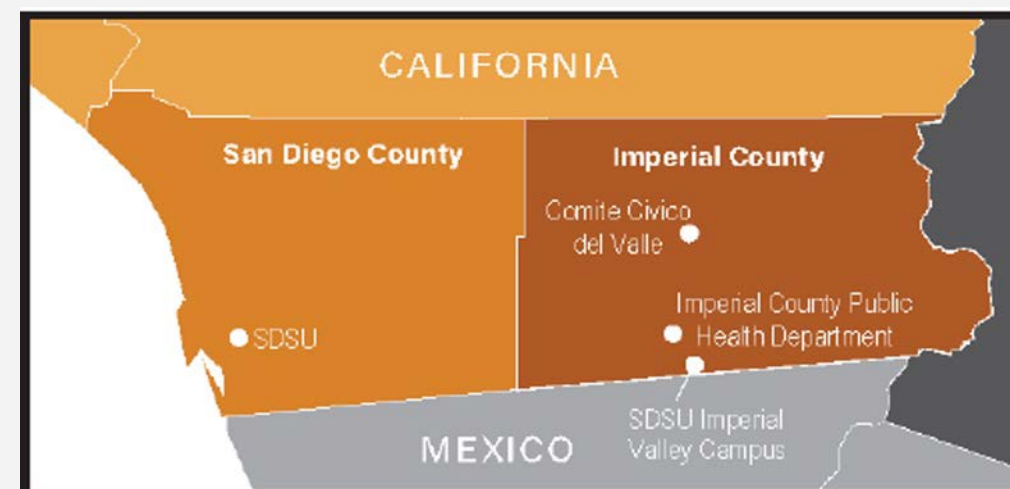


About Us

- The San Diego State University-Imperial Valley Prevention Research Program (SDSU-IV PRC) reflects an **academic-community partnership** between SDSU and the community organization Comité Civico del Valle (CCV).



- SDSU-IV PRC goal is to **reduce the health impacts of extreme heat** in disproportionately impacted communities in **Imperial County**, California, an agricultural region.
- The **PRC is organized into three components**:
 - PRC **Center** Component - build partnerships and infrastructure
 - PRC **Core Research Project** Component - implement heat mitigation strategies
 - PRC **Network** Component - enhance collaboration and impact

Why this Matters?

- Extreme heat disproportionately affects **vulnerable groups**, including agricultural workers, children, and older adults.
- Imperial County**, also known as Imperial Valley, is one of California's lowest-income regions, and the California Environmental Protection Agency designated many of its census tracts as highly under-resourced communities.
- The county is projected to see a **rise in extreme heat days** as the result of increasing temperatures and modification of regional precipitation patterns under climate change conditions.
- We use **Community-Based Participatory Research** (CBPR) to understand how selected **Evidence-Based Interventions** (EBIs) from the **Phoenix Heat Action Planning Guide** can be implemented effectively in under-resourced communities in Imperial Valley.



