition, CBOs elevate members of the organization and members of the community at large through mechanisms to inform climate resilience strategy and advocacy work. CBOs are therefore better positioned after CRUO to act on climate resilience policy going forward. Institutionalizing a commitment to climate resilience allows CBOs to remain committed in a rapidly changing context, whether due to extreme weather events or immigration issues.

Where the Work Is Headed

One way to think about the sustainability of the CRUO initiative is to understand how CBOs are framing the future of the work. In the end-of-initiative interviews, the evaluation team talked with funded CRUO CBOs and partners about the future direction of their work. Several themes emerged. CBOs are:

- Expanding and growing climate-focused cross-sector partnerships, networks and alliances with a commitment to getting campaigns over the finish line
- Committed to connecting climate resilience to everyday issues community members face
- Maintaining relationships with policymakers to ensure accountability in implementation policy wins
- Building social cohesion in communities around emergency preparedness and response planning.

In the final end-of-initiative interview with CRUO CBOs and their partners, they provided clear examples on where they had generated some momentum and where they saw opportunity to continue the work started under CRUO. CBOs and their partners still largely thought about funding first when talking about sustainability but recognized that transformative systems change work opens other pathways to sustainability.

Learning from CRUO

The CRUO Initiative was the first significant multi-year effort under the Environment Program's new strategy and was designed to demonstrate that large-scale, transformative change can and should be led by low-income urban communities. Through CRUO, Kresge sought to:

- Strengthen the capacity of community-based nonprofit organizations to influence local and regional climate resilience planning, policy development, and implementation to better reflect the priorities and needs of low-income urban communities in U.S. cities; and
- Strengthen the climate resilience field by supporting new equity-centered methodologies and approaches to climate resilience policy and planning.

This section highlights key impacts of the CRUO initiative and then summarizes key insights from this work that may be relevant to inform future work by The Kresge Foundation Environment Program, peer funders, and the broader climate resilience field.

Key Impacts of the CRUO Initiative

CRUO's two-phased approach, the flexibility for configuring local partnerships, the use of developmental evaluation, and other factors contributed to an environment that emphasized learning, creative problem solving, adaptation, and meaning-making. The CRUO experience, including the local policy gains achieved by CBOs, demonstrates that finding meaningful solutions to address the impacts of climate change will require intentional, ongoing action where philanthropy, national, and grassroots efforts are working together to achieve equitable climate resilience.

CRUO contributed in significant ways to changing the concept of climate resilience, who is affected, and how climate resilience solutions can advance and support social equity. CRUO was designed to advance work at the intersection of adaptation, mitigation, and social cohesion. Through work in the 15 selected communities, CRUO brought attention to the needs and priorities of communities often underrepresented in conversations about climate impacts and resilience solutions and helped to elevate the voice of community members in local processes relevant to climate resilience.

CRUO demonstrated the value of intentionally integrating the needs, experiences, and skills of low-income urban communities in climate resilience planning and implementation. CRUO stakeholders concluded that CRUO helped stretch the boundaries of the climate resilience field to more intentionally consider the needs and experiences of low-income urban communities. Policies and plans that were advanced during CRUO show promise in this regard, both locally and at scale.

CRUO pushed meaningful systems and policy change. The initiative integrated technical knowledge, data capabilities, community voice, networks of networks, and linked investments in both community-based efforts and national issue-focused activities. The 15 CRUO communities, in partnership locally and

nationally, developed a powerful set of policies, plans, and solutions that are continuing to drive meaningful systems change at multiple levels.

CRUO built and connected capacity across an entire ecosystem of organizations, helping these organizations to forge aligned and mutually-supportive strategies and action plans relevant to growing the climate resilience and equity field. With the support of CRUO, CBOs and community members were able to identify, harness, expand, and use their capacities to grow their participation in policy and advocacy. Likewise, field-building organizations shifted how they develop solutions to be more inclusive of the experiences and priorities of low-income urban communities and to view CBOs as potential partners in developing and testing new approaches, tools, and insights. CRUO helped build the capacity of an ecosystem of organizations—the climate resilience and equity field—by focusing beyond traditional grantmaking to support field-level peer exchange and learning. CRUO also supported organizations develop longer-term strategies and capacities, while supporting organizations to adapt in a rapidly changing political context.

Key Insights and Lessons from CRUO

Based on the evaluation team’s experience and interpretation of the Key Learnings throughout the report, the evaluation team offers several insights and lessons related to (1) the value and impact of funding CBOs, (2) adaptive management, (3) the value of staff and advisory competency to bridge fields, (4) managing (and embracing) risk, and (5) ensuring sustainability of impacts. These insights are likely to be highly relevant to inform how philanthropic investors and their partners can enhance the likelihood of success of future complex social systems change initiatives—such as those focused on equitable climate resilience.

1. Value and Impact of Funding CBOs

KEY INSIGHT: Local community-scale initiatives led by CBOs can provide a valuable testing ground for new approaches as well as tangible examples of what work and progress look like on the ground. These examples provide a crucial ingredient to support national field-building efforts by providing ripe opportunities to collaborate on research, narrative framing, national policy advocacy, and tool development.

CRUO demonstrated the value of having field-building initiatives include explicit investments in local initiatives to pilot and test concepts, approaches, and tools and to have living laboratories that national or issue-focused field-building organizations can work with and learn from. Field development is often propelled by work happening on the ground, complemented by national-level efforts to support and diffuse learning and approaches. Providing opportunities for field-building organizations to build relationships with CBOs and learn about how they solve problems to address their priorities can accelerate efforts to transform growing fields such as the equitable climate resilience field. Funders are well-positioned to align place-based and national investments across grantmaking portfolios and to support communications and engagement activities that can ensure productive interactions within and between these levels.

KEY INSIGHT: CRUO demonstrated that there is real value for philanthropy in connecting partners across place-based investments and in engaging with them as “thought partners” to catalyze more comprehensive systems change initiatives.

CRUO’s design and implementation demonstrated compelling and innovative roles that philanthropy can play in complex systems change and field-building. In CRUO, place-based investments in CBOs provided more than examples of what equitable climate resilience work can look like in communities; CBOs were connected in ways that supported broader field development, strengthened and accelerated learning and improvement across sites, and enabled real-time learning and adaptation between the funder and grantees. Representatives from CRUO communities widely indicated they see an opportunity for Kresge to encourage and engage other philanthropic entities to expand investments in networks of CBOs to lead systems change. CRUO provides a powerful model for philanthropic strategy in which the funder and CBOs work together in a strategic thought partnership to design and influence larger transformational changes—such as efforts to position equity at the core of sustainability solutions. Kresge and peer funders will likely benefit from continued refinement of how funders can show up in conversations with community organizations in productive and authentic ways that elevate the needs and priorities of communities while advancing philanthropic impact goals. For example, CRUO experiences highlighted a few practices that may be useful to further explore and expand. These include entering discussions with grantees with a strong listening frame, allowing some flexibility in grantee plans and use of funds to be responsive to community-voiced needs and emergent priorities while staying true to the funder’s program goals, and elevating the importance of and investing time in co-learning opportunities.

2. Adaptive Management

KEY INSIGHT: There is value in creating lots of space and diverse mechanisms for organic, in-person peer-to-peer learning and technical assistance to support adaptive management by grantees.

As part of CRUO, Kresge supported diverse mechanisms to enable grantees—including both CBOs and national field-building organizations—to interact and learn from each other. Throughout the CRUO initiative, CBOs and partners remarked on the value of both the annual convenings and in-person peer-to-peer learning opportunities, such as peer site visits and special issue convenings. A dominant theme from the evaluations of each convening was the importance and value of having unscheduled time during convenings for more organic, cohort-organized interaction and exchange. CBOs provided multiple examples of how insights from these interactions equipped them to evolve their strategies and tactics.

KEY INSIGHT: Kresge’s approach to the CRUO initiative allowed for flexibility and adaptation, which was supported by the developmental evaluation, ongoing advisory support, continued engagement with grantees as thought partners, and access to reserve funding.

From the inception of CRUO, Kresge’s approach signaled an openness to learning and adaptation. Commissioning a developmental evaluation for CRUO created space for evaluative thinking and

evidence to inform ongoing strategy and implementation activities for CRUO. Ongoing Advisory Committee engagement created an important forum for discussing and testing emergent insights and ideas. Periodic interactions between Kresge staff, consultants, and grantees through site visits and convenings created space for dialogue about emergent needs and opportunities to adjust to address them. The availability of funding dedicated to peer-learning activities enabled Kresge to support emergent needs and opportunities, such as enhanced learning and exchange opportunities for grantees, and focused policy implementation opportunities in some communities. These and other factors contributed to Kresge's ability to evolve CRUO over time, to try new approaches, and to learn in ways. These practices and the insights they have generated are now informing the next generation of the foundation's work in the Environment Program.

3. Value of Staff and Advisory Competency to Bridge Fields

KEY INSIGHT: CRUO benefited from having staff and advisors with skills and experience that spanned both equity and climate resilience fields, equipping CRUO to build bridges to integrate these fields and to navigate different cultural contexts in productive ways.

CRUO benefitted from having staff and Advisory Committee members who not only have experience and skills in equity and climate resilience fields, but who also have valuable cultural and political competencies. This helped ensure that the implementation of the CRUO initiative remained attentive to the social and cultural dimensions of building bridges and connections among grantees, experts, and stakeholders approaching the work from equity and climate resilience lenses. These competencies and capacities also helped to strengthen connections between community-based participants and national field-building experts, while setting an overall tone for CRUO that focused on learning and improvement.

4. Managing (and Embracing) Risk

KEY INSIGHT: Kresge shaped the portfolio to focus on geographies where there was higher capacity and likelihood of success, while also including some higher risk places with more limited capacity and/or stronger political headwinds. This helped to enhance the overall likelihood of success for the CRUO initiative while creating opportunities to learn from work in more challenging contexts.

During the design phase of CRUO, Kresge intentionally focused on urban areas where there was already existing CBO capacity and ripe policy advocacy environments, which tended towards the east and west coast communities. At the same time, Kresge had an interest to test the CRUO hypotheses in a range of community contexts, including those where local focus on climate resilience might be at different stages or politically positioned in different ways. The CRUO Advisory Committee noted that there is a broadening disparity between places in the U.S. that are actively addressing climate change and places that are not. Kresge chose to focus on communities with higher capacity and likelihood of producing successful models of equitable climate resilience work, but also included a few CBO grantees in more challenging contexts. This varied portfolio approach created important learning opportunities about what it takes to support equitable climate resilience work in diverse contexts. An ongoing tension for

funders in future work of this kind will be to balance opportunities to advance climate policies in progressive local contexts versus seeking opportunities in higher-risk geographies where politics may be challenging, CBO capacity is nascent, and/or funder networks and knowledge are not strong.

KEY INSIGHT: CRUO's two-phase grantmaking structure with planning and implementation grant phases allowed Kresge to explore opportunities in higher-risk community contexts without committing multi-year investments in places that had low likelihood of success.

Planning year grants provided Kresge and CBOs an opportunity to work together during a full year to develop CBOs' capacities and plans around equity-focused climate resilience work. This enabled Kresge to pursue implementation investments with 15 of the 17 CBOs from the planning cohort, focusing on CBOs that had the greatest likelihood of successful implementation. While the planning year provided the foundation with a helpful risk management approach, the multi-year implementation phase investments provided CBOs with helpful certainty about revenue flows to enable them to make staffing and investment decisions.

KEY INSIGHT: Creating time and space to build relationships and trust among community-based organizations within and across communities, and with national field-building organizations, was important to enhancing the success of CBOs' work and of the broader CRUO field-building efforts.

Dismantling pervasive, systemic inequities in areas relevant to climate resilience requires the efforts of strong local partnerships and aligned regional and national networks of organizations. The CRUO design created enough opportunity for formal and informal networking to allow relationships to grow over time. CRUO's reach into the climate resilience field largely rested on relationships and networks between CBOs and field-building organizations, media efforts highlighting community-based work, and influence through coalitions to take some models to scale. The effect of these modest shifts in the working relationships between national and local organizations suggest that more could be achieved when national and community agendas are aligned. Such alignment seems to require strengthening the capacity (and commitment) of field-building organizations around community engagement, racial equity and inclusion, an understanding and integration of root cause frames, time to build trust and authentic relationships, and deepening their commitment to shape and grow a movement in which the people on-the-ground have greater access to influence and power.

5. Ensuring Sustainability of Capacity and Impacts

KEY INSIGHT: Ensuring sustained impact (such as equitable climate resilience) requires looking beyond policy wins to support ongoing policy implementation phases.

CRUO demonstrated that there is a growing capacity to advance climate resilience policy and programmatic wins with equity at the center. Policy and program wins are important, but representatives from the CRUO CBO cohort indicated that assuring the full impact of these accomplishments will require substantial work in the subsequent design and implementation of policies

and programs. Several CRUO stakeholders observed that hard-fought policy progress in advancing equity and justice can be easily be unraveled or lost during the implementation phase unless there is ongoing vigilance, advocacy, and engagement to ensure aspirations are realized in practice. Local capacities, including technical skill sets, leadership, and resources, need to be cultivated and prioritized not just to advance policy, but to continue to elevate equity throughout policy implementation processes. Leadership development and training in policy implementation and monitoring for accountability is an important area needing more focus by funders and CBOs.

