

THE CLEAR TOOLKIT

A GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING
COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS



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CATALYST
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Catalyst Miami is an anti-poverty organization working to build resilience in low- and middle-wealth communities in Miami-Dade County. Funding for the development of the CLEAR Miami program was provided by the Kresge Foundation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today in Miami-Dade County, 1.5 million people do not have enough savings to live above the poverty line for three months if faced with an emergency. While Miami is known for its glitz and glamour, a large portion of the population cannot access affordable housing, healthy food, or safe and reliable transportation.

On top of the struggle to have basic needs met, Miami is known for being ground-zero for climate change in the United States. We face widespread flooding, land loss, drinking water threats, extreme heat, the resurgence of harmful tropical diseases, and trillions of dollars in economic losses.

In the face of these challenges we are told to be resilient, meaning that we will spring back into shape after facing adversity and become buoyant as our communities are flooded. We hope that this process of becoming resilient will also be transformational. We envision a Miami where climate investments not only hold back water, but also help communities meet their basic needs, build a just economy, and honor our ecology.

CLEAR Miami, which stands for **C**ommunity **L**eadership on the **E**nvironment, **A**dvocacy, and **R**esilience, was developed as a tool to helping us achieve this vision. It is a community resilience leadership training program designed to create a critical mass of neighborhood leaders with the capacity to: 1) Effectively advocate for practices, programs, and policies that strengthen the resilience of underserved communities to the effects of climate change, 2) Bring voice and perspective to all seats of power and decision-making in order to ensure that the underserved and underrepresented segments of the community are heard and respected, 3) Expose and challenge how systemic barriers that support and maintain conditions of poverty and discrimination also enable vulnerability to climate change, 4) Educate community members on basic climate science, climate vulnerability, and climate resilience.

In this toolkit we share our strategy, successes, and lessons-learned from the CLEAR Miami program. We hope that other communities can use this information to create similar climate resilience leadership programs. Together, we aim to build a culture of meaningful community engagement in the climate resilience field that ensures that no one gets left behind.





FILLING THE ROOM

5 NECESSITIES THAT ENABLE COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUR LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

NO COST OR LOW COST

Offering your program at no cost or very low cost to participants reduces a major barrier to participation.

ENGAGE THE YOUTH

Conduct a concurrent youth program. This removes the barrier of childcare and helps families learn together. If possible, offer childcare for parents whose kids are not yet school-aged.

FULL BELLIES, OPEN MINDS

Providing a hot meal for your participants is a strong incentive for program participation and helps increase focus.

OFFER INTERPRETATION

Making your program accessible to speakers of different languages via translators or interpreters helps to keep your program inclusive.

TRANSPORTATION

Host your training within the communities you are trying to impact. If possible, set aside funding for carpools, public transit, or ride-sharing.





STRUCTURE & CONTENT

The CLEAR Miami program is held once a week for 11 weeks and each session lasts 2.5-3 hours. The curriculum content can be summarized in the following three categories:

THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

Program participants understand basic climate science and the threats that climate change poses to the region.

BECOMING RESILIENT

Program participants are introduced to past and present environmental justice, climate justice, and climate resiliency initiatives. They are also exposed to the benefits of renewable energy and a green economy. In addition, program participants learn how local history and politics shape issues of climate resilience in the region.

LEADING FOR CHANGE

Program participants examine their unique skills and motivations for seeking positive environmental and social change. They develop their skills in public speaking and community organizing. Participants also understand the roles of different non-profit and political bodies in local climate resiliency work. Through developing individual project proposals, participants identify their interests, strengths, and passions as community climate resilience leaders.





SETTING THE TONE

THERE ARE NO EXPERTS

The CLEAR Miami program consists of a mixture of lectures, guest speakers, activities, and participatory discussion. Past participants include teenagers and elders, the homeless and millionaires, scientists and community organizers -- all coming together in the same room to learn more about climate change, its community impacts, and what they can do about it.

