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Title: Jumpstarting Adaptation Projects in Your Organization: A Replicable Half-Day Workshop Model

Abstract: Want to jumpstart a climate adaptation project in your organization? Alameda County has developed a replicable approach to catalyze climate resilience projects. Participants will leave feeling inspired by what this method can accomplish and with an understanding of how to get started. Staff at the Alameda County Office of Sustainability wanted to test how adaptation could be encouraged across our organization. We theorized that starting small and actually launching a few projects would lead to cascading impacts. We also knew that vulnerable frontline communities within our county were already feeling the effects of climate change, and implementing small-scale action would help them deal with those effects. The model that the Sustainability Office developed to accomplish this includes five steps to plan, hold, and follow up on a half-day workshop on a single climate impact that directly affects an organization's work or clients. The workshop model can be executed by a single department, across organizations or partners, or be presented in a series to scale up impact and implementation. The Sustainability Office used this model to hold two successful workshops with the county's Public Health and Planning Departments, addressing extreme heat and wildfire smoke through an equity lens. Both workshops led to tangible results and further partnerships with departments which have now begun to scale up their adaptation work. The Planning Department workshop targeted heat mitigation efforts in communities with the least capacity to withstand extreme heat. Spurred by the workshop, champions secured funding for a tree planting and community engagement project to increase heat resilience at the household level within a socioeconomically disadvantaged community. The immediate result of the Public Health Department workshop on wildfire smoke was a protective actions flyer translated into five languages and distributed to vulnerable clients. The department then obtained grant funding to scale up and is now working to develop smoke emergency alerts and identify how to reach those most affected, such as individuals experiencing homelessness. The model has been written up into a 24-page planning guide. (See guide and supplemental resources at <http://www.acgov.org/sustain/what/climate/adaptation.htm>.) While designed by a local government, the steps apply in any organization. The guide shows how a climate champion within a team can take the lead on designing and holding a workshop on a specific climate impact that affects clients. Crucially, the climate adaptation steps developed at the workshop are likely to be feasible and fit with other team goals.