KEY INSIGHT: Funders can support sustained impact by CBOs with thoughtful exit strategies that support early discussions with CBOs to help them proactively plan for changes in future funding.

In major, multi-year initiatives such as CRUO, sustaining or advancing the transformational potential for investments can be enhanced by creating more time for discussions between funders and CBOs about opportunities for sustaining impact over time. Even when a funder is not able to continue investment in initiative CBOs, the funder can help CBOs think through ways to sustain the work and impact through new funding sources, lower resource levels, or creative implementation strategies.

Appendix A: CRUO CBO Media Coverage and Resources

During the CRUO initiative, communities developed resources and engaged locally and nationally to elevate their work. Appendix A provides a sampling of media coverage of CRUO CBOs and their work during the initiative, as well as links to some resources developed as part of local CRUO initiatives.

Alliance for a Greater New York (ALIGN)

- Elite Emissions: How the Homes of the Wealthiest New Yorkers Help Drive Climate Change
<http://alignny.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Elite-Emissions-Final-version-02-1.pdf>
- Restart Solar: Energizing Environmental Justice Communities
<https://nyf.issuelab.org/resources/27402/27402.pdf>
- President Trump and Jared Kushner’s buildings are some of the worst polluters in New York City
<https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/trump-buildings-biggest-polluters-nyc-article-1.3016899>
- The mayor must get tough with NYC’s biggest energy guzzlers: its buildings
<https://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20151214/OPINION/151209875/the-mayor-must-get-tough-with-nyc-s-biggest-energy-guzzlers-its-buildings>
- De Blasio energy mandates get cool reception from Council, some advocates
<https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/albany/story/2017/09/14/de-blasio-energy-mandates-get-cool-reception-from-council-some-advocates-114509>

Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)

- California’s new climate change laws almost didn’t happen this year. Here’s how lawmakers pulled it off
<https://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-sac-climate-deal-inside-look-20160902-snap-htmlstory.html>
- Updated: Opposition Emerges Right Off the Bat to A’s Laney Ballpark Plans
<https://www.eastbayexpress.com/SevenDays/archives/2017/09/12/opposition-emerges-right-off-the-bat-to-as-laney-ballpark-plans>

Catalyst Miami

- Ten Principles for Building Resilience
https://americas.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/ULI-Documents/10P_BuildingResilience.pdf

- An Equitable Water Future
http://uswateralliance.org/sites/uswateralliance.org/files/publications/uswa_waterequity_FINAL.pdf
- Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact: Regional Climate Action Plan 2.0
http://southeastfloridaclimatecompact.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/RCAP-2.0_Abridged-Version.pdf
- Realizing Resilience: Social Equity and Economic Opportunity
https://issuu.com/ulitampabay/docs/realizing_resilience
- The CLEAR Toolkit: A Guide for Developing Community Resilience Leadership Programs
<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/59538624/the-clear-toolkit>

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

- Climate Ambassadors: street-level environmental activism
<https://www.freshwatercleveland.com/features/ClimateAmbassador102016.aspx>
- Tree Steward Training
<http://www.clevelandnp.org/event/tree-steward-training-part-1/>

Environmental Health Coalition

- Quality of Life Coalition Calls On SANDAG To Spend Tax Dollars On What Communities Need
<https://www.environmentalhealth.org/index.php/en/media-center/press-releases/550-qualityof-life-coalition-calls-on-sandag-to-spend-tax-dollars-on-what-communities-need>
- Make Every Day Earth Day: How to Fight Climate Change Year Round
<https://sandiego350.org/blog/2016/05/07/make-every-day-earth-day-how-to-fight-climate-change-year-round/>
- Justice Won't Wait: Fight Back, Give Back, Stand Up
<https://sandiegofreepress.org/2016/11/justice-wont-wait-fight-back-give-back-stand-up/#.XPharHdFxPY>
- Port of San Diego Approves Controversial Marine Terminal Expansion
<https://www.kpbs.org/news/2016/dec/14/port-san-diego-approves-controversial-marine-terminal/>
- Sales tax linked to pollution
<https://www.sandiegoreader.com/news/2016/sep/22/ticker-sales-tax-linked-pollution/#>

Fifth Avenue Committee

- Environmental Justice Tour of Gowanus with Turning the Tide
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2f5qyr1uSiE>
- Poison Lead Park: Red Hook Ballfields
<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=poison+lead+park%3a+red+hook+ballfields+video&view=detail&mid=44322969649F9A2363E644322969649F9A2363E6&FORM=VIRE>

- Survive and Thrive: Towards a Justice-Focused Gowanus Neighborhood Plan
https://prattcenter.net/sites/default/files/survive_and_thrive_final_062817.pdf

Ironbound Community Corporation (Ironbound)

- State says it's back on the battlefield against polluters
<https://www.njtvonline.org/news/video/state-says-its-back-on-the-battlefield-against-polluters/>
- 'Our air is not good enough.' Kids fight plant burning 2.8K tons of trash every day
<https://expo.nj.com/news/erry-2018/12/9799c118c54580/our-air-is-not-good-enough-kid.html>
- International Coalition to Meet at Rutgers-Newark to Address Global Climate and Environmental Justice
<https://www.newark.rutgers.edu/news/international-coalition-meet-rutgers-newark-address-global-climate-and-environmental-justice>
- New Report: Land Use Reforms Can Break Cycle of American Environmental Racism
<https://www.nrdc.org/media/2019/190221-0>
- New Jersey getting flooded, but many still ignore climate change
<https://usa.inquirer.net/16073/new-jersey-getting-flooded-but-many-still-ignore-climate-change>

Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)

- LADWP approves program to put solar on low-income homes
<http://www.scp.org/news/2016/11/15/66145/ladwp-approves-program-to-put-solar-on-low-income>
- The DWP is expanding its rooftop panel program to the 'solar desert' to meet its energy goals
<https://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-dwp-solar-deserts-20161122-story.html>
- Los Angeles Victory for Community Solar... But
<https://www.laprogressive.com/community-solar/>
- #BuenosDiasLA: Festival de arte y música 100% impulsado por energía solar
<https://laopinion.com/2017/08/04/buenosdiasla-festival-de-arte-y-musica-100-impulsado-por-energia-solar/>
- Liquid Assets and How Stormwater Infrastructure Builds Resilience, Health, Jobs, and Equity
https://laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/LAANE_Liquid-Assets_Stormwater-Report.pdf

Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (Leadership Counsel)

- SB 1000 Toolkit: Planning for Healthy Communities
<https://caleja.org/2017/09/sb-1000-toolkit-release/>

- California Legislators Want Safe Drinking Water. They Haven't Agreed On How To Fund It
<https://www.kvpr.org/post/california-legislators-want-safe-drinking-water-they-havent-agreed-how-fund-it>
- Renewable gas really is too good to be true
<https://capitolweekly.net/renewable-gas-really-is-too-good-to-be-true/>

Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA)

- Tax the Rich, Fight the Climate Crisis
<https://www.commondreams.org/views/2019/01/17/tax-rich-fight-climate-crisis>
- NAYA Campus Soil Test Reveals a Safe Environment
<https://nayapdx.org/blog/2017/05/02/encouraging-results-emerge-from-naya-campus-soil-test/>
- Voters in November to consider renewing Metro parks and nature bond measure
<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/news/voters-november-consider-renewing-metro-parks-and-nature-bond-measure>

Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)

- East Boston Climate Summit- 2017
<https://noahcdc.org/?q=programs/climate-change>
- Walsh, Markey discuss climate change at East Boston summit
<https://dailyfreepress.com/blog/2017/10/30/walsh-markey-discuss-climate-change-at-east-boston-summit/>
- Boston plans strategies to lessen effects of climate change
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2017/10/28/boston-plans-strategies-lessen-effects-climate-change/EyKyQMmzFwkc6z98HlwqN/story.html>

Puget Sound Sage (SAGE)

- New Carbon Fee Initiative Drafted with More Color and Less White Supremacy
<https://www.thestranger.com/slog/2018/05/22/26431926/new-carbon-tax-initiative-drafted-with-more-color-and-less-white-supremacy>
- Truck drivers vow to 'shut down' ports over emissions rules
<https://crosscut.com/2018/02/truck-drivers-vow-to-shut-down-ports-over-emissions-rules>
- Our People, Our Planet, Our Power
<https://pugetsoundsage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/OurPeopleOurPlanetOurPower.pdf>

Southwest Workers Union (SWU)

- Helping Expand What's Possible: Southwest Workers Union
<https://climatejusticealliance.org/helping-expand-whats-possible-southwest-workers-union/>

- Immigration is a Climate Justice Issue
<https://www.swunion.org/single-post/2018/06/29/Immigration-is-a-Climate-Justice-Issue>
- Nuestra Voz Climate Justice Bock Walking Campaign Launch
<https://www.swunion.org/single-post/2018/05/23/Nuestra-Voz-Climate-Justice-Bock-Walking-Campaign-Launch>
- San Antonio Demands Climate Accountability
<https://www.swunion.org/single-post/2018/05/30/San-Antonio-Demands-Climate-Accountability>

The Point Community Development Corporation (The Point)

- South Bronx Community Resiliency Agenda
<https://thepoint.org/community-development/reenvisioning/>
- Harnessing the Sun to Power Equitable Development in NYC
<https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/harnessing-the-sun-to-power-equitable-development-in-nyc>
- How Community-Owned Wi-Fi Changes the Game for Poor Neighborhoods
<http://nationswell.com/wi-fi-connects-poor-neighborhoods/>
- Spared by Sandy, City's Waterfront Food Hub Prepares for Future Disasters
<https://citylimits.org/2017/10/27/spared-by-sandy-citys-waterfront-food-hub-prepares-for-future-disasters/4/>

WE ACT for Environmental Justice (WE ACT)

- Five Book Plan: Cities and Climate Change- Five Years After Hurricane Sandy
<https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3453-five-book-plan-cities-and-climate-change-five-years-after-hurricane-sandy>
- Radical Adaptation
https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/climate-change-adaptation-cities-hurricane-sandy-nyc
- Resilience Matters
<https://islandpress.org/resilience-matters-download>
- Here's a smart solar installation program for affordable housing you should copy
<https://solarbuildermag.com/news/heres-a-smart-solar-installation-program-targeted-at-affordable-housing/>
- Advocates Bring Solar Power, Green Jobs to Upper Manhattan
<https://patch.com/new-york/harlem/advocates-bring-solar-power-green-jobs-upper-manhattan>

Appendix B: Tools and Resources Developed by CRUO Field-Building Partners

CRUO field-building grantees and partners developed multiple resources and tools during the CRUO initiative to support broader efforts to develop the climate resilience and equity field. Key resources are listed below with embedded links.

- [Equity in Resilience Building: Climate Adaptation Indicators](#) (NAACP, 2015)
- [Social Cohesion: The Secret Weapon in the Fight for Equitable Climate Resilience](#) (Center for American Progress, 2015)
- [Holistic Adaptation and Equity Approaches that Engage Communities](#) (EcoAdapt National Adaptation Webinar Series, 2016)
- [Our People, Our Planet, Our Power: Community-led Research in South Seattle](#) (Got Green and Puget Sound Sage, 2016)
- [Miami-Dade in Hot Water: Why Building Equitable Climate Resilience is Key to Public Health and Economic Stability in South Florida](#) (Center for American Progress, 2016)
- [Community-Driven Climate Resilience Planning: A Framework](#) (Movement Strategy Center, 2017)
- [Adaptation Clearinghouse Equity Portal](#) (Georgetown Climate Center, 2017)
- [Energy Democracy: Advancing Equity in Clean Energy Solutions](#) (Edited by Denise Fairchild and Al Weinrub, Island Press, 2017)
- [A Framework for Local Action on Climate Change: 9 Ways Mayors Can Build Resilience and Just Cities](#) (Center for American Progress, 2017)
- [Start Here, Start Now: An Environmental Justice Assessment of the San Diego Climate Action Plan](#) (Environmental Health Coalition, 2018)
- [A Vision for a Greener, Healthier, Cooler Gowanus: Strategies to Mitigate Urban Heat Island Effect](#) (Urban Land Institute in collaboration with Fifth Avenue Committee, 2018)
- [Climate Equity is Climate Smart](#) (EcoAdapt National Adaptation Webinar Series, 2018)
- [Owning the Benefits of Solar+Storage: New Ownership and Investment Models for Affordable Housing and Community Facilities](#) (Clean Energy Group, 2018)

Appendix C: Evaluation Site Visit Methodology

The evaluation team designed and conducted two-day site visits within CRUO communities that engaged CBOs, partner organizations, community members, and policymakers. Engagement activities involved CBO staff interviews, a community dialogue, and a policy change dialogue to address eight prioritized outcomes described in Table C1 below. Policymaker phone interviews followed site visits to gather additional evidence relevant to the evaluation questions.