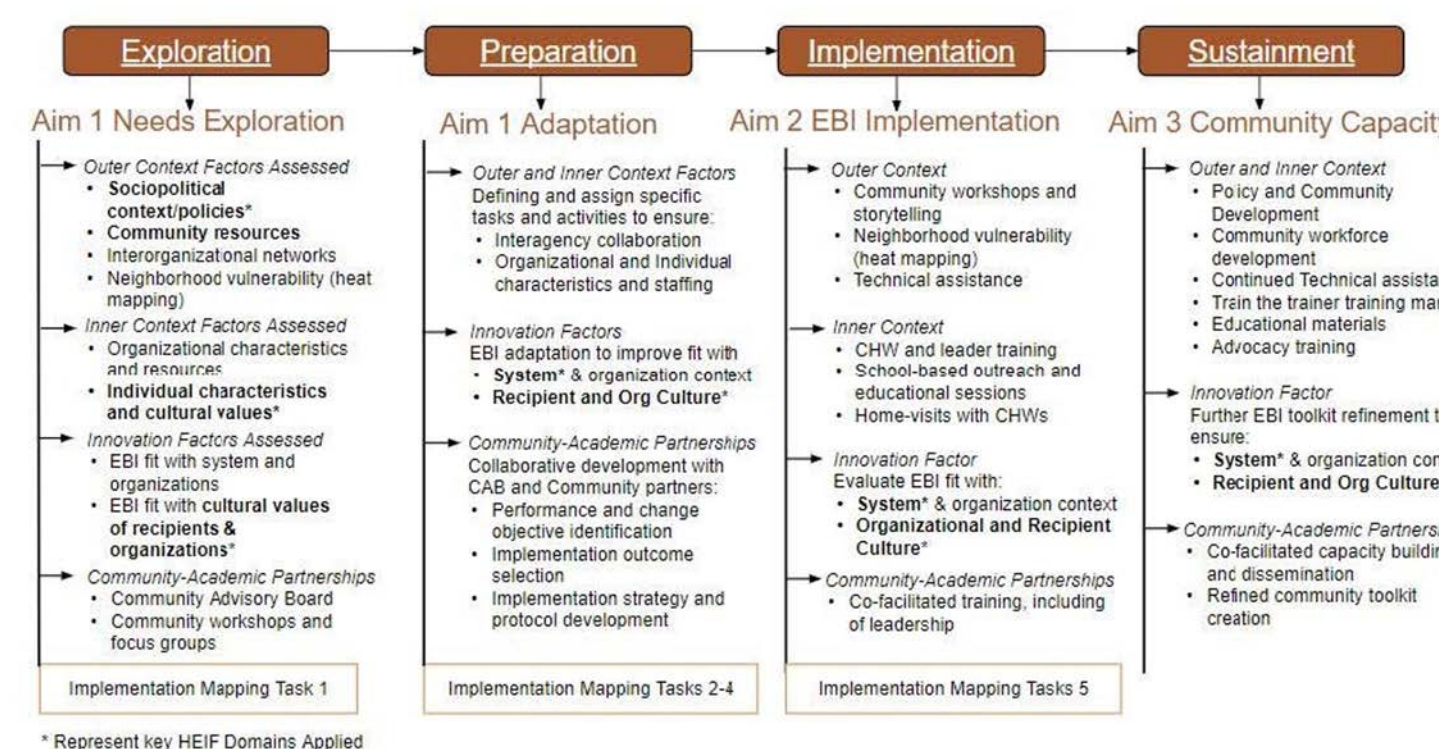
Research Project: Taking on the Heat

Research Project Aims:

- Aim 1** (Yrs 1-2): Conduct a formative **needs assessment** and **adapt strategies** of the Phoenix Heat Action Planning Guide using a CBPR-approach.
- Aim 2** (Yrs 2-4): Test the **short and long-term impacts of community-level strategies** on implementation and effectiveness outcomes in IC.
- Aim 3** (Yr 5): **Build community capacity** to implement specific heat illness prevention strategies.

Conceptual Model & Study Design

- Combines the Exploration, Preparation, Implementation, and Sustainment (EPIS) framework and the equity domains of the Health Equity Implementation Framework (HEIF).
- To evaluate effectiveness and scalability, the intervention will follow a phased roll-out across 10 communities, using a stepped wedge design.

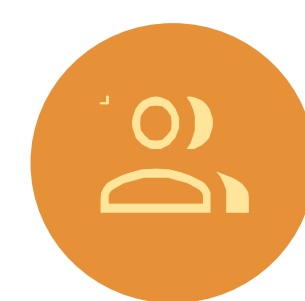


Aim 1 Activities

- Established and maintained bi-weekly meetings between SDSU and CCV
- Built and maintained a **Community Advisory Board** (CAB) of 8 members and held quarterly meetings
- Developed **2 types of Interviews** (Table 1) that assessed individuals **concerns** and **opinions** on **extreme heat and UV exposure** as well as **potential solutions to benefit** the community.
- CCV **recruited** and **interviewed 34 individuals** who lived and or work in IC.
- Research team conducted a **rapid qualitative analysis**.

Table 1. Interview type and interviewees

Community	agricultural workers, college students, Elderly volunteer, grocery store manager, landscaper, medical assistant, monther, outdoor worker, outreach workers, security worker, unhoused, your sport coach
Professional	healthcare executive, medical director, medical assistant, mail carrier, non-profit org/former worker/organizer, police officer, public affairs, college instructor, collecte student representative, school district superintendent, school principal, high school teacher, school member, school-parent liaison



In-Person vs Zoom
32 (84%)



Language
25 Eng (74%)
9 Span (26%)



Recorded
34 (100%)



Type of Interview
20 Comm (59%)
14 Prof (41%)

Preliminary Emerging Themes

- These are the preliminary emerging themes from the interviews:
 - Outreach workers, education campaigns, and summer shelters** were identified as top strategies, with emphasis on **accessibility, transportation, and multilingual communication**.
 - Outreach workers who regularly engage with community members play a key **role in educating the public**.
 - Barriers** that limit access to and use of heat mitigation strategies—such as **cost, lack of awareness, or limited availability**—must be identified and addressed to ensure community members can protect themselves effectively during extreme heat events.
 - Key barriers** included transportation access, language differences, and lack of trust in resources.
- The PRC team is finalizing findings and together with CCV and the CAB, will identify and adapt EBIs.

What Are the Next Steps?

- The *Taking on the Heat* project focuses on **reducing UV overexposure and mitigating the effects of extreme heat** in Imperial Valley's vulnerable communities.
- The research team will **finalize coding** of the needs assessment interviews and report out findings and emerging themes to CCV and CAB by **Year 2**.
- Together with CVV, we will utilize the needs assessment findings and themes to **identify and adapt EBIs**.
- The implementation of EBIs will began early in 2026.
- By adapting the Phoenix Heat Action Planning Guide, this initiative ensures the implementation of EBIs that are **contextually relevant and community-driven**.
- By systematically addressing the health impacts of extreme heat through a participatory approach, the project not only enhances **resilience** but also **creates a replicable model** for similar underserved regions.

Contact us

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