

Breaking Barriers to Climate Justice: Exploring Factors Limiting Participation of the Asian Diaspora in Metro Vancouver and Opportunities for Inclusive Engagement

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Land Acknowledgement

The University of British Columbia's Vancouver campus and UBC Climate Hub sit on the ancestral and traditional x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) nation's territories. As student researchers, we are accountable for ongoing action and learning on decolonization. Climate justice for the Asian Diaspora is intimately connected to Indigenous sovereignty, Land Back, and anti-colonialism.

Positionality Statements

Lynne Kim (she/her)

I am a 22-year-old, second-generation woman of Korean descent who was born and raised in North Vancouver, British Columbia, on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətəl (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples. My parents are first-generation immigrants who moved to Vancouver in 1997, and I acknowledge that my family and I have benefitted from Canada's colonial past by obtaining Canadian citizenship and migrating overseas to live on Indigenous lands.

My ethnicity is Korean-Canadian, but growing up as an Asian woman in Canada has personally left me questioning my identity for over a decade. I felt and continue to feel a significant disconnect with my parents' culture living in North Vancouver, where the majority population is White. I was surrounded by Western food and no Asian grocery stores, and the way I saw people growing impatient with my mom, who was trying her best to communicate in English, conditioned me to associate being Asian as a "bad thing." This led me to voluntarily assimilate into the dominant culture in North Vancouver, and I grew ashamed of my Korean identity. However, I never felt like I truly belonged in Western culture either. I looked different than everyone else, and with little diversity and representation, I felt like I stood out of the crowd. It felt like I existed in the hyphen between my ethnicity, "Korean-Canadian." At home, there were traditional Korean-style paintings hung on the walls, and my mom primarily cooked our family Korean cuisine, but I was so embarrassed by these material objects and food that did not fully represent my cultural worldview.

Only two years ago, I realized I needed to (un)learn the negative views I held about my Korean identity and re-learn ways to appreciate the culture more. I started to learn more by asking my parents questions, watching YouTube videos, and practicing Korean conversation with my family members. Thus, my knowledge and understanding of Korean culture today are limited due to my forceful repression of Korean culture while growing up. My family members are the only immediate Korean influences I have had in my life. I can speak, read, and write Korean and Hangul (Korean alphabet), but my conversational depth and range are limited to everyday topics.

Since elementary school, it has always been my responsibility to be a "translator kid" since my parents spoke limited English, and I felt anxious every time I had to translate for them. At that age, I believed my parents were incompetent at living in North Vancouver without me, but I realize now how much they sacrificed to migrate to Canada and offer me a privileged life. We still face language barriers when speaking to one another because of the lack of fluency in each other's mother tongues. However, I believe it is my job to stand up for first-generation immigrant parents like my own by amplifying and ensuring

society values the opinions of marginalized communities. My parents' inability to have their voices heard due to language barriers in addressing critical issues, such as climate justice, has motivated me to advocate for and emphasize the importance of language accessibility in my research. Although multiculturalism has been adopted in Canadian society, issues of language accessibility, social justice, and climate justice must be addressed to create inclusive and equitable communities where all members' voices can be heard and everyone can participate in conversations that can better our collective futures.

Naomi Leung 梁珮恩 (they/them)

I am a 19-year-old queer Han Chinese Malaysian settler and guest on ancestral and stolen x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) and scəwəθən (Tsawwassen) territories in colonially named “Richmond, BC.” Growing up I was surrounded by a hub of Asian and Chinese diaspora, situated close to our local Chinese BBQ shops, Asian malls, and grocery stores. All the while eating home-cooked Cantonese food made by my grandma, going to Chinese school in elementary school, and having majority Chinese friend groups throughout my adolescence. With all these factors in mind, I still felt and am presently working to unlearn resistance, hatred, and shame towards my culture and how disconnected I felt from it. As a racialized body in a nation-state celebrating the concept of “multiculturalism”, navigating a relationship with White supremacy and Eurocentric media has been deeply painful, confusing, and exhausting. My distancing from the Cantonese language has been enforced by the dominant White-Anglo-centric culture and educational institutions. I speak English at home with my parents, who immigrated to Canada as teenagers and understand Cantonese (poorly) and am learning Mandarin in school. Regardless of how broken my Cantonese and Mandarin skills are, I am deeply inspired to heal and investigate my relationship with the language and dialects and my culture throughout my life as a practice of decolonization and for collective liberation.

As a queer and genderqueer Asian person, I understand how essential it is to create a livable future and present-day where everyone is prioritized and no one is left behind. Including, neurodivergent, disabled, undocumented, unhoused, lower-income, and immigrant IBPOC queer and transgender bodies who are impacted hardest by marginalization and climate change. Asian futures are essential and must be equipped with climate justice knowledge and solutions to further our community’s agency and ability to take climate action.

I have a background in community organizing for climate justice education, harm reduction, and policy change with Climate Education Reform BC, Sustainabiliteens, and the Climate Justice Organizing HUB. This local and youth-driven climate justice movement, as well as Black, Indigenous and Asian femme, inspire me to conduct research for the betterment and protection of people, our joy, and the planet. In accord, I am studying BSc global resource systems, where I am integrating environmental and climate change studies with global health and the study of climate emotions and resilience. I am also a visual artist and believe Asian Diasporic and IBPOC art, literature, ideas, joy, and futures deserve to be centered and made space for in the climate movement and dominant culture. These life experiences inform why I center language access, Asian queer racialized bodies, and marginalized identities in my research.

Jenica Pong (she/her)

I am a 19-year old 2.5 generation Chinese woman and settler, with my maternal grandparents and school-aged mother immigrating from Hong Kong in the 1970s and my father born in Canada. I was born, raised, and shaped on x^wməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səlílwəta?/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nation lands colloquially known as Coquitlam, New Westminster, and Burnaby. I was raised with my parents speaking only English, alongside sprinkles of Cantonese slang, but am non-fluent in my grandparent's Cantonese dialect. I grew up on Cantonese language TV news and radio, and being asked if fake Facebook news stories were real. During the pandemic, I witnessed first-hand with my grandparents and community elders at the mass vaccination centre where I worked the lack of culturally nuanced health information in diverse languages. Many Asian Diasporic elders expressed fear of getting a specific type of vaccine as a result of vaccine misinformation, and I saw my colleagues and parents attempting to debunk scientific misinformation in a language they couldn't proficiently read or write. Further, while explaining my work organizing local protests and sit-ins as a regional coordinator for Sustainabiliteens to elder family members I was often met with questions about the safety (and legitimacy) of disruptive political advocacy. In approaching this research on the Asian diaspora I think about how I viewed my own Asian family as "not caring" about decolonization, municipal elections, climate change, and racial injustices, yet how this is likely rooted in a lack of culturally-relevant educational materials, a lack of digital media literacy, and the fact that vetted news was relatively inaccessible in their household apart from one Cantonese cable network.

Informed by my lived experiences witnessing linguistic, generational, and cultural barriers and my current passion to pursue impact research, I am driven within this project to find solutions for more equitable climate education, beyond just language translation. I hope to research how climate justice resources can integrate cultural nuances in hopes of enabling political autonomy of linguistically marginalized communities, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. I aim for my personal pursuits through research and otherwise to consistently advocate for these communities' seats at the table.

1. Research Context

1.1 Climate Justice in Canada and Abroad

Climate change is defined as “the long-term shifts in temperature and weather patterns,” and has been found to be exacerbated by human activities, in particular those that produce greenhouse gas emissions (United Nations, n.d.). The impacts of climate change are already damaging the health of people and the planet through extreme weather events, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and loss of biodiversity, among numerous other impacts (International Panel on Climate Change, 2022).

Although climate change is a global issue, its impacts are not felt and experienced equally by people across all regions of the world (Wijaya, 2014). These consequences are unevenly distributed across geographical, social, economic, and political boundaries (Wijaya, 2014), disproportionately affecting some groups more than others. Even within a single community, the climate change impacts people face can vary between individuals depending on social factors, such as socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, gender, age, education, and more. Generally, Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) countries have more financial assets and resources to create climate change adaptation, mitigation, and management strategies in preparation for emergency climate events (Henrich et al., 2010; Wijaya, 2014). Conversely, non-WEIRD countries may have limited resources or adaptive capacities for climate change because their general lifestyles and economic structures rely heavily on climate-dependent activities for food and financial resources, such as fishing or farming, causing them to grow more vulnerable to climate change impacts (Wijaya, 2014). Hence, given the perceived disparities in climate-related burdens, it is critical to study what existing barriers prevent certain communities from participating in climate justice actions in order to collectively work towards a more inclusive and climate-equitable future.

In North America, historical roots of institutional racism are deeply embedded in all systems and structures, making it difficult to eradicate in society, and the intersection of racism and environmental policy perpetuates and contributes to the ongoing oppression of racially marginalized peoples; this is known as environmental racism (Bullard, 2001). Environmental racism is defined as any policy, practice, or action that disadvantages or impacts individuals, groups, or communities based on race (Bullard, 2001). The prevalence of environmental racism through modern-day Canadian and American sociopolitical systems leads to the likelihood of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) experiencing disproportionately higher environmental health problems (Gochfeld & Burger, 2011). Environmental racism directly ties into the climate justice movement because climate change and racial injustices share the same colonial roots of systems of power, privilege, and White supremacy (Bullard, 2001), which explains the necessity to view climate inequities through a climate justice framework.

While the concept of multiculturalism is broad, it can describe how people from differing ethnic and cultural backgrounds co-exist in a society (Hyman et al., 2011). Canadian multiculturalism can refer to ideas and ideals that celebrate cultural diversity in Canada, which have been formally extended within policies such as the “1971 Canadian Multiculturalism Policy” (Hyman et al., 2011). The institutional frameworks of Canadian multiculturalism today expect assimilation into dominant societal structures and

reject multiculturalism when immigrants have distinct cultures and values or are provided with special treatment (Besco & Tolley, 2018). This critique unveils how racial bias and injustices are still prevalent in Canada despite the multiculturalism policy and value celebrated in the nation, as many Canadians support multiculturalism as an abstract concept, but not in practice.

1.2 Conceptual Framework: Climate Justice

Climate justice describes how the roots of climate change are grounded in systems of oppression, experiences of climate change are distributed inequitably, and climate solutions require dismantling these systems to form just, livable, and healthy communities for all (UBC Centre for Climate Justice, n.d.; Xie, 2021). In a research context, this framework focuses on how climate change is a social justice issue with colonial, capitalist, racial, and gender injustices and hierarchies at their core, meaning climate change is not simply an environmental issue (UBC Centre for Climate Justice, n.d.). Especially noting how climate injustices harm those least responsible for climate change at a disproportionate scale (UBC Centre for Climate Justice, n.d.). For this reason, the climate justice framework aims to center knowledge and expertise of frontline communities impacted hardest by climate change, such as knowledge from Indigenous, Black, Asian, racialized, working class, displaced, disabled and marginalized communities (UBC Centre for Climate Justice, n.d.; Jampel, 2018). Other key tenants of climate justice include providing reparations for social and ecological damage caused by climate change, a just transition to post-carbon dependant economies, and protection of Indigenous communities, land rights, and self-determination (Mylvaganam et al., 2021).

This study specifically focuses on the intersections of epistemic and procedural justice and how racial injustices fuel these inequities as well. **Epistemic justice** “refers to the right of all people to make sense of their own experiences and to express their knowledge in order to improve society’s understanding of their experiences” (Byrnes et al., 2022, p.2; Fricker, 2007). **Procedural justice** is defined as “the idea of fair processes, and how people’s perception of fairness is strongly impacted by the quality of their experiences and not only the end result of these experiences” (Yale Law School, n.d.). The justice concepts described above are incorporated in this study’s definition of “climate justice framework” to ensure numerous angles of injustices and marginalization are considered when working towards equitable futures where people feel empowered to take climate action and have proper access to knowledge and understanding of climate change.

2. Metro Vancouver Contexts

2.1 Community Partner: Hua Foundation

This study has been completed in partnership with Hua Foundation, with research aiming to provide insights for the second phase of their Language Access Program (LAP) that centres resource building for translator kids.

Hua Foundation defines translator kids as “the role of children in multilingual communities, as translators and interpreters for their families, in the absence of adequate access to basic public services.” (Hua

Foundation, 2022, p. 2). As highlighted by conversations with the Hua Foundation and organization-provided materials, there are community-identified barriers to civic engagement due to language access and lack of culturally sensitive resources on topics such as government, climate justice, food justice, decolonization, gender and sexuality, mental wellness, and more (Hua Foundation, 2022). Work within LAP aims to improve civic literacy amongst non-English speaking communities and reduce the emotional burden on translator kids (Chen, 2023).

In the brainstorming phase of our project, we met with a liaison for our community partner, Hua Foundation's staff member and research, policy, and systems-building lead to discuss potential areas of focus. Prior to our midterm draft, we met again to share our potential research questions and methodologies. We received feedback from our community partner's liaison regarding clarifying and defining the geographical scope, both in terms of Metro Vancouver and the context of the United States organizations we planned to include in the critical literature review. This feedback has been integrated into both, the context section 1.1 as well as the methodology section of the critical literature review.

2.2 Climate Justice in Metro Vancouver: Impacts & Policy Intervention Opportunities

In this report, our contextual scope extends to the geographical region of Metro Vancouver Regional District (Metro Vancouver), British Columbia (BC), Canada encompassing 21 municipalities, one Electoral Area, and one Treaty First Nations listed in Figure 1. We decided to include these regions informed by the location that our community partner, Hua Foundation, serves, as they do not have a physical location but serve the Metro Vancouver region with specific work in Vancouver's Chinatown. Although many of Hua Foundation's events and workshops are held virtually and accessible to the online community, the bulk of their community engagement and research work is focused on the Metro Vancouver region, namely the City of Vancouver.

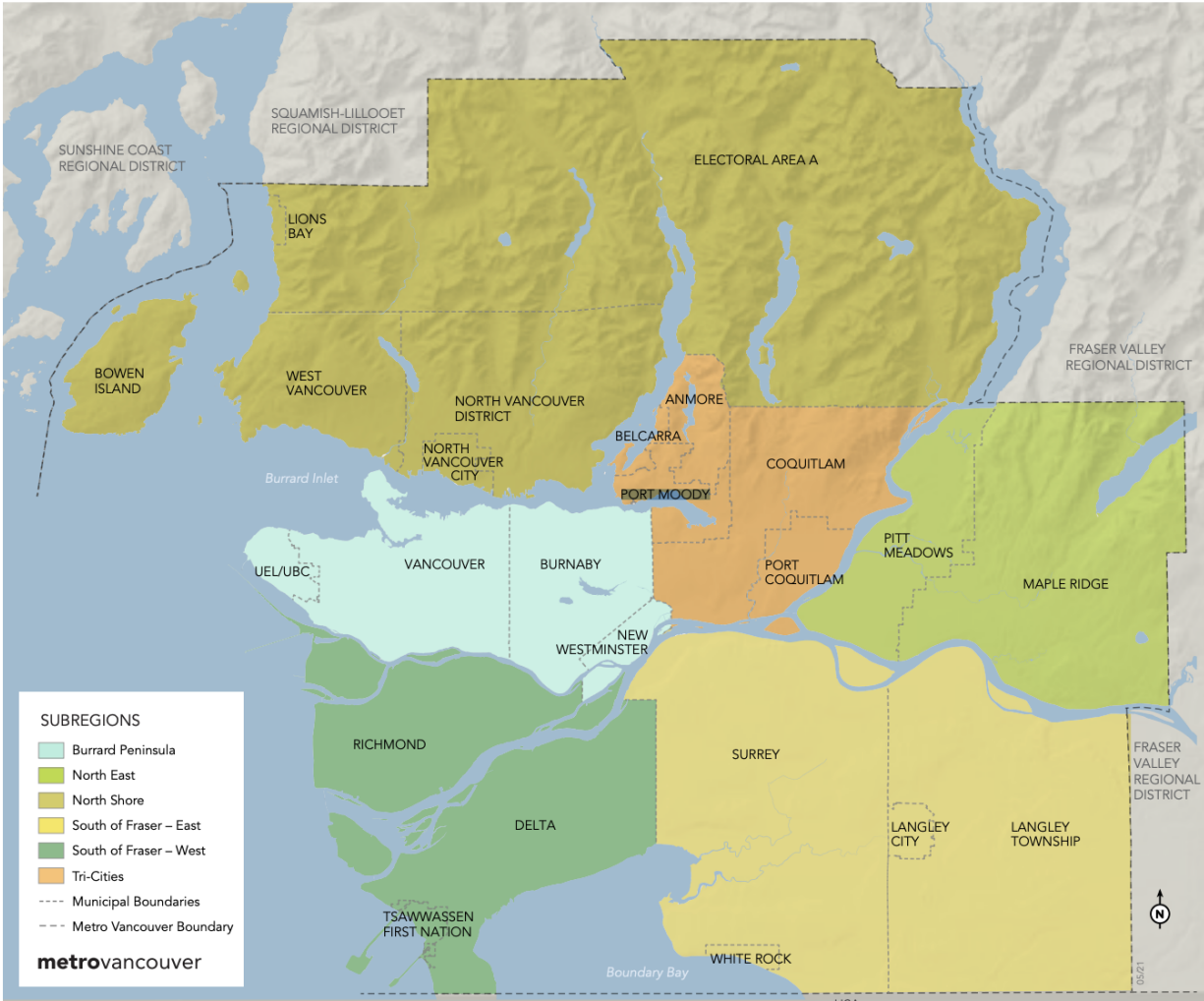


Figure 1. A map of the Metro Vancouver Regional District, which is comprised of 21 municipalities, one Electoral Area, and one Treaty First Nations: Village of Anmore, Village of Belcarra, Bowen Island Municipality, City of Burnaby, City of Coquitlam, City of Delta, Electoral Area A, City of Langley, Township of Langley, Village of Lions Bay, City of Maple Ridge, City of New Westminster, City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, City of Pitt Meadows, City of Port Coquitlam, City of Port Moody, City of Richmond, City of Surrey, Tsawwassen First Nation, City of Vancouver, District of West Vancouver and City of White Rock (Metro Vancouver, 2021).