Table C1: Priority Outcomes and Indicators

Outcome category	Outcome	Indicators
1 Policy and practice changes	Cities take actions to address climate resilience in ways that address social equity, facilitate integration of community-led priorities, and that are inclusive of the most vulnerable people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New policy adopted Policy win categorized by scale (neighborhood, municipal, county/regional, state) Policy win categorized by type (energy, transportation, community development, housing, land-use planning, emergency response, disaster preparedness, etc.) Policy change has explicit equity components Policy change reflects community priorities Policy change includes the most vulnerable New policy implemented (with climate resilience (CR) and equity components intact, with CR and equity components added, or with CR and equity components lost) Primary factors that facilitated the policy change, including level of influence of the CBO on the policy process (tested in policymaker interview) Policy change has set the stage for other policy wins or advancements Policy change fits into CBO's long-term strategy
2 Organizational commitment to climate resilience with equity lens	CBOs integrate climate change issues across the organization's programs and projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization can demonstrate multiple issue areas (or strategies outside of the CRUO initiative) that integrate a climate focus into their work and contribute to climate resilience strategies (e.g., CBO incorporates CR educational or training components in multiple programs or projects; CBO offers new CR, EJ, and/or climate justice programs or projects) One or more of these issue areas are not funded to advance climate resilience specifically CBO allocates budget for CR components in multiple programs or projects CBO has long-term plan to sustain CR and equity work, including leadership development Organization's HR plans (e.g. job descriptions), board and staff development, and other documentation explicitly name climate resilience knowledge as a necessary qualification for one or more staff and board members
3	Organizational mission, vision, and documented priorities reflect principles and values that were defined by "frontline" low-income communities and communities of color	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational mission, vision, and documented priorities reflect principles and values that were defined by low-income communities and communities of color at the "frontline" of climate change Organization has mechanisms in place to ensure the community's priorities remain central over time, including partnering with the community to adapt ongoing priorities and work Organization can identify multiple strategies (outside of this initiative) where they ensure that community priorities drive strategies Organization demonstrates integration of community priorities in other ways

Outcome category	Outcome	Indicators
		<p>Community members indicate that organization has involved community members in development of mission, vision, values, priorities, strategies, etc.</p> <p>Community members indicate that organization has shifted to align with expressed community priorities</p> <p>Community members see the organization as credible and authentic</p> <p>Community priorities for climate resilience and equity are represented in the strategic plan, operations plan, and/or hiring practices</p>
4	Organizational capacity for action on climate resilience with equity lens	<p>CBOs increase their knowledge and confidence in advancing climate resilience work (inclusive of CBO staff and leadership)</p> <p>CBO staff have completed training in CR, climate justice, racial equity, and/or environmental justice</p> <p>CBO staff are using new knowledge from CR and equity trainings in their work with the community</p> <p>Organization's staff demonstrate fluency in CR</p> <p>CBO staff can articulate how CR is relevant to and incorporated across multiple issue areas within the organization</p> <p>Organization's staff are confident in their ability to advance CR</p> <p>CBO staff can articulate the organization's strategy for CR and equity work</p> <p>CBO staff have a level of comfort discussing CR and equity with community members, partner organizations, and policymakers</p>
5	Signals of progress in community leadership and engagement	<p>Community leaders increase their knowledge, skills, and ability to take action on climate change</p> <p>Organizational strategies cultivate, support, and resource community leaders to take action on CR</p> <p>Organization develops new leadership for CR in the community through training, education, skills-building, and other leadership development tools</p> <p>Organizational strategies support community leaders to engage a larger circle of community members on CR</p> <p>Community members report level of comfort with discussing CR and equity with other community members, organization staff, community leaders, and policymakers</p> <p>Community members report high level of satisfaction, learning, new knowledge, time well spent, etc. for CBO-led CR and equity leadership development activities</p> <p>Community members report participating in CR and equity advocacy activities, either associated with the CBO's work or in the broader community</p>
6	Community leaders advocate for appropriate and important opportunities to improve their community's climate resilience	<p>Community leaders and community members take action to advance CR</p> <p>Community leaders are an active part of the CBO's policy change strategy development and policy change advocacy activities</p> <p>Community members report what they have done with new skills/knowledge re: CR and equity</p> <p>Community member follow-up and follow-through on strategic advocacy roles for CR and equity</p>
7	Signals of progress in political and partnership environment	<p>Community leaders consider how their climate resilience work impacts and reflects the needs, priorities, and knowledge of low-income and vulnerable populations</p> <p>Policymakers have made changes to increase opportunities for frontline communities (adjusted meeting practices to accommodate more diverse participation in public processes for decision-making, added or designated seats on advisory bodies for frontline community leaders, etc.)</p> <p>Policymakers indicate considerations for their CR decision-making (level of public support, budget, equity, needs of frontline communities, etc.)</p> <p>Policymakers indicate what issues they see as most relevant to the frontline communities</p> <p>Policymakers indicate that they consult community leaders and/or CBOs about CR issues and policy</p> <p>Policymakers indicate that community voice has impacted their thinking about CR and equity</p> <p>Community members/leaders feel heard by policymakers on issues related to CR</p>

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Outcome category	Outcome	Indicators
	CBOs increase number and/or strength of working relationships with elected and appointed officials and agency staff working on climate resilience issues	<p>Policymakers and influencers identify the organization as a credible voice to consult on CR, especially with regards to community needs</p> <p>Policymakers consult with organization on decision-making, policymaking, etc.</p> <p>Policymakers see community members as leaders on CR and equity</p>

Details of the four verification interactions that occurred as a part of site visits—staff interviews, community dialogues, policy change dialogues, and policymaker interviews—are described in Table B2 below.

Table C2: Site Visit Verification Interactions

	CBO grantee staff interviews (one-on-one)	Community dialogue (group)
<i>Timing and duration</i>	During site visit 30 minutes	During site visit 1.5–2 hours (consult grantee to understand what is feasible)
<i>Identify participants</i>	In conversation with the grantee/with input from grantee	In conversation with the grantee/with input from grantee
<i>Outreach</i>	Initially through CBO leadership, then Spark	Initially through CBO staff, then Spark
<i>Stakeholders (number and criteria)</i>	Up to 3 CBO staff members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 staff member directly working on climate resilience programs and projects At least 1 staff member working in other issue area(s) where CR and equity principles are integrated 	6–8 people who have enough involvement in the organization’s activities or work that they have experienced CR and equity programming and advocacy work and are a respected voice in the community, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leaders Grantee program participants
<i>Facilitator</i>	Site visit lead	Site visit lead or site visit second (if Spanish speaking)
<i>Outcomes</i>	2, 3, 4	3, 5, 6, 7
<i>Objectives (See also indicators in Table 2)</i>	<p>Gather CBO staff perspective on commitment to and capacity for CR and equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization’s efforts and actions to embed CR and+ equity in mission/vision/values, priorities, programs, and culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission, vision, values, and priorities reflect community priorities for CR and equity (M/V/V as starting point to identify how community priorities are integrated into organizational priorities and actions) CR integration into multiple issue areas For community advocacy organizations, how is climate/EJ included in org work now? 	<p>Understand program participant and community leader perspectives on organizational commitment to CR and equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational values reflect community priorities Organization includes community in the shaping of CR and equity strategy (or elsewhere in the org) <p>Understand community member perspective on signals of progress in community leadership and engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How has increased org capacity translated into increased skill among community leaders? How has leadership development led by CBO translated to action by community leaders?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For EJ orgs how is advocacy included in the work now • Structures to maintain CR and equity long term • Changes in staff knowledge, skills, and confidence in CR, EJ, and racial equity, as well as how this translates into staff's work 	Understand community member perspective on whether policymakers are considering how their CR work impacts frontline communities
<i>Methods</i>	<p>Short, focused individual conversations with staff members (guided by an interview protocol)</p> <p>(Site visitors can split up to conduct these individual interviews)</p>	<p>Focus group (specific methods TBD)</p> <p>Methods to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written statements to react to • Dot voting • Pair and share writing (asking for specific examples) • Most significant change exploration

	Policy maker Interviews (one-on-one)	Policy change dialogue (group)
<i>Timing and duration</i>	<p>Flexible timing during the verification period</p> <p>Realistically 30 minutes, maximum 45 minutes</p>	<p>Last dialog during site visit</p> <p>2.5 hours</p>
<i>Identify participants</i>	In conversation with the grantee/with input from grantee	In conversation with the grantee/with input from grantee
<i>Outreach</i>	Spark in conjunction with CBO's leadership and CR-specific staff	Spark in conjunction with CBO's leadership and CR-specific staff
<i>Stakeholders (number and criteria)</i>	<p>2 policymakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 policymaker who was integrally involved in the selected policy win <p>At least 1 policymaker who can reflect on their working relationship with the grantee and the impact of the grantee on how policymaker thinks about CR and equity</p>	<p>6–9 participants who directly worked on the policy win and can speak with specificity and depth about policy change and/or strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 3 CBO staff and leadership • Up to 3 community leaders • Up to 3 partner organization staff
<i>Facilitator</i>	Ideally, this would be the content lead or, alternatively, the other site visitor—both will be intimately familiar with the grantee organization, the grantee's CRUO Theory of change, and the policy win in focus and will be able to easily adapt the protocol.	Site visit lead
<i>Outcomes</i>	1, 7, 8	1
<i>Objectives (See also indicators in Table 2)</i>	<p>Understand policymaker perspective on how the selected policy win was achieved and if/how it sets the stage for long-term policy change with CR and equity focus</p> <p>Understand policymaker perspective on signals of progress in political environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If/how policymaker considers low-income and vulnerable communities in their CR work • Changes in practices and processes to create more opportunities for frontline 	<p>Gather multiple stakeholder perspectives on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy win and its aspects of social equity, community priorities, and inclusion of the most vulnerable • How the short-term policy win was achieved • If/how this win sets the stage for long-term change • If/how the policy was implemented

	<p>communities to have voice in decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection on organization as a community leader and credible source on CR and equity <p>Reasons/issues for which organization is seen as credible leader</p>	
<i>Methods</i>	<p>Structured interview with one part focused on relationship building with policymakers and grantee influence on policy process and decision-making, and one part tailored to the grantee organization's policy win.</p>	<p>Adapted process tracing dialog to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of win itself • What facilitated win • How it sets the stage for future strategy

Appendix D: Supplemental Grant Funds

CRUO CBOs were invited to apply for funds to advance implementation of policy wins and scale existing efforts. In addition, CBOs were also offered the opportunity to propose collaborative efforts across funded communities to advance learning or regional/state-level policy efforts. The table below provides a brief description of CRUO CBOs funded to pursue implementation efforts.

CRUO CBO	Purpose
ALIGN	Translate the Dirty Buildings campaign into public sector investment
APEN	Advance equitable implementation of California’s SOMAH (Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing) program
Catalyst Miami	Advance the development of a set of place-based resilience hubs
Cleveland Neighborhood Progress	Expand climate ambassadors program in order to advance an Eco-District approach to neighborhood planning
Coalition of Communities of Color (NAYA partner)	Drive equitable implementation of the Portland Clean Energy Initiative
Environmental Health Coalition	Staff and facilitate the San Diego Transportation Equity Working group
Fifth Avenue Committee	Use an Eco-District framework to drive the next phase of land use planning
Ironbound	Advance state-level air quality and clean energy policy gains to reinforce and augment local policy victories
LAANE	Building on local pilots, support local implementation of SOMAH (Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing) legislation
Leadership Counsel	Advance equitable local implementation of state-level policies with a focus on climate communities and air quality
NOAH	Expand and facilitate NOAH's Adaptation Planning Working Group for shared resiliency planning
Puget Sound Sage	Continue place-based work at the intersection of climate resilience and displacement
The Point	Advance equitable implementation of Hunts Point Resiliency Project
SWU	Drive an accountable and equitable implementation of the San Antonio Climate Action & Adaptation Plan
WE ACT	Advance WE ACT’s efforts to identify alternative approaches to bringing climate resilience to Northern Manhattan residents

Appendix E: Site Summaries

Note: Photos in Appendix E were provided to the evaluation team by each individual CBO.

