

Environmental Justice Project Measurement and Evaluation Framework

Guidance

This guide clarifies the criteria and definitions included in the Environmental Justice Project Measurement and Evaluation Framework (EJ MEF). Project evaluators should refer to this guide during the review of project proposals.

Acknowledgements

This tool was developed as a collaboration between the members of the Just Transition PowerForce, Microsoft CO+I, and WSP USA. It is based on the Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund granting process and the Energy Democracy Flipbook, a project facilitated by Emerald Cities Collaborative and the US network of energy democracy practitioners.

The Just Transition PowerForce is an advisory committee of US-based environmental and climate justice organizations working together to ensure a transition to a clean energy and regenerative economy that is led by and prioritizes low-income and communities of color on the front lines of the climate crisis. The PowerForce was established in 2021 to align the climate commitments of corporations toward deep investments in the sustainability and climate resilience of frontline communities, enabling self-determination, economic security, and restorative and transformative justice.

The Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) is a City of Portland program that provides dedicated funding to take climate action and advance racial and social justice. Approved by Portland voters in 2018, PCEF is the first program of its kind in the US, investing in green jobs, healthy homes and communities, and a climate-friendly Portland.

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Intentions and criteria for evaluators

Evaluating project concepts for environmental justice outcomes requires thoughtful consideration of complex and highly localized social histories and dynamics. For this reason, users of this framework should be mindful of the US-centric context in which it was developed, and embrace the work necessary to become an effective user of this tool.

A message from the Just Transition PowerForce

Because each of us is socialized in different ways based on our race, gender, class, and other identities, it is impossible to be an unbiased evaluator, particularly when evaluating for environmental justice. This tool, developed by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color environmental justice leaders and organizers, and with the support of white collaborators, is imperfect, evolving over time, and rooted in the lived experiences of people and communities that have been most impacted by environmental injustice and most excluded from access to resources and decision-making authority. For these reasons, it is critical to thoughtfully consider who is best suited to interpret this framework and guidance.

The work around environmental justice is specific to localities, impacted parties, proposed projects, and intended outcomes, which makes it impractical and ill-advised to use this tool as a universal standard or procedure without tailoring and critical interpretation with local frontline community experts. Users of this tool should endeavor to consume the framework, guidance, and linked resources in their entirety to glean overarching themes, intentions, and a deeper understanding of the complexities they will need to navigate to adeptly engage in environmental justice.

All people are on a journey of understanding systemic oppression and unlearning oppressive ways of thinking and being; transformation is always possible. Individuals who hold dominant and privileged identities as it relates to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, ability, class, age, ethnicity, etc., and who hold positions of formal power, are encouraged to step back from serving in an evaluator role. We caution users against performative actions and misrepresentations related to this tool (that is, engagement with this content does not fundamentally equate to expertise or authority in environmental justice). Evaluators and other decision-makers using this tool to steward a funding or project selection process should identify as members of frontline communities or other groups experiencing oppression. This is not a positioning tool to legitimize an inequitable funding or project selection process.

An equitable funding and project selection process includes:

- Maximum transparency, including the source of capital, governance, process expectations, and constraints.
- Co-learning, co-creation, and consensus about the design and implementation of a funding or project selection process by and with frontline community members.
- Self-determination, leadership by, and decision-making autonomy for frontline communities.

Note of gratitude

Our gratitude is extended to the NAACP Centering Equity in the Sustainable Building Sector network and the co-authors and editors of their [Guidelines for Equitable Community Involvement in Building and Development Projects and Policies](#), which informed this section of guidance.

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- Adaptive approach to pivot and learn along the way, including an exploratory process to continuously push boundaries to take bold, courageous, and transformational steps.
 - Acknowledgment and reversal of status quo white supremacist and capitalistic evaluation approaches,¹ instead favoring advancing deeply regenerative and democratic organizations and communities.
 - Consideration for the unique circumstances of the cases to which this framework and guidance is applied.
 - An ecosystem of support beyond funding (and beyond funding from a single donor) for frontline communities.
 - An expectation that mistakes are inevitable, and mechanisms are in place to ensure accountability from funders and decision-makers to transform conflicts and share learnings with the broader environmental justice movement.

When used thoughtfully, this tool can support advocacy for and produce policies, programs, and practices that are transformational for individuals, economies, and society—advancing a [just transition](#) for all of us.

Example Large Physical Assets Projects

Large physical assets projects are tangible projects with real assets costs above \$100,000 that bring new or improve existing physical infrastructure to benefit under-resourced communities by advancing fair economic inclusion and resource access, providing equal protection against climate impacts, or remedying uneven pollution effects. Examples of projects include developing community solar assets; developing or significantly retrofitting community-serving facilities for resilience, energy efficiency, and clean energy generation; remediating brownfields; developing circular economy or clean transit infrastructure; or enabling regenerative land practices such as ecological restoration and regenerative agriculture.

¹ Additional resources for white people [here](#) and [here](#).

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
Community-serving organization (CSO)	<p>CSOs are those with a mission specifically dedicated to a community defined by place (neighborhood, municipality) or population (for example, frontline identities, people of color, people who are low income, people with disabilities, people who are children, older adults, people who are LGBTQIA,² and people who identify as women). CSOs include social service agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and formal and informal community groups, such as neighborhood associations or special-interest clubs. For-profit entities are excluded for the purposes of this framework. Ideally, CSOs are physically based in the communities they serve, though in some cases CSOs can be effective even without a physical presence.</p>
Cooperative ownership	An ownership and governance model in which jointly owned enterprises are controlled through democratic governance to realize the economic, social, and cultural needs of their owner members.
Direct benefits	<p>Benefits that improve the quality of life for a community in a tangible and measurable way in a discrete time period. The benefits reflect community priorities for addressing the barriers the community has communicated. This contrasts with indirect benefits, which do not address root causes or change material conditions for individuals and are difficult to assess or measure.</p> <p>A direct benefit from a project could include job creation or the transfer of assets, such as solar panels, to a priority community. In this instance, there are no degrees of separation between the priority population and the directly delivered benefits. An example of an indirect benefit is an energy efficiency project that generates cost savings for an entire school district that serves a mixed population of students. Though the district may in turn use the savings to support students within the priority population, that is not a direct and absolute result of the efficiency investment.</p>
Diverse-owned (business)	Ownership by individuals that identify with the priority population (defined below). Different locations may define priority populations differently, though generally they will include marginalized, under-resourced, and

² LGBTQIA is defined as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (one's sexual or gender identity), intersex, and asexual/aromantic/agender.

vulnerable individuals and communities, such as BIPOC-owned businesses in the United States.

A diverse-owned business meets one of the following:

- A sole proprietorship, owned and controlled by a member of the priority population.
- A partnership or joint venture of business enterprises in which 51 percent of the beneficial ownership interest is held by members of the priority population.
- A corporation or other entity controlled by persons in which at least 51 percent of the voting interest and 51 percent of the beneficial ownership interest are held by members of the priority population.