Climate change is impacting Metro Vancouver, with projections expecting warmer temperatures, extended summer drought periods, wetter and more extreme rainfall events, decreased snowpack, and rising sea levels (Metro Vancouver, 2023). On a local scale, these effects will impact different municipalities disproportionately depending on geographical location (e.g. closer to sea level versus further inland) and existing climate preparedness and adaptation strategies or policies (Province of British Columbia, n.d.). Different communities and individuals may experience unequal distributions of climate change impacts, depending on the presence of natural areas and green spaces, accessibility to heating/cooling infrastructures, along with low-carbon resilience solutions to climate change (Metro Vancouver, 2018).

At this regional level, Metro Vancouver’s “Climate 2050 Strategic Framework” specifically mentions that climate change will impact lower-income and socially marginalized populations in the region to different extents, and will have further challenges coping with the impacts of climate change (Metro Vancouver, 2018). Metro Vancouver has acknowledged how some community members that face financial hardships have fewer options to adapt their homes to protect themselves against extreme weather events, and more difficulty recovering from impacts (Metro Vancouver, 2018). Additionally, the Metro Vancouver Climate 2050 report mentioned how marginalized communities often do not have equitable distribution or access to green spaces nearby that can reduce thermal discomfort for people (2018). This can increase the inequities in health complexities, social injustices, and climate resilience in various areas (Metro Vancouver, 2018). Since July 2019, there have been no further revisions of the Metro Vancouver “Climate 2050 Strategic Framework,” suggesting the priorities of implementing policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change must not perpetuate existing economic, social, or geographic disparities among residents of the region by considering Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, fairness, equity, and affordability in developing goals, strategies, and actions plans (2018).

That said, Metro Vancouver and the Province of British Columbia have stated inclusion, collaboration, and transparency in decision-making and resource accessibility are important to achieve climate justice across the region (Metro Vancouver, 2018). However, BIPOC minority groups are not mentioned in the “Climate 2050 Strategic Framework” even though these groups face disproportionate climate change impacts. Throughout the 40-page document, there is no effort in creating future climate action strategies or plans that are directly informed by different BIPOC communities’ environmental needs, values, and concerns. “Climate 2050” has collaborated with Metro Vancouver residents, businesses, academia, and non-profit organizations to develop local climate action solutions and ideas (Metro Vancouver, 2018). Nonetheless, no concrete plans were developed using the Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Indigenous peoples or prioritizing the concerns of the public. The imbalance between BIPOC communities and institutional structures of power and privilege perpetuates procedural injustices by excluding marginalized communities’ voices and needs throughout the development of climate action plans. Integrating a climate justice framework when creating climate strategies is necessary to ensure all voices of the community are heard, equally and equitably.

Specifically, people of the Asian diaspora include self-identified and community-accepted Asians, Pacific Islanders, West and Central Asian and Middle Eastern, South Asian, South-East Asian, and East Asian peoples specified in Table 1. The term Asian diaspora is inclusive of those who have chosen to, been forced to, or descend from ancestors who emigrated from the continent of Asia to another geographical region (Agunias & Newland, 2012). In this study, the term diaspora will describe ethnic groups who themselves or their descendants live in a host country while maintaining ties to their country of origin (Agunias & Newland, 2012; Sheffer, 1986). There is limited research in the space of climate justice education oriented towards the non-English speaking Asian diaspora, and upon first search, there are few, if any, resources or organizations that provide translated materials on a climate justice framework. Moreover, as highlighted by the work of Climate Recentered, especially in Vancouver, BC the climate justice space is often a White-dominated space (Faisal, 2022). In Metro Vancouver, the Hua Foundation has published the Asian Community Convener Project, which is one, if not the only research work that examines the intersections of community organizing, anti-racism, and equity in Metro Vancouver (Hua Foundation, 2022).

2.3 Disinformation in Asian Communities

Those in the Asian diaspora, especially individuals who do not fluently speak English, may have a greater risk of experiencing digital disinformation through social media apps such as Facebook, which have underdeveloped fact-checking technology in diverse languages (Barias et al., 2022). This is compounded by the fact that Asian populations were found to use private and unmoderated platforms separate from social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter; including, “Line, KakaoTalk, WhatsApp, WeChat, Weibo, and Viber... as a main source of news and forum for political discussion” (Barias et al., 2022, p 10). There are also high levels of trust in information on social issues from family, friends, and non-governmental social networks such as faith-based organizations, which have the potential to further spread misinformation (Barias et al., 2022; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017). As we set the stage to discuss the intersections of the Asian diaspora and climate education or distribution of information, it is pertinent to acknowledge existing challenges that the community may face. Whether strictly linguistic or based on culturally informed ways of interacting with information differently than non-Asian people, as detailed in this section.

The studies introduced above focus heavily on the generalized “Asian American” diaspora in the United States, but this context may provide valuable context on factors such as institutional (dis)trust, language injustice, and digital literacy that can shape resource and capacity-building materials beyond just direct translation (Barias et al., 2022; Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote, 2022; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017). Moreover, translator kids and community-led groups often bear the actual labour of addressing translation and resource gaps, seen specifically in Metro Vancouver with Bao Ve Collective and the C19 Response Coalition that tackled COVID-19 disinformation in multiple Asian languages (Asian American Disinformation Table, 2022; Wong et al., 2022).

2.4 Epistemic and Procedural Injustice at Provincial and Municipal Levels: Civic Engagement of the Asian Diaspora in Metro Vancouver, BC

Expanding on the previous definition of epistemic and procedural injustice in section 1.2, these frameworks in our study context aim to explore how structural processes and access to information impact the Asian diaspora’s involvement and climate justice understandings. Epistemic injustice, more specifically, can be viewed as barriers for the Asian diaspora to conceptualize climate justice, and thus prevent autonomy in their learning and civic engagement. Procedural injustice in our study’s context refers to the equitability of interactions with climate justice and climate decision-making processes for the Asian diaspora within the BC provincial government context and with Asian-diaspora-focused non-governmental organizations.

Broadly addressing epistemic justice, current provincial governmental resources for the Asian diaspora include voter information fact sheets in multiple Asian languages, including Arabic, Farsi, Japanese, Korean, Punjabi, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese (Elections BC, n.d.). The City of Vancouver website also describes accompaniment options for translation, bringing trusted friends or family who will take an oath of confidentiality (City of Vancouver, n.d.). A 2019 study conducted by

Elections Canada found that “new Canadian electors were less likely to say that they were registered to vote in the election (60%), compared with other Canadians (90%)” (Elections Canada, 2019). Further, the study found a potential implication of procedural injustice, as new Canadians cited “the electoral process” as a reason not to vote 18% higher than other Canadians (Elections Canada, 2019). It is unclear and not specified if this is related to perceptions of unfairness or distrust in the system, or feeling that their vote is not significant. The study not providing insights as to what barriers exist that cause these disparities between “new” and other Canadians serves as a research gap on epistemic and procedural injustices in the BC election process. Another limitation to acknowledge is the lack of voting or civic engagement data, specifically disaggregated data for the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver.

Hua Foundation’s Proportional Representation Project in 2018 is a strong example of Metro Vancouver community-led work that addresses these epistemic and procedural justice gaps. The project goes beyond just translation, specifically tailoring voting and civic engagement information in a culturally relevant way. Using taglines geared towards the Asian diaspora, such as “every grain of rice counts, every vote should too” and “we do not waste food, why waste votes?”, the project’s webpage importantly notes:

“Translations go beyond individual words; the key is strong multilingual campaigning is to translate values” (Hua Foundation, 2018).

Nationally, Action! Chinese Canadians Together (ACCT) Foundation is an organization that promotes engagement and development in civic leadership for Chinese Canadians through conferences, training cohorts, a social media-like platform, and collecting resources on their website (ACCT, n.d.).

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Objective

The objective of this study is to identify what barriers people of the Asian diaspora living in Metro Vancouver experience that limit their participation in climate justice actions, and to reflect on ways community organizations and local and provincial governments can promote their meaningful involvement in these efforts moving forward.

3.2 Study Population

In this research, we will focus on the Asian diaspora at large living in Metro Vancouver with specific research into the East Asian diaspora, including Chinese, Hmong, Hong Konger, Mongolian, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, and other East Asian origins not included elsewhere.

This study focuses on people of the East Asian diaspora due to large components of the community partner’s work grounded in Vancouver’s Chinatown, and all three researchers are East Asian femme-presenting individuals with lived experiences only relating to our East Asian heritage and culture. However, our team acknowledges the privileges and limitations of our experiences and positionality, restricting our understanding of specific Asian Diaspora lives beyond ours, which identifies a gap in our

research. In further research, we encourage those with lived experiences and expertise in West, Central, South-East and South Asian communities to delve into this area of research.

Based on the recommendations by the Canadian Institute for Health Information (2022), Statistics Canada (n.d.), and Kwak (2017), our study defines Asian ethnicities under the following sub-categories (Table 1).

Table 1: Asian Ethnicities Encompassed by the Asian Diaspora in Our Report

Sub-category	Ethnicity
East Asian	Chinese, Hmong, Hong Konger, Mongolian, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, East Asian origins not included elsewhere.
South-East Asian	Bruneian, Burmese, Cambodian(Khmer), Chin, Filipino, Igorot, Indonesian, Javanese, Karen, Laotian, Malay, Malaysian, Singaporean, Tibetan, Thai, Vietnamese, Southeast Asian origins not included elsewhere.
South Asian	Bangladeshi, Bengali, Bhutanese, Goan, Bhutanese, Goan, Gujarati, Indian, Jatt, Kashmiri, Maharashtrian, Malyali, Nepali, Pakistani, Punjabi, Sindhi, Sinhalese, Sri Lankan, Tamil, Telugu, South Asian origins not included elsewhere.
West and Central Asian or Middle Eastern	Afgan, Armenian, Assyrian, Azerbaijani, Baloch, Circassian, Cypriot, Georgian, Greek Cypriot, Hazara, Iranian, Iraqi, Israeli, Jordanian, Kazakh, Kurdish, Kuwaiti, Kyrgyz, Lebanese, Omani, Palestinian, Pashtun, Persian, Saudi Arabian, Syrian, Tajik, Tatar, Turkish, Turkmen, Uyghur, Uzbek, Yemeni, West and Central Asian and Middle Eastern origins not included elsewhere.
Pacific Islander	Fijian, Hawaiian, Indo-Fijian, Polynesian, Samoan, Tongan, and Pacific Islander origins not included elsewhere.
Other Self-Identified & Community Accepted Asians	

3.3 Research Questions

Q1: What are opportunities for people of the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver to get involved in climate justice?

Critical Literature Review: Data Collection & Data Analysis

Critical Literature Reviews, also known as environmental scans, are “used to investigate external factors that are interpreted as keys to success and affect the future of the organization” and through literature

reviews can guide strategy or program planning (Graham et al., 2008, p. 1). This methodology is specially tailored to our first question, as a detailed analysis of existing programs both locally and across North America can offer strategic or programming insights into building support for the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver to build their understanding and action on climate justice. The critical literature review provides logistical, funding, and organizational insights into potential opportunities, but falls short to identify the emotional experience of the community. As seen in Table 2, the process of compiling climate justice, Asian diasporic, or organizations that center both and their ongoing key works were drawn on critical literature reviews completed by Fang et al. (2021) and Lou (2020). Both studies visually display in a table format, existing community or governmental resources and key takeaways from those projects, then via case studies, delve more deeply into the successes, lessons, feasibility, and applicability of projects from other locations for their respective communities (Fang et al., 2021; Lou, 2020). For the context of our study, this environmental scan will be completed in Table 2, alongside supplemental charts (Appendix A and Appendix B) that contain more detailed data collection of the organizations.

Before presenting Table 2 in the results section, we will detail our data collection process, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and limitations.

Data Collection Process

Our approach to completing the critical literature review and data collection will be detailed in this section. Initially, we leveraged our own experiences and knowledge of ongoing work as community members in the Metro Vancouver and British Columbia climate justice space. This led us to including our community partner, Hua Foundation, as well as Climate Recentered. Our initial online search was “climate justice organizations for Asians” and “environmental justice and Asians” on Google. This query led to a limited number of organizations, mainly in Canada and the United States. Within Table 2, Chicago Asian Americans for Environmental Justice (CAAJEJ) was found through Stovicek’s (2019) feature of founder Andera Chu and Chinatown Working Group was highlighted by David Suzuki foundation researchers Lalonde and Zhang’s (2022) story. A significant introductory point to these organizations, including APEN, was the Grassroots Asians Rising website that featured a 20+ organization database of grassroots organizations run by the Asian diaspora across the US. Further information was then gathered from the organization’s websites, social media (mainly Facebook event posts and Instagram), news articles, and press releases.

Inclusion Criteria

- I. Community-led local and regional climate justice organizations.
- II. Organization’s primary focus is serving the Asian diaspora of all backgrounds and ages.
- III. Organization’s information written in English.
- IV. Organizations have media accessible through an internet search, at the minimum, a website updated within the past 5 years or active social media (mainly Facebook and Instagram).
- V. Information is accessed through online resources only.
- VI. Organizations located in Canada and the United States.

Exclusion Criteria

- I. Climate justice and environmental organizations that are not specifically focused on BIPOC and/or Asian diasporic education (for example, we are excluding organizations that have held single workshops situating BIPOC or East Asian experiences in the climate justice context).
- II. Climate justice organizations focusing primarily on national or international advocacy or efforts.
- III. Climate justice organizations within Asia because of this study's focus on Asian diasporic experiences.
- IV. Physical materials from organizations such as prints, passives, brochures, magazines, books, etc.

Limitations

Some potential limitations include that this study only reviews publicly available data written or translated into English due to the time limitations of completing this report in one four-month academic semester. Also, without direct conversations with the community organizations, there is limited detailed information about specific projects from grassroots organizations, their structures, and about lessons they learned from the programming. In addition, this study did not have the ability to ask organizations how they would like to present themselves in the report. Lastly, only being able to read and write fluently in English limited access and analysis to existing non-English resources for the East Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver and beyond.

Q2: How can community organizations and local and provincial governments support the Asian Diaspora in Metro Vancouver to build their knowledge and understanding of climate justice?

