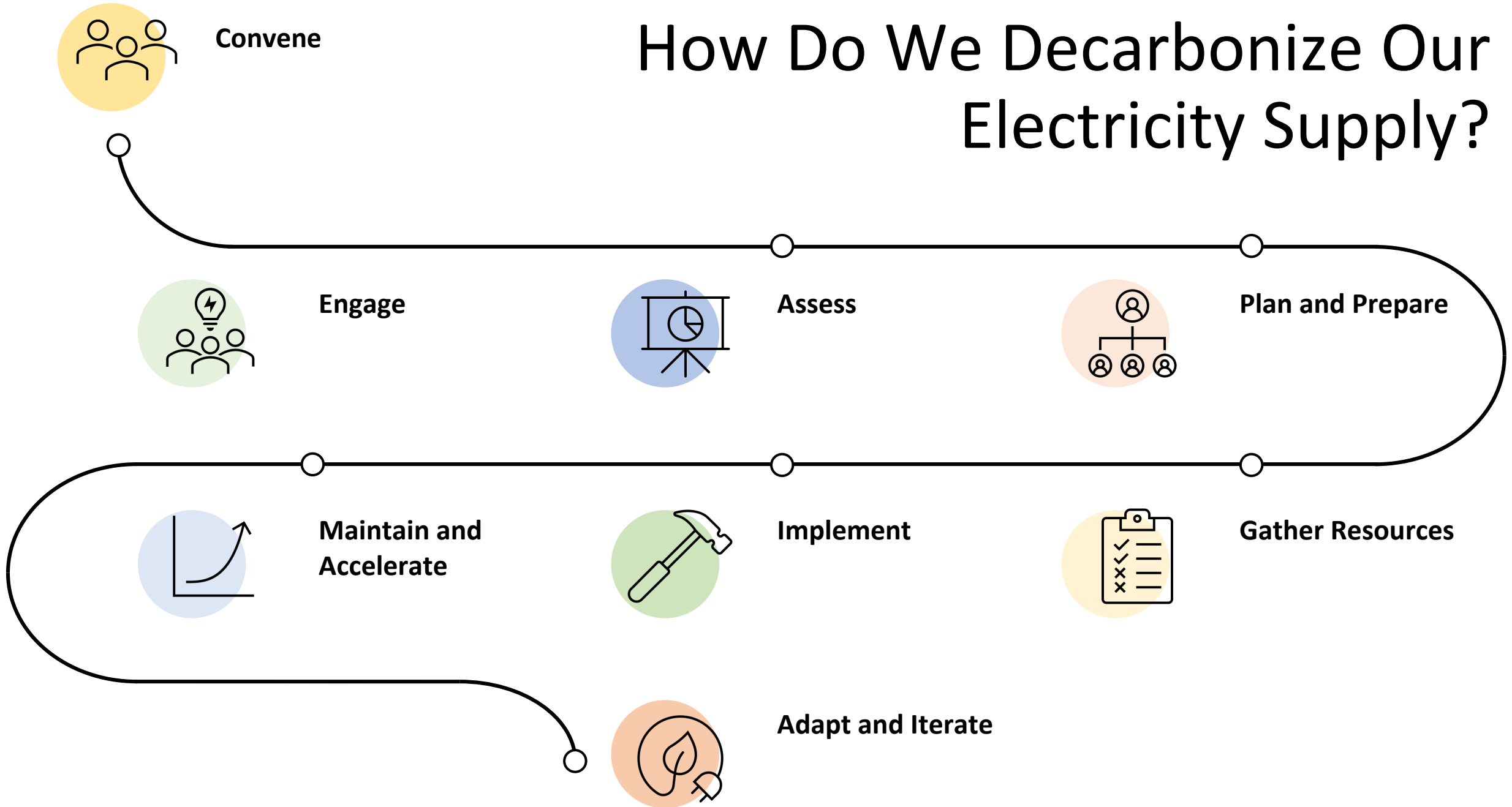


How Do We Decarbonize Our Electricity Supply?





Convene: Identify and map key partners, decision makers, and stakeholders

Who in our community will be positively or negatively impacted by renewable energy development?

- Begin identifying stakeholders by considering how electrification and decarbonization might impact vulnerable communities. View tract-level energy burden and social vulnerability indices in the [Data Viewer](#), part of NREL's SLOPE platform.
- Consider who in your community lacks access to clean energy using Berkeley Lab's [Residential Solar-Adopter Income and Demographic Trends](#).
- Conduct a community assessment and barriers analysis using Better Buildings [Clean Energy for Low Income Communities Accelerator \(CELICA\)](#).

Who should be involved in developing our electricity decarbonization strategy?