In the United States, consult local, state, or national databases and certification programs for business enterprises certified as diverse-owned.

Energy democracy

An approach to the renewable energy transition that seeks to strengthen communities by advancing both new technologies and new values within the energy sector, with the intent to protect workers, the environment, and fair access to energy resources. The values of the energy democracy movement include the integration of social justice; adopting new cooperative economic models and governing institutions; and prioritizing community health, resilience, and the environment over property rights. Energy democracy advocates focus on advancing decentralized energy systems, such as community-owned distributed solar generation, and ensuring the burden of electrification and the clean energy transition do not fall on the poorest.

Environmental justice

The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.³

Environmental justice begins with acknowledging past and present harms to communities of color, low-income communities, and other communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis and racial and economic injustice. It redirects leadership, resources, and decision-making into these communities that are most impacted and were previously excluded.

³ "Environmental Justice," The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, accessed September 28, 2021, <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>.

<p>Frontline communities</p>	<p>The populations most impacted by multiple and cumulative sources of pollution and climate impacts due to proximity to toxic factories, fossil fuel refineries, neighborhood oil drilling, freeways, and the like, often without access to clean drinking water or public investment.</p> <p>People who experience oppression because of race, income, gender, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity, age, etc. are more likely to have less resources and protections in society in general and even less access to resources and protections not only to adapt to our changing climate but also to pass policies and legislation that are fair and culturally significant.⁴</p>
<p>High-road labor standard</p>	<p>High-road labor standards include the following:⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job quality – At a minimum, quality jobs include family-supporting wages, benefits, safe working conditions, fair scheduling practices, and transparent career advancement opportunities. • Worker voice – Recognize workers’ experience and knowledge to inform job structures, descriptions, and quality. Leverage workers’ perspectives to assess workforce gaps, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Addressing expected changes resulting from technological evolution and deployment. ○ Maintaining or increasing competitiveness in anticipation of, or in response to, market forces like new laws and regulations. ○ Informing career advancement needs and opportunities. • Equity – Take a systematic approach to generating greater opportunity for individuals who have been left out of the mainstream economy, are under-represented in high-wage occupations and industries, or face multiple barriers to quality in employment. <p>Environmental sustainability – Address issues related to environmental sustainability, particularly climate change.</p>
<p>Intersectionality</p>	<p>The complex, cumulative ways in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.⁶</p>

⁴ “Our Communities, Our Power: Advancing Resistance and Resilience in Climate Change Adaptation,” NAACP, accessed September 28, 2021, <https://naacp.org/know-issues/environmental-climate-justice>.

⁵ “What Is A High Road Labor Standard?” Gridworks, accessed September 28, 2021, <https://gridworks.org/2021/04/what-is-a-high-road-labor-standard/>.

⁶ Crenshaw, Kimberle. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color.” *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241–99. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>.

Just Transition	Just Transition is a vision-led, unifying, and place-based set of principles, processes, and practices that build economic and political power to shift from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy. ⁷
Labor hours	Labor hours include the total hours of workers receiving an hourly wage who are directly employed on the site of the project to complete physical work. Labor hours include hours worked by all craft workers, including working foreman, lead (journeymen, working owner-operators (allowing for small businesses) and apprentices, and shall not be supervisory, management or non-working owners.
Local hiring and procurement	Local hiring and procurement programs use geographically targeted hiring programs that connect local workers and businesses, especially in under-resourced communities and priority populations, to jobs and business opportunities. The targeted populations may be based on geographic, income, minority, veteran, or other status indicative of economic marginalization. This benefits local contractors and workers, including diverse-owned businesses historically excluded from contracting opportunities.
Living wage	A wage that is adequate to maintain a satisfactory standard of living and that allows individuals and families to afford shelter, food, and other necessities.
Marginalized populations	People who are denied involvement in mainstream economic, political, cultural, and social activities and exist on the margins of society. Factors contributing to marginalization include, but are not limited to, age, physical or mental abilities, economic status, race or ethnicity, and access to education.
Priority populations	The individuals and communities intended as the primary beneficiaries of environmental and climate justice initiatives. Different locations may define priority populations differently, though generally they will include marginalized, under-resourced, and vulnerable individuals and communities. Consider intersectionality as a factor in determining priority.
Project leads	Organizations included in the core project team with overall decision-making authority for project planning and implementation. This excludes project funders without a significant advisory or implementation role and

⁷ "Just Transition: A Framework for Change," Climate Justice Alliance, accessed September 28, 2021, <https://climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition/>.

project partners that deliver key elements of the project but do not have overall decision-making authority.

Project partner or partner organizations	A project proposal may include individuals or teams from multiple organizations, including a combination of for-profit and nonprofit entities, referred to as “partners” or “partner organizations.” For evaluating purposes, the key partners to consider are those in lead roles, as well as any other partners that are materially involved in the project design and implementation, such as project management, training, community involvement, procurement, and other forms of project implementation. Project advisors or organizations with minor roles (for example, less than 10 percent of the labor effort) are not considered key partners).
Project team	The group of individuals responsible for implementing the project, including community members, staff of organizations participating in the project, contractors, and other partners.
Real assets	Physical assets such as commodities, real estate, land, equipment, and natural resources.
Resilience	The capacity of a system (this could be a community, an economy, etc.) to maintain an intact core identity in the face of change. Also, a state of dynamic balance within which change can be avoided or recovered from without a fundamental transition to a new form. ⁸
Small or emerging business	Small or emerging businesses are those that carry a local, state, or national certification based on revenue or employee standards relevant to the related industry or have fewer than six fulltime equivalent employees or have been in operation for fewer than three years.
Staff leadership	Individuals in senior management, executive management, upper management, or a management team at the highest level of management and authority within an organization who have the day-to-day tasks of managing that organization.
Under-resourced communities	Communities with high proportions of low- and middle-income residents and generally receive below-average quality and amount of services and financial resources from government and the private sector. In the United

⁸ “Our Communities, Our Power: Advancing Resistance and Resilience in Climate Change Adaptation,” NAACP, accessed September 28, 2021, <https://naacp.org/known-issues/environmental-climate-justice>.

States, an above average number of people of color and immigrants compose under-resourced communities.⁹

Vulnerable populations

Often used synonymously with “frontline communities,” “under-resourced communities,” or “marginalized populations.” Populations including low-income communities, older adults, children, and health-compromised individuals of any race or socioeconomic status that are especially harmed by climate impacts. Due to a lack of resources or presence of biological sensitivities, these populations are more at risk of experiencing adverse effects from climate impacts.

⁹ “Solar with Justice Report,” Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA), accessed September 28, 2021, <https://www.cesa.org/wp-content/uploads/Solar-with-Justice.pdf>.