Autoethnography: Data Collection & Data Analysis

This study uses autoethnography, a qualitative self-study research method that draws upon personal experiences and memories to highlight significant or pivotal stories of one's life (Butler-Kisber, 2010). In this research context, the purpose of this is to ask each researcher to reflect and remember personal experiences or past conversations they have had with parents, family members, or elders about climate justice and climate change. Although autoethnography values subjective anecdotes and experiences that vary person-to-person, the rigour of this methodology is credible and valid because personal evidence adds value to the field of social justice research (Le Roux, 2016). Le Roux mentions as long as researchers incorporate these five criteria as markers to ensure high-quality autoethnographic studies: subjectivity, self-reflexivity, resonance, credibility, and contribution (2016). Each criterion is necessary for ensuring rigour in autoethnographic methodology, and this study integrates these criteria and principles throughout the data collection process.

In this study, autoethnography was used as a methodology and source of knowledge, to draw upon past and present struggles, discourses, conversations, memories, and experiences the researchers have experienced to address the second research question that aims to identify barriers the Asian diaspora experience when building their knowledge and understanding of climate justice. For data collection, on March 31, 2023, the researchers collectively worked in a group with assistance from Manvi Bhalla, the graduate academic assistant, to write five guiding questions that each person can use to reflect on certain memories, conversations, or experiences from their life and to provide structure to their autoethnographic

writing. Following this, each researcher individually wrote their individual autoethnographies reflecting on their life experience while responding to or addressing the guiding question using anecdotal writing with the following guidelines: writing in full sentences, organizing paragraphs by different questions or topics, and limiting the length of our autoethnographies to be maximum of 2000 words with flexibility of 10% above or below this word limit. After this 10-day independent writing exercise period, the researchers met as a group on April 9, 2023, to discuss themes emerging from our work, and compared and contrasted similarities and differences to further understand how our life experiences can help community organizations and local and provincial governments identify opportunities for the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver to engage in climate justice. We took notes during our discussion surrounding key themes and commonalities among our three autoethnographies. *Figure 2* below is a word cloud representation of the meeting, showing the top 30 keywords from the notes taken during the session.



Figure 2. Word cloud generated from notes taken during a meeting. Filler characters such as “ie” and non-word characters such as “+” were scrubbed from notes, then inputted and retrieved from <https://www.jasondavies.com/wordcloud/>.

This research methodology aimed to address the second research question by analyzing and identifying where climate justice knowledge and understanding are limited in local and provincial governments for people of the Asian diaspora. Through further data analysis, opportunities for increasing engagement for the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver were determined through a climate justice framework that includes procedural justice, epistemic justice, and racial justice.

One limitation of this method is that all three researchers are Asian diaspora of East Asian descent. Their personal experiences and interactions with parents, family members, or elders are limited to other East Asian people, which excludes knowledge and understanding from all other regions of Asia. In addition, the researchers do not speak, read, or write fluently in Mandarin, Cantonese, or Korean, which restricts

the conversational depth we would have had with our family members and relatives. Furthermore, the researchers have varied access to multilingual networks, either with family members or news/media outlets, due to language and communication barriers.

Guiding Questions for Individual Autoethnographies:

1. When you interact with exploring climate justice, how many opportunities are there for the Asian diaspora?
 - a. What do meaningfully inclusive organizing spaces require for the Asian diaspora to thrive?
2. What is the most significant barrier to you?
3. What does the climate crisis look like for the Asian diaspora?
 - a. What are cultural connections to climate and environmental justice?
4. What climate emotions or emotional connections do people of the Asian diaspora experience related to the climate crisis?
5. What are opportunities for intergenerational dialogue about this issue?
 - a. What tensions arise in conceptualizations of climate justice with respect to immigration and generational differences?

4. Results of Current Climate Justice Opportunities For the Asian Diaspora in Metro Vancouver

In this study, specific focus was given to the Asian diaspora organizations in Canada and the United States because of the limited information available about organizations in Metro Vancouver and Canada.

Q1: What are opportunities for people of the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver to get involved in climate justice?

As residents of Metro Vancouver who are familiar with the organizing landscape, and working alongside our community partner located in Metro Vancouver, we picked these six organizations as per our previously stated inclusion and exclusion criteria, due to time and feasibility limitations. At the narrowest lens, we have included organizations within Metro Vancouver that fit the inclusion criteria mentioned previously. Broader, we have included Canadian organizations of the same focus. For the North American level, United States organizations were included due to the limited numbers of Asian-centered climate justice organizations found in Canada and to provide a more holistic understanding of existing climate justice organizing for the East Asian diaspora in North America.

Table 2: A critical literature review of existing Asian diaspora or BIPOC-specific community organizations in North America with key takeaways from various programming

Organization/Location	Structure/Programming	Key Takeaways
Canada		
<p>Hua Foundation</p> <p>Vancouver, British Columbia</p>	<p>Founded by Kevin Huang in 2014, the non-profit organization serves Asian Diasporic youth to build skills, conduct community-based research, and take actions for community resilience through racial equity and civic engagement initiatives in Vancouver Chinatown and beyond.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Created a knowledge HUB of workshops, research, and resources related to cultural heritage, racial equity, food security, language access and social change. Ex: ● Facilitated community for Asian youth to connect with one another, process their emotions, and relationships to systems of oppression on a variety of topics. ● Supports political engagement by mobilizing the Asian diaspora to vote, offering language translation resources, and offering feedback to Vancouver’s Climate Emergency Action plan and equity group.
<p>Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice 世代同行會</p> <p>Vancouver, British Columbia</p>	<p>Founded in 2015 by Chanel Ly, the organization serves low-income immigrant seniors and youth in Vancouver Chinatown, the Downtown Eastside (DTES) and the Strathcona area. They address oppression and violence their communities face and help Chinese and other seniors access good food, translation and interpretation support, and community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on livelihood support for low-income Asians and seniors through help with housing, health, and income needs through medical accompaniment, language translation, and community advocacy. ● Provide fresh, culturally appropriate, and free groceries to seniors living in the DTES and Chinatown through their “Nourishing Hearts Grocery Program.” ● Fosters intergenerational connection, reduces isolation and builds stronger community ties through their zine, photography, story, and community arts programs.
<p>Climate Recentered</p> <p>Surrey, British Columbia</p>	<p>Asian youth and femme-led climate justice non-profit organization founded in 2021 by Dana Cachero, Arshia Uppal, Zoha Faisal and Naisha Khan. Their focus is on supporting BIPOC youth to learn, mobilize, and organize for climate justice through mutual aid and community connection initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hosted community events where they centred joy, care, community building, and empowerment for racialized youth and de-centred Whiteness and White supremacy in the climate movement. ● Physical community space for Asian and racialized youth to hold educational workshops on climate justice and resilience. ● Supported by SolidState Community Industries, which provides pre-existing structure and aid for racialized youth to build their ideas, skills, and launch organizations.

<p>Chinatown Working Group (CWG)</p> <p>Montreal, Quebec</p>	<p>A volunteer-run organization focused on community and political mobilization amongst Asian elders. The main project advocated for the opposition of high-rise expansion due to negative impacts on greenspace in Montreal’s Chinatown. Defunct and ceased operations as of September 29, 2022.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocated for increased community engagement in civic discussions by partnering with municipal governments to host “Chinatown Roundtable” discussions ● CWG faced logistical challenges when Montreal’s municipal government did not hire interpreters despite a majority Chinese-speaking audience ● Necessity for local governments to organize community hearings intentionally, with awareness of community needs and the burden that epistemic, procedural, and linguistic barriers put on volunteer-run organizations who serve the community
<p>USA</p>		
<p>Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)</p> <p>Richmond, Oakland, and Oakland Chinatown in California</p>	<p>APEN is an environmental justice organization that has continuously worked to educate and politically mobilize California’s Asian low-income, immigrant, migrant, and refugee communities since 1993.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical locations serve as community educational, care, and organizing hubs ● Uses local examples and culturally informed knowledge of California environmental disasters to emphasize the importance and disproportionate impacts on Asian immigrant and low-income communities ● Provides workshops that integrate culturally-informed knowledge mobilization and offer translation devices
<p>Chicago Asian Americans for Environmental Justice (CAA EJ)</p> <p>Chicago, Illinois</p>	<p>A Volunteer-run organization founded in 2019 by community organizers Kelly Chen and Andrea Chu. Serves the Asian diaspora and elders in Chicago’s Chinatown.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Created and regularly hosts “Asian Americans and Environmental Justice” workshops, situating climate justice in diasporic experiences and integrating information on how environmental pollutants disproportionately impact Asian communities in Chicago’s Chinatown. Sole programming of its kind. ● Organized a program to address the prevalence of lead contamination in home gardens, including plain language information sheets in multiple Asian languages about health risks ● Utilized free plants as an incentive and familiar access point to encourage engagement and understanding of environmental pollution risks amongst older Asian elders

5. Discussion of Current Climate Justice Opportunities for the Asian Diaspora in Metro Vancouver

At first glance, no existing research specific to climate justice and the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver exists, meaning this report marks a gap that we, and the community partner, Hua Foundation, have identified. From the research process, we have identified a specific need for future researchers to develop resources and research in service and with the East Asian, South Asian, South-East Asian, West and Central Asian or Middle Eastern, and Pacific Islander communities due to the lack of existing research.

The results from the critical literature review provide evidence that no organizations exist in Metro Vancouver or within Canada that are specifically catered to the Asian diaspora with a focus on climate justice. That said, the three Metro Vancouver organizations included in Table 2, Hua Foundation, Yarrow Intergenerational Society of Justice, and Climate Recentered, are regional non-profit organizations that work to serve various BIPOC communities but are not explicitly focused on the subject of the Asian diaspora and their climate justice involvement (Wong et al., 2022). However, the commonalities we noticed from all Metro Vancouver organizations was how there was a strong emphasis on education and knowledge mobilization for BIPOC communities. The organizations used methods of creating cultural connections to engage BIPOC and expand their understanding of environmental issues, such as food security in Metro Vancouver (Wong et al., 2022). Furthermore, the Hua Foundation and Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice focused particularly on intergenerational connection to climate justice (Wong et al., 2022). After analyzing these two organizations, we believe incorporating intergenerational support for elders is important in all climate justice organizations, so all ages of the Asian diaspora can participate and engage in climate justice while reducing isolation and building stronger community ties. Nonetheless, the workshops run by Hua Foundation and Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice often worked through anti-racism and solidarity frameworks. These frameworks encompassed racial equity and social change, without mentioning explicitly a climate justice framework that considers procedural and epistemic injustices when working toward a future where the Asian diaspora feels like they have the proper access to resources, knowledge, and understanding of climate justice. The only exception to this was with Climate Recentered, a relatively newer organization in Surrey, British Columbia, with a specific focus on strengthening climate resilience through community events and mutual aid initiatives serving racialized youth.

Having said that, all organizations from the table showcase procedural and epistemic injustices that the Asian diaspora has experienced. For example, the Chinatown Working Group in Montréal, Québec organized a community consultation meeting called “Chinatown Roundtable” with OCPM (local municipal government) representatives. Despite this project and eventual success in gaining historical designation, the OCPM “declined to hire interpreters” for the Chinatown Roundtable, highlighting the “inaccessibility of public hearings to members of the Chinese community, notably seniors who do not speak English or French.” (Zhang & Lalonde, 2022). Within Zhang and Lalonde’s 2022 interview, local lawyer and activist May Chiu noted that “an almost 90-year-old senior crossed a few blocks with her walker to come to a Q&A (question and answer) period held by the City of Montreal. However, since there was no interpretation, she sat in silence for two hours, not understanding what was said.” This incident in Montreal highlights the inherent barriers and procedural injustices that the East Asian

diaspora, specifically those non-proficient in English, face while interacting with municipal politics (Zhang & Lalonde, 2022).

The results suggest that there is more work that can be done in Metro Vancouver and across Canada using the models and resources of existing organizations in the United States, like Chicago Asian Americans for Environmental Justice (CAAJE) and Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), to support the Asian diaspora communities and provide climate justice learning or engagement opportunities. For example, CAAJE specifically situates climate justice frameworks within their workshops through community-identified cultural components. Plants and home gardening were identified as a commonality amongst many Asian and elderly community members. After CAAJE discovered the prevalence of dangerous lead contamination in multiple urban neighbourhoods of Chicago, including Chinatown, they employed the strategy of using free plants to incentivize testing (Chen, 2023). In terms of applicability to this study, a potential barrier detailed in section 2.3 is the risk of disinformation due to unmoderated platforms more likely used by the Asian diaspora (Barias et al., 2022). Although impossible to fully mitigate false climate information, steps can be taken to assess populations through community actions such as these, using familiar topics, language, examples, or even modes of communication. Furthermore, directly engaging with community members while using culturally relevant examples of climate justice that relate to topics they care about is a strong potential empowerment and action for communities, organizations, and local governments in Metro Vancouver.

In addition to CAAJE, the environmental organization, APEN, was selected for the “deep dive” case study due to the geographical, urban makeup and climate emergency similarities between Metro Vancouver and California. Both regions are coastal, and APEN’s work to respond to climate emergencies such as extreme temperatures, wildfires, and flooding mirrors and has transferable lessons for Metro Vancouver. Expanding on this in terms of applicability to our study’s population, in June of 2021, Metro Vancouver faced an extreme heatwave that led to the death of 619 individuals and further openings of emergency cooling centres (Hunter & Woo, 2022). Although the City of Vancouver opened emergency cooling centres, individuals, especially seniors and low-income individuals who live alone, were dying at higher rates due to inadequate ventilation infrastructure and a lack of in-home resilience plans (Spannagel, 2021). In terms of language accessibility, the City of Vancouver released cooling kit resources, Instagram graphics, and cooling maps in multiple languages (City of Vancouver, 2021). More specific similarities that could be drawn on in the Metro Vancouver context is APEN’s advocacy for “Resiliency Hubs,” focused on “community-led governance” in the face of climate emergency response and supply distribution (Lou, 2020). Further, much of APEN’s research focuses on utilizing the existing relationships and advocating for worker empowerment of front-line home care workers in the event of climate emergencies. Such centralized networks of care workers who may have the most insight into vulnerable communities, whether in partnership with government or NGO services, do not exist in California or Vancouver. Further organizational information is detailed in the case study below.

Case Study: Asian Pacific Environmental Network

The Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) is a California-based environmental justice organization founded in 1993. The organization has three current locations in Downtown Oakland, Oakland Chinatown, and Richmond, with plans to expand to Los Angeles. The organization has a wide array of public and private funders, including multiple Asian and Pacific Islander and California environmental-focused organizations. APEN's website is available in both English and Simplified Chinese. Their physical locations serve as community hubs to advance solutions for critical issues they are facing through developing leadership and highlighting marginalized voices to make communities more livable and self-sufficient. APEN has also conducted California-state-specific research on the need for climate resiliency hubs that provide support during climate-related emergencies, act as a space for youth to attend climate capacity-building workshops, and facilitate intergenerational learning with elders (Lou, 2020).

APEN's programming has been specifically focused on the integration of immigrant and refugee communities, including elders, into movement-building actions, advocacy for a just transition, climate resilience in the face of climate-related disasters, and mobilizing Asian voters (APEN, n.d.b). There is limited publicly available information about the functions of APEN's spaces and workshops, but many organizations published videos featuring stories from working-class and immigrant Asian elders explaining how environmental racism has impacted them. Lipo Chtanasak, a Lao immigrant and Richmond, CA resident physically impacted by the air pollutants after the Chevron Refinery explosion, noted they are, *"the poor people affected by the pollution and smoke from the refinery. This causes many deaths in our community"* (APEN, n.d.b). Lipo and Saeng Chtanasak also detailed how APEN has provided workshops on renewable energy that contextualize and emphasize for working-class communities how clean energy can decrease the cost of utilities. For addressing epistemic and procedural justice gaps, Chtanasak notes that *"in the past, the city council never engaged with the community. Now, five of the current [Richmond, CA] city council members have pledged that they would not accept money from corporations... We believe that working with APEN is about fighting for our wellbeing and our health"* (APEN, n.d.a).

