

Climate Event and Emergency Preparedness Project

Community Conversations with Members of Equity-Deserving Groups

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Land Acknowledgement

Interior Health would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Dăkelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, St'át'imc, syilx, Sinixte and T̓silhqot'in Nations where we live, learn, collaborate and work together.

Agenda



Purpose of the project



Context: Climate risk and equity



Engagement approach



What we heard (key findings)



What this means for planning and decision-making



What made this work



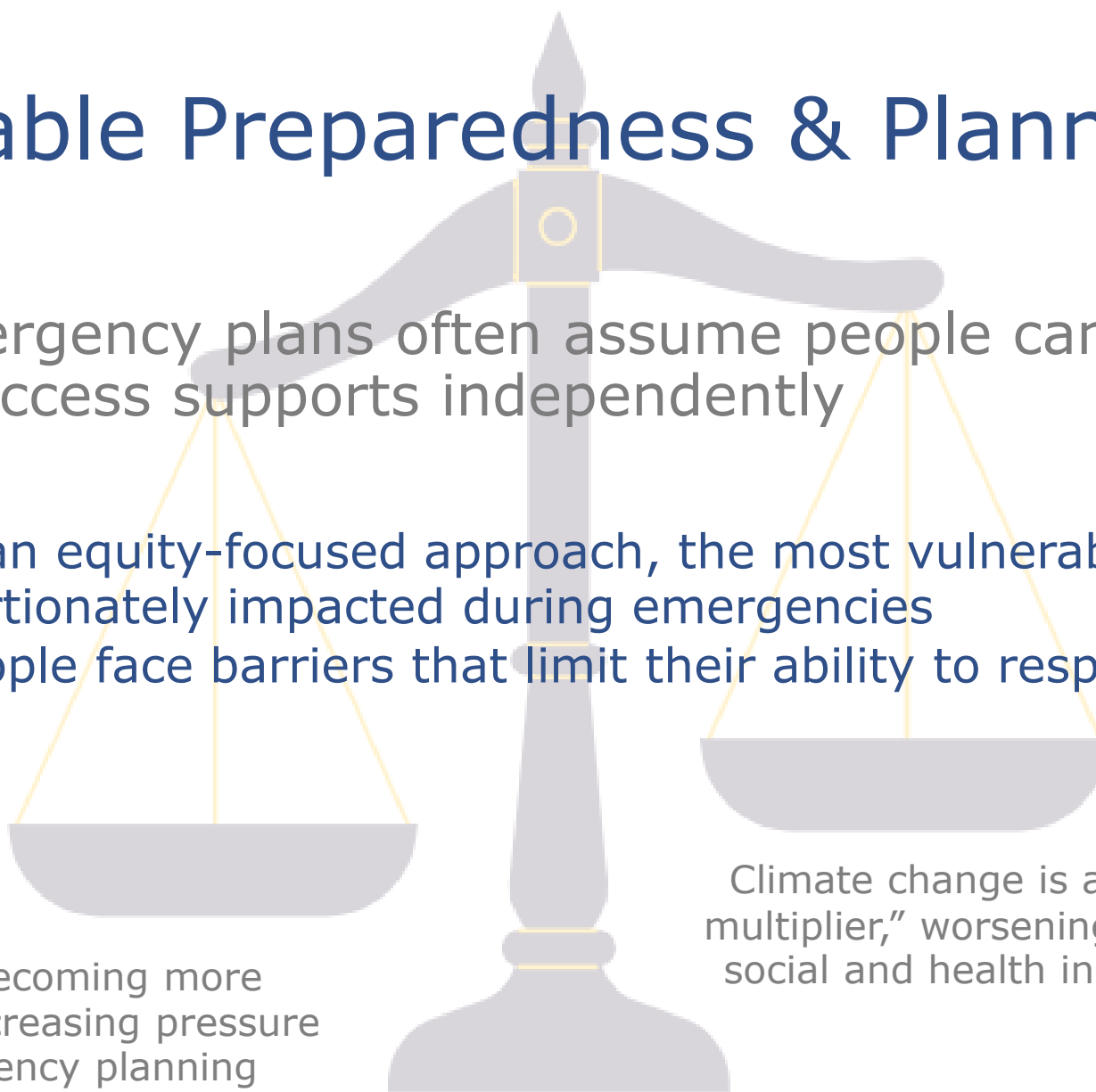
Purpose of the Project

Engage with community members belonging to diverse groups to:

1. Understand how climate emergencies are experienced across intersecting identities
2. Identify barriers and strengths in preparedness, response, and recovery
3. Inform more inclusive emergency planning and community supports



(In)Equitable Preparedness & Planning



Traditional emergency plans often assume people can prepare, relocate, and access supports independently

- Without an equity-focused approach, the most vulnerable are disproportionately impacted during emergencies
- Many people face barriers that limit their ability to respond safely

Climate events are becoming more frequent and severe, increasing pressure on community emergency planning

Climate change is a “threat multiplier,” worsening existing social and health inequities



Populations at Risk



Elderly
People



Pre-existing
illness



Children &
Youth



Pregnant
People



Indigenous
Peoples



Frontline
Emergency
Responders



Northern &
Remote
Communities



Social &
Economically
Disadvantaged



Racialized
People

Same Storm... Different Boats



Health and well-being for all
Quality | Integrity | Compassion | Safety

Kamloops Emergencies (Past & Future)

Weather and Climate events that required action by individuals and/or communities to help people stay healthy and well:



Extreme Cold



Winter Storms



Flooding



Extreme Heat



Wildfire



Wildfire Smoke

About the Project



Community-based engagement: Explore experiences related to climate-related emergencies and preparation for extreme weather



Used an **intersectional lens** to understand how belonging to different social groups can shape experiences of climate events and emergencies.

Centering lived experience: Those who experience disproportionate impacts



Key Focus: Preparedness, access to information, barriers to safety, and community strengths

Funding provided by



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Engagement Techniques

- ✓ Community-hosted conversations (not institutional settings)
- ✓ Paid participation and resourced host agencies
- ✓ Consistent questions across diverse groups
- ✓ Rapid timeline with meaningful depth



Help Strengthen Climate and Emergency Preparedness in Kamloops

People in Motion is inviting your organization to collaborate with us on a SPARC BC-funded community engagement initiative focused on climate resilience and emergency preparedness. The project seeks to better understand the experiences of equity-deserving populations in relation to climate hazards and emergency preparedness. Through focus groups and individual interviews, our goal is to gather meaningful input from priority populations to inform a broader SPARC-funded climate emergency preparedness project. Findings will be shared with collaborating organizations, and all responses will be anonymous.

HOW YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN SUPPORT:

- Assisting with recruitment for focus groups (or individual interviews if participants prefer)
- Helping us reach participants with intersecting identities
- Hosting an engagement session or interviews at your site

WHAT PIM WILL PROVIDE:

- Organizations will receive a **\$500.00** honorarium for hosting and facilitating an engagement session
- Participant honoraria of **\$50.00** (plus travel support)
- A facilitator guide and support with note taking

WHO WE'RE ENGAGING:

- People with disabilities
- Seniors
- Low-income individuals
- Newcomers and refugees
- People supporting unhoused individuals
- Youth
- Indigenous Peoples
- Single parents
- Gender diverse groups

HELP ENSURE THAT COMMUNITY VOICES SHAPE POLICY AND INFORM INCLUSIVE LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING

QUESTIONS? For more information please reach out to Deb Delyzer ddelyzer@peopleinmotion.org



Organizations and demographics

Agency	Primary demographic served
YMCA – BC Aging Mindfully	Seniors (co-ed)
Centre for Seniors Information	Seniors (co-ed)
Kamloops District Men's Shed	Mostly senior aged men
Kamloops Immigrant Services	Newcomers to Canada
Thompson Rivers University Students' Union (TRUSU)	Newcomer and Indigenous post-secondary students, and those living with low-income levels
Kamloops Society for Community Inclusion (KSCI) & Speak Up Self-Advocacy Group	Adults with developmental disabilities
City of Kamloops – Accessibility Engagement Group	People with physical disabilities
Same Sky & ASK Wellness	Individuals experiencing homelessness and/or with substance use disorders





Recommendations shared to all participants (organizations and individuals)