Prerequisite criteria

ITEM	CRITERIA	GUIDANCE
1	Project intends to provide benefits to priority populations, such as under-resourced, marginalized, and frontline populations	<p>DESIRED OUTCOME</p> <p>Ensure that the project is deliberate in delivering benefits to the intended populations.</p> <p>CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating this prerequisite requires determining whether the intended project benefits are direct and whether they are targeted at priority populations. • If the project is directed at a general or broad population, it may not be enough to serve environmental justice objectives. • To evaluate directness of benefits, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are the intended benefits aligned with demonstrated prioritized needs of the priority population? ○ Will the benefits logically affect the target community within 6 to 12 months of project completion (or the timeline otherwise anticipated by the project team)? ○ Is there a reasonable way to measure the benefit to individuals or households? ○ Are there many conditional circumstances necessary for the priority population to experience the benefits? <p>RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glossary definition of priority populations. • Glossary definition of under-resourced communities. • Glossary definition of marginalized populations. • Glossary definition of frontline populations. • Glossary definition of direct benefits. <p>Example – targeted benefits: If a project benefiting a local school has a higher proportion of affluent students than the general public, the prerequisite would not be satisfied, even if some students are in the priority population. If the school has a higher proportion of prioritized students than the general public or is in a location with high needs across communities, the prerequisite would be satisfied.</p> <p>Example – direct versus indirect benefits: A direct benefit from a project could include job creation or the transfer of assets, such as solar panels, to a priority community. In this instance, there are no degrees of separation between the priority population and the directly delivered benefits. An example of an indirect benefit is an energy efficiency project that generates cost savings for an entire school district that serves a mixed population of students. Though the district may in turn use the savings to support students within the priority</p>

population, that is not a direct and given result of the efficiency investment.

2

Project planning and decision-making involves, at a minimum, community perspectives and leaders

DESIRED OUTCOME

Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into the project and inform planning.

CONSIDERATIONS

- To determine whether the project meets this requirement, refer to the infographic in [Appendix A](#), excerpted from Facilitating Power's [Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership](#).
- Level 3 (Involve) is the minimum to satisfy the prerequisite, and projects that follow best practices beyond this minimum are scored more favorable in the scoring rubric.
- In assessing this prerequisite, consider:
 - Does the proposal mention "community outreach" or an "organizer" role?
 - What formal role do local organizations and frontline community members play in the proposal? Do they have significant budget allocated to support ongoing involvement?
 - Is there testimony or verification available from members of the priority populations most impacted by the project to confirm their level of involvement?
 - Locally owned or based business and organizations (including governmental) do not automatically represent perspectives of priority populations.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

Appendix A: The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership.

3

Labor needed for the project is compensated at least at living wage levels for a sole adult

DESIRED OUTCOME

Ensure the project does not rely on unfair labor practices.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Projects that are committed to paying wages at the levels negotiated through collective bargaining, unions, or collaborative procurement efforts are considered living wages.
- To determine whether the project relies extensively on volunteer contributions from under-resourced community members, review the project proposal for mentions of labor practices and the websites or annual reports of the involved organizations.

- This requirement is not meant to exclude voluntary, self-determined unpaid contributions from board or chapter members of nonprofit organizations.
- Outside of the previous consideration regarding nonprofit board and chapter members, unpaid internships or underpaid labor by members of the priority population for significant aspects of project implementation is considered noncompliant; proposals should instead include budget items to compensate this labor.
- To determine living wages for locations in the United States that comply with this prerequisite, consult the living wage for households with a sole adult in the [MIT Living Wage Calculator \(US\)](#). In the United States, minimum wage does not necessarily mean a living wage.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

Glossary definition of living wage.

4

Medium-sized or larger for-profit partners have public carbon neutrality and clean energy transition commitments or an aligned core business

DESIRED OUTCOME

Ensure that project partners are committed to preventing further human health and climate impacts from industrial pollution through the disclosure of their emissions and meaningful participation in the clean energy transition.

CONSIDERATIONS

- A for-profit entity is considered medium-sized or larger if they employ 100 or more employees or received \$50 million or more in annual revenue. These criteria do not apply to small for-profit entities.
- A project proposal may include individuals or teams from multiple organizations, including a combination of for-profit and nonprofit entities.
 - If medium-sized or larger for-profit entities are involved, evaluate the one or more entities with the largest budget portions that comprise at least 50 percent of the budget for for-profit partners.
 - Projects delivered exclusively by nonprofit entities and fully member- or worker-owned cooperatives earn full credit.
- Aligned core businesses include businesses that provide goods and services related to the carbon solutions listed in the "Appendix-Climate Benefits" tab within the scorecard file. Companies that simultaneously deliver goods and services related to the fossil fuel energy sector are not considered to have an aligned core business, even if they also have clean energy goods and service offerings.

- If the project proposal does not readily provide information pertaining to carbon neutrality and clean energy commitments, use internet research to locate relevant information, such as:
 - Annual sustainability reports or statements posted on the organization's website.
 - [CDP reporting](#).
 - [Science-based target commitments](#).
 - [RE100 commitments](#).

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:

- **Glossary** definition of partner.
- "Appendix-Climate Benefits" tab within scorecard file.

Example – multiple for-profit partners: If a project proposal consists of two medium-sized for-profit companies with a collective budget of \$100,000, with 75 percent of that budget apportioned to Company A and 25 percent to Company B, only Company A needs to be evaluated for prerequisite compliance.

Example – multiple for-profit partners: If a project proposal consists of three medium-sized for-profit entities with a collective budget of \$100,000, with 40 percent of that budget apportioned to Company A, 40 percent to Company B, and 20 percent to Company C, both Company A and B need to be evaluated for prerequisite compliance because they are entities with the largest budget proportions and together account for at least 50 percent of the for-profit budget.

5

Project outcomes include climate benefits

DESIRED OUTCOME:

Ensure that the root causes and effects of the climate crisis are addressed.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- A project proposal must include at least one aspect related to the prevention or mitigation of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and their copollutants, either directly or through efforts to transform the policies or social structures that contribute to the climate crises. GHGs include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gases. Copollutants include particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, volatile organic compounds, and other air toxins released during the combustion of fossil fuels.
- Project proposals are not required to show project-specific GHG emissions reduction or sequestration benefits if they are related to the high and regular priority carbon drawdown solutions listed in the "Appendix-Climate Benefits" tab of the

scorecard; if a proposal contains climate-related approaches outside of those listed, use internet research to evaluate the approach to addressing pollutants of concern or achieving transformation of the root causes of climate change. Evaluate the solution for compatibility with environmental justice outcomes and community priorities, including the potential for the proposed solution to have adverse impacts even if carbon reductions may be achieved, as in the case with approaches that exploit land, labor, and living systems.