Acknowledging diverse experiences is central to building community. It is vital that facilitators do not mimic the traditional teacher-student role, but see themselves as learners as well. Encouraging participants to address their questions to the entire room and to speak from their own experiences will help

create a discussion that is fueled by the diversity of expertise in the room. Having experienced facilitators with knowledge of climate change is also important.

GROUP AGREEMENTS

In addition to sharing the program goals, content, and schedule, it is important to establish "group agreements" or ground rules at the first meeting. Setting group agreements should be a brainstorming process that includes participants and facilitators. One example of a group agreement is setting cell phones to silent. Another example is to "step back, step forward", meaning that those that dominate the conversation should be mindful and hold back, while those that haven't spoken should make the effort to speak up.

INTRODUCING OURSELVES

Introductions can help participants get to know one another, while centering the class around the theme of climate resilience. Consider having participants share a personal experience with water or natural disasters in addition to sharing their names.



THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

INTRODUCING CLIMATE CHANGE & RESILIENCE

WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

It is important that every participant walks away from the first meeting understanding that increases in greenhouse gases are causing our atmosphere and oceans to warm, leading to climate change and sea level rise. Most of the participants will not likely have a baseline knowledge of atmospheric science, so it is best to explain climate change in layman's terms. For example, it is helpful to describe global warming with a blanket analogy. If you went to bed without a blanket you would probably be too cold to sleep. If you had one blanket you would be warm and comfortable. If you had ten blankets you would probably become overheated and uncomfortable. Greenhouse gases are like the earth's blankets; climate change is occurring because there are too many greenhouse gases and so they are trapping too much heat. Another example is to describe thermal expansion with a pot of

water analogy. What happens if you fill a pot to the brim with water and then put that pot on the stove to boil? The water spills over. This is because water expands as it heats. Like the pot of water, our oceans also expand when they heat - causing sea level rise and ice melt.

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Bay Localize defines resilience as "a community's ability to withstand and recover from hard times. Even in the case of a widespread emergency, residents can meet their basic needs including food, water, energy, transportation, housing, economic and social services". Through our Resilience Walk activity we are able to explain the concept of resilience and start to understand what resilience looks like within our own communities. This activity also begins the conversation on what can be done to improve resiliency in our communities, for present and future generations.



ACTIVITY

RESILIENCE WALK

INSTRUCTIONS

1) Instruct participants to stand in the center of a large room or hallway. Explain that the purpose of the exercise is to better understand the concept of resilience. Point out that participation in this exercise is voluntary.

2) Explain to participants that a list of statements will be read. After a statement is read, participants will stand on a side of the room that corresponds with how much they agree with the statement (one end would be strongly agree, center would be neither agree/disagree, and the opposite end would be strongly disagree). Practice this with an example statement.

3) Start the exercise by reading the statements from the statement list. After moving to their spots, allow participants to engage in a brief conversation about why they stood where they did.

4) After the last statement, assure participants that the program will teach participants how to advocate for increased resilience, as well as to create more functional and sustainable communities. Debrief the activity.

STATEMENT LIST

- Fresh, healthy food is accessible and affordable in my community
- My community's water is clean and safe
- Those who wish to live in my community can find quality affordable housing near jobs and schools
- Transportation is affordable and meets community needs
- Residents of my community have access to sufficient income to sustain a household
- Neighbors in my community are well organized to help each other in times of need
- My local government responds effectively to community needs
- Climate change affects my daily life
- Gentrification affects my neighborhood
- Flooding affects my neighborhood
- I am concerned about how climate change may impact my health or the health of my friends and family
- The world is watching. What we do here now can set an example for the rest of the world, and for future generations.
- There is power in citizens engaging with their elected officials on this issue: local, state and federal. We all have a voice and must use it.

THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE / BECOMING RESILIENT

GROUNDING OURSELVES IN LOCAL CHALLENGES & EXPLORING SOLUTIONS

Climate change is a threat multiplier. It worsens the existing challenges that communities face, and is expected to disproportionately impact low- and middle-wealth communities. By relating climate change to current concerns, it becomes less abstract and more relatable. In CLEAR Miami, those topics were the following:



**HURRICANES, STORM SURGE,
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**



**SEA LEVEL RISE, DRINKING WATER
SECURITY (SALTWATER INTRUSION),
FOOD SECURITY**



**AFFORDABLE HOUSING, CLIMATE
GENTRIFICATION, COSTS OF
ADAPTATION**



**PUBLIC HEALTH DISPARITIES, EXTREME
HEAT, INFECTIOUS DISEASE, MENTAL
HEALTH**

It is easy to despair after learning about climate change and how it may impact daily life. Luckily, climate solutions pose many potential win-win-win scenarios for the environment, economics, and equitable communities. For example, if a program is implemented to make solar power accessible to low-income community members, it can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, help build a local solar economy, and lessen the burden of electricity bills. However, if communities are not aware of the multiple benefits of climate solutions, they may not be realized. In CLEAR Miami, we present many examples of climate solutions with multiple benefits through the following themes:



**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, CLIMATE
JUSTICE, COMMUNITY ORGANIZING**



**THE FOSSIL FUEL ECONOMY AND
LOCAL POTENTIAL OF RENEWABLE
ENERGY**



**URBAN PLANNING AND
TRANSPORTATION POLICY**



**INTRODUCTION TO LOCAL
GOVERNMENT**

When teaching a topic like climate change to the general public, it is vital to cater to a variety of learning styles. A combination of traditional PowerPoint presentations, guest speakers, facilitated group discussions, small group activities, TED talks, and interactive mapping tools are some methods to keep a diverse cohort of participants engaged.



Eyes on the Rise App, FIU

ACTIVITY

VISUALIZATION EXERCISE

INSTRUCTIONS

Background: In CLEAR Miami, this exercise precedes a lecture by local urban or transportation planners on climate adaptation.

- 1) Instruct participants that they will be doing a visualization exercise. They can close their eyes or allow them to remain open, focusing on the floor.
- 2) Read the adjoining statement. Feel free to embellish, add details, and further adapt to your local context.
- 3) Let participants know that they can open their eyes. Distribute paper and pencils so that they can document what they envisioned via a drawing, poem, song, or written description. Give them 10 minutes to work.
- 4) Allow volunteers to share their vision with the larger group.

STATEMENT*

We are 40 years in the future and sea level has risen by at least two feet.

You step out on your stoop and look around.

What does your neighborhood look like?

Are your neighbors out and about?

You start your commute to work. How do you get to work? Where is your work located?

You see a billboard discussing climate change in your city. What does it say?

You turn on the radio and the morning talk stations are on. What are they discussing?

Later on in the day you receive notice that a hurricane is expected to land. How do you prepare? What do you expect government response to be like?

*Inspired by a Miami Foundation workshop facilitated by Sightful



LEADING FOR CHANGE

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY LEADERS

Building leadership skills is essential in order for participants to become effective climate resilience advocates by the program's end. CLEAR Miami features four activities that are intended to help teach participants skills that will be useful in influencing policy change and implementing grassroots initiatives.

WEEKLY CLIMATE CHALLENGES

The CLEAR Miami program requires each participant to take a personal, public, or political action on climate resilience weekly. A personal challenge could be eating vegetarian for a day, a public challenge could be talking to their neighbors about climate change, and a political challenge could be speaking at a city commission hearing.

COMMUNITY-BASED ASSET MAPS

The CLEAR Miami program provides printed satellite maps onto which participants can identify assets within their neighborhoods. These maps can be used as a community organizing tool to identify what resources might be available within a neighborhood, as well as the neighborhood's internal strengths.

STORIES OF SELF, US, & NOW

Many people can recite facts, however, being able to tell a compelling story is a rare skill. This skill is important for influencing the public, media, and government. The CLEAR Miami program uses an adaptation of Marshall Ganz's public narrative guide, 'Telling your Public Story. Self, Us, Now', to improve the public speaking skills of participants.