Engagement Specifics

8 engagement sessions

- 6-10 participants per group

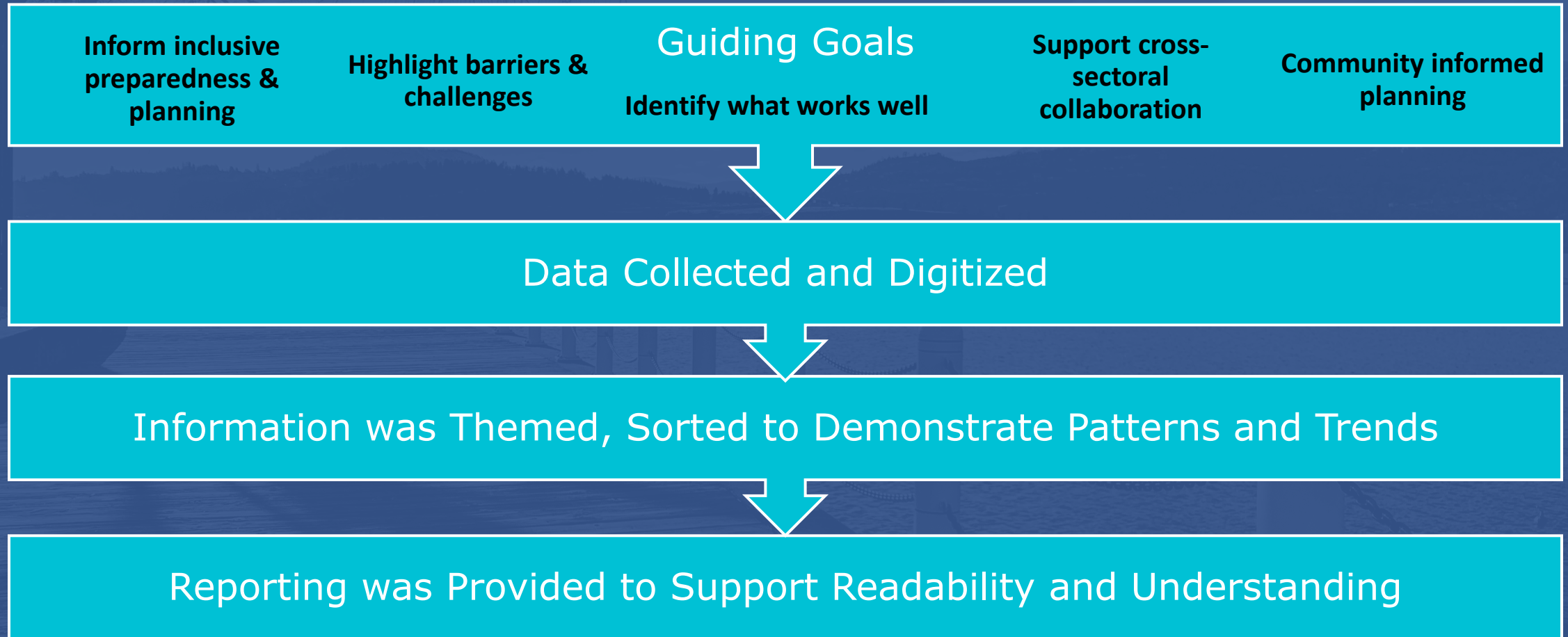
10 Organizations

Anonymity was important

- Notes taken
- No recordings
- No personal identifiers collected

Data was digitized and then themed

Making Meaning of the Information Provided



What We Heard:



Findings: Information, Communication and Coordination

People actively seek critical information from multiple sources during emergencies, but it can be fragmented, not easily understood and hard to access – even when people are motivated to stay informed.

I was checking everywhere—alerts, news, social—but still unsure what to do.

Most alerts assume everyone has a smartphone, and that's just not the case.

Everything was coming from different places—it was overwhelming.

If you're new here, you don't automatically know how emergencies work or where to look for information.



Findings:

Housing, Health & Physical Safety

Higher income and stable, climate-ready housing with reliable utilities reduce risk, while evacuation barriers increase vulnerability and limit access to safe shelter and evacuation options

Leaving wasn't an option unless I knew my dog could come with me

Not having the money or landlord's permission to make changes made it hard to prepare the home properly."

Installing air purifiers and making small upgrades helped keep smoke and heat out of our home.

Knowing there was a reliable way out for non-drivers would make evacuations less frightening



Findings:

Community Capacity and System Gaps

Community members, local organizations, public spaces, and first responders play a critical safety role during prolonged events, but gaps in local access and coordination across agencies remain.

Not everyone feels safe going into public spaces without being questioned or judged.

The fire department was phenomenal.

It felt like everyone was doing their own thing, and no one was clearly in charge.