- The solutions listed in the Appendix-Climate Benefits worksheet are derived from the Project Drawdown list of top carbon reduction opportunities, and have been intentionally narrowed by the Just Transition PowerForce from the full Project Drawdown list to focus on those solutions that are the highest priority and recommended solutions because of their alignment with environmental justice outcomes. These include solutions that do have the support of the local community, do not perpetuate the use of fossil fuels as an energy source, do not have significant local pollution impacts, and do not develop new industries reliant on extractive consumerism.
 - Identify the carbon solutions represented within the project proposal and map them to the solutions listed in the Appendix-Climate Benefits tab. Filter first by primary category (e.g., Food and Agriculture), and then look for the specific solutions (e.g., Reduced Food Waste). For prerequisite purposes, projects related to any listed solution are compliant unless there is unified community opposition to that solution locally; the priority levels listed in Column G are for full project scoring only.
 - Apply a national/regional/local lens to ensure appropriateness of the carbon solution(s), particularly for the following solutions:
 - Refrigerant management - Frontline communities should be equipped to mitigate harm from emissions and pollution already impacting their communities. However, a mitigation strategy in and of itself should not cause harm. Project Drawdown suggests that Refrigerant Management can include purification for reuse or transformation into other chemicals that do not cause warming. Communities and evaluators should look at the whole life cycle of any proposed harm reduction measure, to the greatest extent possible, to ensure that this strategy does not

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- reduce emissions at the expense of community health.
 - Clean cookstoves - Given that Project Drawdown promotes this as a solution for only certain geographies in the Global South, including countries with lower incomes economies located in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and the US-centric context in which this framework was developed, evaluators should defer to the perspectives of local frontline communities when evaluating project proposals related to this solution.
 - Projects that set the stage for eventual implementation of a qualifying carbon solution satisfies the prerequisite criteria.
 - Some projects that reduce emissions or sequester carbon do not ultimately deliver climate benefits, or can at the same time continue or cause new harm to communities and ecosystems. For example, waste-to-energy processes that combust waste and convert it to heat or electricity may reduce emissions if replacing energy that would otherwise be generated by combusting coal or gas, but come with serious human health and environmental risks, and can undermine waste prevention strategies. These types of strategies do not support environmental justice outcomes and are not aligned with Just Transition principles.
 - Evaluate the carbon solutions represented within the project proposal in the context of environmental justice outcomes and Just Transition principles.
 - Qualifying solutions do not exploit land, labor, or living systems, and instead promote fair economic inclusion, energy democracy, food and land sovereignty, and protection of nature.
 - If local leaders of frontline communities and priority populations collectively oppose certain climate solutions, related projects are not considered compliant with this prerequisite; if there is some opposition because the proposed solution has the potential for adverse effects on communities or the environment, the project proposal must include a viable plan for addressing those risks to be considered compliant with this prerequisite.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- The "Appendix-Climate Benefits" tab within scorecard file.

- Project Drawdown Solutions [website](#).
- [Hoodwinked in the Hothouse](#).
- [The People’s Solution Lens](#).

Example – project that can be improved to include climate

benefits: A food bank seeks to expand its vehicle fleet to enhance community services in a neighborhood with high levels of food insecurity. The project proposal does not indicate a plan to transition toward electric or hybrid fleet vehicles, and therefore does not deliver climate benefits. The proposal can be improved to satisfy the prerequisite by specifying clean transportation elements, such as electric fleet vehicles and the installation of electric vehicle charging stations.

Example – solution that is not appropriate in all geographies:

In relation to Bamboo Production, Project Drawdown notes, "Because bamboo is an invasive species in many places, which can spread with detrimental effects to native ecosystems, care should be taken to select appropriate locations and manage its growth." A project proposing this solution should address the appropriateness of the solution to the local context, and how potential adverse effects will be monitored and managed over time.

6

The project, if related to new development or major redevelopment, includes measures to prevent displacement

DESIRED OUTCOME

The project does not displace low-income residents by increasing housing costs and other living expenses.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Evaluate the potential for displacement of low-income and under-resourced residents and the efficacy of mitigation strategies by asking:
 - Do low-income and under-resourced residents live in the immediate vicinity of the project site?
 - Are property values and taxes likely to increase as a result of this project?
 - Are other cost-of-living increases likely, such as increased food prices, rent, and parking?
- For the purposes of this prerequisite, building retrofits such as rooftop solar installations and equipment retrofits that improve building performance but do not change the fundamental use of the facility are not considered a displacement risk, and the prerequisite is considered “not applicable.”
- For projects that carry risk of displacement, are there deliberate measures to mitigate impacts, and does the approach seem feasible and effective?

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:

Example – preventing displacement: A project development is sited in a community with low-income renters and homeowners and has high potential to increase property values and cause displacement of long-time neighbors. To prevent this, the developer commits to providing financial assistance to help those neighbors purchase their homes debt free and covers the anticipated cost of property tax increases for a 10-year period.

7

Project avoids development or disturbance of land that has been identified as culturally sensitive or ecologically important by community stakeholders

DESIRED OUTCOME

Ensure that project siting does not result in the destruction of sensitive land.

CONSIDERATIONS

- This prerequisite is considered “not applicable” to projects or project concepts that do not include development or disturbance of land. If land may be disturbed during the current or future phases of the project concept, evaluate for the potential that the affected land is inappropriate for development given cultural and ecological considerations.
- Regulatory and permitting processes evaluate or prohibit development on some sensitive sites but should not be considered the only criterion for meeting this prerequisite.
 - Opposition from community stakeholders due to cultural concerns is one indicator that this criterion has not been satisfied. Perform due diligence, including internet research (for example, review media coverage, public meeting records and comments, community advocate websites, and social media), to determine whether there is community opposition to this project.
- The timespan for determining impact should consider the short-term (1 to 12 months) and the long-term (1 to 30 years).

Large physical assets scorecard

Leading organizations

ITEM	CRITERIA	GUIDANCE
1	Project is led or co-led by CSO with an established relationship with the community the project is intended to benefit (priority population)	<p>DESIRED OUTCOME</p> <p>Project leads have a strong understanding of and commitment to the needs of the benefiting community.</p> <p>CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects exclusively led by for-profit entities do not qualify for points; projects with at least one partner that meets the definition of a CSO that has an existing relationship to the intended community are eligible for points. • Prerequisite 2 addresses community involvement in a project in the shorter term, and this criterion addresses the holistic, long-term relationship of CSOs with their communities and whether they have a leadership role within the project (as opposed to other project partners not in a leadership position). • To determine whether the CSO has an established relationship with the intended community, review the organizational website or other materials for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A description of the CSO’s mission or vision statement that demonstrates clear connection to the community. ○ Evidence of positive interaction between the CSO and community members on social media or through other unpaid media coverage. ○ Indications that the CSO’s employees, members, volunteers, committee, or board members live or work in the community. ○ Past projects or collaborations with the community. • Consider the relationship length between the CSO and the community. Community-based organizations (CBOs) local to the community and led by community members are preferable to outside organizations. If an organization has a newly created position or department devoted to engaging the intended community but no actual track record or demonstrated outcomes, whereas other local groups have a long-standing track record, this criterion would not be met. • If the organization works in the community but has had negative impact or lacks the organization health needed for constructive community relationships, this criterion is not satisfied. Established policies for whistleblowing and conflict

resolution or positive testimonials from employees or collaborators are signals of organization health and strong community relationships.