Former railway worker Pan Hai Bo, of Oakland, California, shares their experiences of the devastating effects of coal particles on worker's health and of the perennial monsoon *"chang nian ji feng"* or perennial wind direction; curved lines common on maps in China but not in North America that show where wind directions go. Bo notes that *"[Oakland] is the direction where the wind blows"* and through APEN, they are sharing their culturally-informed environmental justice *"knowledge and experience with policymakers and APEN members"* (APEN, n.d.b).

Shown in the same video, footage from workshops features many Asian elders listening through what are likely translation devices, having conversations, as well as the integrated movement led by the facilitator. Further, the facilitator's approach to the workshop activities seems to be more participatory, rather than workshops taught like lectures, more similar to community centre classes frequently programmed for seniors (Liljas et al., 2017).

Summary of Case Study

APEN's workshops and events are rooted in fostering community and addressing epistemic injustice through knowledge mobilization, and the use of culturally-informed and linguistically diverse means of learning. Their provision of opportunities for accessible and demographic-appropriate pathways to civic engagement also addresses epistemic and procedural injustice by encouraging political autonomy. Further, the organization's physical space pioneers what climate justice opportunities can look like for a diasporic community.

Although the study population in this report is not specifically focused on elder Asian diaspora communities, many local Asian diaspora organizations, such as the Yarrow Intergenerational Justice Society and Hua Foundation, serve these seniors in Vancouver's Chinatown. Pertinently, existing barriers previously detailed, including access to multilingual information, media literacy, and epistemic or procedural injustices in municipal engagement more likely to impact elderly immigrants who do not fluently speak or read English. For these reasons, the opportunities to transfer approaches mentioned below within APEN's work with elders are key to our population's context.

Organizations in Metro Vancouver can take inspiration from APEN's approach to local and cultural contextualization of climate justice issues using topics such as affordability, cost of living, and health impacts to engage Asian immigrant diaspora communities. Overall, APEN and CAAEJ, located in the United States are creating their own workshops and hosting events, providing opportunities for the Asian diaspora to get involved and mobilize knowledge of climate justice, and fostering community hubs that have been successful in leading to political mobilization; thus, addressing epistemic and procedural barriers Asian communities face. Furthermore, these organizations have considerable knowledge and resources that Metro Vancouver can adapt and adjust depending on the transferability of relevant information.

6. Results and Discussion for Autoethnography on How Community Organizations and Local and Provincial Governments Can Support the Asian Diaspora in Metro Vancouver's Engagement in Climate Justice

In this section, our individual autoethnographies were analyzed as a group to answer our second research question written below.

Q2: How can community organizations and local and provincial governments support the Asian Diaspora in Metro Vancouver to build their knowledge and understanding of climate justice?

Using data from the autoethnographies, information was analyzed using a climate justice framework to

highlight commonalities based on our experiences; however, it is important to understand that our analysis is experience-informed, meaning the barriers we identify are inherently subjective and are not universally applicable to the East Asian diaspora.

6.1 Existing Conceptualizations of Climate Justice in Metro Vancouver

Through analysis of their autoethnographies, a commonality among researchers was a critical longing for ongoing relational connections with other Asian diaspora and racialized youth to discuss climate justice and their life experiences. Interestingly, another commonality throughout their autoethnographies was that environmentalism took place in their home lives, but only through community organizing, media and formal education did they learn about climate change and climate justice.

6.1.1 Environmental Action Informed by Cultural Values

A prevalent theme among the three researchers' autoethnographies and verbal reflections is that culturally informed practices are not necessarily viewed from our families' perspectives as "environmentalism or sustainable." Rather, these practices were done as a result of East Asian cultural norms and being raised in working-class immigrant families; however, these small actions co-benefitted as ways of doing positive actions for the environment as well. This demonstrates an opportunity to bridge East Asian ways of being to climate justice work.

Naomi (19) highlights this sentiment, noting that, *"I was not raised explicitly discussing about climate change, environmentalism or climate justice... However, throughout my childhood my mom has grown fruits and vegetables, brought me outside a lot and facilitated my relationship to the outdoors when I was younger."*

Paralleling this, Jenica (19), writes that, *"my grandparents had compost in the garden since the house was bought in the 90s, the garden is abundant - with apple pears, persimmons, peas, and guas (瓜). These ways of simply doing were not radical acts of environmentalism, although possibly rooted in conservation and preventing waste"*.

Following writing their autoethnographies, Naomi, Lynne, and Jenica also recalled how their families utilize electric or hybrid vehicles as a step for climate action. Still, these acts were conceptualized in their homes as a means to save money, with a co-benefit of helping the environment, rather than explicitly for climate justice.

Through the autoethnography process, we realized how our families were engaging in environmental action due to their cultural values rather than for climate justice specifically. Furthermore, learning about climate change in connection to colonialism, capitalism, and systems thinking was developed through community organizing, media and formal education, rather than at home. Outside their homes, the researchers also navigated White supremacy in the climate movement, finding a sense of belonging with other racialized climate organizers and opportunities for engagement with non-profit climate organizations. These findings demonstrated how inaccessible climate justice organizing and resources are to Asian elders and families but highlighted the necessity of structural spaces held by community organizations for intergenerational organizing for the Asian diaspora on climate justice topics. Local and

provincial governments can support funding of organizing for climate justice initiatives for Asian and racialized peoples.



Figure 3. Photo of researcher Jenica's grandmother (婆婆) in her Chinese vegetable garden in September 2020. Pictured on the left is a fuzzy melon (节瓜) in a homemade greenhouse frame structure, with bamboo support, a watering system, and risen plant bed (Pong, 2020).



Figure 4. Photo of a section of researcher Naomi's mom's garden in April 2021. Pictured are spinach, kale, and green onions in a homemade greenhouse with white plastic surrounding the garden box (Leung, 2021).

6.1.2 Climate Change as a Systems Issue

Also discussed within the autoethnographies were how, through institutional education and media access, each researcher learned about the urgency and severity of the climate crisis— and wanted to do something to address it. Yet, the initial strategies they learned to take action felt inconsequential to the scale of the crisis.

While feeling ecological grief firsthand, Naomi felt relieved when encountering a “Climate Doom to Messy Hope” created by Meghan Wise and the UBC Climate Hub. As resources about climate resilience are difficult to access by many, even in the climate movement, a resource on climate wellness and mental health provided Naomi with hope.

This resource is tailored to educators and community members who desire to discuss climate action while empowering people with hope and strategies to build resilience and healing. **Educators are recommended to teach their students about messy hope, strategies for resilience, and local climate solutions** with resources like the *Climate Doom to Messy Hope: Climate Healing and Resilience A Practical Handbook for Climate Educators and Community* (Wise, M, 2022). The researchers are excited for their professors to access this resource and empower youth to engage in community organizing and collective action. Especially as dominant narratives tend to focus on individual one-off actions focused on Sustainability rather than collective climate justice actions. From their discussion, the researchers discussed how action through strengthening community ties and building knowledge about climate resilience and preparedness helped with their ecological grief. Naomi and Jenica both engaged in youth climate justice organizing with a group named “Sustainabiliteens.” While in high school, they mobilized youth and community members on various campaigns to pressure decision-makers for climate action. As noted in their autoethnographies, concepts of climate justice, youth power, agency and change-making were first introduced to them by other teenagers during this time. From our research, we noted how community organizing for climate justice felt distinct from individual actions such as going zero-waste or recycling because they addressed issues on a systems level.

Naomi (19) described how community organizing with youth felt unlike anything they encountered before “*[because they] described how we as youth had agency and an ability to create change in the present through youth power. I hadn’t had access to movement or systems thinking knowledge, so these concepts were radical and powerful.*” Even though, “*prior to 2020 and these meetings I had no idea what climate justice was. I had not heard of it, and rather only knew about sustainability, zero-waste, recycling and about other various individual actions.*” Despite feeling overwhelmed in a new community and organizing space, Naomi was “*extremely energized and committed to what they described. A key aspect of what they described was how climate justice and racial justice were connected.*”

Similarly, Jenica (19) noted how “*until high school, my main interactions with the environment were sorting trash and recycling. My education and interaction with climate justice did not begin until late 2019 when I became engaged in the Fridays for a Future movement online and was exposed to environmental protests and friends I knew from other extracurriculars who began leading organizations and climate groups. I also began closely following the Sunrise Movement’s*

just transition political mobilization campaigns.” Following her exposure in media to this global youth movement, she was “energized and inspired by the incredible climate activists I had met and movements I had read and watched content about” and therefore “joined the newly formed Burnaby, New West and Tri-Cities regional branch of Sustainabiliteens right as the pandemic hit.”

A commonality discussed in the autoethnographies that the researchers experienced was that important insights were gained after conceptualizing climate change on a systems level and its connections to racism, colonialism, and capitalism. Building these connections was informative of their future actions and the climate justice frameworks the researchers possess to this day. From there, the researchers understood how their race, ethnicity, and oppression connected to climate justice and action.

Naomi (19) stated how, “learning about the connections between climate change, colonialism and capitalism were so powerful.” Yet these important insights were not learned in formal education spaces; they were learned by connecting to climate injustices on a local scale. For example, “Through listening to Indigenous land defenders and climate activists, I came to understand how climate change is a symptom and result of larger systemic issues.”

Additionally, Jenica (19) stated, “I think about how knowledge can be both a burden and lead to amazing enrichment” when describing climate justice education. Together, the researchers discussed how empowering accessing a climate justice framework could be, yet how mobilizing this knowledge could add to life stress. Still, Jenica was able to access “a multitude of climate justice workshops led by activists only a few years older than me on topics such as Indigenous sovereignty in the climate movement,” which helped her with “situating climate science in a justice context, [in] environmental policy, and [utilizing] intersectional approaches.”



Figure 5. Pictured is a photo of researcher Naomi speaking into a microphone at a Sustainabiliteens solidarity action in March 2021 against the development of the Trans Mountain Pipeline (Sustainabiliteens, 2021). Other youth organizers are holding a sign which states, “Dismantle settler colonialism.”

After discussion of the individual autoethnographies, researchers agreed that learning about climate change on a systems level helped us understand better how to engage with climate action through a local context and with the Asian diaspora in mind.

Naomi (19) stated *“for me, climate and racial justice organizing could not be separated. If it was, I don’t think it would be fighting for justice anymore. The more I organized and educated myself, the more I understood aspects of how my race, ethnicity, and decolonization needed to be centered in my climate justice advocacy– and this was really difficult.”*

Naomi recalls feeling surprised and enraged after understanding the first time what the word “unceded” meant. Understanding how the land they were raised on was never legally handed over (stolen) prompted shock and guilt, especially since Naomi never needed to consider this fact. However, as a racialized Asian person, they learned how their own justice was connected to Indigenous sovereignty. Since Naomi benefits from both past Asian labour and bodies, and the Musqueam, Tsawwassen, and Cowichan nations they reside on, they are working on changing their relationship to the land. In other words, the researchers discussed the importance of changing their perceptions of land as a commodity to extract from to a sustainer of life. The researchers compel other East Asians and organizations supporting East Asians to integrate decolonization into their anti-Asian hate frameworks and to consider their own relationships to the land they reside on. Naomi also noted from their experiences the importance of not centering their guilt, but instead mobilizing for action and solidarity. As Asian well-being depends on the well-being of Indigenous land in colonially named “Canada” and beyond, a reciprocal relationship with the land is critical for climate justice. To emphasize the importance of the land to the East Asian diaspora, as the family is seen with the utmost importance in many East Asian families, the researchers discussed the idea of conceptualizing land as family to form cultural connections of land with East Asian ways of being. Integrating a holistic and systems way of viewing land as a sustainer of life and alike family are ways community organizations serving the Asian diaspora can empower youth for climate justice education and action.

6.1.3 Whiteness in the Climate Movement

A commonality discussed throughout each researcher's autoethnography was that racialized people may feel a lack of belonging in White-dominated or White-led climate or environmental spaces, especially since the media about environmentalism and conservation has historically centred and presently struggles to de-centered White narratives and voices (Curnow & Helferty, 2018; McLean, 2013). The researchers noted a commonality in their autoethnographies and discussed how entering and remaining within climate-organizing spaces may feel uncomfortable and unwelcoming for Asian youth, while White youth might have a different experience.

Naomi (19) recalls joining their first climate justice space nervously while noticing the facilitator was White and that there were *“few other visibly non-White organizers.”* Yet they did not question this because this was the norm they understood as, *“at the time, I rarely consumed environmental media created by non-White people, and I was really young and developing my own sense of self...I wanted to contribute something even though I had an unshakable imposter syndrome towards my belonging.”*

Jenica (19) added how she did attend “*workshops often stress[ing] the importance of racial justice to the climate movement*”, yet was not given space to “*reflect on how my own culturally-informed experiences impacted how I viewed climate justice.*”

For these reasons described in multiple researchers’ autoethnographies, racialized organizers may feel a need to assimilate into the Eurocentric norms of the group to participate in climate action. For example, speaking in English, separating their personal life experiences from climate justice, and referring to media centred around White experiences and emotions.

A commonality discussed in the autoethnographies that the researchers experienced was the separation between their own home life and culturally-informed perspectives and experiences from White-dominated spaces like their climate-organizing ones. On the contrary, Naomi noted in their autoethnography how they witnessed racialized organizers feel tokenized due to their skin colour or culturally-informed experiences. The researchers agreed after analyzing their autoethnographies that naturalizing Whiteness as the “default” in the climate movement made it more challenging for them to share their experiences. After reflecting on the autoethnography process, Naomi recalled further difficulties for BIPOC people to organize in climate justice spaces when there was a failure to compensate or respect their time and labour when BIPOC are positioned as “the other,” and when they are utilized for diversity optics but are not listened to.

Naomi (19) shared that “*[the White environmental movement], like in society, seems to reward Whiteness and people that act and assimilate to White ways of doing things.*” Moreover, from their organizing experiences, “*East Asian people with lighter skin tones specifically did really have privileges in the environmental movement when they assimilated to White ways of communicating or acting. Especially compared to visibly darker racialized peoples in Metro Vancouver who may be more tokenized since Vancouver does have quite a large Chinese and East Asian population.*”

After reflecting on what supported Naomi’s experience in their youth climate organizing experiences, they remembered how, on a Sustainabilityteens group education call, they learned about a resource called *Divorcing White Supremacy Culture* by Tema Okun (Okun, 2022). Another youth organizer explained how it informed them that elements such as perfectionism, binary black-and-white thinking, defensiveness and individualism were characteristics of White supremacy culture (cite), meaning they upheld White supremacy in the climate movement as well. After discovering this resource, they could pinpoint and identify White supremacy culture within their own life and organizing experiences. Furthermore, Naomi felt this resource helped them separate characteristics of their own culture compared to characteristics of white supremacy culture that resulted from British colonialism embedded in their parents' education in Malaysia and Hong Kong.

Through analyzing the researchers’ experiences of feeling a sense of intimidation, discomfort, and un-belonging within White-dominated climate spaces, community organizations in Metro Vancouver already serving the Asian diaspora can create spaces for Asian youth to actively discuss climate justice. As organizations such as Hua Foundation and Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice already have

programming related to cultural heritage and social change, integrating a climate justice framework explicitly can advance the participation of Asian youth audiences in their pre-existing programming. Local and provincial governments can provide funding for these projects to build leadership capacity in racialized youth for climate justice actions. A foreseeable problem is that ongoing resources and programming around climate justice may add a heavy burden to organizations already limited in funding and organizing capacity. As a result, organizations similar to Climate Recentered can be created across municipalities in Metro Vancouver, which explicitly work to de-center Whiteness in the climate movement. This intentionality of re-centering Asian and racialized youth perspectives can provide depth to Asian youth's understanding of how to take climate action and advance local climate action projects. Furthermore, organizations can offer Asian youth external resources related to this topic, which can outline connections between White supremacy, systems of power, and social change.

6.1.4 Race-Related Experiences with Climate Organizing

Contrary to section 6.1.3, researchers felt they belonged in climate and environmental spaces in the BIPOC caucuses and spaces that are explicitly for racialized people. This Asian community and mentorship in the movement were important to feel heard, valued, and understood in climate-organizing spaces. The burden of disrupting Whiteness in the environmental movement was easier in a community space created for Asians and BIPOC.