FINAL PROJECTS

Participants of CLEAR Miami are required to write a proposal for a project that will make their community more resilient in the face of climate change. While resilience includes environmental sustainability, the projects do not have to be purely about environmental issues. Projects should be something that could be realistically done if participants had the resources and time. After graduating from CLEAR Miami, participants may become CLEAR Fellows and receive funding and technical assistance to make their programs a reality.

EVALUATION & RESULTS

To evaluate the quality and impact of CLEAR Miami, Catalyst Miami gathered different types of data, including: demographics, a pre-training assessment to determine participants' baseline knowledge, a post-training assessment to determine change from the baseline, feedback sheets to determine the quality of every lesson, as well as interviews conducted at six months and one year after graduation to determine civic engagement and leadership.

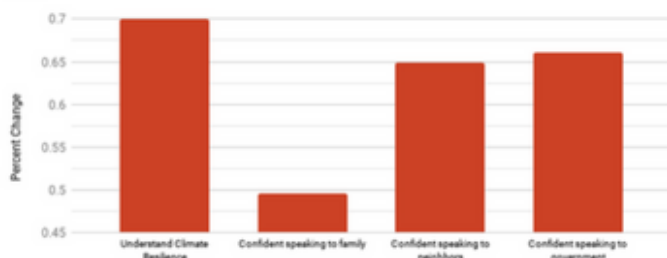
CLEAR Class Evaluation Averages



Between September 2016 and August 2017 there were three CLEAR Miami cohorts, consisting of a total 55 adult graduates and 17 youth graduates. 75.5% of CLEAR graduates are people of color and 87% of CLEAR graduates live in low-income communities. The CLEAR Miami program greatly increased participants' understanding of climate resilience, ways to get involved in their communities, and the intersectionality of climate, environmental and social issues.

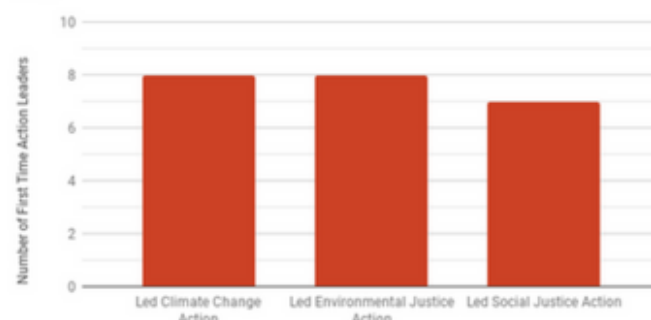
Percent Change in Climate Change Knowledge and Action through CLEAR

N=50



CLEAR Miami prompted many of its participants to become more environmentally and socially active. Of 46 responses, about 17% of CLEAR Miami graduates led a climate, environmental or social justice action for the first time- all within the timespan of 11 weeks. Six months after graduation, 100% of the graduates had taken a civic action related to climate resilience.

First Time Action Leaders

 $N = 46$ 

In their post-assessment, participants shared what they learned in a short answer format. The size of the words in the word cloud below corresponds with how often each word was used.



“CLEAR showed me how climate change is inherently an equity issue, and how climate change resilience must be equitable. CLEAR helped me realize how climate change affects people in other communities, and getting to know people from other communities who I would have never otherwise met is invaluable.” - Anne, 2017 CLEAR Graduate

“Because of CLEAR, my children are being more environmentally friendly, and they’re pushing me to think outside the box and reevaluate my own habits. CLEAR really needs to be expanded. More people need to be educated about climate change, and it can help change people’s habits for the better.” - Katherine, 2016 CLEAR Graduate

**“I live in a vulnerable community. CLEAR gave me the knowledge, skills and confidence to be more assertive and to stand up for myself and my community. CLEAR brought different but passionate people into the room, to have passionate conversations on difficult topics, and in the process, made all of us better advocates and leaders.”
- Phalange, 2017 CLEAR Graduate**

**INTERESTED IN HOSTING A CLEAR
TRAINING IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY
OR ACCESSING OUR FULL CURRICULUM?
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