Alliance for a Greater New York

Alliance for a Greater New York (ALIGN) seeks to achieve a more resilient and just climate economy in New York City through increased energy efficiency, renewable energy infrastructure, equitable job creation, sustainable and affordable housing for residents, and reduced public health impacts and energy burdens on low-income households. ALIGN pursued these goals through the following strategies:



- Investing in research and policy development
- Establishing cross-organizational partnerships with other sectors
- Organizing events, meetings, convenings, workshops, and trainings
- Developing strategic communications and mass engagement through websites, social media, and earned media
- Policy advocacy to advance city policy adoption and implementation

Policies and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Public Power Campaign/Project	Collaborate with New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) to ensure that all public buildings are outfitted with renewable energy installations, siting priority is given to frontline communities, savings from renewable energy are reinvested in low-income communities of color, and public investments in renewable energy create good union jobs	<i>Implementation</i>
NYC Energy Efficiency Program	Retrofits of every city-owned building by 2025 and installation of 100 MW of solar on public buildings and overall effective and equitable implementation	<i>Implementation</i>
Solar generation in public school buildings	Supporting installation of solar-generating systems on public school buildings	<i>Implementation</i>
Holding elected officials accountable to retrofitting and solar installations on public buildings	City elected officials held accountable to vision and promises of OneNYC, New York City’s comprehensive plan for creating a sustainable, resilient, and equitable city.	<i>Advocacy</i>
Sandy Build it Back Program and Green Jobs Corps	Influenced the creation of local hiring programs that connect union jobs and workforce development to low-income residents, people of color, and women from storm-devastated areas of New York City	<i>Implementation</i>

Dirty Buildings Campaign	New York City mandates that all privately-owned buildings 25,000 Sq. Ft and above reduce energy use 40% by 2030 and 80% by 2050 with provisions to protect rent-regulated tenants from rent increases and displacement.	<i>Advocacy</i>
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Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, ALIGN has learned a lot about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity.

- **Bringing together non-traditional allies can lead to successful, multi-dimensional outcomes.** ALIGN brought together community, labor, and environmental justice groups that had not previously worked hand in hand to address climate change issues. By aligning these organizations around common objectives in mitigating climate change, ALIGN and its allies were able to develop unique environmental policy centered around economic and racial equity.
- **Creating open dialogue with community members can provide critical input for campaign development.** Listening to community members and understanding how climate change impacts their daily lives can shed light on needs that go beyond technical policy processes. Issues like housing, jobs, and unemployment are important to community members and can help drive campaign development so that they are intersectional and responsive to needs on the ground.
- **Coalition building should result in long-term alliances.** ALIGN's model of coalition building is structured so that partner and community engagement is continuous through different phases of the work. This model helps ensure that folks remain plugged in during implementation and allows for skill building, collaboration, and building of working relationships with policymakers and agencies throughout the campaign.

Where Our Work Is Headed

ALIGN has positioned itself as a key player in climate resilience and equity in New York City and in the future plans on approaching its work in the following ways:

- **Ensure proper implementation of the Public Power Project.** Through ALIGN's advocacy, DCAS has adopted a set of criteria that prioritizes environmental justice communities for solar and ALIGN is currently working with stakeholders to secure a Project Labor Agreement for all public solar installation work. In addition, further studies and engagement with technical experts, business owners, labor, and community will continue, along with broader oversight of the implementation process.
- **Get the Dirty Buildings Campaign over the finish line.** ALIGN will continue advocacy on legislation for the campaign. It has been a challenge to get lawmakers to consider the policy holistically to include equity and community concerns, particularly around housing affordability. Because the policy provides for a separate compliance path for rent-regulated housing in order to protect tenants from rent increases, the campaign has called for funds to support retrofits in rent-regulated buildings and other low-income housing. ALIGN is in early stages of advocacy around the city budget to push for public investments for energy efficiency and workforce development.
- **Develop a water infrastructure campaign.** National events have highlighted the case for 'water as a right,' leading ALIGN to explore the implications of aging water infrastructure in New York City. ALIGN will develop a campaign that incorporates water infrastructure into climate resilience issues and ensure equitable access to clean quality water for community members.



Asian Pacific Environmental Network

Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) acts so that working class communities of color can respond to the impacts of climate change and displacement pressures. APEN works to improve neighborhood stabilization and ensure access to the economic and health benefits of climate policies and public funds by infusing the priorities of low income and vulnerable populations into policies and investments. APEN pursued these goals through the following strategies:



- Building support for projects to reduce disruptive impacts that affect San Francisco Bay area’s most underserved communities
- Disseminating research, resiliency data and information in a culturally-literate manner
- Developing “base-building” networks of community-based organizations that strengthen relationships with environmental and transit allies and local/regional officials
- Facilitating leadership development, training, and education for members to support engagement in policy and planning processes
- Engaging in outreach and education of organizations, local leaders, and community members to enhance capacity to advocate and access resources and benefits from California climate and energy laws and funds

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Alameda County Community Choice Aggregation	Allows for pooling of electricity demand of participating communities, choice around energy purchase including renewable low carbon emission energy, provides for financial tools that support energy efficiency programs, ownership of rooftop solar and other renewable technologies and strategies	<i>Implementation</i>
Solar Energy Legislation (AB 693)	Advocated for equitable implementation of landmark solar energy legislation to prioritize enrollment of community members worst hit by poverty and pollution	<i>Implementation</i>
Electric Program Investment Charge (AB523)	Mandates 25% of funds from the state Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) administered by the CA Public Utilities Commission benefit disadvantaged communities across CA	<i>Implementation</i>
CA Cap and Trade Extension (AB398)	Extends the cap and trade through 2030; continuing the work due to missed opportunity to ensure real reductions of GHG emissions, improve air quality and create new clean energy infrastructure in climate vulnerable communities.	<i>Continued Advocacy</i>
Solar Energy Project	New options for experimentation and development of a joint proposal to the CA Energy Commission for a micro grid project that includes distributed solar and energy storage in downtown Oakland. Siting has preliminary approval.	<i>Early implementation</i>
Air Resources Board's Climate Investments program	Initiative that puts \$140 billion of cap and trade to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy and improving public health and the environment.	<i>Early implementation</i>

100% Renewable Energy in the electricity sector (SB100)	Require that retail sellers and local publicly-owned electric utilities procure a minimum quantity of electricity products from eligible renewable energy resources. Implementation will ensure greater equity and investment in disadvantaged communities.	<i>Early implementation</i>
CA Energy Commission Barrier Study (SB350)	Required the CEC to perform a barrier study. Supported CEC in community input to this study to understand the barriers to accessing renewables and energy efficiency for low-income and disadvantaged communities.	<i>Adopted</i>

Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity.

- **Work needs to be open and adaptable.** APEN has found that while it is important to keep your eye on sustainable solutions for climate resiliency, it is equally important to recognize that the vehicles to achieve goals need to be responsive and adaptive to opportunities and challenges as they arise. This translates into shifts in coalition roles, ways of leveraging partnerships, and the types of narratives used to engage the community.
- **Adaptation through community engagement.** Adaptation requires combining strategy with a community powerbase. Purposeful engagement of impacted communities is needed to move towards more climate-resilient communities. While it is important to address the physical changes in the urban environment related to climate change, the experience of people who are living in impacted neighborhoods, their priorities and opportunities, and their solutions need to be central.
- **Early relationships lead to a richer collaborative agenda.** Inroads would not have been achieved without APEN’s early engagement with other groups. This has sparked new coalitions and alliances of organizations across the region that are still maintained today. Because of the early cultivation of relationships, APEN can strategize in a multi-faceted manner through coalition work rather than focusing on a narrow subset of issues and solutions.

Where Our Work Is Headed

Moving forward, the organization plans on approaching their work in the following ways:

- **Building movement power at multiple levels.** At APEN, there is a broader acceptance of the solutions necessary to realize resilient communities. APEN is committed to finding ways to build a base of community power to promote solutions at the local, state, and regional levels and generate the influence necessary to develop truly climate resilient communities.
- **Policy angle-adaptation work.** APEN continues to work closely and lead projects on intersectionality and vulnerability. APEN will identify communities that are the most vulnerable to climate change and pursue policy solutions and acquire resources at the state level towards community solutions to strengthen climate adaptation work.
- **Strengthening partnerships and alliances.** To strengthen climate resilience capacity across the state, it will be important to look at where there are shared interests between labor groups and other vulnerable populations. This would provide the opportunity to have a larger conversation about what new infrastructure should look like; both physical energy-related infrastructure but also the political and decision-making structures that determine who benefits and who does not.

Catalyst Miami

Catalyst Miami’s goals are to create and support structures and systems in Miami-Dade County that benefit all community members, provide for the safety and well-being of future generations of Miami’s residents and visitors, establish networks to fight poverty countywide, and contribute to global climate resilience. Catalyst Miami pursued these goals through the following strategies:



- Engaging in educational efforts to build public awareness about forecasts of climate change and community resilience concepts
- Participating in grass tops conversations and advisory councils
- Co-organizing the Miami Climate Alliance and the People’s Climate Movement
- Developing a targeted communications campaign including a website, social media, phone outreach, and grassroots channels
- Providing leadership skills development opportunities for adults and youth through the Community Leadership on the Environment, Advocacy, and Resilience (CLEAR) program
- Building relationships with community groups and individual community members in order to better understand community issues and to collectively inform policy change

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Miami Forever General Obligation Bond	Miami will invest \$192 million for stormwater management projects and \$100 million for affordable housing. The fund also includes \$78 million in park improvements, \$23 million in road repairs, and \$7 million in public safety. This would be the City of Miami’s first significant climate adaptation funding.	<i>Implementation</i>
Miami Forever General Obligation Bond Community Oversight Board (MFB COB) Requirements	Miami passed an ordinance which added the following requirements to the MFB COB: demographic diversity, Miami residents only, no lobbyists or overt conflicts of interest, added community leadership as a valued expertise. These were decided by community members at two town halls that Catalyst Miami hosted.	<i>Implementation</i>
Prevention of funding cuts for transportation	Prevented \$13.5 million in service cuts by Miami-Dade County	<i>Implementation</i>
Regional Climate Action Plan	Helped author the new Equity and Public Health chapters of the Regional Climate Action Plan for the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (Broward, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, and Monroe Counties). Fifty community members that Catalyst Miami helped convene co-authored the Equity Chapter.	<i>Implementation</i>
Miami-Dade County Budget	Increased investment in the Miami-Dade County Office of Resilience and Sustainability; Budget Director announced that this was due to our persistent advocacy efforts. In 2015, there was \$0 investment in the \$7	<i>Implementation</i>

	billion County budget and no Office of Resilience. Now they have a \$2.5 million budget and 13 staff.	
Successful Solar Ballot Initiatives	Helped with the passage on Yes on Amendment 4, a solar ballot initiative that prevents increases in property tax on business owners who install solar. Helped with failure of No on Amendment 1, a bad utility-backed initiative that monopolizes solar and puts it in the control of large utilities.	<i>Implementation</i>

Insights from CRUO

Catalyst Miami learned a great deal about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity:

- **The CLEAR program created deep relationships in the community.** Catalyst Miami has become a trusted body in the community because staff take a "community first" approach, leading with compassion and listening to their community members. Modeling behaviors and actions that show that community is at the center helps to further solidify relationships and increase trust.
- **Grassroots engagement is most effective at the neighborhood level.** Catalyst Miami understands that to sustain climate resilience efforts, local power must be generated. This can be done by tailoring strategies for engagement to the context of the individual community.
- **A good inside/outside game strategy requires a careful balance.** Working in coalitions with organizations that have clear roles provides cover and allows organizations to push on existing power structures and institutions in effective ways. It is important that organizations are aligned on who is playing which role in order to capitalize on opportunities as they present themselves.

Where Our Work Is Headed

Catalyst Miami has positioned itself as a key player in climate resilience and equity work in Miami, Florida. Moving forward, the organization plans on approaching its work in the following ways:

- **Adopting a resilience lens across all areas of work.** The CRUO initiative allowed Catalyst Miami staff to see the ways in which resilience encompasses a number of different themes that the organization has historically worked on including financial security and wealth building. Through their climate work, staff learned that they could successfully combine different parts of their theory of change from community leadership to coalition building to direct service into one program area with aligned strategies and fewer siloes.
- **Implementation of the Miami Forever Bond.** Catalyst Miami will continue to engage as bond money is allocated to ensure that community priorities are considered, particularly in the roll-out of affordable housing projects.
- **Increase civic engagement.** Catalyst Miami wants to see greater engagement of community members by elected officials and one of their goals is to continue to create opportunities for community members to meaningfully engage with decision-makers.



Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress is working toward comprehensive and equitable climate resilience that delivers multiple benefits to

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress



local residents. Its goals include that neighborhood residents are prepared for emergencies; energy consumption is reduced; the City of Cleveland's Climate Action Plan is updated using an equity and engagement framework with the Climate Ambassadors playing an integral role in the outreach and engagement process; and social cohesion is strengthened in the four participating neighborhoods. Cleveland Neighborhood Progress is working toward these goals through the following strategies:

- Helping project partners develop metrics to evaluate the extent to which residents are better prepared for climate change-induced events and ways to achieve it, and evidence of greater social cohesion
- Collecting and disseminating effective mitigation and adaptation strategies for shared learning with other cities in the Midwest
- Training a cohort of Climate Ambassadors and strengthening their capacity to engage in building climate resilience
- Supporting local climate documentaries and climate fairs to raise community awareness around climate change
- Promoting and enhancing neighborhood-specific climate resilient adaptation concepts such as design of a neighborhood Cooling Center to address seasonal thermal discomfort
- Mapping the geographic distribution of climate-related vulnerability and pursuing research funds to better understand local needs
- Engaging communities to keep neighborhood and civic leaders informed on issues, needs, and efforts

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Cleveland Tree Plan	An action plan for Cleveland's urban forest to guide decision-making on tree planting, tree establishment, and tree management.	<i>Implementation</i>
Cleveland Climate Action Plan	Hosted 12 community workshops to engage residents in developing the plan and to inspire over 40 resident-led projects (over 20 of which received match funding).	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Tree Canopy Pilot Project	Pilot program to plant trees on City owned lots with the help of Western Reserve Land Conservancy.	<i>Implementation</i>
Recreational Equity Assessment	Assess equitable access to comprehensive recreational amenities.	<i>Design</i>

Climate and Social Vulnerability Assessment	This assessment and template overlays social factors with climate factors to determine geographies and populations most vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change.	<i>Implementation</i>
Cuyahoga County Climate Action Plan	Worked with Cuyahoga County on the framing and outline for their first county-wide climate action plan. Plan incorporates significant ideas from the CRUO initiative.	<i>Waiting Period</i>

Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity.