Friends and family opened-up their homes and provided yard parking

TRU opened overnight and turned into a safe refuge.



Key Recommendations



Address housing-related vulnerability as a core emergency preparedness issue



Ensure evacuation planning is inclusive and realistic for people with diverse needs



Recognize and integrate lived experience and Indigenous knowledge into emergency planning



Strengthen pre-season preparedness through coordinated, community-based education and planning



Improve clarity, accessibility, and coordination of emergency information



Expand neighbourhood-level and place-based supports during emergencies



How will the information be used?



Shared with
funder to inform
provincial research
on climate and
seasonal readiness
for at-risk groups



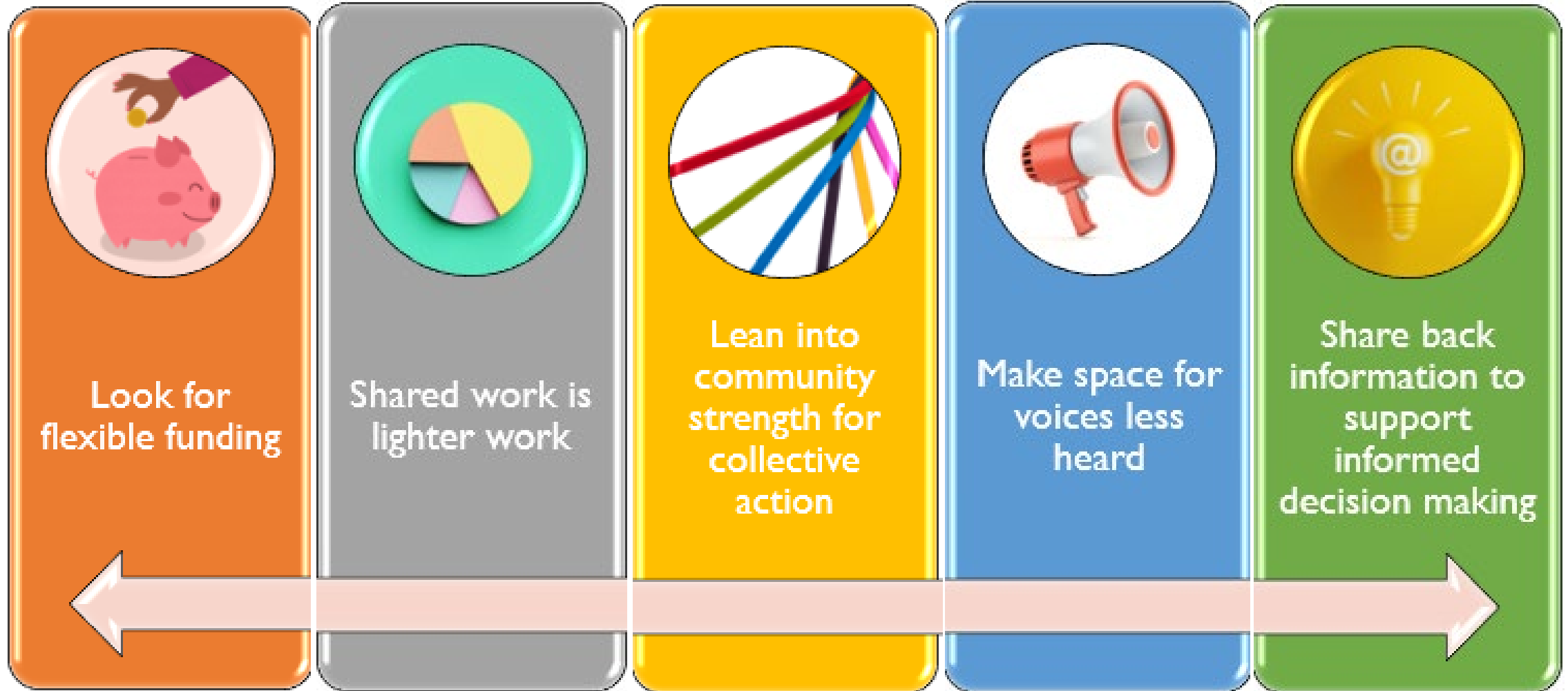
Shared with
participants and
agencies to inform
their understanding
of the issues and
solutions



Shared with
municipal partners
to inform future
planning and
preparedness
work



What Made this Project Work



Questions?



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Quality | Integrity | Compassion | Safety