- Identify key stakeholders, foster support, assemble an advisory team, and determine what stakeholders' roles might be in program or policy adoption, implementation, and long-term operation using Chapter 2 of NREL's [Guide to Energy Master Planning of High-Performance Districts and Communities](#) and Stage 1 of USDN's [Guidebook on Equitable Clean Energy Program Design for Local Governments and Partners](#).
- Identify local grassroots organizations involved in energy (e.g., [Southern Alliance for Clean Energy](#)) and consider contacting members of the [Florida Advisory Council on Climate and Energy](#) to include in planning and outreach activities.
- Make participation as easy as possible for stakeholders using NREL's [Best Practices in Community Energy Planning](#).
- Lastly, document each stakeholder's role, impact, and interest in planning and implementation using DOE's [Stakeholder Matrix](#).



Engage: Invite diverse perspectives, center community voices, identify stakeholder priorities, and develop a shared vision

How can we improve equity through renewable energy development?

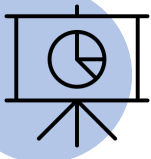
- Begin by defining equity with the stakeholders. Definitions of equity, energy justice, energy burden, and energy insecurity outlined in the [Energy Justice Workbook](#) provide a starting point.
- In addition to revisiting indicators of social vulnerability using SLOPE's [Data Viewer](#), explore how various housing and household characteristics relate to energy burden using DOE's [LEAD Tool](#).
- Explore how to advance equity in renewable energy planning using DOE's SolSmart [Guidance for Advancing Solar Equity](#).

Which economic, environmental, and community resilience benefits matter most to our community and stakeholders?

- With stakeholders, outline goals and desired outcomes using Stage 1 of USDN's [Guidebook on Equitable Clean Energy Program Design for Local Governments and Partners](#). Get help with goal-setting using EPA's [Goal Setting Guidance](#).
- As you explore possibilities with stakeholders, consider potential community benefits of renewable development using the 100% Network's [Comprehensive Buildings Blocks for a Regenerative & Just 100% Policy](#) (p. 14).

What is our shared vision of success?

- Create a shared vision of success to help guide conversations with stakeholders, build public support, attract investors, and bolster grant applications. Revisit Chapter 2 of NREL's [Guide to Energy Master Planning of High-Performance Districts and Communities](#) to learn how to create a shared vision and craft a compelling story for public messaging.
- Explore projections for energy consumption, CO₂ emissions, and technology adoption rates to help connect stakeholder visions and priorities to mobility, renewable energy, and decarbonization goals using SLOPE's [Scenario Planner](#).



Assess: Map existing assets and analyze policy, market, societal, and technical barriers and opportunities

What does our energy supply look like today? How might that change in the future?



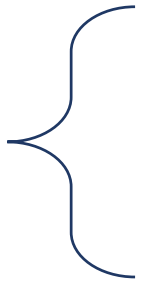
- Explore solar pricing and design trends using Berkeley Lab’s [Tracking the Sun Tool](#) and SEIA’s [Solar State By State](#) map.
- Identify the electric utilities serving your area using DHS’ [Homeland Infrastructure Foundation-Level Data – Electric Retail Service Territories](#).
- Review city-level strategies relevant to your utility type using Section 2 of Cadmus’ [Pathways to 100: An Energy Supply Transformation Primer for U.S. Cities](#).

Which renewable energy technologies and procurement options should we prioritize?



- Use an energy analysis to balance energy consumption and production by consulting Chapter 8 of NREL’s [Guide to Energy Master Planning of High-Performance Districts and Communities](#).
- Review typical sizes and applications of solar in Section 1.5 of DOE’s [Solar Power in Your Community Guidebook](#).
- View modeled maximum technical generation potential for renewable energy technologies in your area using the energy generation layers in SLOPE’s [Data Viewer](#).

What are the social, cultural, and political factors affecting renewable energy deployment?

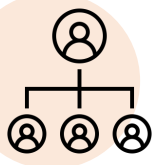


- Explore how sociodemographic factors affect the distribution of environmental burdens and learn about the role of government in combatting inequities using Chapter 2 of USDN’s [Guide to Equitable, Community-Driven Climate Preparedness Planning](#).
- Investigate demographic trends in solar adoption using Berkeley Lab’s [Solar Demographics Trends and Analysis](#) tools.

What are the key planning documents and policies that affect our energy supply and grid infrastructure?



- Navigate federal and state regulations renewable energy projects using DOE’s [Regulatory and Permitting Information Desktop \(RAPID\) Toolkit](#).
- Lastly, develop an energy master plan by consulting Chapter 5 of NREL’s [Guide to Energy Master Planning of High-Performance Districts and Communities](#).



Plan and Prepare: Identify human, technical, and financial resource needs and align with equity and resilience goals

Will our energy plan support our community's equity goals?