Naomi (19) described how *“I felt included and understood when my friend, a Bengali organizer, invited me to Sustainability’s BIPOC caucus to discuss our experiences...The group was comprised of mostly South East Asian, South Asian and East Asian people discussing tokenism, our place in the environmental movement, frustrations with White fragility, and our relationships to White supremacy. It was powerful to discuss these systems of power, and to feel like I could without making a White person uncomfortable...I remember the significance of having older mentors (a year or so more experienced than me) who were East Asian. It felt like a relief and a breath of fresh air to talk with them. I just felt more connected to them immediately because of how we had to navigate White supremacy in the climate movement in the same or similar ways.”* Naomi added how, *“I felt as though Black, Indigenous, Asian, and racialized people in the climate justice movement often had to create space for themselves in climate spaces because White people wouldn’t make any for us. Or if they would, it was rare or done in a tokenizing and strange way.”*

Jenica (19) expressed tension she felt while in climate organizing spaces disconnected from her living realities. Mentioning how, *“in the wake of the multitude of anti-Asian hate incidents during the pandemic in Metro Vancouver, I remember the feelings of heavy grief while I processed fear for my grandparents. This all felt separate from climate organizing, and there wasn’t always space held within these meetings to discuss ongoing events. I think I struggled to reconcile the urgency I felt for the planet with the sadness I felt scrolling through news stories about Asian hate. As many friends as I had made in my time as a climate organizer, very few were Asian, and very few I felt I could connect to talk about the nuances of these feelings.”*



Figure 6. Pictured are Sustainabiliteens BIPOC caucus members meeting in an episode of “The Sustainabiliteens: Creating an Intersectional Climate Movement.” Researcher Naomi is sitting in the bottom left corner (Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/YJhAdIIjne4>).

As described in all researchers' experiences in their autoethnographies and following later analyses, organizing with other Asian youth increased the likelihood of staying within climate-organizing spaces. This resulted from feeling like the researchers could relate to other Asians, and as mentioned in 6.1.3, white-dominated spaces felt isolating for Asian youth. Whereas, from the researchers' analyses, intentional BIPOC spaces fostered a stronger sense of belonging and increased retention in climate justice spaces. Community climate or environmental organizations currently serving a general audience can offer BIPOC caucuses, wellness check-ins, or shape their group norms and culture to center care and BIPOC joy. From the researchers, common past experiences, this intentionality of care for Asian and racialized youth increased the positive experiences of Asian diasporic peoples. Importantly, community organizations can make space not to single out Asian youth but to provide them with equitable opportunities for action, rest, and joy when engaging with climate justice. Funding should be made by local and provincial governments investing in Asian and racialized youth's well-ness and mental health.

6.1.5 Existing Opportunities

A commonality discussed in the autoethnographies that the researchers experienced was that there were opportunities for action within unpaid volunteer organizing positions and jobs with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on climate justice-related topics. Notably, most of these job positions are not intentionally designated for the Asian diaspora.

Lynne (22) *“wanted to find a summer job where I could gain a sense that I am doing something meaningful with my life to either connect or help other people suffering from climate anxiety and worries about our collective future.”* Therefore, she began to work at UBC’s Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning (CALP), a non-profit NGO where she *“participated in multiple community engagement events throughout the summer of 2022 that helped residents create climate action plans to build more climate resiliency in their own neighbourhoods. I listened to people’s concerns about the lack of shade trees, unused grassy boulevards, lack of biodiversity, and limited access to nature at these engagement workshops, and this made me realize how there is so much more we can do to fight the climate crisis, and knowing everyone has similar values of nature and the desire to live more sustainably and ethically inspired me to do more of the same.”* In her reflection post writing her autoethnography, Lynne noted how she did not engage with other East Asians specifically about her own cultural connections to climate change during this job position.

Naomi (19) organized with Sustainabiliteens and Climate Education Reform BC (CERBC), two youth-led organizations with members in Metro Vancouver. With CERBC in their grade 12 year, *“[Naomi] advocated for climate justice to be integrated across subjects comprehensively in the BC K-12 curriculum and viewed climate justice education as an important step for engaging youth in hope through action.”* Naomi also worked for *“Be the Change Earth Alliance, an NGO where I ended up working for two summers.”* Joining their team, they *“developed climate and environmental justice education workshops and programs for middle to high school aged youth and for educators.”* These organizations deepened their own understanding of climate justice in a local education context; however, Naomi still made connections between their cultural background and climate change independently.

As described through the researchers' autoethnographies, there were commonalities in the experience that beyond self-organized youth climate justice initiatives, there are existing climate justice job opportunities with environmental and climate organizations. However, there were none in Metro Vancouver explicitly made for Asian youth to engage with climate justice. This identifies a clear gap in paid, structural, ongoing opportunities explicitly for the Asian diaspora to connect with climate justice and action, which community organizations serving the Asian diaspora can fill. Local and provincial governments can support the creation of these positions by providing funding and grants.

6.2 Barriers to Climate Justice Engagement

Through the analysis of our individual autoethnographies, followed by an open conversation discussing broadly what existing significant barriers prevent our families of East Asian heritage from engaging in climate justice action, we identified the presence of two types of barriers: procedural and emotional barriers.

Procedural Barriers

The common procedural barriers to engaging with climate justice that the researchers experienced and identified are often tied to our upbringing, heavily influenced by our families’ survival mentality, generational gaps, and language or information accessibility.

6.2.1 Survival Mentality is the Priority

When reflecting and discussing what procedural barriers have limited our participation in climate justice, we all mentioned different ways our families have impacted or limited our initial engagement. A commonality among all researchers was that our families, when first immigrating to Canada, were tasked with the job of survival, meaning it was their job to find different work arrangements and ways to put food on the table and financially support their children and grandchildren to give them comfortable lives. Watching our families live in a Western society with a “survival mentality” informed our perceptions of climate justice from a young age. Our families' mental and emotional capacity to prioritize climate change and environmental justice was limited when day-to-day survival and adapting to a completely different culture and society were of the utmost importance. Therefore, our exposure to climate justice was very limited growing up.

Naomi (19) noted that *“many racial justice organizations and most racialized people care about the environment and the earth, but are focused on surviving and other life-sustaining protective campaigns”* throughout their interactions with structural organizations. The limited East Asian representation in climate organizing led to Naomi thinking, *“It was rare to discuss how our own cultures could contribute to climate justice organizing or connected to climate justice values.”*

Similarly, Lynne (22) described how she felt a *“deeper connection to climate justice through [her] external social environment rather than at home”* and how her *“family never specifically engaged in or was adequately aware of climate change.”*

Additionally, Jenica (19) internalized and understood how much her family had *“sacrificed and struggled and how incessant their survival mindset was, how adding something new to discuss that could cause emotions, like climate change, could feel like an additional unnecessary burden to face.”*

The evidence collected from the three researchers' autoethnographies illustrates the hardships of immigrant families, such as struggling to find economic security, lifestyle stability, and adapting to Canadian institutional structures, and how these limit engagement, learning, and understanding of climate justice. Local organizations and governments must understand the values of Asian immigrant families, which include caring for family and survival of the day-to-day when supporting or working with people of the Asian diaspora.

6.2.2 Generation Gaps Create Knowledge Gaps

Another common theme identified among the researchers is how generation gaps and the knowledge learned and transferred from one generation to another contribute to epistemic and procedural barriers limiting our families' climate justice engagement, including our grandparents, parents, and ourselves. It is important to understand how generation gaps create differences in beliefs, values, opinions, and perceptions of climate justice depending on a person's upbringing, which includes geographical location, culture, religion, language, digital literacy, and education system. Consequently, the information our grandparents or parents learned in school in East Asia is vastly different from what the researchers learn in Canadian education systems today. However, a commonality the researchers have identified is that no one grew up in their household learning about climate change from their family members. We were all

taught about climate change and justice through our schooling, volunteering, and personal passion projects outside the home.

Lynne (22) shared, *“Throughout my story, you may have noticed that my participation and engagement with climate justice have been through my intrapersonal, academic, or work community. However, I have not mentioned climate justice and my family yet, and that is largely due to my deeper connection to climate justice through my external social environment rather than at home.... My family never specifically engaged in or was adequately aware of climate change.”*

Jenica (19) vocalized, *“How the limited education [my grandparents] have received, and consistent loop of media in a world that demands nuanced media literacy impacts how they understand and read news about climate.”* Also, she further mentions *“that it is a right to have the tools to learn and build their own understandings in order to inform equal involvement. The nuances of climate justice, as I conceptualize it, require deep foundational knowledge that can take years to situate ourselves in. This is probably the biggest barrier in itself, let alone the lack of translated materials applicable to the so-called “Vancouver” context.”*

After writing our individual autoethnographies, through dialogue and conversation, the researchers found that education on what climate change looked like dramatically varied for our parents’ generation and elders. They grew up learning very little about climate change; meanwhile, we have taken numerous courses and participated in climate justice organizations to learn what climate actions and climate solutions we can individually and collectively work on to achieve climate equity. As Jenica mentioned, engaging in climate justice requires foundational knowledge of institutional racism, environmental racism, and other topics that people of the Asian diaspora may have little exposure to, growing up in different countries and cultures. We have recognized how the knowledge gaps and lack of intergenerational connection to climate change and environmental justice amongst our family members are barriers to engaging and learning about climate justice. Therefore, community organizations could host workshops and create inviting community engagement events that are safe spaces for “first-time learners about climate justice” to attend; this could encourage Asian diaspora older generations and elders to build their understanding and knowledge of this field.

6.2.3 Information Accessibility Limits Asian Diaspora Knowledge and Participation

Additionally, the researchers have identified language or digital literacy barriers that limit the information people of the Asian diaspora can understand or learn about climate justice. It is necessary for local and provincial governments to continuously translate their climate justice information to make it accessible for community members who are not fluent in the English language. Currently, a lot of the climate organizations we have experienced growing up are predominantly in English, which does not create spaces for Asian immigrants and Asian diaspora to participate and feel included or welcomed if they are not comfortable speaking in English. Furthermore, relevant climate justice information, toolkits, and literature readily accessible in English and online are not inclusive for those with limited English or digital proficiency.

Jenica (19) mentioned how *“the lack of translated materials applicable to the so-called*

“Vancouver” context” prohibits her first-generation Chinese immigrant grandparents to engage in climate justice. She articulated how, *“We must view, especially our elders, as equally curious and able to learn and grow as us. We can’t discredit and overgeneralize a whole group of people simply because work in providing spaces for conversation or creating learning materials has not been done yet.”*

Naomi (19) described, *“When recently discussing with my family how they feel about the climate crisis, I realize how they are worried but also ill-informed about how to engage in community-based solutions. There are not many Asian adults their age organizing in Metro Vancouver around climate justice, but if they could find community with others doing so, I think they would.”*

Lynne (22) expressed, *“Being born and raised in a dominant English-speaking community, my Korean abilities were not competent to speak about deep political, economic, social, and environmental topics about climate change and its utmost importance. Language has always been the most significant barrier to connecting with my parents, especially my mom, about matters that are important to me, including climate change.”*

It is evident that access to resources, whether it is translated documents and learning materials or workshops and organizations where Asian adults and elders can engage and learn about climate justice, are essential in creating inclusive discussions that welcome Asian diaspora and immigrant families to join the environmental justice movement. Local organizations and governments can create more spaces or workshops aimed specifically at involving the East Asian diaspora in climate justice to broaden their knowledge and understanding of this movement. Furthermore, these resources should be designed with the East Asian diaspora's various ages, physical abilities, language fluency, and digital literacy in mind. This will encourage greater participation and involvement from Asian diaspora members who are less accustomed to education in English and are fluent in other Asian languages, and it will allow for interaction both in-person and in virtual spaces allowing for more flexibility in case people have to work or take care of family members.

Overall, the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver faces challenges in expanding their knowledge and understanding of climate justice due to a survival mentality and commitment to supporting the family, as well as cultural, generational, educational, and language differences compared to Canadian institutions.

Emotional Barriers

The unanimous climate-related emotions all researcher and their respective families have felt and experienced include fear, worry, helplessness, grief, stress, and loneliness. As many of these emotions arise simultaneously, this section looks at climate-related emotions as a whole to identify and analyze how emotions limit the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver from building their knowledge and understanding of climate justice.

6.2.4 Climate-related Emotions: Fear, Worry, Helplessness, Grief, Stress, and Loneliness

We discovered that all of us, including our family members, felt the same negative emotions related to climate change by examining our individual autoethnographies, reflecting on past conversations with

family, and identifying what climate-related emotions we consistently feel in our everyday lives. Moreover, we realized how our specific emotional connections to the homeland multiplied the intensity of our climate-related emotions. For people of the Asian diaspora, like ourselves and our families, we not only face climate anxiety about our homes in Metro Vancouver, but also, our homes and family relatives in East Asia.

For example, Jenica (19) reflected on *“what it means [for my elders to] think about the rising sea level’s effect on the only two coasts [they] have called home (those being Hong Kong and Vancouver).”*

Similarly, Lynne (22) highlighted, *“Both of my homes and families in Vancouver and Korea are affected by climate change and will experience continuous sea level rise and increasing rainfall. Once again, I felt helpless and could not help my relatives or do anything to support them through this time.”*

Additionally, Naomi (19) expressed how they *“recall travelling back to Malaysia and witnessing flash floods and intense humidity”* and worrying about *“people living in Malaysia who do not have the financial security to recover from flooding.”*

After further dissecting the various climate-related emotions, we learned that certain feelings were specifically associated with differing concerns. Fear and stress were emotions that we felt when thinking about the climate disasters that affected our homelands.

Lynne (22) wrote how, *“There have been more climate disasters, such as flooding, typhoons, droughts, high concentration of fine dust particles in the air causing poor air quality, and snowstorms [she] heard about from my relatives living in Korea.”*

Additionally, Jenica (19) described, *“I remembered off-hand my grandmother mentioning that my mother was often sick as a child and had a variety of ailments including asthma, which she blamed as a consequence of the pollution in Hong Kong. “Why would I want to go back? The air and the water is so clean in Vancouver,” she said once after I asked about Hong Kong.”*

Both examples provide evidence that climate issues and the associated negative health impacts on their families were stress-inducing concerns that caused fear when thinking about the future. Furthermore, worrying about our families and future generations and how our homelands would be affected in the future were all anxiety-provoking concerns that led to feeling helpless. Specifically, with the geographical barriers separating two lands we are emotionally connected to, we felt helpless when we heard about climate events happening in East Asia; there was nothing we could do to help our family and relatives when we lived abroad, very far away. Consequently, after feeling hopeless, we identified how emotions of loneliness often arose because of our isolation from the homeland and our family there, stemming from the idea that we could not change or improve things from a distance. On top of that, reflecting on the loss or physical damage to one’s land or home created strong emotions of grief and sorrow.

Lynne (22) exemplified our analysis above through her experience in August 2022, saying, *“As a person of the Asian diaspora, geographically living separate from Korea, but also having weak*

connections to my relatives who do reside there (mostly due to the geographical and language barrier), it is difficult to imagine sometimes how there can be these devastating climate disasters when the weather in Vancouver (at the same time) is the complete opposite. For example... there was a terrible flooding event from too much rainfall where streets were completely flooded, cars were floating down the street, water was seeping into the walls of people's apartments, and underground subway stations were completely submerged in water. When my mom heard the news, she called her siblings and asked if everyone was safe, but I felt this huge disconnect. How can this be their reality when Vancouver was dealing with drought and wildfires? With that understanding, once again, I felt helpless that could not help my relatives or do anything to support them through this time."

From our discussion on identifying emotional barriers, we understood how these negative climate-related emotions limited engagement in climate justice for the Asian diaspora. We have recognized how there was very little space for the Asian diaspora to contribute their specific emotions of loneliness, isolation, and worry about the homeland in current White-dominant community organizational structures. Naomi (19) mentioned, "*In the climate spaces I was in, it was rare to discuss how our own cultures could contribute to climate justice organizing or connected to climate justice values.*" Therefore, the feeling of "being different" from the majority of those who climate organize can contribute to feelings of separation from others, acting as a barrier for more Asian diaspora engaging in climate justice. Also, Jenica (19) described "*How tiresome and anxiety-inducing truly learning, situating your identity and your own emotions into the context of climate change means. I feel for my elders, the burden of anxiety for future generations,*" which led to our realization that understanding the burdens of climate change on our collective futures makes people feel emotional exhaustion from the perpetuating worries and concerns. This led to the interpretation that ignorance about climate change can relieve negative climate-related emotions, prompting avoidance of learning or engaging in climate justice.