- **Link climate resilience investments with current community needs and concerns.** Cleveland Neighborhood Progress started with the immediate and ongoing needs of residents related to health, safety, public space, emergency preparedness, and their concern about vacant lands. Demonstrating the connection of these issues to climate resilience and opportunities to create meaningful benefits for the community was powerful for inspiring grassroots action on climate resilience.
- **Engage community leaders as climate resilience ambassadors to amplify the work.** Cleveland Neighborhood Progress provided stipends to community leaders in four neighborhoods to connect community residents with climate resilience policy and practice recommendations.
- **Train staff at all levels in racial equity.** Cleveland took a new approach to updating its Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2018, intentionally integrating equity into its planning approach and training staff on racial equity. The plan’s 107 actions and 28 objectives were assessed using a racial equity tool to determine which ones worked to advance equity. The experience with the CAP inspired the Mayor’s office to institutionalize racial equity through training for cabinet-level staff.

Where Our Work Is Headed

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress has positioned itself as a key player in climate resilience and equity in the City of Cleveland. Moving forward, the organization plans on approaching their work in the following ways:

- **Planning for Extreme Weather.** Partners are working on neighborhood-scale research to understand thermal comfort and the variation in temperatures in summer and winter to inform land use policies that reflect different needs of the community.
- **Implementing Equitable Development Models.** Cleveland Neighborhood Progress is interested in developing neighborhood plans that advance equity, resilience, and climate protection by integrating the eco-district model and using the climate ambassador approach.
- **Great Lakes Climate Network.** Cleveland Neighborhood Progress is reaching out to expand its impact with the help of other organizations in the Midwest. The organization will be sharing its experiences as a way to build collaboration across the region.



Environmental Health Coalition

Environmental Health Coalition worked to reduce the impacts of climate change by increasing climate resilience throughout the San Diego region with an emphasis on the most impacted communities, including improved transportation access and infrastructure, job opportunities, improved public health, and increased civic engagement in impacted communities. Environmental Health Coalition pursued these goals through the following strategies:



- Conducting power analyses and preparing research briefs
- Reviewing policy proposals and drafting positions and recommendations
- Facilitating community training and workshops
- Organizing participation of community supporters and allies in events such as meetings, rallies, and press conferences to build and maintain support for policies
- Engaging in outreach using fact sheets, letters to government officials, petitions, and other advocacy and communication materials

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
AB-805 County of San Diego: transportation agencies	Changes voting authority/administrative processes of three major transportation planning agencies to support equity in representation; increases oversight of these agencies, and increases focus on air quality	<i>Early Implementation</i>
No on Measure A	Environmental Health Coalition and resident leaders joined a coalition of more than 20 social justice, labor, and community groups to demand that investment be directed to better transit and safe streets for biking and walking in low-income communities. Alongside the coalition, Community Action Team (CAT) members educated their neighbors about the importance of transportation justice for good jobs, clean air, and healthy communities. The ballot measure was defeated in the November 2016 election	<i>Completed</i>
Barrio Logan Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal Expansion	Port of San Diego adopted an expansion plan for the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal with significant pollution reductions and community benefits. The plan includes: 25% less maximum cargo throughput; 36 new pieces of electric cargo handling equipment; mandatory equipment that captures/treats smokestack emissions for ships without shoreside electricity; annual equipment inventory; renewable energy project on the terminal for greenhouse gas reductions; and community benefits including local hire, parking solutions, and a local community advisory monitoring committee.	<i>Implementation</i>

Metropolitan Transit System Zero Emissions Buses Pilot Program	MTS board unanimously approved a zero-emissions bus pilot program to be deployed in a disadvantaged community and MTS gained new authority to levy sales taxes for transit.	<i>Completed</i>
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Insights from CRUO

Environmental Health Coalition can share many lessons learned about advancing systems change related to climate resilience and equity:

- **Translating climate jargon is often essential to encourage community participation.** Education and training on climate impacts and quality of life can help community members connect climate resilience and environmental justice to issues that are relevant to their day-to-day lives. This allows community members to interpret the issues in meaningful ways and builds momentum for greater community engagement.
- **Creating leadership pathways for civic engagement is critical.** Organizing, educating and developing leadership capacity within the community can be more difficult than policy advocacy, but it is the only way to ensure that authentic community voices are represented within structures of power and in civil society. Frameworks for creating leadership capacity are key to keeping equity at the center of climate resilience and other issues.
- **Equity work is hard to maintain.** Despite promising alliances with environmental, labor, and other organizations, the voice of equity groups is often crowded out. An equity focus must be specific and intentional from conception to implementation in order to ensure gains for underserved communities.

Where Our Work Is Headed

Environmental Health Coalition has positioned itself as a key player in climate resilience and equity issues in San Diego. Moving forward, the organization plans on pursuing several areas of work:

- **Focus on transportation justice.** As result of the passage of AB-805, the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) will be able to raise its own funds for transportation measures. A bond will be issued in 2020 and Environmental Health Coalition is working on influencing the type of projects that will be put forward in the ballot measure. Environmental Health Coalition will also focus more broadly on transport and climate work at the local and state levels, working to build equity into the discussion.
- **Participation in the Quality of Life Coalition.** Environmental Health Coalition will continue to ensure that community voice is part of the conversation through the Quality of Life Coalition, a group of labor, environmental, social justice, affordable housing, and transit organizations representing over 150,000 San Diego County residents.
- **Creation of the San Diego Transportation Equity Working Group.** Environmental Health Coalition recognized the need for authentic community and environmental justice voices in the policy development and implementation arena. Environmental Health Coalition established the SDTEWG in late 2018 as a continuation of the CRUO partnership with expanded membership from community-based organizations working on transit.



Fifth Avenue Committee

Fifth Avenue Committee supports resilient, sustainable, healthy, and safe communities in the Brooklyn, New York coastal



neighborhoods of Red Hook and Gowanus by organizing low-income public housing residents and allies to inform the climate justice and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) accountability movements as well as land use and environmental remediation efforts. Fifth Avenue Committee pursued these goals through the following strategies:

- Building knowledge, capacity, power, and social cohesion among Red Hook and Gowanus public housing residents to overcome a range of stressors and influence public policy decisions
- Providing leadership training, development, and support for public housing residents and low-income advocates and allied stakeholders
- Ensuring Turning the Tide (T3) and local community has access to appropriate technical assistance to influence public policy around environmental clean-ups, resilience, sustainability, and land use efforts by NYC, USEPA, NYCHA and others
- Developing alliances across sectors through its efforts in both T3 and the Gowanus Neighborhood Coalition for Justice (GNCJ) with a specific focus on engaging public housing residents, industrial businesses owners, and local allies to influence relevant federal, state and local elected officials and agencies including USEPA, NYC DCP & DEP and NYCHA.
- Advocating to ensure billions of dollars in public and private investments in local environmental cleanups, resilience, sustainability, infrastructure, and real estate development efforts advance climate resilience, sustainability, and equity goals

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Create an Eco District in Gowanus - NYC's first	Create an Eco District as part of the Gowanus rezoning to address equity, resilience and climate action to address needs of public housing residents and the larger community.	<i>Advocacy</i>
Promote Public Value Recovery (aka Value Capture) as part of Gowanus rezoning and clean-ups to preserve NYCHA and a promote healthy, sustainable community	NYC should implement Public Value Recovery, the first effort outside of Manhattan and focused on equity, to recapture a portion of increased property value developers will gain as a result of the land use changes and environmental clean ups to dedicate these funds to addressing local public housing capital needs (>\$500 million) and Eco-District goals.	<i>Advocacy</i>
Siting of Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO) Tanks	T3 organized to change public park and public pool locations given impact on the local public housing community; those efforts led directly to NYC DEP selecting a different location (the Gowanus Canal-side site). A larger stakeholder group—the North Canal Visioning Group—has now been formed to promote shared goals.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Reopening of Gowanus Houses Community Center	The Gowanus Community Center is an important community resource and was a base of emergency support after Superstorm Sandy. Fifth Avenue Committee has supported temporary uses including arts and youth programming. In Oct.	<i>Advocacy</i>

	2017, Mayor de Blasio committed to reopen the center and \$4 million is included in the Draft Rezoning Framework for Gowanus.	
Fifth Avenue Committee Solar & Community Solar & Gowanus Wi-Fi-Mesh Projects	Community-controlled resilient infrastructure paired with green job training and placement to address the digital divide and expand access to renewable energy for low- and middle-income multi-family affordable and public housing, contributing to GHG reduction, emergency preparedness, social cohesion and access to green jobs.	<i>Early Implementation</i>

Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity.

- **Ongoing pressure on government ensures accountability.** Policymakers are always adapting. If the organization and its partners are viewed as respected sources of community representation, decision-makers will be incentivized to establish a closer relationship. As policy changes occur, Fifth Avenue Committee leverages its embedded position in the community to convene community members and ensure accountability, not allowing policy implementation to occur without community needs being met.
- **Advocacy from the community makes efforts sustainable.** Community ownership of advocacy efforts must be realized. This comes both from ensuring that the priorities of the organization are aligned with the priorities of the community and by providing opportunities for the community to engage in civic matters. Fifth Avenue Committee’s consistent, meaningful embeddedness in the community is key to community empowerment and sustained engagement. If what is advocated for is truly a priority of the community, it will lead to long term sustainability.
- **Building local power and capacity helps build equity.** Fifth Avenue Committee is activating citizens who would not traditionally have a voice at the policy table or access to jobs by creating, investing in, and otherwise supporting capacity and knowledge building/sharing activities and opportunities such as leadership trainings and workforce training. Fifth Avenue Committee has focused its efforts on building power and economic sustainability for the most impacted members of their communities by engaging public housing residents.

Where Our Work Is Headed

Fifth Avenue Committee has positioned themselves as a key player in climate resilience and equity in Brooklyn and New York City. Moving forward, the organization plans on approaching their work in the following ways:

- **Continuing to build on ongoing local, city-wide or broader regional processes.** Fifth Avenue Committee continues to attend to and build on local, city-level and regional-level processes and policies to provide foundations to support their efforts. For example, New York City has been working towards a Gowanus rezoning and city-wide affirmatively furthering fair housing process; Fifth Avenue Committee continues to organize around an Eco-District, Public Value Recovery and efforts to address long-standing neglect of public housing tenants and the environment and create programs and advocate for policies that promote equity, sustainability and resilience.
- **Focusing on the implementation of significant wins.** Following multiple significant recent wins, Fifth Avenue Committee will be focusing on its role as part of ongoing oversight and accountability during their implementation. Fifth Avenue Committee will continue to convene residents, checking in on early implementation; for those wins that seem to have shifted away from addressing or responding to the community’s needs or intentions, Fifth Avenue Committee will provide space and mechanisms to reconvene and determine how to support the community to get the win back “on track.”
- **Implementing new and replicable models.** Fifth Avenue Committee is working to implement several community controlled resilient infrastructure projects that leverage investment to train and place local residents into green jobs to ensure positive environmental and economic benefits for local public housing and affordable housing residents and the larger community.

