

SUCCESS STORY

Rising Sun Expands its Impact in Climate Resilience



Rising Sun Center for Opportunity is a nonprofit organization working at the intersection of economic equity and climate resilience. With offices in Oakland and Stockton, their workforce development programs specialize in preparing youth, women, people of color, and individuals in reentry for high-road careers and green pathways that offer family-sustaining wages across the greater Bay Area.



3Degrees is a global climate solutions provider that seeks to accelerate a clean energy transition in a manner that builds the economic and political power of historically disadvantaged communities, such as low-income communities and people of color, who are disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis. Because of Rising Sun's leadership on many climate and DEI-related initiatives, 3Degrees identified Rising Sun as a partner and offered it non-profit, pro-bono climate consulting services. The 3Degrees and Rising Sun teams identified the following priorities to build on Rising Sun's existing services and expand its impact:

- + Explore ways to bring climate resilience into existing resident-facing programs
- + Investigate opportunities for potential development of a resilience hub
- + Offer support for a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory so Rising Sun could understand its own carbon footprint

Challenges

3Degrees is quickly growing its knowledge on the subject of climate resilience, and is aware that it's critical to create ample opportunities to listen to many different voices in the community. As the team dove into the project, it learned that there are a variety of approaches – or frameworks – to structuring resiliency programs. Since a core principle of effective resiliency planning is recognizing community members as leaders and experts in their own resiliency needs, community engagement was critical before any final recommendations on the frameworks could be presented. To honor this principle and ensure 3Degrees delivered recommendations that would resonate with directly impacted individuals, it held a series of conversations with the Rising Sun team members, who work closely with community members in Oakland and Stockton, as well as other subject matter experts working on community resilience on the ground.



How We Helped



OBJECTIVE: CLIMATE RESILIENCE

3Degrees kicked off the engagement by exploring how Rising Sun’s successful community-based Climate Careers program that educates households on energy efficiency could be expanded to build resilience in the communities where Rising Sun works. The first step was to facilitate discussions with Rising Sun team members to define what they meant by resilience. Collectively, the group landed on “the ability to withstand, recover, and build back better from shocks, such as impacts of climate change.”

Next, based on this definition of resiliency, 3Degrees conducted an analysis on how Rising Sun could make this resilience a reality in their community. The teams looked at which climate impacts are expected to pose the most severe threat to the well-being of individuals in the communities where Rising Sun works in the coming few decades. The group then held a brainstorming session and workshop to leverage the Rising Sun team’s knowledge of the priorities and needs of these communities. Simultaneously, 3Degrees conducted expert interviews with people working in the area of climate resilience. The whole process culminated with Rising Sun’s decision to focus on providing intervention bundles for the threats of extreme heat and air pollution as its first resident resilience program. The recommended interventions for household visits included data gathering on vulnerable individuals, which could be leveraged to support government programs in the future, as well as educational components like how to check air quality and what to do on a poor air quality day.



OBJECTIVE: RESILIENCE HUBS

To support another phase of the project, 3Degrees worked to assess opportunities to develop a resilience hub in Stockton, where Rising Sun already has a small office. Once again, the team began by facilitating alignment on a shared definition for a resilience hub: a community center that serves many functions to everyone in the community, including under normal, disruptive (i.e. a significant weather event), and recovery conditions.

Next, 3Degrees conducted research and community interviews in Stockton, which informed the development of a roadmap with high-level phasing on how Rising Sun could make its resilience hub vision a reality. The roadmap included a library of resources that Rising Sun could utilize, including a climate assessment of the region, a list of potential community partners, and various funding opportunities.



OBJECTIVE: GHG INVENTORY

The third component of 3Degrees’ work with Rising Sun was an inventory of the non-profit’s GHG emissions footprint, since Rising Sun wanted to lead by example and implement sustainability improvements for its own organization. Throughout this work, 3Degrees engaged the Rising Sun staff to ensure they understood the GHG inventory process and could take actionable next steps using the data. At the conclusion of the project, Rising Sun had established an emissions baseline, made initial progress toward reductions, and learned how to replicate the GHG inventory in future years.

Results

Rising Sun received specific support for each of the three priorities it outlined at the beginning of the project:

- ✓ Actionable recommendations for new programs that include climate resilience for extreme heat and air pollution, so the organization can help prepare the communities where it works to withstand and recover from extreme climate impacts;
- ✓ A roadmap tool and set of resources that Rising Sun can use to establish a well-funded climate resilience hub in an area of need, including programming and services provided by the community and for the community;
- ✓ The organization's first GHG inventory and an understanding of how to repeat the process in future years, enabling Rising Sun to continue making progress toward its sustainability goals year over year.



3Degrees, a certified B Corporation, makes it possible for businesses and their customers to take urgent action on climate change. We help organizations around the world achieve renewable energy and decarbonization goals through our work with global Fortune 500 companies, utilities, and other organizations that want to join the fight against climate change.

 [3DegreesInc](#)  [@3Degrees_Inc](#)  [3Degrees Group, Inc.](#)