- To determine whether the CSO has a leadership role in the project, evaluate the extent of their decision-making authority in the project planning and implementation.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of priority population.
- **Glossary** definition of project leads.
- **Glossary** definition of CSO.
- **Glossary** definition of partner or partner organization.

2

CSO is genuinely involved and not in name only (tokenization)

DESIRED OUTCOME

CSOs involved in the project have an authentic and material role.

CONSIDERATIONS

- This criterion focuses on whether a CSO, as either a project lead or project partner, is materially involved; it is not necessary for the CSO to have a previous relationship with the community to be eligible for points for this item.
- Based on the project approach, is it clear the CSO will be performing, managing, delegating, or supervising functions that are critical to the project?
- Does the project align with the established capabilities and mission of the CSO, or address how capabilities will be expanded?
- Does the project approach indicate that the CSO's role pertains to 10 percent or more of the project budget?

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of project leads.
- **Glossary** definition of project partners or partner organizations.
- **Glossary** definition of CSO.

Example: A CSO is listed as one of five project partners, though the project approach does not list any employees of the CSO as key project personnel. Additionally, the CSO's role on the project is described as "ad hoc advisory support." In this case, there is no evidence that the CSO has a role that is material to the project and no points are awarded.

3

Project leads have a track record of delivering programs or projects that benefit the intended priority population

DESIRED OUTCOME

Project has high likelihood of delivering intended outcomes because the project leads are experienced in overcoming challenges specific to the project type.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Look for evidence that the leading organizations or key personnel for the project team have at least three years of experience delivering programs and projects that benefit the priority population, experience completing at least one similar project in the past, or the necessary partners to meet stated gaps in expertise and experience; if there are multiple organizations involved, credit can be awarded if any of the project leads or key team members meet these criteria.
- For full credit, at least one of the project leads must also have a primary organization focus on one or more of the intended priority populations; this should be evident based on the organization's mission statement and core work.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of project leads.
- **Glossary** definition of priority population.
- **Glossary** definition of partner or partner organization.

4

Staff (including leadership) and board of the community-serving organization(s) leading the project have prior or current lived experienced with the socioeconomic factors affecting the priority population the proposed project is intended to benefit

DESIRED OUTCOME

Those making decisions that will impact the community have strong insights into community perspectives.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Projects that do not have a CSO functioning as a project lead cannot achieve points for this item.
- If there is more than one CSO functioning as a project lead, points can be achieved if any of them satisfies the criteria.
- Organizational staff (including leadership) and the organization's board should be separately evaluated against the established thresholds.
- Consult annual reporting on staff and board diversity, personnel profiles, or proposal materials to evaluate the demographics and compare to the demographics of the priority population.
- Do not attempt to guess or assume identities if that information has not been voluntarily disclosed; if not otherwise disclosed, request the voluntary sharing of the needed information, with options for entities to provide this individually or as a summary and anonymized as needed or desired by the staff and board.

- In considering partial credit, award higher points for organizations with diverse leadership, and lower credit for organizations with diverse staff that primarily hold junior or entry level positions.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of CSO.
- **Glossary** definition of frontline communities.

Example: One of the project leads is a CSO with 10 staff members and 5 board members. Five staff (50 percent) and three board members (60 percent) reflect the racial demographics of the community benefiting from the project, achieving full credit.

Example: One of the project leads is a CSO with 10 staff members and 5 board members. Six staff (60 percent) and one board member (20 percent) reflect the racial demographics of the community benefiting from the project. Because the minimum threshold of 30 percent for both staff and board members is not met, no credit is awarded.

5

For-profit organizations are diverse-owned

DESIRED OUTCOME

Counteract historic patterns of underemployment, intergenerational wealth gaps, and lower income in priority populations by enabling wealth-building opportunities and economic inclusion.

CONSIDERATIONS

- This requirement applies to project leads only.
- Evaluate each for-profit partner serving as a project lead; start by determining whether the project leads hold relevant certifications of diverse ownership, such as being minority-owned business enterprises (MBE), woman-owned business enterprises (WBE), veteran-owned, or LGBT-owned business enterprises (LGBTBE)
- Organizations may or may not have the capacity to earn a certification to verify this information; formal certifications are not required to earn credit, but are useful in aiding evaluation.
- Projects delivered exclusively by nonprofit entities and fully member- or worker-owned cooperatives earn full credit.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:

- **Glossary** definition of diverse-owned (business).
- **Glossary** definition of project leads.

6

Project team, including staff, contractors, and other partners have demonstrated implementation experience and relevant qualifications that will support project success

DESIRED OUTCOME

Participating organizations are qualified and capable of delivering the project.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Relevant qualifications include (but are not limited to) certifications, degrees, or completed training in relevant fields; a track record of delivering similar work; or life experience and expertise directly related to the community or planned project.
- Demonstrated implementation experience should consist of past work relevant to the core elements of the proposed project.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of project team.
- **Example – full credit:** A project proposes to retrofit a community center facility for energy efficiency, renewable energy, and indoor air quality considerations. The project team includes a certified energy manager tasked with identifying key efficiency opportunities, contractors with previous experience installing the planned technology, and a community member familiar with the health issues most concerning to facility users. Collectively they comprise the necessary expertise, and the project receives full credit.

Example – partial credit: A project proposes to develop a community solar project that will offer discounted electricity subscriptions to low-to moderate-income (LMI) households. The project team is experienced in developing solar energy projects, but does not have experience in outreach to LMI utility customers and does not indicate a plan for securing that expertise at a later stage. Because LMI customer subscriptions are critical to the project realizing the intended benefits and this capability is not accounted for, the project achieves only partial credit.

7

Project partners include a small or emerging business

DESIRED OUTCOME

Counteracting historic patterns of underemployment and lower income in priority populations by enabling wealth-building opportunities and economic inclusion.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Evaluate each for-profit entity serving as a project partner to determine whether they qualify as a small or emerging business; if one or more partner qualifies, full points are achieved.

-
- Projects delivered exclusively by nonprofit entities and fully member- or worker-owned cooperatives earn full credit.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of partner or partner organizations leads.
- **Glossary** definition of small or emerging business.