Ironbound Community Corporation

Ironbound Community Corporation (Ironbound) works to ensure the City of Newark, NJ and all its residents are more resilient to the effects of climate change, specifically flooding, air pollution, dirty energy, extreme weather, and heat. Jobs



creation and small business development rebuilds and greens the city’s aging infrastructure, pairing climate resilience with economic stability and climate resilience does not lead to displacement of current residents. Ironbound in partnership with Clean Water Fund (CWF) and the New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) pursued these goals through the following strategies:

- Building partnerships with stakeholders and residents including public, private, non-profit sectors, housing, labor, business, arts, culture, environment, transportation, government, economic development, and others to advance allied position
- Development of resident, neighborhood-based environmental justice leadership through training programs and support in the development of actional recommendations that offer multiple community benefits
- Educating and preparing residents to respond to impacts of climate change and building community awareness
- Implementation of a resident-developed climate resilience agenda and efforts to mitigate the impact of flooding, air pollution, dirty energy, disaster and extreme heat
- Engagement of residents in the generation of data and research to support resiliency efforts

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Environmental Justice and Cumulative Impact Ordinance	Requires the city to create an Environmental Resources Inventory which identifies new commercial or industrial projects and must make to the public the amount and type of pollution associated with the project.	<i>Implementation</i>
Environmental Justice Act of 2017 a.k.a. the Booker Bill	The bill protects the federal EJ Executive Order No. 12898 and states that new applications for pollution permits can be denied under certain circumstances based on cumulative impacts, leveraging language in the municipal ordinance.	<i>Waiting Period</i>
Homes for All Newark Campaign	City-wide coalition to push for stronger rent control after the city council voted to weaken rent control. Passed by municipal council.	<i>Implementation</i>
Heat Relief and Tips	City of Newark heat relief plan including city-wide expansion of cooling centers, placement of oversized cooling tips posters and street banners.	<i>Implementation</i>
Climate Action Planning + Mitigation	Requires 100% of electricity generation to come from clean renewable energy by 2050 with meaningful benchmarks every five years.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
State Energy Master Plan	A state-level Energy Master Plan process that emphasizes energy and transit equity, energy efficiency, and benefits of green power including job training and employment.	<i>Advocacy</i>

Executive Order 23	Directs the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to take the lead in developing a guidance document for all executive branch departments and agencies for the consideration of EJ impacts on community in implementing their statutory and regulatory responsibilities, as well as facilitate coordination between state agencies.	<i>Early implementation</i>
State Cumulative Impact Proposal - S.1700	Mandates that cumulative impacts of existing and new pollution sources must be documented prior to issuing new site permits.	<i>Advocacy</i>

Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity.

- **Community-based organizations are a critical partner in building bridges.** Ironbound links government officials with the work on the ground to lift up best practices in community engagement, green infrastructure, and workforce development to keep economic and social inclusion front and center. Policymakers seek information from partners they see as trusted sources of knowledge and a bridge to the community. This trusted advisor role extends into the implementation of key decisions impacting community.
- **Sustainable change results from a community-driven agenda.** For advocacy efforts to be successful, residents must have a say in the agenda. The successful, sustained movement around climate resilience in Newark started with connecting to residents around their own vulnerabilities and priorities, then discovering together how resiliency works.
- **Don't overlook the small wins.** Quick wins and even "little" wins are important. They provide an opportunity to celebrate, see the results of resident-led efforts, and mitigate frustrations with slow policy process. Being adaptable allows for small wins to arise and avoids a fixation on solely holding out for only a few big wins.

Where Our Work Is Headed

Ironbound, CWF, and the NJEJA are positioned as key advocates in climate resilience and equity in Newark. Moving forward, these organization plan to continue their work on:

- **Sustainability action plan.** As the city begins redoing its sustainability action plan, these partners look forward to elevating the voice of residents, making sure that the city's agenda reflects community needs, and raising issues that are tied to the real-world experiences of those in neighborhoods throughout Newark.
- **Energy work.** Ironbound, CWF, and NJEJA will continue advocacy and accountability efforts around the State Energy Master Plan, ensuring that the focus if fixed to the intended goal to get 100% renewable energy in New Jersey by 2050.
- **Stormwater long-term control plan.** Ongoing work with government officials will lead to millions of dollars of investment particularly in the East and South Wards for large-scale green infrastructure and reduced flooding. The partners will continue to support the finalization of this plan by June 30, 2020 and then the implementation of the plan by ensuring economic and social inclusion of Newark residents in the plan.



Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (Leadership Counsel) has increased resilience in low income and vulnerable neighborhoods in Fresno and Kern counties in California’s San Joaquin Valley (SJV) through improvements in public health, reductions in



private vehicle travel and better alternatives, increased investments in community priorities, and protection from the proliferation of polluting uses in disadvantaged communities. Leadership Counsel pursued these goals through the following strategies:

- Aligning with other organizations for advocacy efforts; building relationships with local, regional, and statewide decision-makers and influencers; and participating in conferences and legislative hearings
- Convening resident leaders to support their advocacy efforts and strategies
- Developing narratives to inform and influence constituencies and community leaders, including conservatives, and communicating through social media, press conferences, and op-eds
- Building organizational expertise in relevant substantive areas to inform complex policy and programmatic changes

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Legislative advocacy	Following the passage of AB 617, which requires air quality monitoring and community-level reductions for air contaminants, Leadership Counsel, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment (“CRPE”) and partners are engaged in developing community air monitoring and emissions reduction plans in Fresno in Shafter. Leadership Counsel and CRPE supported passage of SB 1000, which requires general plans to include multiple environmental justice elements. They are currently working on implementation in Fresno and Kern Counties.	<i>Design/Advocacy/Implementation</i>
Adoption of various community plans in Kern County	Secured commitments to transparency and compliance with environmental justice legislation in the update of the Kern and Fresno Counties General Plans (in advocacy phase). Leadership Counsel is designing an advocacy approach to inform the Kern County Alternative Rural Transportation Plan rural communities feasibility study. Due to Leadership Counsel advocacy, final adoption of the Kern County Regional Transportation Plan (in early implementation) includes commitments to direct resources to disadvantaged communities, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and consider alternative transit options.	<i>Design/Advocacy/Early Implementation</i>
Dairy digester funding requirements	Through community engagement and education of state-level decision-makers, Leadership Counsel secured language requiring community outreach and mitigation by dairy digester developers applying for public resources from the California Department of Food and Agriculture.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Launch of Van y Vienen	Leadership Counsel advocacy contributed to the deployment of an all-electric community-driven rural rideshare program in Fresno County. This program has now expanded to Merced County.	<i>Implementation</i>
Adoption of various community plans in Fresno	Leadership Counsel advocacy led to community and sustainability commitments in the 2018 Fresno Regional Transportation Plan. The City of Fresno Active Transportation Plan includes a decision-making equity matrix developed by Leadership Counsel, partners, and community members. Following Leadership Counsel and community efforts, the City of Fresno unanimously approved the first Southwest Fresno community plan to prioritize green space, public transportation, mixed-income housing, jobs, and zoning practices for overconcentrated industrial uses in West Fresno.	<i>Early Implementation/Implementation</i>

Funding/ investments in SJV	<p>Due to Leadership Counsel and partner advocacy, over half the \$70 million Fresno TCC investment will go to SW Fresno; Leadership Counsel and partners also influenced TCC statewide guidelines to require community engagement and support plans. Leadership Counsel and CRPE advocacy led to investment in Kern County public parks and affordable housing and implementation of affordable energy pilot projects in SJV; pedestrian improvements in Lamont and Rexland Acres; public housing improvements in Wasco; and a new Arvin drinking water well.</p>	<i>Early Implementation/ Implementation</i>
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Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity:

- **Demanding government accountability ensures strong implementation.** If an organization and its partners are viewed by decision-makers as respected sources of knowledge and representative of the community, decision-makers will understand the benefit of establishing closer relationships and developing mutually-beneficial policies. As collaboration leads to policy change, Leadership Counsel maintains pressure on responsible government entities both to create explicit implementation mechanisms to ensure conformity with the policy and ensure ongoing community engagement in policy and program implementation.
- **Building local power helps build equity and makes efforts sustainable.** Community ownership comes from ensuring the priorities of the organization are aligned with the priorities of the community and in providing opportunities for the community to engage in decision-making processes. Leadership Counsel’s efforts to bring state-level attention to the issues in SJV has been strengthened by its engagement at the community level. By sharing local and state-level knowledge and information and co-creating strategies with communities and partners, Leadership Counsel brings community-developed solutions to the state-level table.
- **Approaching the work holistically can highlight new paths.** Rather than assuming a linear strategy, it is important to attend to different potential opportunities and avenues for reaching goals. This can include considering how to work with or otherwise influence decision-making bodies outside the primary target who can also have an influence on the goal, such as working with a state-level agency to create requirements that will hold local elected officials accountable.

Where Our Work Is Headed

Leadership Counsel has positioned themselves as a key player in climate resilience and equity in SJV. Moving forward, the organization plans on:

- **Working with new governor on climate adaptation policy.** With a new administration, Leadership Counsel plans to continue their engagement with state agencies but expects that the interaction will be different. Under the previous governor there was a heavier focus on global climate impacts, sometimes to the detriment of neighborhoods in California. Leadership Counsel hopes to engage the new administration on a climate resilience strategy that focuses on neighborhood well-being in addition to global metrics.
- **Expanding consideration of potential needs and opportunities.** Leadership Counsel anticipates that there will be other important areas of advocacy besides climate change in the coming years. Based on San Joaquin Valley projected population growth and associated demographic, economic, environmental and political impacts and on the recent environmental issues such as wildfires, droughts, and the economic downturn, considering what those issues mean for their communities and how to focus on adaptation strategies at the state level helps shape the agenda moving forward.
- **Leveraging/sustaining policy wins.** Policy wins such as the Transformative Climate Communities program, AB 617, SB 1000, and increased investments in community priorities serve as foundational starting points. As noted above, key to the success of such policies is implementation and identification of opportunities to leverage and maximize impact. Leadership Counsel will work with community leaders to monitor and engage in implementation efforts that will lead to community resilience.

Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy

Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE) works to ensure that frontline communities drive the decisions that impact them at work and at home, to create a sustainable economy that works for all. The organization fights for a green economy that creates access to good jobs and to the benefits of clean energy and clean water, with the ultimate goal of creating more resilient and safe communities. LAANE pursued these goals through the following strategies:



- Building a powerful cross-sector coalition, RePower LA, and a committee of resident ratepayers to have a leading voice in climate resiliency issues
- Cross-sector leadership development and community engagement
- Employment training and support through the Utility Pre-Craft Training Program
- Raising awareness about climate change through social media, earned media, and meetings with city leaders
- Organizing community events with local partners that built support for a climate agenda
- Developing and implementing educational programs around the importance of conserving water
- Campaigning in support of water infrastructure investment

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Community Solar Rooftops Pilot Program	Provides incentives for low-income homeowners to install solar panels to generate in-basin solar energy and lower their energy bills; Created the opportunity for 400 low-income households to benefit from solar installations without the considerable up-front cost and expanded well-paying jobs for LA residents through the Utility PreCraft Trainee (UPCT) program; homeowners hosting solar panels also received discounts.	<i>Implementation</i>
Passage of Measure W	The parcel tax established by Measure W will generate over \$300 million annually to fund LA County's Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP) to modernize the water system and capture and clean storm water. The funds will be allocated to green water infrastructure projects that can reduce storm water pollution and improve local water resilience, while also creating thousands of good construction and permanent maintenance jobs that benefit disadvantaged workers and their communities	<i>Implementation</i>
Shared Solar	After a four-year campaign led by RePower LA, in 2018 the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) Board of Commissioners voted to adopt a Shared Solar program that will increase solar access for 13,000 renters and provide energy efficiency retrofits under the Home Energy Improvement Program.	<i>Implementation</i>
\$100 million for energy efficiency measures	Together with allies, the RePower LA coalition advocated to move the LADWP towards a more renewable future, helping to radically cut back on a contract with a natural gas plant, generating savings of \$100 million over five years which	<i>Early Implementation</i>

	will be directed towards free energy efficiency measures for low- and moderate-income renters.	
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Insights from CRUO

LAANE has learned a lot in the last three years about what it takes to advance systems change related to climate resilience and equity:

- **Organizing frontline communities is critical to success.** Campaigns will not be won without frontline leaders doing direct advocacy. Conducting outreach and engaging frontline communities is necessary to ensure that climate resilience and equity stays at the heart of the work. It is important to create space for those in greatest need to have a seat at the table. Beyond Kresge, most philanthropy has yet to fully understand the real value of mobilizing the people who are most impacted by climate change.
- **Government works best when the community is engaged.** LAANE believes in the power of government and that for all issues, even beyond climate resilience, government action is necessary and can be effective. LAANE wants communities to understand why and how government can play a key role in providing the solutions to climate change.
- **Connect climate change to tangible outcomes for the community.** Helping community members understand how climate change impacts them in terms of pollution or heat effects and linking that to a green jobs pathway can help to make community organizing more successful. Community members become aware of the problem but are also actively engaged in solutions that have a positive impact on their daily lives.

Where Our Work Is Headed

Moving forward, LAANE plans on approaching its work in the following ways:

- **Continued focus on shared solar program implementation, implementation of renter-focused energy efficiency, and solar and energy efficiency jobs.** The shared solar program is directed at renters and LAANE will focus on ensuring there is equitable access for ratepayers. There are numerous pieces of implementation that need to stay on the right track. LAANE has fostered a lot of good will with the Department of Water and Power (DWP) but LAANE will need to have a strong continued presence to make sure that the work is being connected properly to the larger energy efficiency package.
- **Explore EV charging infrastructure.** LAANE is looking into initiatives at the county level to operate in an alternative model with a power purchase agreement.
- **Focus on making the hiring process at DWP more seamless.** Training community members for utility jobs or as private union contractors has been successful, but the jobs pipeline into public jobs has been too slow. LAANE is working to tweak current city rules for entry-level positions and working with DWP so that trainees can more rapidly enter into positions.