Overall, creating spaces for healthy discussions regarding climate-related emotions must be encouraged in today's community organizations and local and provincial governments to work with the Asian diaspora and not neglect their feelings of climate anxiety or worry.

6.3 Opportunities for Future Engagement in Climate Justice

After identifying existing opportunities and key barriers, we began discussing future opportunities, integrating our personal experiences with the literature, stories, and research completed in the critical literature review and throughout this project. A significant commonality discussed among the three researchers was the potential success of contextualizing climate justice with observed cultural understandings and increasing the representation of Asian diasporic voices in organizing. Lastly, while discussing experiences in activism, the researchers identified the power of social aspects of community organizing and potential future applications to encourage more Asian individuals to get involved.

6.3.1 Approaches to Future Opportunities: Situating Culture

As mentioned in section 6.2.4 about emotional barriers, a significant theme was identified when the researchers discussed the conceptualization of climate justice was impacted by home security, both in Vancouver and ours or our elders' original homelands. These nuances for the Asian diaspora impact how

we conceptualize climate justice not only for ourselves on these lands but also for our families and communities, whether directly connected or not, abroad.

Organizations and those creating resources can emphasize appealing to the layered emotions, anxiety, and disconnect Asian diasporic members may feel about their homelands. Utilizing specific examples of how climate issues impact the Asian community such as this can increase engagement and personal investment in justice issues.

Other approaches for future projects include integrating aspects of culturally-informed ways of knowing into educational approaches.

With this in mind, Jenica (19) notes that *“exploring how intentionality and understanding potential applications of taking the time to tend to a garden or wash out your cans could be an integrative practice. Beyond these wonderful, nature-connecting acts of gardening and caring even about our waste, it could be interesting to explore how the mindset of intentionality, applying these “practices” when teaching climate justice, can be leveraged for resources and spaces for the East Asian diaspora.”*

Similarly, Lynne (22) wrote that the acts of reusing containers, *“were never done with the intention of taking care of our planet; this was a cultural norm in my neighbourhood in North Vancouver, and my parents were encouraged to take these individual sustainable actions in Korea as well.”*

What does or can intention look like when teaching and emphasizing justice in the climate education and organizing space? This strategy of targeting what people care about, and finding ways to relate it to emphasize climate justice, is key to reaching new audiences. Beyond validating the importance of individual actions, such as recycling and home gardening in relation to climate, for the Asian diaspora, the concept of intentionality could be used more broadly. For example, introducing overarching climate justice concepts such as a just transition to renewable energy, focusing on how this concept impacts individuals and families in terms of cost of living, housing security, or the future for children may be more tangible than emphasizing large-scale political campaigns or disruptive actions. As mentioned earlier in the case study, while discussing renewables with low-income, immigrant, and elder Asian communities, emphasizing the potential reduction in utility costs made the concept of a just transition more digestible (APEN, n.d.).

6.3.2 Resourcing and Representation

In the discussion amongst researchers, we commonly related to the gaps in existing climate justice resources, organizations, and spaces specifically for members of the East Asian diaspora.

One example, while participating in BIPOC caucus held by a mainstream climate movement group, Naomi (19) noted the relief they felt without fear of triggering White fragility or discomfort. Naomi further reflected that even in the climate justice organizing community, where the *“ideas and people I was exposed to... were queer [and] radically accepting”*, they did not have designated spaces for BIPOC people. Further, Naomi expressed that some Asian friends left

organizations partially because these groups were *“not directly built for Asian people and racialized people, [and] they got really tired of advocating for de-centering Whiteness.”*

Moreover, when thinking of approaches to spaces for the Asian diaspora to interact with climate justice, Jenica (19) drew inspiration from the film *Everything, Everywhere, All at Once*, expressing it was a film that Jenica, *“truly saw my own East Asian diasporic experience in but also a testament to how impactful making things that are weird and oddly specific to our personal experiences can be.”* Further, Jenica believes that organizations should focus on *“crafting spaces and resources to discuss climate justice with the East Asian diaspora that are very specific”* in order, *“for Asian folks to access climate action, education, joy, get to use their civic rights, and not get left behind.”*

Critically, all three researchers noted that growing up, there was a lack of resources, media, or public representation of the Asian diaspora in community organizing. Naomi (19) recalled in their formative years growing up doing climate organizing, they *“rarely consumed environmental media created by non-White people”* despite growing up in a predominantly East Asian community.

In many discussions, the researchers pondered if this deficit in East Asian-focused projects exists because of not wanting to be exclusionary of other BIPOC communities and whether, as an individual cultural group with our own privileges, it feels or is appropriate to create spaces serving specifically the East Asian diaspora. The potential benefits of having climate discussions, spaces, and resources specifically tailored to the East Asian diaspora may include a deeper relatability to the content or connections amongst community members.

Insight on future organizing projects can be found from CAAEJ founder Andrea Chu, who shared in an interview, *“I don’t usually encourage people to go to their White-ass workplace and try to get them to care about Asian issues”* and suggests bringing climate justice to the table of existing Asian diasporic organizations. Chu’s suggestion that building capacity within existing racial justice organizations can be completed via *“analysis and partnerships with other POC organizations... and finding some strength,”* which may be a better approach to integrating an Asian diasporic focus into climate justice organizing.

Takeaways from these reflections prove the necessity for media and spaces: owned, featured, and created by and for the Asian diaspora. When we discuss our futures, the radically-Asian spaces, research, and resources we hope to create, it is hard not to think about where funding to sustain programs, staff, and this work will come from.

6.3.3 Mobilizing Community Organizing

While discussing together, the three researchers related to the generation gaps and barriers we witnessed our parents facing when discussing our own work in climate justice and advocacy. As young people and members of an online “Gen Z” generation who consistently had access to climate information, research, social media posts, and a community of climate organizers, it is almost unfathomable that our parents, just one generation apart, do not reap the benefits of access to education and community in the same ways.

Interestingly, Naomi and Jenica's reflection also surrounds the notion that for older generations, finding an Asian community or space to organize in would potentially encourage them to take action. Naomi (19) expands on this idea, noting that their father has a strong engineering and science background but, "*the social community organizing aspect of climate justice is not on his radar*" like it is for younger people. When discussing this topic, the three researchers related on how significant finding community has been in our own climate justice learning and activism journeys and how beneficial this could be when looking to the future for engaging older members of the Asian diaspora.

This study has so far discussed that the Asian diaspora faces barriers in terms of survival mindset, language barriers, epistemic and procedural injustice, and gaps in digital media literacy, but feeling like you have an emotional, personal, and community stake is what is truly going to connect you to the work. Approaches to building spaces and resources that provide a personal stake for Asian diasporic community members to latch onto could be through leveraging intentionality, relating climate issues to the emotional concerns for the homelands and beyond, or building spaces and places specifically catered towards fostering Asian, climate justice communities.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, we explored multiple community organizations in Canada and the United States and conducted autoethnographies reflecting on our past experiences and conversations to identify barriers the Asian diaspora living in Metro Vancouver experienced that limit their engagement or participation in climate justice. The findings state that there are no organizations in Metro Vancouver specifically addressing climate justice for the Asian diaspora, and very few are serving BIPOC youth. Although some organizations in Metro Vancouver are serving the Asian diaspora with programs related to social change, racial equity, cultural heritage, and food security, they do not explicitly mention climate justice. This highlights a significant structural gap for the Asian diaspora in Metro Vancouver to access resources and support for climate justice engagement. Using models and resources from existing Asian climate justice organizations in the United States, like the Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)'s approach of using cultural connections to engage the Asian diaspora communities since 1993 demonstrates the success and staying power an Asian climate organization can have, as long as opportunities are accessible and created for the Asian diaspora. Furthermore, community organizations and local and provincial governments can support the Asian diaspora's engagement in climate justice by addressing the procedural and emotional barriers highlighted in this report. Specifically, to connect members of the East Asian diaspora, like ourselves and our families, in climate justice, creating spaces and resources that establish a personal connection for the East Asian diaspora community members, such as linking climate issues with emotional ties to homelands, and developing resources with generational differences and various language and digital proficiencies in mind are opportunities to engage and learn with the East Asian diaspora. Specific inspiration can be drawn from APEN's approach to collaborative learning and teaching between facilitators and members, as mentioned in the case study creating an accessible community-run space for Asian elders to bring their lived experiences and knowledge of climate from Asia and their community to the table (APEN, n.d.b)

Overall, this study has specifically focused on how to break the barriers and identify existing opportunities or considerations for future climate organizing that directly support the Asian diaspora. However, we emphasize that more research needs to be done in the field of Asian diaspora and climate justice to encourage a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to climate justice, particularly for underrepresented communities such as the Asian diaspora. This could involve further exploration of the specific community needs and experiences of different Asian subgroups and the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and Indigenous sovereignty related to climate justice issues. The researchers of this report compel and encourage those within the Asian diaspora to engage and explore climate justice in their own communities. Moreover demonstrated through the critical literature review, there are future opportunities to advance research in the area of climate justice for East Asian, South-East Asian, South Asian, West and Central Asian or Middle Eastern, and community-accepted and self-identified Asian diaspora. Lastly, ongoing collaboration and dialogue between community organizations, local and provincial governments, and academic institutions can help to identify and address more procedural and emotional barriers that prevent meaningful engagement of the Asian diaspora in climate justice efforts.

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Appendix A

Table 3: Critical Literature Review of Existing Asian Diaspora or BIPOC Specific Climate Justice Organizations and Key Programming

Organization/Location	Description of Organizations	Key Programming
British Columbia		
<p>Hua Foundation (Metro Vancouver)</p>	<p>Located on x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaʔl (Tsleil-Waututh) nations territories, their work focuses at the intersections of cultural heritage and social change(hua foundation, 2020). More specifically, they identified race& equity, Vancouver Chinatown, knowledge mobilization, food systems, and supporting new initiatives as their areas of action (hua foundation, 2020).</p> <p>They function as a non-profit organization that serves youth and youth-led organizations to conduct community-based research, build skills and take actions for stronger community resilience (hua foundation, 2020).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Space for Asian Diaspora: Through their workshops “Loss in Translation”, “race and food series”, “race and equity” they created ways for Asian youth to connect with one another and process their emotions and relationships to systems of oppression. Their “Asian Community Convener Project” accesses what anti-racism work was being done by Asian community organizations across British Columbia. - Knowledge Mobilization: Resource HUB for accessing culturally relevant foods through their “Seasonal Choi Guide”, “Chinatown food guides”, “Grocery Delivery Program”, and “Vancouver Chinatown Food Security Report” and more. They create resources for accessing local and sustainable food and from Chinatown businesses. - Language Accesibility: During COVID-19 their “C19 response coalition” developed resources for help community access factual translated information in Chinese (simplified), Chinese (traditional), Vietnamese, and Tagalog. - Political Engagement and policy analysis: Offered feedback to Vancouver’s Climate Emergency Action Plan and equity working group, and other MetroVancouver networks.
<p>Yarrow Intergenerational Justice Society 世代同行會 (Metro Vancouver)</p>	<p>In Chinatown, the Downtown Eastside and Strathcona area on x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaʔl (Tsleil-Waututh) nations territories, the organization serves low-income immigrant seniors and youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food access: Their “Nourishing Hearts Grocery Program” provides fresh, culturally appropriate, and subsidized (free) groceries to seniors living in the DTES and Chinatown. - Language and livelihood support: conducted COVID-19 senior support with translation, supports residents of DTES, strathcona and Chinatown in meeting

	<p>through an intergenerational lens to address oppression and violence their communities face. They help Chinese and other seniors living in a lower income neighbourhood to access good food, translation and interpretation support, and community.</p>	<p>housing, health and income basic needs through medical accompaniment and language-access organizing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intergenerational connection: Through zine, photography, story, and community arts programs, the organization reduces isolation and builds stronger community ties.
<p>Climate Recentered (Surrey)</p>	<p>Youth, Asian, and femme-led climate justice organization from Surrey, BC on Kwantlen, Katzie, and Semiahmoo nations. The organization aims to provide a space for BIPOC youth to learn and mobilize for climate justice, organize, and build community.</p> <p>Founded by Dana Cachero, Arshia Uppal, Zoha Faisal and Naisha Khan.</p> <p>Structured out of solid-state community industries which helps racialized people build a solidarity economy in Surrey. Not structured as a charity model. Empower cohorts with mentorship, community partners, training and resources to launch their own co-operatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Space for Asian and racialized youth - Education: hold workshops on climate grief, climate justice and more tailored to racialized youth. - Reshaping narratives: shift focus from Whiteness and White supremacy in environmental and climate movement to racialized youth experiences. Their focus is on utilizing joy and empowerment rather than shame and guilt. - Community care: center on mutual aid and community ties and well-ness.
<p>Canada</p>		
<p>Chinatown Working Group (Montreal) - defunct and ceased operations as of September 29, 2022</p>	<p>Now defunct organization out of Montreal, Quebec Work aims to build a community amongst Asian elders in Montreal's Chinatown and advocate for the historical designation and preservation of Chinatown.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procedural justice: Language barriers may have prevented certain Montréalers from participating in OCPM consultation process → written submissions (and the provided template) were to only be accepted in English or French - Environmental racism/justice: Montreal's Chinatown is located in Downtown

	<p>Wrote a statement to Montreal’s OCPM (local municipal government) 1) advocating for the historical designation of multiple areas within Montreal’s Chinatown 2) advocating for civic involvement of Chinatown’s elder population in density and high rise proposals 3) opposing proposed density and high rise redevelopment.</p>	<p>surrounded by busy roads and highways. Most of the residents of this area are economically vulnerable and elderly, but they face the most harmful climate impacts. Specifically, urban heat island and poor air quality exacerbated by excessive tourism, construction sites nearby, and pollution worsens their health, well-being, and safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Chinatown landscape is dramatically changing in a way that is not representative of the historical value and community that live in the neighbourhood. In Chinatown, land has been bought by big developers, and now there are more than 50 luxury hotels located within a one-kilometre radius. It is important to note that Chinatown residents were never consulted about these developments and changes immediately taking place within their neighbourhood.
<p>Green Chinatown Montreal</p>	<p>Green Chinatown Montreal’s hosts events to emphasize that community green spaces can foster intercultural and intergenerational knowledge sharing from elders, many of whom were formerly farmers.</p> <p>Wrote a letter to Montreal’s OCPM (local municipal government) opposing the city’s proposed increased high-rise density citing negative consequences of less sunlight for community gardens in the urban core</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using lived understandings to inform what climate justice looks like in relation to the people in the community, their physical space, and what impacts their physical space environmentally as a result of urban surroundings
<p>USA</p>		
<p>Chicago Asian Americans for Environmental Justice (CAAEJ)</p>	<p>Chicago, Illinois based organization founded in 2019 by community organizers Kelly Chen and Andrea Chu</p> <p>Informed by the relevance of home gardening and lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main workshop led multiple times a year by Chicago community organizer Andrea Chu: “Asian Americans and Environmental Justice.” Other workshops include: Climate Finance, Urban Flooding in Chicagoland, Petro Chemicals, Sustainable Food Systems and Asian