Project Objectives and Approach

ITEM	CRITERIA	GUIDANCE
8	Project objectives and approach demonstrate thorough understanding of the environmental, climate, and social justice issues of priority population	<p>DESIRED OUTCOME</p> <p>Projects are aligned with the objectives and approach desired by the priority populations and thoughtfully consider constraints, as opposed to aligning with the preferences of outside entities.</p> <p>CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First evaluate if the project has a clear and direct approach to addressing the identified issue or opportunity and whether the approach considers the real barriers and constraints to successful implementation.• Look for evidence that the identified issue or opportunity is considered important by the priority population; types of evidence might include summaries of community surveys, visioning sessions, or needs assessments or letters of support for the project from community stakeholders. <p>RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glossary definition of priority population.
9	Intended project benefits are directed to priority populations	<p>DESIRED OUTCOME</p> <p>Ensure that project is deliberate in delivering benefits to the intended populations.</p> <p>CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the project is directed at a general or broad population, it may not be targeted enough to serve environmental justice objectives.• Unless the project includes eligibility criteria that ensure delivery of benefits to priority populations, consider the broader demographics of the benefiting organization or community and how its composition compares to the general public and priority population. <p>RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glossary definition of priority population. <p>Example – benefits are not targeted: A project benefits a local school that has a higher proportion of affluent students than the general public, indicating that the priority populations are not receiving the majority of benefits; therefore, the project does not earn credit, even if some students are in the priority population.</p>

Example – benefits are targeted: An energy efficiency incentive program includes distributing LED lightbulbs to households, and the program requires that 75 percent of households served must meet eligibility criteria related to LMI status. This project earns full credit for targeting benefits to a priority population.

10 Project planning and decision-making is optimized for inclusion

DESIRED OUTCOME

The project is designed or codesigned by the community.

CONSIDERATIONS

- To determine whether the project meets this requirement, refer to the infographic in [Appendix A](#), excerpted from Facilitating Power’s [Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership](#).
- Level 4 (Collaborate) achieves partial credit, and Level 5 (Defer to) achieves full credit. In assessing this prerequisite, consider:
 - Does the proposal mention “community outreach” or an “organizer” role?
 - What formal role do local organizations play in the proposal, and do they have significant budget allocated to support their ongoing involvement?
 - Is or will the detailed project approach be transparent and accessible to community members to enable their involvement in the project components most important to them?
- Locally owned or based businesses and organizations (including governmental) do not automatically represent perspectives of priority population.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:

Appendix A: The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership,

11 Project approach is clear, manageable, and organized to be successful

DESIRED OUTCOME

Project implementations details are well-considered and positioned to deliver the intended outcomes.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- The proposal may include clear and realistic milestones and outcomes, but if extensive risks and dependencies exist, the project approach may not be successful; look for evidence that likely barriers and challenges have been anticipated, the associated risks mitigated in the project approach, and that processes are in place that will enable nimble mid-project adjustments as needed.

- Assess the appropriateness and plausibility of due diligence efforts, technical delivery aspects of the project, and community involvement components.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

Example – inadequate project approach: A rooftop solar installation project is proposed for an existing facility. The project approach does not include foundational elements like an assessment of the current condition of roofing materials or load-bearing capacity, nor does the project contain contingency approaches should health and safety issues arise that must be addressed prior to installing the solar system. Because these missing elements are critical aspects of a rooftop solar installation, the project earns no credit.

Example – appropriate project approach: A project proposal for community solar development includes commitments to contracting with diverse-owned business. Because the current availability of diverse-owned contractors is limited in the region, the project timeline includes additional time for recruiting and identifies two local organizations that will serve as intermediaries for finding and vetting diverse-owned options. The project earns full credit.

12

Project budget is complete and reasonable

DESIRED OUTCOME

Project is likely to be fully implemented because costs are well understood and planned for.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider if the overall project budget is within range of cost benchmarks for similar projects in the same market, focusing on order-of-magnitude discrepancies; keep in mind that ideal projects with high-road labor standards, joint partnerships, and robust community involvement may have cost premiums compared to low-bid offerings.
- Evaluate the reasonableness and completeness of both planned hard costs (e.g., materials and equipment) and soft costs (e.g., administrative, project management, training, and labor).
- Compare the labor costs budgeted here to related evaluation items, such as those assessing for living wages.
- Depending on the project timeline, planning for inflation or market shifts in costs may be appropriate, particularly for multiyear projects.

Resources and examples:

Example – project budget is incomplete: A rooftop solar installation project is proposed, and the budget indicates line items for the project design and installation. However, local codes require assessing roofing material longevity and structural engineering studies for load-bearing capacity prior to installing solar onto existing facilities, and the budget does not account for these costs. The project earns partial credit.

Example – project budget is unreasonable: A project proposal for installing electric vehicle charging stations at community centers is proposed, though the project budget per charging station is only one-tenth of similar stations installed in the same community in the last year, and the significantly lower costs are not adequately explained within the project approach. The project earns no credit.

Intended Social Benefits

ITEM	CRITERIA	GUIDANCE
13	Fair economic inclusion: cooperative ownership and wealth building	<p>DESIRED OUTCOME Project provides wealth-building opportunities to priority populations.</p> <p>CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the project proposal does not explicitly mention options for equity building or shareholding for community members, no credit is awarded. • Cooperative ownership models vary in their structure, including the type of economic benefits that owners experience; for scoring purposes, ownership should entitle shareholders to democratic influence over governance and decision-making of the asset or enterprise, and should also provide for the opportunity of economic benefit in the form of dividends, rebates, discounts, or other material benefits. • Financial benefits do not need to be guaranteed by the project, but the terms for realizing financial benefits, including the expected timeline and conditions that must be met prior to disbursements to owners, should be disclosed to prospective owners. • Projects that include a planned ownership flip to cooperative ownership after an initial financing period can earn points, as long as the eventual availability of cooperative ownership shares is codified within project planning documents. <p>RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glossary definition of priority populations. • Glossary definition of CSO. • Glossary definition of cooperative ownership.
14	Fair economic inclusion: wages	<p>DESIRED OUTCOME Laborers are compensated at a level that enables them to have a thriving standard of living for their families.</p> <p>CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that are committed to paying wages at the levels negotiated through collective bargaining, unions, or collaborative procurement efforts are considered living wages, and therefore are eligible for credit for this item. • To determine whether wages exceed living wages or higher for a sole adult, begin by evaluating hourly wage practices for the lowest-paid labor for the project.

- To determine living wages for locations in the United States that comply with partial or full credit for this item, consult the living wage in the [MIT Living Wage Calculator \(US\)](#). To earn full credit, wages should be adequate to support a family of four with two children and one adult working. In the United States, minimum wage does not necessarily mean a living wage.
- Beyond assessing wage levels, verify if employers of the lowest-paid laborers involved in the project include additional high-road labor practices related to job quality and worker voice by consulting the project proposal, organizational websites, annual reports, or other public documents that disclose employment practices.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of living wage.
- **Glossary** definition of high-road labor standard.
- [MIT Living Wage Calculator \(US\)](#).