Native American Youth and Family Center

Working in partnership with the Coalition of Communities of Color and OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon, Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) is working



toward comprehensive and equitable climate resilience policy and practices changes that deliver multiple forms of justice to communities of color and low-income people. This trio of organizations pursued this goal through the following strategies:

- Increasing access to and ownership of infrastructure for climate resilience in communities of color and for low-income people in the Portland Metro Area
- Creating a network of leaders of color and low-income people prepared for emergencies and with an improved sense of belonging
- Pushing for development without displacement with choice and stability for people of color and people with low income
- Building a shared analysis within the Just Transition strategic framework
- Building power in culturally-specific and cross-cultural venues to advance climate resilience systems change
- Leading and winning the Portland Clean Energy Initiative ballot measure camping in partnership with the Climate Justice Coalition members, NAACP, 350PDX, and Sierra Club
- Adoption and monitoring of City of Portland’s anti-displacement measures in the Portland Comprehensive Plan and Inclusionary Zoning implementation
- Building capacity for our community partners/organizations and individual community members through a series of classes, summits, and volunteer opportunities to engage and drive climate resilience work

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
HB 2017 Keep Oregon Moving	\$125 million annually for safe routes to school, \$15 million annually for cross walks, bike lanes, and sidewalks; a requirement for local transit authorities to plan, justify and evaluate how they will use funds for low-income riders; and rebates for zero emission vehicles for low-income communities.	<i>Implementation</i>
Portland & Multnomah County’s 100% Clean Energy Resolutions	The first city and county commitments to 100% clean energy in the Northwest. Explicit inclusion of low-income communities’ goals.	<i>Implementation</i>
HB 2059 - Student transit	Allows for 1% of transportation funding coming to TriMet to be utilized for student transportation. Creation of grant program for school districts to apply for funding for transportation.	<i>Implementation</i>
Expanded TriMet Youth Pass	Portland City Council agreed that Youth Pass should also cover transportation for the Parkrose and David Douglas school districts.	<i>Implementation</i>

Low Income Fare Secured (2017)	Riders with qualifying incomes, along with organizations that distribute fare to low-income clients, can take advantage of the programs to get their transit fare at a lower cost or at no cost.	<i>Implementation</i>
Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund	Imposes surcharge on certain retailers; funds clean energy and job training. \$30 million in new annual revenue for clean energy and clean energy jobs in Portland.	<i>Early Implementation</i>

Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity.

- **Engage residents across the city as grassroots leaders to activate your base.** For the Portland Clean Energy Fund, the organizations engaged residents of color and residents with low income as grassroots organizers to knock on the doors of their own neighbors, many of whom had never had their door knocked on before.
- **Create clear and simple messages that spell out the benefits of a policy for community.** Many new people joined the climate justice fight because they saw what was in it for them, their families, and their neighbors.
- **Create a shared space for analysis and the development of a shared language.** The organizations held a Just Transition Assembly with members of the Climate Justice Coalition and 250 frontline community members to learn about the Just Transition Framework and develop an understanding of the intersection of climate resilience and equity.
- **Community-based participatory research is a powerful tool for engaging the grassroots and grass-tops.** The Low-Income Fare Equity (LIFE) report provided local data and stories to demonstrate the need for a low-income fare. The report articulated a solution based on the experience of other jurisdictions working toward a low-income fare.

Where Our Work Is Headed

NAYA, CCC, and OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon have positioned themselves as key players in climate resilience and equity in and around the city of Portland, Oregon. Moving forward, the organizations plan on approaching their work in the following ways:

- **Keeping benefits local.** In the wake of policy wins, it will be important to ensure that people of color and residents with low income remain the primary beneficiaries of recent policy wins.
- **Fighting gentrification and displacement.** The organizations will fight to mitigate the adverse effects of urban development so that current residents can benefit from climate resilience policy.
- **Creating an equitable regional transportation package.** The organizations will use the mobilization model from the recent transportation package win for the next regional transportation package with a focus on the intersectionality of housing, transit, climate, economic justice, and gentrification.



Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, Inc.

Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, Inc., (NOAH) is working to bring attention to community climate resilience needs and priorities while supporting residents in their diverse East Boston community to be embedded and take leadership roles in climate resilience efforts occurring at the neighborhood, city, and state levels. NOAH pursued these goals through the following strategies:



- Engaging residents, including youth, in culturally sensitive settings and providing multi-lingual information about E. Boston’s vulnerability to climate changes/sea-level rise
- Promoting resilience and preparedness so community members can speak ‘Climate’ and recruiting neighborhood residents to participate in planning, review, and decision-making processes of public-sector planning efforts
- Serving as a resource and partner for the City of Boston and its agencies in its climate resilience efforts and supporting, promoting, and creating connections between community members and inter-agency city and state representatives
- Through formation of the Adaptation Planning Working Group (APWG, which includes community members and infrastructure managers), influencing the type and timing of planning and implementation efforts of multiple participating city/state agencies responsible for sea level rise and asset protection in E. Boston in a manner that also provides co-benefits to the community.
- Collaborating with other non-profits or agencies which promote carbon reduction/energy-saving programs as well as household waste strategies
- Increasing NOAH’s internal capacity to acquire technical expertise and ‘authority’ through knowledge partnerships with agencies, universities, and other non-profit organizations, committed to climate resilience

Policies and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Impacting city climate and environmental programs in E. Boston	Supporting efforts by the city to prioritize E. Boston in its energy efficiency program and remove E. Boston community participation barriers; advocating for improved E. Boston resident access to household hazardous waste drop off locations and events; and sharing E. Boston resident questions and concerns to inform the Suffolk Downs development process.	<i>Advocacy</i>
Mass DOT transit planning	NOAH engaged in work with city and consultants to support Mass DOT plans to protect three tunnels that connect E. Boston to the rest of the city.	<i>Waiting Period</i>
Prioritizing local and regional resilience projects	Following NOAH advocacy efforts, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority is prioritizing the Blue Line from E. Boston to Downtown Boston in its current resilience planning efforts; Boston Sewer and Water Commission will begin work on prioritized upgrades for E. Boston storm sewer inlets.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Increasing access to state energy efficiency program	Partnering and collaborating with city departments, program administrators, energy/performance contractors, development organizations, local nonprofits, and community development corporations to remove participation barriers in the program during the program’s current planning cycle.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Guiding Principles for APWG in E. Boston	Tool to guide future development in E. Boston and to create accountability for city and state agencies, quasi-publics, and nonprofit organizations in E. Boston.	<i>Implementation</i>

Work with City's Park Department	Boston's Park Department and Arborist are partnering with NOAH's youth-led tree canopy advocacy maintenance program to increase the tree canopy in E. Boston.	<i>Implementation</i>
Informing the Climate Ready E. Boston program	NOAH led outreach and planning to drive greater community involvement and engagement in the development process, communicating community concerns that were included in the final report.	<i>Implementation</i>

Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity:

- **Meaningfully position community as experts.** The Adaptation Planning Working Group (APWG) provides the opportunity to have true, meaningful engagement between key city/state agencies and community members, who sit at the table and surface valuable perspectives. In its next phase, NOAH plans to expand the group's membership and work in more deliberate ways to move its agenda forward by pushing for specific plans to be actualized into city/state/agency capital budgets.
- **Joint ownership of advocacy efforts must be realized.** This comes both from ensuring that the priorities of the organization are aligned with the priorities of the community but also in partnership with the city. NOAH forged a formal relationship with the city that opened doors for reciprocal benefit from the relationship and establishes legitimacy for talking about the work.
- **Engaging youth provides an intergenerational advantage.** NOAH learned that one key target of community activation should be directed at E. Boston's youth as future and current leaders in their community. Youth bring a different perspective to the table and provide continuity to the work. Their passion and excitement provide further intergenerational inspiration.

Where Our Work Is Headed

NOAH has positioned themselves as a key player in climate resilience and equity in E. Boston, the City of Boston and the greater Boston area. Moving forward, the organization plans to approach their work in the following ways:

- **Focusing on social cohesion and emergency preparedness.** Through a new two-year funding opportunity with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, NOAH will be working with NYU to map and increase social cohesion so that emergency preparedness planning is undertaken and coordinated in E. Boston. This is based on repeated concerns they have heard from the community around the lack of neighborhood/individual emergency preparedness plans, and research showing that communities/persons with more social cohesion tend to be more resilient in emergency situations.
- **Working with the City of Boston, advocating with and on behalf of the community.** NOAH plans on leveraging their growing climate and organizational credibility with the City to continue their resilience and preparedness work. Climate is a long-term investment and to be effective, implantation plans must be based on the reality of local people's lives and needs. NOAH will continue to demonstrate that community knowledge/expertise, fueled by increasing social cohesion in the neighborhood, offers valuable insights and practical applications to the City's agencies.
- **Driving a state-level focus on E. Boston.** While the state has recently been turning attention to Climate and resiliency, currently, there is little state involvement in community-based climate resilience work. NOAH plans to broaden its efforts to engage with state-level departments and bring attention to climate resilience needs and efforts in E. Boston.

The Point CDC

The Point CDC (The Point) and the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance (NYC-EJA) are working to realize comprehensive and equitable climate resilience policy and practice changes that deliver multiple benefits

to South Bronx residents. Focused on neighborhoods in the South Bronx Significant Maritime and Industrial Area (SMIA), The Point and NYC-EJA are creating neighborhoods that are healthy, safe, sustainable, resilient, and equitable. To reach this goal, the organizations are engaged in several strategies:



- Coordinating local planning and development efforts
- Facilitating community education, advocacy, and organizing to push for resiliency plans and improved community preparedness
- Creating a resiliency roadmap for SMIA communities that serves as an advocacy document
- Shaping an energy pilot project for both residential and industrial areas
- Conducting a feasibility study for implementation of coastal protections and green infrastructure
- Assessing the feasibility of creating a microgrid and resilient energy systems
- Strategic use of communications and media to support campaign goals

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Hunts Point Resiliency Project Advisement	Organizations are a part of the Advisory Working Group that is convened by the City to guide a \$45 million investment related to developing and implementing resilient energy solutions on public schools and the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center.	<i>Design</i>
Advocating through State-wide Coalition on Climate	Organizations have become founding members of NY Renews a statewide coalition demanding environmental justice, good jobs, and healthy communities and pushing for legislation.	<i>Advocacy</i>
Ramp-up of Green Infrastructure Advocacy	Organizations are engaging in advocacy to highlight the benefits of pursuing coastal resiliency and green infrastructure by liaising with the NYC Department of Environmental Protection including inviting them to a round-table to discuss benefits with local community leaders.	<i>Advocacy</i>
Revision of the HUD Action Plan	Organizations raised concerns regarding air quality and the use of diesel-powered generators as resiliency solutions through the Hunts Point Resiliency Plan, resulting in an amendment by The City of New York to their Community Development Block Grant HUD Action Plan.	<i>Design</i>
Informing State Administration on Climate	Organizations are appointed to the Governor's Environmental Justice and Just Transition Working Group, ensuring that the new state legislation, policies, and initiatives incorporate a strong representative environmental justice leadership body that would identify the disadvantaged communities to be prioritized for investments and provide a platform for community governance.	<i>Implementation</i>

Progress on Community Solar	The Point received commitment from major industrial space to explore the development of large-scale community solar in the Hunts Point Peninsula.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
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Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity.

- **Tap into what residents are already doing to inspire a network of agents for resiliency.** The Point and NYC-EJA created a network of local change agents by training local residents of all ages in grassroots organizing and advocacy campaigning and helping them see how resiliency is a route to accomplishing something they care about and believe in. Climate resiliency cannot live in the policy space only.
- **Use principles to create accountability.** The Point and NYC-EJA were successful in ensuring the Guiding Principles of Implementation developed by the Hunts Point Resiliency Advisory Working Group were included in the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Request for Proposal and finalized contract thereby holding the City and the selected consultants accountable to community priorities.
- **Put a human face on the impacts of climate disaster.** The Point and NYC-EJA were able to move the conversation from being about local businesses to being about the thousands of people impacted in a flood and extreme heat disasters.



Where Our Work Is Headed

The Point and NYC-EJA have positioned themselves as key players in climate resilience and equity in the South Bronx. Moving forward, the organizations plan on approaching their work in the following ways:

- **Hunts Point Resiliency Project Implementation.** The Point plans to continue its advocacy work to influence the next phase of the City’s \$45 million energy pilot project in Hunts Point.
- **Wi-Fi Network Construction.** Construction of the resilient mesh network will be done by the end of January.
- **Community Emergency Preparedness.** Working with climate preparedness and resiliency organizers, The Point will provide direct outreach by connecting volunteers to climate-vulnerable community residents through NYC’s Be a Buddy Program. In addition, the organization will leverage local health centers and businesses to strengthen the community’s ability to act before, during, and after the next natural disaster.
- **Community Solar.** In response to the overwhelming need for renewable energy solutions, The Point and NYC-EJA are working to alleviate the energy burden experienced by the community’s most vulnerable populations by advancing a community solar project.