	<p>contamination in soil for low-income, non-English speaking communities, the group has canvassed and hosted community events to provide soil testing information in multiple languages</p>	<p>Americans, Xenophobia of Asian Carp → As per instagram (@/chicagoaej)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From my time researching in this area thus far Andrea Chu’s “Asian Americans and Environmental Justice” is the first workshop of its kind that sits at this intersection of diaspora and climate justice. This workshop is regularly and repeatedly hosted as per their Instagram - Finding a very specific, relevant, and community-identified climate justice need that disproportionately impacts East Asian residents in Chicago’s Chinatown that was not being addressed by governmental or other environmental groups - Offering the soil testing resources in multiple languages, giving away plants as rewards to attend soil testing (which is relevant as a promotional tactic targeting the interest of avid home gardeners) - Generally, using lived understandings combined with community identified need to build programming and resources that meets the target audience linguistically, culturally, and informationally
<p>Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) (California)</p> <p>From 2022 Impact report</p>	<p>APEN is an environmental justice organization who has continuously worked with California’s Asian low-income, immigrant, migrant, and refugee communities since 1993.</p> <p>This organization works in three different regions of California. Specifically, APEN’s work focuses on Laotian refugee communities in Richmond, CA and the Chinese immigrant community in Oakland, CA (Downtown Oakland and Oakland Chinatown). They are expanding a new base in Los Angeles, CA, to work with more Asian communities there.</p> <p>The mission of APEN is to bring together these Asian communities to advance solutions to critical issues they</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - APEN Academy 301 (Oakland): “Political education academy that trains members to organize their communities for change” - Published “<u>Resilience Before Diaster</u>” in 2020, reasearch focused on California’s need for climate resiliency hubs, run on community-owned clean energy and providing support during climate-related emergencies, such as wildfires, extreme heat, and power outages. It is necessary to advance climate adaptation and resilience plans to create community-driven social infrastructures that support a wider audience. - Advocated to increase federal budget investments into Lincoln Recreation Centre in Oakland Chinatown - Political mobilization: Calling on state politicians to take action against proposed oil, gas, and coal projects, look towards a just transition, and refuse donations from emission contributing corporations. Educating and advocating for stronger voter registration amongst Asian diaspora.

	are facing through developing leadership and making marginalized voices heard to make communities healthier, livable, and self-sufficient with enough resources to support everyone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshops: There is sparse information about what APEN’s workshops entail, but through promotional video footage non-English speakers listened to workshops through translation headsets along with guidance from multilingual community organizers
<p>Grassroots Asians Rising (California)</p> <p>From Grassroots Asians Rising Website (n.d.)</p>	Network of many grassroots Asian Diaspora organizations (not specifically climate-related) founded in 2004. Focused on providing a base for working class, Asian American led grassroots organizations to organize in their communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2016, developed a free “Asian American Racial Justice” toolkit alongside 15 organizations highlighting anti-racist and community-informed organizing - Highlights the need for community and connectivity of organizations serving the Asian Diaspora, as there are many smaller, on the ground organizations but it is challenging to access them (at least from a researchers/internet search perspective)
<p>Asian Americans United (AAU) (Philadelphia)</p> <p>From AA United Website (n.d.)</p>	<p>Existing since 1985, the AAU organization has worked with people of Asian ancestry in Philadelphia to build communities and unite to challenge oppression.</p> <p>This organization has a specific focus on youth so young Asian Americans in Philadelphia are supported to exercise their voice, participate in active struggles for justice, and become individually, socially, and politically aware. Through their work, AAU wants to create a generation of leaders who fight for Asian communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inch-by-Inch Community Garden: There are hardly any green spaces in Philadelphia's Chinatown, with the most impervious surfaces of any Philadelphia’s neighbourhoods. AAU worked with students, children, and youth to convert a vacant lot next to a school and remediated the site by building raised garden community gardens planting flowers and vegetables, creating bird and butterfly habitats, and adding benches or shared spaces for reflection or social cohesion. These efforts create a physically, culturally, and spiritually healthy community for Asian Americans, as all Asian cultures have traditions of growing and strong ties to the land. - Chinatown Vote: This project began in 2014 and AAU trained youth and adult volunteers to engage with non-English speaking communities to complete new voter registration. They host free legal clinics within communities to provide pathways to citizenship with the goal of increasing civic engagement - No Arena in Chinatown: Currently, Philadelphia’s Chinatown is facing a threat from a billionaire developer saying they want to build an arena one block away from Chinatown. However, AAU is

		<p>fighting against this idea because Chinatown will lose its treasured authenticity and cultural significance of the neighbourhood. This cultural neighbourhood has already stopped a casino from developing in 2008, and are confident that they can prevent the development of an arena as well. There are no details on what actions they will take other than signing a petition linked on AAU’s website.</p>
<p>Laal NYC</p>	<p>Founded by Sanjana Khan and Ayesha Akhtar in 2018, Laal is a Bengali newcomers and womxn-focused organization in the Bronx, New York. They offer multi-level, virtual English language learning courses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A key project is the Laal Baghaan community garden which provided opportunities for community building and knowledge sharing as Laal’s study found that 65% of womxn gardened in Bengali and as climate refugees had a wealth of “Indigenous agrarian knowledge” providing further connection to home (pg. 13). - Under the stewardship of NYU Permaculture and Environmental Science Master’s Student Shahla Begum, participants have also attended “field trips to local nature conservatorships and learned about climate justice issues in the Bronx” (pg. 13). - Annual organization report is published in English and Bengali - Awareness of target audience’s needs and preferred way to access information/resources (Whatsapp, on a mobile device rather than a computer which some folks did not have access to) - Integration of cultural knowledge brought from homelands in relation to climate justice topics of food security, accessible green spaces, Indigenous knowledge - Inspired by the Black civil rights movement and community organization, with the vision of “literacy means liberation” for Bengali womxn in the Bronx

Appendix B

Table 4: Key organizations with refined information, including transferability points to Metro Vancouver including funding, logistical, and structural information

Organization/Location/Key facts	Funding/ logistics/ structure	Transferability to Metro Vancouver
<p>Hua Foundation</p> <p>Their programming focuses at the intersections of cultural heritage, racial equity, food security, and social change in Vancouver Chinatown and beyond.</p> <p>Officially launching in 2014, they function as a non-profit organization that serves Asian youth and youth-led organizations to conduct community-based research, build skills and take actions for stronger community resilience (hua foundation, 2020).</p>	<p>Hua foundation’s core team is comprised of a small group of 3 staff, a board of directors, and others working on their ‘special projects” (hua foundation, 2020).</p> <p>They mention the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Foundation, Vancity, Genius, and Government of Canada as their community partners. The organization relies on grants for a variety of their programs such as in their “Asian Community Convener Project” where they mention Resilience BC and Vancouver Foundation as the funders (hua foundation, 2020).</p>	<p>Community Space for Asian Diaspora: Many of their workshops and research created and highlighted ways for Asian youth to connect with one another and process their emotions and relationships to systems of oppression. This approach could be intentionally applied to a more explicit climate justice and climate emotions framework.</p> <p>Knowledge Mobilization: They act as a resource HUB for accessing culturally relevant foods through their various food guides, “Vancouver Chinatown food security report” and more. They create resources for accessing local and sustainable food and from Chinatown businesses. This approach is critical for sharing information in the Metro Vancouver region in consultation with organizations serving Asian Diaspora in their respective municipalities.</p> <p>Language Access and political engagement: They helped Chinese, Vietnamese and Filipinx community members access accurate information about COVID-19. They also partnered with other organizations to mobilize Asian Diaspora to vote in past campaigns and offered feedback to Vancouver’s Climate Emergency Action plan and equity group. Other cities could also consult with organizations like Hua Foundation to ensure an equity lens is included in their climate plans and on an ongoing basis.</p>
<p>Yarrow Intergenerational Justice Society 世代同行會 Founded by Chanel Ly in 2015</p>	<p>Yarrow’s team is comprised of an operations manager, food programs coordinator, Chinese</p>	<p>Food security: Their “Nourishing Hearts Grocery Program” provides fresh, culturally appropriate, and subsidized (free)</p>

<p>with the Downtown Eastside SRO Collaborative and Atira Development Society.</p> <p>The organization serves low-income immigrant seniors and youth in Vancouver Chinatown, the Downtown East side and Strathcona area through an intergenerational lens. They address oppression and violence their communities face and help Chinese and other seniors to access good food, translation and interpretation support, and community.</p>	<p>senior HUB coordinators, a youth board, and their program volunteers.</p> <p>The funders listed on their website are BC Artscape, the Province of British Columbia, the BC Ministry of Health, the City of Vancouver, Disability Alliance BC, DTES Response, The Federation of Community Social Services of BC, Mazon Canada, Network of Inner City Community Services Society (NICCSS), SUCCESS, Tiny Foundation, Unity Asian Employee Resource Group (ERG), the University of British Columbia, Vancouver Coastal Health, WorkBC, 221A, and our community of donors.</p>	<p>groceries to seniors living in the DTES and Chinatown.</p> <p>Language Access and livelihood support: conducted COVID-19 senior support with translation, supports residents of DTES, strathcona and Chinatown in meeting housing, health and income basic needs through medical accompaniment and language-access organizing. Programming could be created in connection to climate justice and knowledge translation for Asian seniors and youth.</p> <p>Intergenerational connection: Through zine, photography, story, and community arts programs, the organization reduces isolation and builds stronger community ties. These ties can act to strengthen mutual aid during extreme weather events caused by climate change.</p>
<p>Climate Recentered</p> <p>A South-East and South Asian youth and femme-led climate justice organization from Surrey, BC. The organization aims to provide a space for BIPOC youth to learn, mobilize, and organize for climate justice through mutual aid and community connection initiatives.</p> <p>Founded by Dana Cachero, Arshia Uppal, Zoha Faisal and Naisha Khan.</p>	<p>Climate Re-centered is a co-operative funded by SolidState Community Industries.</p> <p>They aim to build worker co-operatives and a “solidarity economy” (cite).</p> <p>Their principles are mutuality, reciprocity and democracy.</p>	<p>Education: Space for Asian and racialized youth to hold workshops on climate grief, climate justice and more tailored to racialized youth. Physical and emotional places for Asian youth to process their climate anxiety and ecological grief are helpful for action.</p> <p>Reshaping narratives: shift focus from Whiteness and White supremacy in environmental and climate movement to racialized youth experiences. Their focus is on utilizing joy and empowerment rather than shame and guilt.</p> <p>Community care: center on mutual aid and community ties and well-ness. This focus on care is important in climate organizing groups across Metro Vancouver and beyond.</p> <p>The structure of creating climate organizations from co-ops can support grassroots organizations and movements through funding and to create lasting campaigns. It can alleviate stress from Asian Diaspora when there is pre-existing</p>

		structure and aid them in focusing on advancing their ideas or campaigns.
<p>Chinatown Working Group (CWG) - defunct and ceased operations as of September 29, 2022.</p> <p>This organization was focused on building community and political mobilization amongst Asian elders and preserving historical sights in Montreal’s Chinatown.</p>	<p>No information about funding available online. Volunteer-run organization. Organizers and volunteers canvassed and wrote open letters to the municipal government in opposition of proposed high rise expansion and in advocacy for historical designation.</p> <p>After successfully achieving historical designation of more areas of Chinatown, CWG shut down. Their organization has evolved into community board called “Chinatown Roundtable”, that aims to encourage the involvement of community members into municipal decision making.</p>	<p>Epistemic and Procedural Injustice: When opposing a proposed high rise tower expansion and advocating for Motreal Chinatown’s historical designation, Chinatown Working Group hosted a community municipal government hearing in Chinatown. The meeting had high turnout, with many Asian elders in attendance. Despite this project and eventual success in gaining historical designation, Montreal’s municipal government OCPM did not hire interpreters, highlighting “inaccessibility of public hearings to members of the Chinese community, notably seniors who do not speak English or French.” (Zhang and Lalonde, 2022). This is an example of procedural injustice,</p> <p>Intentional Community Engagement This work demonstrates the necessity for local governments to organize intentionally, with awareness of community needs and the burden that epistemic, procedural, and linguistic barriers put on volunteer run organizations who serve the community.</p>
<p>Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)</p>	<p>APEN is an environmental justice organization who has continuously worked with California’s Asian low-income, immigrant, migrant, and refugee communities since 1993.</p>	<p>Community Care and Climate Resiliency: In September 2020, APEN released a “Resilience to Climate Disaster” report that provides a policy framework for community resilience by creating models for Resilience Hubs and in-home resilience for the residents of California, US. This report is particularly transferable to Metro Vancouver and the greater BC province as a whole because the climate disasters mentioned include wildfires, extreme heat, and power outages, which are all climate change-related events that have negatively impacted the health, safety, and well-being of Metro Vancouver residents (City of Vancouver, 2022).</p> <p>The report provides recommendations and</p>

		<p>initial steps to build community resilience and emergency preparedness in California and emphasizes the need for the state/government to protect and invest in easily accessible resources for vulnerable communities, particularly working-class communities of colour who are disproportionately affected by systemic racism, neighbourhoods facing economic disinvestment, the elderly, and medically-vulnerable populations.</p>
<p>Chicago Asian Americans for Environmental Justice (CAAEJ)</p> <p>Chicago, Illinois based organization founded in 2019 by community organizers Kelly Chen and Andrea Chu. Serves the Asian diaspora and elders in Chicago’s Chinatown.</p>	<p>There is no publicly available information about CAAEJ’s funding structure. Previously, CAAEJ has fundraised to support their lead in soil testing program (Wu, 2020).</p> <p>CAAEJ is run by a board of directors and has previously offered paid summer internship programs for outreach.</p> <p>CAAEJ hosts monthly general meetings, each featuring a different climate justice topic. Ongoing works include the free soil testing program, including canvassing, outreach, and education, as well as workshops on the intersection of Asians and environmental justice.</p>	<p>Education: In terms of specific workshops and resources to situate Asian diasporic experiences within climate justice, CAAEJ and the work of Andrea Chu is potentially the sole programming of its kind. CAAEJ’s work in Chicago is inspired by the lack of Asian recognition in white-dominated climate movements, and gaps in understanding of how environmental pollutants disproportionately impact Chinatown and Asian communities (Stovicek, 2019). This closely mirrors the Metro Vancouver’s community identified barrier of a lack of translated and culturally informed resources on climate related topics.</p> <p>Intentional Community Engagement: Alike Bao Ve and C19 Coalition in Vancouver, CAAEJ has developed infographics and plain language information about the risk of lead contamination in multiple Asian languages. Within CAAEJ’s soil testing program, they used plant giveaways as an incentive for more home gardeners to get their soil tested.. The strategy of using free plants as a familiar access point to interacting with understanding environmental pollution could be conceptually applied to our study population. For example, a potential barrier detailed in section 2.3 is risk of disinformation due to unmoderated platforms more likely used by the Asian diaspora. Although impossible to fully mitigate fake climate information, accessing populations on a familiar</p>

		platform, directly engaging with community members while using culturally relevant examples of climate justice that relate to topics they care about, could create an access point.
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Appendix C

Lynne Kim:

My passion for the environment began at the age of 16, after listening to Leonardo DiCaprio’s winning speech for his first Oscar in 2016. It was obviously a life-changing moment for DiCaprio, but little did I know that moment would also change the trajectory of my life as well. I imagined how long he had waited to win an Oscar, and most acceptance speeches are about thanking the directors and producers, family, and friends, but not this speech. I was inspired and moved by how he used his shining moment to give a heartfelt speech about the urgency of climate change. I thought, “Climate change must be really important if his entire speech is about this topic,” and then I began to watch DiCaprio’s documentary *Before the Flood*, and this documentary about the disruptive changes that are occurring around the world because of climate change fuelled a passion in me to help the planet. This passion continued for the next year, and when it came time to apply for university after high school, I knew that I wanted to study the environment and climate change to learn what can I do about the devastating state of the world, so I applied for the Urban Forestry program at UBC and started attending in 2018.

Throughout my time studying urban forestry, the first two years of my degree, I was quite depressed. In every class I took, I learned about climate change and the consequences both nature and humans are facing: our forests are dying, negatively impacting our health, climate change is increasing the frequency of natural disasters harming millions of people, sea-level rise and ocean acidification are eroding coastal habitats, coral bleaching is a pressing issue, human activity is fragmenting forests reducing biodiversity, clear-cutting in rainforests for palm oil, and the list is endless. I grew quite frustrated and wanted to do something – anything– to improve the state of the earth, but I felt so helpless as an individual. Companies with economic power are contributing the most pollution, but it is not like I could stop anything from happening. I felt useless, and this stopped me from deeply caring about the environment for a period of time because the more I cared, the more depressed I would get. Then, COVID-19 hit and social injustices were spotlighted around the globe with the Black Lives Matter movement and Anti-Asian hate crimes. The same feeling of helplessness arose when there were endless videos of people experiencing hateful actions and language in the midst of a global pandemic. I grew emotionally weak and frail, endlessly “doom scrolling” while watching and listening to upsetting news stories on social media. During this time, I had explicit conversations with my mom about systemic racism and white supremacy that are causing injustices for all marginalized communities. I talked about my experience growing up Korean-Canadian in a culture and society that celebrates Whiteness, along with the micro-aggressions I faced in my life. This was the first time I openly discussed my hardships and struggles of growing up Asian from a first-generation immigrant family. I have struggled to talk about this with my mom because I know my family's sacrifice to immigrate to a foreign country in search of a better life. It is a true

privilege and luxury to search for fulfillment, meaning, and purpose when my parents were tasked with the job of survival, especially in their early years in Canada.