15 Fair economic inclusion: local hiring

DESIRED OUTCOME

Project delivers community benefits through employment opportunities.

CONSIDERATIONS

- This requirement pertains to hourly laborers working directly on the project site and employed by the construction contractor and subcontractors and is based on the labor hours needed for project completion; it does not pertain to site superintendents or foremen, project administration, engineering, architecture, or other project efforts.
- To qualify for points, projects must have a local hiring provision or detailed workforce utilization plan, such as use of a workforce intermediary, for employing local laborers from within the priority population. The plan should include clear targets and compliance reporting procedures.
- Note that in some jurisdictions, affirmative action hiring is not allowed, requiring the use of local hiring provisions that emphasize hiring from neighborhoods with low employment to drive employment opportunities to priority populations.
- Examples of inclusive hiring practices include:
 - Writing job descriptions that communicate the employer's desire and commitment to a diverse workforce.
 - Making the work site accessible, including transportation options to and from the site.
 - Providing bias training for hiring teams.

- Using diverse hiring teams.
- Measuring progress through candidate surveys and exit interviews.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of living wage.
- **Glossary** definition of high-road labor standard.
- **Glossary** definition of priority population.
- **Glossary** definition of labor hours.

16

Fair economic inclusion: worker transition

DESIRED OUTCOME

Workers likely to suffer job losses from the fossil fuel industry are actively transitioned to employment in the clean energy economy.

CONSIDERATIONS

- This requirement pertains to hourly laborers working directly on the project site and employed by the construction contractor and subcontractors and is based on the labor hours needed for project completion; it does not pertain to efforts attributable to engineering, architecture, supervisory, management, or non-working owners.
- To qualify for points, projects must have a detailed workforce utilization plan, such as use of a workforce intermediary, for employing transitioning fossil fuel laborers. The plan should include clear targets and compliance reporting procedures.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of labor hours.

17

Fair economic inclusion: diverse ownership of contracted businesses

DESIRED OUTCOME

Project provides wealth-building opportunities to priority populations.

CONSIDERATIONS

- The percent of budget allocated to diverse-owned business is calculated based on the full project budget for the current project phase. If there are multiple funding sources for the current phase, consider the sum of them in the calculations. Do not include related expenditures for earlier planning phases or pro bono or in-kind contributions.
- If all contractors are identified in the project proposal, evaluate which qualify as diverse-owned and the portion of the project budget allocated to those that qualify. Start by determining whether contractors hold relevant certifications of diverse ownership, such as being minority-owned business enterprises

(MBE), woman-owned business enterprises (WBE), veteran-owned, or LGBT-owned business enterprises (LGBTBE)

- Organizations may or may not have the capacity to earn a certification to verify this information; formal certifications are not required to earn credit, but are useful in aiding evaluation.
- If some or all contractors are not yet secured, points can be awarded if there is a detailed plan for diverse-owned business utilization. The plan should include clear targets and compliance reporting procedures.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of diverse-owned business.

Example – plan for diverse contracting: A project proposal requires the use of contractors to install a community solar project, and the project will be bid to qualified contractors once funding is established. The project proposal includes a detailed plan to ensure that at least 55 percent of the project budget is spent with diverse-owned contractors. The plan includes outreach to diverse-owned bidders through connected trade organizations, options for breaking down or combining elements of work into economically feasible units to facilitate diverse-owned participation, providing assistance in obtaining required bonding or insurance or accommodating alternatives, and providing quick pay agreements to meet cash-flow demands. To track compliance, all contractor payments will be logged monthly over the life of the project, with clear delineation of the expenditures paid to diverse-owned businesses. Because the plan is detailed, plausible, and exceeds the related threshold, the project is awarded full points.

18

Health benefits (through pollution remediation, prevention, or other means)

DESIRED OUTCOME

Project reduces or eliminates pollution exposure to address the root causes of adverse health impacts in the priority population.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Health benefits include reduced exposure to air and water pollution, including indoor air quality; reduced exposure to extreme heat; increased access to high-quality food; and increased access to safe walking, biking, and other personal mobility routes.
- Projects that explicitly include pollution remediation as a part of the project scope qualify for full points.
- Certain energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainability projects may also provide significant, direct health benefits. Examples include energy efficiency projects that improve indoor air quality within buildings; renewable energy, electrification, or battery storage projects that reduce fossil fuel

combustion in buildings or neighborhoods; or tree planting and building retrofits to address extreme heat and air pollution filtration that are located in priority communities.

- Indirect health benefits qualify for partial points, such as tree planting near but outside of priority communities, or reduction of fossil fuel combustion near to but outside of priority communities.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of direct benefits.
- **Glossary** definition of priority population.

19

Resource access: basic access and reliability for utilities (water, sewer, electricity, internet, and clean transportation options)

DESIRED OUTCOME

Equitable access to reliable energy, water, sanitation, and other critical services without increasing financial burden on vulnerable populations.

CONSIDERATIONS

- To qualify for full points, the project must either bring access to critical services to the priority population or increase the reliability of those services.
- Partial credit is available to projects that indirectly improve resource access or improve access and reliability in a way that is not specific to the priority population, such as the addition of high-speed internet to a neighborhood that includes a combination of vulnerable and less vulnerable populations.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of priority population.
- **Glossary** definition of vulnerable population.

Example – new access to electricity: A project proposes to develop a community solar and microgrid project for a rural community with a priority population that does not currently have access to electricity. The project is awarded full points.

Example – improved reliability: A project proposes to install battery storage and onsite solar for a health services clinic that serves a priority population, ensuring that the facility will maintain power during grid outages. The project is awarded full points.

20

Resource access: affordability for utilities (water, sewer, electricity, internet, and clean

DESIRED OUTCOME

Equitable access to reliable energy, water, sanitation, and other critical services without increasing financial burden on vulnerable populations.

CONSIDERATIONS:

transportation options)

- To qualify for credit, cost savings should benefit priority populations at the household level, the business-level (for diverse-owned businesses), or through CSOs.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:

- **Glossary** definition of priority population.

Example – cost savings for food: A community garden project intends to provide produce shares and offers a 25 percent discount to low-income households. The project is awarded full points.

21

Climate resiliency

DESIRED OUTCOME

Protection for priority populations from the risk of extreme weather events and other effects of climate change.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Climate resiliency outcomes that are most likely to be relevant to priority communities include initiatives that protect against extreme weather. Examples include:
 - Building retrofits that offer protection from acute physical climate change risk (for example, moving mechanical equipment out of basements prone to flooding), keep occupants safe during extreme weather (for example, providing reliable cooling during heat waves), or optimize passive survivability so that the building maintains livable conditions in the event of power outages.
 - Green infrastructure projects minimize heat island effect or mitigate flooding from sea-level rise or deluge rainfall events.
 - Redundancy or isolation of critical building or community infrastructure, such as battery-supplied backup power.
- For full credit, projects should be focused on delivering benefits at the scale of the community or neighborhood; this can be in the form of public infrastructure projects or optimizing of a facility or facilities that serve the public.
- Resiliency approaches that further exacerbate pollution impacts should not be awarded credit, such as diesel-power backup generators that maintain power during outages but also add to pollution burden.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **Glossary** definition of priority population.