Puget Sound SAGE

Puget Sound SAGE (Sage) and its frontline community partner, Got Green, are working to ensure that communities with low income and communities of color prosper in place through the advancement of climate adaptation and mitigation and the reduction of carbon emissions. Their goals include maintaining established affordable housing while also finding new affordable housing opportunities in order to stabilize communities; preserving culturally relevant community anchors; and a living wage. Sage and Got Green pursued these goals through the following strategies:



- Deepening their engagement with Front & Centered and the City of Seattle’s Environmental Justice Steering Committee organizations
- Establishing a communications strategy centered on justice and equity, resulting in earned media, more followers on Sage’s policy blog, and government and decision-makers repeating its climate resilience and equity messages
- Practicing Deep Democracy by engaging south Seattle residents through town halls and our climate resilience curriculum and zines on issues of climate resilience, housing and displacement, and jobs
- Cultivating champions in the City Council, City Departments, and Mayor’s office and linking them with allies within mainstream environmental organizations and the Equity and Environment Initiative so that environmental policy work is informed by and rooted in communities facing the biggest impact from climate change and environmental injustice
- Facilitating a local visioning process for the S. Graham St. light rail station area to create a community-driven climate-resilient cultural hub

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Environmental Justice Steering committee	Creation of a local city advisory committee of leaders from environmental justice communities to carry out the city’s Equity and Environment Initiative (EEI) and hold the city accountable to its EEI goals.	<i>Completed</i>
Environmental Justice Fund	Creation of a city fund of resources to be allocated to communities most impacted by environmental injustice and climate disaster. This fund was replicated at the county level.	<i>Completed</i>
Public Health – Seattle & King County blueprint for Addressing Climate Change and Health	Influenced the Public Health – Seattle & King County blueprint for Addressing Climate Change and Health to include the voices and priorities of impacted communities of color.	<i>Completed</i>

Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity:

- **Use community-based participatory research to engage community in climate resilience.** Sage and Got Green produced *Our People, Our Power, Our Planet* which identified key community vulnerabilities exacerbated by climate change and climate justice priorities. It served as an important catalyst for Seattle's Equity and Environment Initiative.
- **Create a pathway for community to exercise progressively greater power.** Sage and Got Green are training community members to serve on city boards and commissions so that residents traditionally left out of the policymaking process are able to shape strategy and outcomes for their communities.
- **Frame climate issues in terms of community priorities.** Sage and Got Green have had success engaging communities on climate issues when these issues are framed in terms of community priorities like healthy communities and the daily challenges residents face.

Where Our Work Is Headed

Sage and Got Green have positioned themselves as key players in climate resilience and equity in Puget Sound. Moving forward, the organizations plan on approaching their work in the following ways:

- **Emergency planning and energy democracy to ensure a just transition.** Sage and Got Green are building community self-determination to transition into the new renewable energy economy where communities have control over land and resources, including energy, so that they are resilient in the face of climate and environmental disasters.
- **Equitable distribution of benefits.** Making sure communities of color and communities with low income are not left behind as the region transitions to the electrification and solarization of its energy and transit systems.
- **Identifying unintended consequences.** Being sensitive to the complexity of systems change, Sage intends to anticipate and respond to potential adverse impacts that climate and energy policy may inflict on community resilience in such areas as housing and displacement.



Southwest Workers Union

Southwest Workers Union (SWU) advocates for socially-just climate resilience in San Antonio, Texas, including increased low-income access to weatherization and renewable energy programs and services which reduce low income energy costs, increase local green jobs, and reduce air pollution and heat impacts in disproportionately-impacted communities. The organization pursued these goals through the following strategies:



- Recruiting and training climate justice leaders to participate in activities, events, and policy processes
- Researching local climate change impacts, including air quality and flooding
- Creating events, camps and workshops to train local residents on air quality health impacts and build regional grassroots power
- Drawing attention to air quality issues through press conferences, fact sheets, and other communication materials
- Forming cross-sector coalitions, movement building, and policy advocacy to support the City’s Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan and Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP)	The Sustainability Plan is a roadmap for enhancing the community’s quality of life and overall resilience while balancing the impact of expected growth of 1.1 million people by 2040 with existing economic, environmental, and social resources. The CAAP is aligned with the SA Tomorrow Plan and will focus on GHG emissions reductions targets for the City.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Air Quality Ordinance	Passage of air quality ordinance for the city that included a lot of one-on-one work and continuous engagement with the neighborhood around the Port of San Antonio. SWU also worked with the EPA on this effort. One of the largest lessons learned is the importance working with scientific partners to decipher data and develop workshops with the community to understand the data and how it can affect them.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Accountability Forums	Venues bringing together mayoral candidates and the community during the 2017 elections. Two specific forums on Environmental Justice and another on Social Justice highlighted issues around health, air quality, transparency and climate action. These spaces coordinated with 10–15 local allies and gave the community an understanding of where key leaders stood on environmental issues. These forums were the only spaces talking about environment and accountability through the lens of equity and race.	<i>Completed</i>
Climate Action San Antonio Coalition	External coalition of organizations working on the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, including pulling together recommendations for the plan. This effort was highly focused on social cohesion.	<i>Implementation</i>
Water Stakeholders Meeting	Worked with San Antonio Water System to create monthly meeting updates about conservation efforts and updates on water quality.	<i>Implementation</i>

Office of Sustainability Community Outreach Program	SWU's Climate Promotora program and success in engagement with frontline communities led towards conversations with the city to offer a similar program for the climate action efforts. The city is currently developing a pilot program modeled on our Climate Promotora engagement strategies to further advance the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and climate issues from a municipal level.	<i>Waiting Period</i>
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Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, SWU has learned a lot about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity:

- **Consistency is essential for successful community engagement.** It is important to keep the community informed and engaged at all times. This allows for an educated community that can be quickly mobilized when bad things are happening. Consistency and follow-up are key to ensuring that the community stays involved.
- **Community voices are critical through all phases of policy development.** Though the community is well-educated on issues and understands how policy processes work, there continue to be systemic barriers to bringing the community into the policy process. Even when policies are won, the community has to remain vigilant to ensure that the benefits reach the community as intended.
- **Lasting change takes a long time and is a long-term investment.** It is important to look at the bigger picture and invest in the community and not just in a moment. Though often more intensive and challenging, long-term thinking will pay off in sustained community support through buy-in and ownership of projects and the benefits of these efforts remain within the community.

Where Our Work Is Headed

SWU has positioned itself as a key player in climate resilience and equity in San Antonio. Moving forward, the organization plans on focusing on the following areas of work:

- **Focus on CAAP Implementation.** SWU will continue to engage with the city to hold it accountable to its commitments. Continued community education and awareness will also be necessary to ensure that the city does what it has promised to do through the CAAP and that the city is actively engaging working groups in the proper way.
- **Engage in Water Sustainability Issues.** SWU will work to hold the San Antonio Water System accountable. Community involvement continues around documenting contaminated waterways, monitoring community spaces impacted by extreme weather and sewage releases, flood control and access to emergency services, water quality literacy, and organizing against extraction of water sources from other communities.
- **Ensure City Public Services Rate Hikes are Affordable and Clean.** SWU will ensure that weatherization programs offered by the public energy utility continue to benefit low income residents. Consistent community pressure will be needed to keep rate hikes to a minimum and to discourage the use of coal or nuclear energy.



WE ACT

WE ACT is working to ensure that Northern Manhattan neighborhoods are energy secure through a resilient energy infrastructure that uses renewable technology, supports microgrids that can work independently of the larger, more vulnerable grid, and provides access to these innovation to low-income residents. WE ACT pursued these goals through the following strategies:



- Installation of solar panels on affordable housing (Solar Uptown Now)
- Leveraging the broader NYC civic community through partnerships and direct community engagement at the city and state levels to increase knowledge and awareness, organize events, and collectively impact the decision-making of public agencies
- Public will-building to promote energy security and clean energy infrastructure
- Grassroots community outreach where WE ACT serves as a social hub to engage community around its priorities
- Emergency Preparedness resources to provide community with information about preparing for the next environmental disaster
- Sponsoring citizen-driven research to support advocacy efforts and policy development
- Development of community and implementor readiness assessment to carry through on work

Policy and Initiatives Advanced During CRUO

Policy	Description	Stage
Environmental Justice Study Bill (Intro 359)	The Environmental Justice Study Bill requires the City of New York to conduct a city-wide survey and analysis to identify potential EJ areas and to make the findings of the analysis publicly available through an interactive EJ portal on the city's website.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Environmental Justice Policy Bill (Intro 886A)	The Environmental Justice Policy Bill establishes an Interagency Working Group to develop a comprehensive environmental justice plan "to provide guidance and recommendations on incorporating EJ concerns into city decision-making, operations, programs, and projects." The bill also establishes an EJ advisory board of advocates appointed by city officials and requires the Interagency Working group to consult with the EJ advisory board on the EJ plan. The draft of this EJ plan must be completed by December 31, 2019.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Phase Out of Number 4 Oil in Boilers (Intro 1465)	Intro 1465 would require that the timeline for the phase out of Number 4 oil in boilers be moved up from 2030 to 2025. The bill is in the Committee on Environmental Protection.	<i>Early Implementation</i>
Northern Manhattan Climate Action Plan: Solar Uptown Now	Building financial stability for low-to-moderate income residents through energy conservation by installing 300kw+ solar PV on tenant-owned affordable housing buildings.	<i>Implementation</i>
Asthma-Free Homes Bill: The Asthma-Free Housing Act (Intro 385C)	Requires New York City landlords to annually inspect and correct indoor allergen hazards, including mold, pests, and underlying symptoms that may	<i>Implementation</i>

	cause hazardous conditions in the homes of residents diagnosed with asthma, COPD, or lung cancer	
Proposal for EPIK kiosks have moved on to the second round	Working with NYCHA to develop Emergency Preparedness Informational Kiosks in public housing as part of NYCHA's Next Generation Agenda	<i>Design</i>

Insights from CRUO

Over the past three years, much has been learned about advancing systems change as it relates to climate resilience and equity.

- **Group pressure on government ensures accountability.** Policymakers are always learning and if the organization and its partners are viewed by decision-makers as trusted sources of knowledge, decision-makers will be incentivized to establish a closer relationship. As collaboration leads to policy change, it is still important for WE ACT to insist on accountability and not allow the implementation of the policy to be held up.
- **Advocacy from community makes efforts sustainable.** Community ownership of advocacy efforts must be realized. This comes both from ensuring that the priorities of the organization are aligned with the priorities of the community and by providing opportunities for the community to learn how to practice civic engagement. Learning through consistent, meaningful participation is key to empowering community and sustaining engagement. If what is advocated for is truly a priority of the community, it will lead to long term sustainability
- **Building local power helps build equity.** As mentioned above, the community must have ‘buy-in’ and must believe that the organization has listened to their needs. WE ACT is activating citizens that would not traditionally be impacting change in the community. WE ACT has learned that a significant target of such activation should be directed at the youth.

Where Our Work Is Headed

WE ACT has positioned themselves as a key player in climate resilience and equity in New York City. Moving forward, the organization plans on approaching their work in the following ways:

- **Developing the Solar Uptown Now initiative.** WE ACT will dedicate 2019 to the continued planning process of solar installation and research of battery storage systems for neighborhood resilience. They are targeting 2020 to begin implementation. Strengthening their relationship with NYCHA public housing has been identified as a key strategy for these goals.
- **Member meetings as tool for engagement.** As policy wins develop into the implementation phase (i.e. Bill 1253), it will be important to keep members informed on how that process is going. WE ACT plans to use engagement as a way to impact regulations and provide guidance to agency staff.
- **Make sure there is adequate oversight of council members.** As policy wins develop into the implementation phase (i.e., Bill 1253), it will be important to hold decision-makers accountable. Maintaining relationships with key decision-makers responsible for overseeing policies such as the Environmental Justice law and Asthma-Free Homes law will be very important.



Appendix F: CRUO Total Spending

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Grant Funding (CRUO CBO's)	\$1,783,000.00	\$3,300,000.00	\$3,300,000.00	\$3,300,000.00	N/A
Grant Funding (CRUO Field-Building Grantees)*	\$2,900,000.00	\$3,333,000.00	\$2,760,000.00	\$5,209,432.00	N/A
Grantee Convening	\$192,712.00	\$208,000.00	\$175,000.00	\$195,726.92	N/A
Advisory Committee - Honorarium and Travel	\$13,958.44	\$32,919.85	\$11,499.00	\$21,018.28	\$5,784.14
Evaluation Consultant	\$99,960.00	\$125,300.00	\$115,000.00	\$319,979.44	\$30,770.56
Initiative Consultant	N/A	\$100,000.00	\$125,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$10,000.00
Peer Learning Consultant	N/A	\$90,176.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Technical Assistance & Knowledge Exchange	N/A	N/A	\$50,000.00	\$7,019.91	N/A
The CRUO Fund - Supplemental Grant Funds (administered through Movement Strategy Center)				\$1,200,000.00	
Total	\$4,989,630.44	\$7,189,395.85	\$6,536,499.00	\$10,353,176.55	\$46,554.70
Total 2015–2019	\$29,115,256.54				

**Represents funding for the 11 field-building grantees mentioned in the evaluation report. Note: additional grantees beyond these 11 organizations participated in the initiative*