- Consider the shared vision of success your community created and consult the Initiative for Energy Justice's [Justice in 100 scorecard](#) to gauge whether your plan supports your equity goals.

How can we help local businesses and workers benefit from decarbonization?

- View data on solar employment using SEIA's [National Solar Jobs Census](#).
- Consider the workforce policies in NAACP's [Just Energy Policies: Model Energy Policies Guide](#) (p. 36–41) and IREC's [Strategies for Solar Workforce Development: A Toolkit for the Solar Industry](#).
- Help workers gain the necessary skills and credentials with DOE's [Weatherization Standardized Curricula](#) and IREC's [Clean Energy Resources and Training](#).

How can we anticipate potential risks and plan for long-term resilience?

- Explore the American Cities Climate Challenge's library of [tools and resources](#). Filter by procurement type and "finance and risk" to find case studies, templates, tools, and webinars.
- View Better Buildings [Webinar Series](#) on resilience for best practices and cost-effective strategies for growing resilience in the building sector. Find additional guidance on resilience in DOE's [Resilience Resource Navigator](#) and [Energy Resilience in the Public Sector](#).

What financial and institutional resources are needed to carry out our plan?

- Develop financial and business models using Chapter 3 of NREL's [Guide to Energy Master Planning of High-Performance Districts and Communities](#).
- Access technical assistance resources through DOE's [Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy](#).
- Estimate year one cost of energy and levelized cost of energy for renewable energy projects using NREL's [Cost of Renewable Energy Spreadsheet Tool \(CREST\)](#).



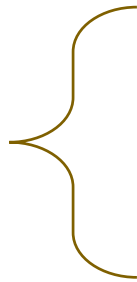
Gather Resources: Finalize budgets, schedules, and partnerships for near-term projects

How do we identify the best funding opportunities for our near-term projects and craft successful applications?



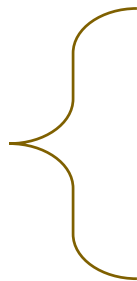
- View the Florida Race to Zero [Webinar](#) for an overview of funding provisions in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and how state and local governments and utilities can access these funds.
- Find information about federal funding opportunities, including program details, eligibility requirements, and helpful tips in the [Federal Funding Opportunities for Local Decarbonization \(FFOLD\)](#) resource.
- Explore [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#), which are the most comprehensive lists of Federal grants. Also explore Better Buildings [Financing Navigator](#) and [Carbon Financing Decision Tree](#).

How do we coordinate with the public and private sectors and with institutional partners on near-term projects? How do we establish consistent and transparent reporting processes?



- Engage partners and prepare for collaboration using the American Cities Climate Challenge's Procurement Guidelines to [Engage Potential External Partners](#).
- Develop strategies to collaborate with local utilities using Chapter 4 of NREL's [Guide to Energy Master Planning of High-Performance Districts and Communities](#).
- Use the [Sponsor Coordination Matrix](#) to keep track of projects' timelines, funding sources, and funding amounts.

What is our long-term plan for financial sustainability?

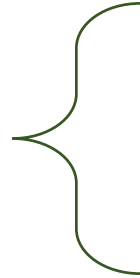


- For an overview of financing options and lessons learned, consult Better Buildings [In It for the Long Haul: Long-Term Financing Solutions for Energy Savings](#).
- Consider [Revolving Loan Funds in Commercial Real Estate](#) using Better Buildings guidance.
- Explore the benefits of challenges of different solar ownership options using SolSmart's [Toolkit for Local Governments: Market Development and Finance](#) and their webinar [How Local Governments Can Buy Renewable Energy & Support Market Development](#).



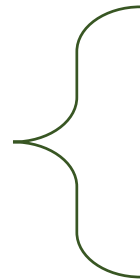
Implement: Issue contracts and permits, mitigate risks, and track and report progress

How can we mitigate potential environmental, social, and safety risks?



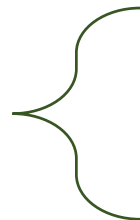
- Follow guidance on safely siting, installing, and operating renewable energy systems. Consult SolSmart's [Best Practices in Solar Planning and Zoning](#) and [Solar PV Fire Safety Training](#), EPA's [Handbook on Siting Renewable Energy Projects While Addressing Environmental Issues](#), and NREL's [Best Practices for Siting Solar Photovoltaics on Municipal Solid Waste Landfills](#).
- Establish consumer protection measures using USDN's [Guidebook on Equitable Clean Energy Program Design for Local Governments and Partners](#) (p. 58).
- Explore opportunities to use investments in energy as tools of social change using Greenlining Institute's [Investing in Climate Equity: Lessons and Opportunities for Increasing Green Bank Investments in Communities of Color](#).