22

Other social benefits

DESIRED OUTCOME

Innovative project approaches and outcomes that deliver social benefits beyond those covered in other scoring items and that demonstrate responsiveness to local conditions and community priorities.

CONSIDERATIONS

- To qualify for credit, the other social benefits delivered by the project should be a central element of the project. Examples include, but are not limited to, projects that:
 - Provide enhanced sense of place or history.
 - Create opportunities for socializing.
 - Provide opportunities for ongoing learning or training.
 - Improve the privacy, security, and safety of community members.

Intended Environmental Benefits

ITEM	CRITERIA	GUIDANCE
23	Carbon (emissions reduction or sequestration)	<p>DESIRED OUTCOME</p> <p>Project implements EJ-aligned climate actions that reduces emissions or sequesters atmospheric carbon.</p> <p>CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate the proposal to assess if carbon benefits beyond those required by the related prerequisite will result from the project; only the solutions listed in the Appendix-Climate Benefits worksheet are eligible to achieve points.• The solutions listed in the Appendix-Climate Benefits worksheet are derived from the Project Drawdown list of top carbon reduction opportunities, and have been intentionally narrowed by the Just Transition PowerForce from the full Project Drawdown list to focus on those solutions that are the highest priority and recommended solutions because of their alignment with environmental justice outcomes. These include solutions that do have the support of the local community, do not perpetuate the use of fossil fuels as an energy source, do not have significant local pollution impacts, and do not develop new industries reliant on extractive consumerism.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Identify the carbon solutions represented within the project proposal and map them to the solutions listed in the Appendix-Climate Benefits tab. Filter first by primary category (e.g., Food and Agriculture), and then look for the specific solutions (e.g., Reduced Food Waste). To earn full points, the project must directly implement one or more high priority carbon solutions.○ Projects that set the stage for eventual implementation of a carbon solution do not qualify for points.○ Apply a national/regional/local lens to ensure appropriateness of the carbon solution(s), particularly for the following solutions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Refrigerant management - Frontline communities should be equipped to mitigate harm from emissions and pollution already impacting their communities. However, a mitigation strategy in and of itself should not cause harm. Project Drawdown suggests that Refrigerant Management can include purification for reuse or transformation into

other chemicals that do not cause warming. Communities and evaluators should look at the whole life cycle of any proposed harm reduction measure, to the greatest extent possible, to ensure that this strategy does not reduce emissions at the expense of community health.

- Clean cookstoves - Given that Project Drawdown promotes this as a solution for only certain geographies in the Global South, including countries with lower incomes economies located in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and the US-centric context in which this framework was developed, evaluators should defer to the perspectives of local frontline communities when evaluating project proposals related to this solution.
- Some projects that reduce emissions or sequester carbon do not ultimately deliver climate benefits, or can at the same time continue or cause new harm to communities and ecosystems. For example, waste-to-energy processes that combust waste and convert it to heat or electricity may reduce emissions if replacing energy that would otherwise be generated by combusting coal or gas, but come with serious human health and environmental risks, and can undermine waste prevention strategies. These types of strategies do not support environmental justice outcomes and are not aligned with Just Transition principles.
- Evaluate the carbon solutions represented within the project proposal in the context of environmental justice outcomes and Just Transition principles.
 - Qualifying solutions do not exploit land, labor, or living systems, and instead promote fair economic inclusion, energy democracy, food and land sovereignty, and protection of nature.
 - If local leaders of frontline communities and priority populations oppose certain climate solutions, related projects cannot earn credit for this scoring item
 - If the proposed solution has the potential for adverse effects on communities or the environment, does the project proposal include a viable plan for addressing those risks?

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- Appendix-Climate Benefits tab within the scorecard file.

- Project Drawdown Solutions [website](#).
- [Hoodwinked in the Hothouse](#).
- [The People's Solution Lens](#).

24

Ecosystem stewardship

DESIRED OUTCOME

Project delivers improved species diversity, protected/restored habitat area, or another indicator of ecosystem stewardship.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Beneficial ecosystem stewardship projects typically consider the hydrology, vegetation, and soil functions of a site.
- Percent improvements over baseline conditions can be demonstrated based on the area affected, the number of healthy species or specimens present, or other indicators relevant to the ecosystem function.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

Example: A project proposal includes converting 5 acres of a 10-acre parcel to native vegetation. The area planned for restoration is currently turf grass. Because 50 percent of the site area will be improved, the project is awarded full credit.

25

Water stewardship

DESIRED OUTCOME

Project delivers water efficiency, rainwater management, water treatment, or other indicator of water stewardship.

CONSIDERATIONS

- For water efficiency projects, percent improvement over baseline conditions can be demonstrated through calculations based on the equipment specifications of the proposed equipment compared to either the existing equipment or code requirements.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:

Example: A project proposal includes retrofitting a facility with high-efficiency water fixtures and onsite greywater recycling. Calculations show water use will be reduced by 50 percent compared to the existing fixtures. The project is awarded full credit.

26

Waste stewardship

DESIRED OUTCOME

Project delivers waste prevention, waste diversion from landfill or incineration, or other indicator of waste stewardship.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Efforts that replace single-use products with durable alternatives are assumed to deliver a 50 percent or greater improvement.
- Efforts that introduce options for reuse, recycling, or composting should be evaluated based on how effectively they address the related waste stream.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES:

Example: A project proposal will introduce onsite composting operations to a school campus, allowing diversion of 100 percent of food waste from the cafeteria. The project is awarded full credit.

27

Responsible sourcing

DESIRED OUTCOME

Prioritize use of responsible supply chains that deliver environmental and social benefits.

CONSIDERATIONS

- The responsible sourcing approach can be specific to the project proposal, or part of a broader organizational-wide responsible sourcing commitment made by the project leads.
- The responsible sourcing approach should include social aspects, such as commitments to human rights, fair labor standards, and environmental aspects, such as use of goods and services that have low negative or positive impacts on carbon, ecosystems, water and waste indicators.
- To earn full credit, the responsible sourcing approach must include traceability, meaning the capability to verify the history, location, or application of the responsible sourcing policy through a documented record. Third-party audits or certifications at the project or organizational level can be used to demonstrate traceability.

Appendix A

For more detail on the spectrum and examples of different levels of participation, visit: https://www.facilitatingpower.com/spectrum_of_community_engagement_to_ownership

THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP



2