How can we vet contractors and vendors for energy efficiency services and streamline permitting processes?

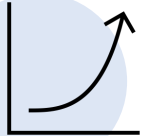


- Use a request for proposals to convey specific expectations and requirements to project developers. NREL's [Guide to Energy Master Planning of High-Performance Districts and Communities](#) describes how to align an request for proposals with the community's vision and what to expect during land entitlement processes to mitigate complexity and costly delays.
- Review permitting best practices and application forms for renewable energy and bulk transmission projects by revisiting DOE's [RAPID Toolkit](#).
- Consider simplifying your community's solar permitting process using SolSmart's [Solar Permitting](#) page and using [SolarAPP+](#) to implement an instant permitting process.

How can we structure performance plans and establish metrics to track and report progress?

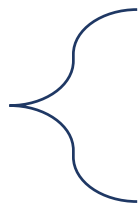


- To define metrics and accountability plans, consider using the [Shared Accountability Framework](#), IRENA's [Evaluating Policies in Support of the Deployment of Renewable Power](#), and/or the Initiative for Energy Justice's [Justice in 100 scorecard](#).



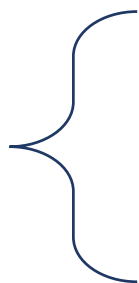
Maintain and Accelerate: Monitor performance, maintain reliability, and promote success

How can we incorporate feedback and lessons learned to identify opportunities for improvement?



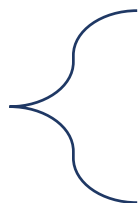
- Review the iterative program design and implementation processes outlined in Stages 1 and 3 of USDN's Guidebook on Equitable Clean Energy Program Design for Local Governments and Partners.

How can we expand renewable energy access to more homes, businesses, and institutions?

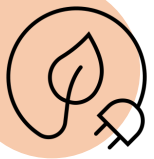


- Make solar available to more households, businesses, and nonprofits using DOE's Local Government Guide for Solar Deployment resources.
- Help homeowners, businesses, and institutions understand their options by developing outreach and education materials. Consider using DOE's Homeowner's Guide to Going Solar.
- Consider ownership models that help lower costs, including those described in SWEEP's EV and PV Power Purchase Handbook and Clean Energy Group's Owning the Benefits of Solar + Storage.

What policies can help renewable energy deployment while improving health and equity in our community?

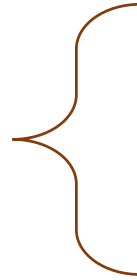


- Consider the policy recommendations in the NAACP's Just Energy Policies: Model Energy Policies Guide and the Southern Economic Advancement Project's State + Local Decarbonization Policies for the South.



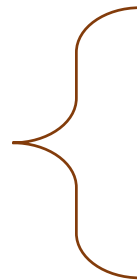
Adapt and Iterate: Strive for continuous learning, growth, innovation, and amplification

How do we future-proof our energy system and prepare for emerging technologies?



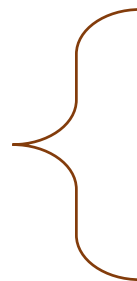
- Explore possible impacts of electric technology adoption and grid decarbonization on energy consumption and emissions in your county using SLOPE's [Scenario Planner](#). SLOPE's state planning metrics can help you plan for infrastructure development.
- Plan for grid integration, energy storage, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure using the analysis approaches described in Chapter 9 of NREL's [Guide to Energy Master Planning of High-Performance Districts and Communities](#).
- Explore Better Buildings resources on [Utilizing Emerging & Existing Technologies to Reduce Carbon](#) and [Leveraging Renewables to Reduce Carbon](#) and gain specialized knowledge using the [Technology Information Suites](#).

How do we support an adaptable local workforce and business community to keep pace with future repair, replacement, growth, and upgrade needs?



- Support mentorship and networking opportunities for underrepresented workers using SEIA's [Diversity Best Practices Guide for the Solar Industry](#).
- Revisit DOE's [Weatherization Standardized Curricula](#), IREC's [Clean Energy Resources and Training](#), NAACP's [Just Energy Policies: Model Energy Policies Guide](#) (p. 36-41), and IREC's [Strategies for Solar Workforce Development: A Toolkit for the Solar Industry](#) to see how else local governments can support a clean energy workforce.

How do we amplify the impact of early wins and harness momentum to achieve our more ambitious goals?



- To pave the way for future development, ensure that early projects are done right by revisiting NREL's [Guide to Energy Master Planning of High-Performance Districts and Communities](#) (p.30).
- Assess the social equity impacts of early projects and communicate the results and lessons learned using Greenlining Institute's [Making Equity Real in Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience: A Guidebook](#). This can help the project team find opportunities to achieve more ambitious goals and maintain public trust, enthusiasm, and support.