Fast forwarding to April 2022, after one year of completely online schooling with endless Zoom lectures and recorded videos in 2020-2021, and one year of “on and off” in-person and online schooling in 2021-2022, meeting different classmates and connecting with professors that value like-minded things as me, fuelled my desire for me to go out and do something with my physical body. I wanted to find a summer job where I could gain a sense that I am doing something meaningful with my life to either connect or help other people suffering from climate anxiety and worries about our collective future. I started working at a non-profit, non-governmental organization, called UBC Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning (CALP) where I participated in multiple community engagement events throughout the summer of 2022 that helped residents create climate action plans to build more climate resiliency in their own neighbourhoods. I listened to people’s concerns about the lack of shade trees, unused grassy boulevards, lack of biodiversity, and limited access to nature at these engagement workshops, and this made me realize how there is so much more we can do to fight the climate crisis, and knowing everyone has similar values of nature and the desire to live more sustainably and ethically inspired me to do more of the same. Now, one year has passed, and it is April 2023 when I am writing this story, and I am still collaborating with like-minded individuals who are passionate about climate change and environmental justice and are actively working to do their part against the climate flight.

Throughout my story, you may have noticed that my participation and engagement with climate justice have been through my intrapersonal, academic, or work community. However, I have not mentioned climate justice and my family yet, and that is largely due to my deeper connection to climate justice through my external social environment rather than at home. I lived with my parents, who immigrated to Canada from South Korea in 1997, and with my dad always travelling to support his business, I primarily lived with my mom, who nurtured and took care of me to this day. Since she did not work and was a stay-at-home mom caring for the family, she never took the time to learn English and is not fluent or comfortable speaking English. She has always had linguistical support from my cousins, siblings who lived nearby, and myself, who speak fluent English; thus, I have been a “translator kid” since I can remember. Regardless, before I mentioned the DiCaprio documentary in 2016, my family never specifically engaged in or was adequately aware of climate change. There were so many facts and new information I was learning about climate change that I wanted to share with my family, but being born and raised in a dominant English-speaking community, my Korean abilities were not competent to speak about deep political, economic, social, and environmental topics about climate change and its utmost importance. Language has always been the most significant barrier to connecting with my parents, especially my mom, about matters that are important to me, including climate change. I did not know how to translate words, or how to express my emotions of sadness, frustration, and anger, and without Korean subtitles to watch documentaries or videos together, I could not communicate with my parents about climate change. Overall, I was unsuccessful in communicating the message of climate change and explaining conceptual ideas of how social facts, such as race and socioeconomic status, all influence people’s experience of nature and the climate change impacts they experience. It also does not help that Korean culture and society did not view climate change as seriously of a threat as the information I was learning. A lot of Korea’s primary focus (to this day) is largely on economic prosperity and from some of the videos I watched in Korean, it sounded like climate change was working directly against economic

growth and this was a misinformation topic I wanted to talk to my parents about, but the language barrier did not help me. This is not to say that I grew up ignorant of “doing good things for the environment.” There were many sustainable practices we did at home, such as not wasting food, recycling paper and empty containers, composting, or reusing plastic bags and Tupperware containers, but these actions were never done with the intention of taking care of our planet; this was a cultural norm in my neighbourhood in North Vancouver, and my parents were encouraged to take these individual sustainable actions in Korea as well. However, it has not been until recently that my parents and many of my family members in Korea started to care more for the environment; however, they still use nature with more of a utilitarian purpose - to sequester carbon and help improve air quality and for shade, but the lack of a holistic connection to nature is still evident in many environmental plans today.

In more recent years, there have been more climate disasters, such as flooding, typhoons, droughts, high concentration of fine dust particles in the air causing poor air quality, and snowstorms I heard about from my relatives living in Korea. As a person of the Asian diaspora, geographically living separate from Korea, but also having weak connections to my relatives who do reside there (mostly due to the geographical and language barrier), it is difficult to imagine sometimes how there can be these devastating climate disasters when the weather in Vancouver (at the same time) is the complete opposite. For example, in August 2022, there was a terrible flooding event from too much rainfall where streets were completely flooded, cars were floating down the street, water was seeping into the walls of people’s apartments, and underground subway stations were completely submerged in water. When my mom heard the news, she called her siblings and asked if everyone was safe, but I felt this huge disconnect. How can this be their reality when Vancouver was dealing with drought and wildfires? However, it is also alarming to think how both of my homes and families in Vancouver and Korea are affected by climate change and will experience continuous sea level rise and increasing rainfall. With that understanding, once again, I felt helpless that could not help my relatives or do anything to support them through this time.

Now, it is safe to say that climate change is on the minds of my relatives in Korea and my family in Canada. People understand the importance of having a healthy climate and know that these climate disasters and the increased frequency of weather events are not coincidental. I have noticed that speaking to my family about conceptual ideas of climate change and climate justice in the past was not beneficial in expanding their knowledge and understanding of this subject. Only through their direct experience of extreme climate events like wildfire smoke in Vancouver or flooding in Korea did they become more receptive to learning about what they can do to help the environment. Before then, my family members did not fully comprehend the severity of climate change.

As the years passed, my Korean has significantly improved, and my mom and I occasionally talk about the climate justice concepts I am learning at school and engage in talks about the importance of healthy urban forests and how having access to and abundance of nature is important for people’s health and well-being. When I talk about the inequities between canopy coverage in different neighbourhoods, such as Kitsilano and Chinatown, my mom takes the time to listen and understand how there are disproportionate effects on residents living in different areas.

Overall, over the years, my mom and family in Korea have been more open to learning about climate change and are often left wondering what they can do to gain more support from the municipality or

province, and what to do if there are future climate events. This is a question that I also wonder because, as a resident of Vancouver and a person of the Asian diaspora, I am not sure what to do to support either side of my family. I can translate documents for my family here, but there is little municipal support or information on how we can be prepared for climate events and the negative impacts of climate change. Additionally, my disconnect with my Korean culture and knowledge does not help me support my relatives in Korea. Language and culture have always acted as barriers for me to support and directly help my family members and will continue to be a challenge.

Naomi Leung:

When I entered climate justice organizing spaces in 2020, it was virtually over Zoom. I recall joining my first Zoom meeting nervously while noticing the facilitator was a White girl around my age. The space was friendly but certainly felt unfamiliar, with few other visibly non-White organizers. The first onboarding meetings were intensive and described how we as youth had agency and an ability to create change in the present through youth power. I hadn't had access to movement or systems thinking knowledge, so these concepts were radical and powerful. At this first onboarding training, the youth facilitators lead the training in a highly organized way. I felt slightly overwhelmed, but also extremely energized and committed to what they described. A key aspect of what they described was how climate justice and racial justice were connected. In all honestly, prior to 2020 and these meetings I had no idea what climate justice was. I had not heard of it, and rather only knew about sustainability, zero-waste, recycling and about other various individual actions. Learning about collective power from other students, and about how these other youth around my age at the time (16-19 years old) organized actions with thousands of people attending was deeply inspiring and I wanted to be a part of it. When I began, I was deeply eager to prove myself as someone who was an "overachiever" at school, I wanted to contribute something even though I had an unshakable imposter syndrome towards my belonging. At the time, I rarely consumed environmental media created by non-White people, and I was really young and developing my own sense of self. Over the next few months, I learned how my lack of confidence and these feelings of un-belonging were due to systemic reasons other than my own shortcomings.

I felt included and understood when my friend Naisha, a Bengali organizer invited me to Sustainabiliteen's BIPOC caucus to discuss our experiences. When I was first invited, I wasn't sure if I qualified as a BIPOC because I am not Black or Indigenous. The group was comprised of mostly South East Asian, South Asian and East Asian people discussing tokenism, our place in the environmental movement, frustrations with White fragility, and our relationships to White supremacy. It was powerful to discuss these systems of power, and to feel like I could without making a White person uncomfortable. I felt as though Black, Indigenous, Asian, and racialized people in the climate justice movement often had to create space for themselves in climate spaces, because White people wouldn't make any for us. Or if they would, it was rare or done in a tokenizing and strange way. I think East Asian people with lighter skin tones specifically did really have privileges in the environmental movement when they assimilated to White ways of communicating or acting. Especially compared to visibly darker racialized peoples in Metro Vancouver who may be more tokenized since Vancouver does have quite a large Chinese and East Asian population.

I organized intensely around climate justice education, divestment from fossil fuel financing, and against the trans mountain pipeline from 2020-2021. After high school, I would come home and sit in on Zoom

meetings, webinars and trainings often skipping dinner with my family, on call with educators, union workers, or with other climate organizers. We discussed strategy, our vision, theory of changes, and ways to keep our hope alive and in action. I continued with this but felt burnt out until I really needed to slow down in 2022 for my own health and well-being. My friends taught me how organizing couldn't be my whole life, and that I needed other ways to rest and find joy too. Aside from Sustainabiliteens, a youth climate justice organization in MetroVancouver, I also organized with Climate Education Reform BC. With this campaign, we advocated for climate justice to be integrated across subjects comprehensively in the BC K-12 curriculum. We viewed climate justice education as an important step for engaging youth in hope through action. Though this organization, I was connected with Be the Change Earth Alliance, an NGO where I ended up working for two summers. We developed climate and environmental justice education workshops and programs for middle to high school aged youth and for educators. I felt deeply proud of myself at the time, but my worldview was changing quickly and this was overwhelming. I grew up in a conservative Christian family and school from my grade 5-12 years. At this time I was also surrounded by community which was often an echo chamber. A lot of the ideas and people I was exposed to in the environmental movement were queer, radically accepting, and pushed my own comfort and learning in ways that I am remarkably grateful for now. I learned about the connections between art and revolutionary movements and organizing, about the 3.5% population active for movements to get serious political change, and about emergent principles for change.

In the climate spaces I was in, it was rare to discuss how our own cultures could contribute to climate justice organizing or connected to climate justice values. I recall in the BIPOC caucus wishing how there could be funding to pay BIPOC people to share to other people (if they wished to) about non-White ways of understanding climate justice in connection to their cultural backgrounds. For some of my Asian friends, because Sustainabiliteens was not directly built for Asian people and racialized people, they got really tired of advocating for de-centering Whiteness. Eventually, it led them to initiate Climate Recentered based in colonially named "Surrey, BC" and focusing on the demographics of Surrey which is a South and South East Asian peoples.

A significant barrier is how there are few structural organizations intentionally making space for Asians and POC youth to start an sustain climate campaigns. If there was more funding, space and paid organizational capacity to do so, I think we would be a lot further in our campaigning in Metro Vancouver. I believe many racial justice organizations and most racialized people care about the environment and the earth, but are focused on surviving and other life-sustaining protective campaigns. I wish that more East Asians and people like me with privileges, financial security and more would conduct more radical climate justice organizing. I have seen many racialized Asian older people (millennials to young parents age) organize for climate justice and it re-energizes me. It seems like young people our age also energize older people, and I'm glad. I hope that they also take young people seriously, and not just as an "inspirational boost". I think most people also do not have access to knowledge about climate justice and about how to take action. Coupled with how the environmental movement often erases or tokenizes Indigenous voices and sidelines other POC, sustainability initiatives can feel like a privilege or "White issue" to take part in. These two reasons intersect for how Asian Diaspora feel a lack of belonging and space for them in the climate justice movement.

For me, climate and racial justice organizing could not be separated. If it was, I don't think it would be fighting for justice anymore. The more I organized and educated myself, the more I understood aspects of how my race, ethnicity, and decolonization needed to be centered in my climate justice advocacy— and this was really difficult. I think it would be easier to organize in the predominantly White environmental movement not addressing these key factors of race, ethnicity and decolonization (even though it would cause me and others harm), simply because of the way the movement functions now. The system, like in society seems to reward Whiteness and people that act and assimilate to White ways of doing things. I remember the significance of having older mentors (a year or so more experienced than me) who were East Asian. It felt like a relief and breath of fresh air to talk with them. I just felt more connected to them immediately because of how we had to navigate White supremacy in the climate movement in the same or similar ways. I was not raised explicitly discussing about climate change, environmentalism or climate justice. This is why for me, learning about the connections between climate change, colonialism and capitalism were so powerful. Through listening to Indigenous land defenders and climate activists, I came to understand how climate change is a symptom and result of larger systemic issues. However, throughout my childhood my mom has grown fruits and vegetables, brought me outside a lot and facilitated my relationship to the outdoors when I was younger. Unfortunately, my connection to the earth and environment was disconnected after many years in the colonial education system. It felt like the classrooms I was in did not prioritize and were not formatted for outdoor learning.

Furthermore, broadly, a concept in my family has been to “not waste”, and to reuse single-use items (plastics, containers, clothing, etc.). My family enjoys returning to Malaysia to see my relatives and for the good food. I recall traveling back to Malaysia and witnessing flash floods and intense humidity. Furthermore, how my family often described racism and ethnic inequalities in the country and the stigma with its discussion. I worry about people living in Malaysia who do not have the financial security to recover from flooding and other crises (ex: food insecurity and domestic violence, etc).

When I first began climate organizing, I felt this constant urgency and pit in my stomach. Understanding the urgency of the crisis, governmental inaction, and the trajectory we are on right now feels heartbreaking. At this time, I was in my grade 12 year under the pressure of university applications, thinking about my future and processing how I wanted to move in the world. Around this time, I helped organize and attend an action where we painted a mural and raised awareness about how Chubb, an insurance company, insured the trans mountain pipeline. Some of my friends and community members helped with the land acknowledgment, shared stories and sang songs at this rally. These anti-colonial practices really boosted morale and I felt the community at the time. We sat in a circle and shared stories about how we were connected in our fight against colonialism and for climate justice. This is when one of my friends from Tsleil-Waututh nation described how he noticed these patterns of White or non-Indigenous organizers entering the environmental movement, giving it their all for a year, and then burning out. He described how this could be unsustainable when people don't have other hobbies, passions and rest which give them life and care. This resonated with the young people I was with. Another Indigenous land defender described to me the importance of organizing around rest after describing how trauma and intense actions impacted them. I think its important to take lessons like these from racial justice organizers and Indigenous land defenders who themselves or their families have been fighting colonialism and racist institutions and people for generations.

It feels easy to spiral and to let myself get lost in climate anxiety. Or on the other hand, to disconnect and become avoidance because feeling these emotions are too much. I think I could benefit from a place to grieve more regularly for what we have lost, will lose and are trying to prevent from losing. Organizing with emotions is powerful. I believe emotions can drive real change forward and motivate people. But I think with the media and access people have today it feels easy to give into the hopelessness. Where I have been finding hope recently is in mutual aid and local initiatives which center normal people serving others. I have learned how necessary it is to learn how to build and practice joy, hope and positive emotions in order to make climate organizing sustainable and grounded in building a better future. Learning how to hold multiple emotions at once has been necessary for me. When recently discussing with my family how they feel about the climate crisis, I realize how they are worried but also ill-informed about how to engage in community-based solutions. There are not many Asian adults their age organizing in Metro Vancouver around climate justice, but if they could find community with others doing so, I think they would. My father was educated as a chemical engineer, understands how climate change works, and is up to date with regular news. Still, the social community organizing aspect of climate justice is not on his radar. I believe many other Asian adults are alike in his situation.

Jenica Pong:

In my experience as a member of the East Asian diaspora, I see reciprocity and learning from elders, sharing of food, and kindness shown through action. It's important to highlight that this is my perspective and experience, and not one that will ever be representative of all East Asian diaspora here. When discussing the term "culturally relevant", it's essential not to generalize, or frame Asian experiences as a monolith. Particularly, in creating spaces for the Asian diaspora to interact with climate justice and climate education, and especially utilizing what we may understand as cultural practices.

My family keeps all plastic and paper bags and rinses out pop cans fully before recycling (so the bugs don't crawl in the house, and so when we bring them to the depot they don't smell), my grandparents had compost in the garden since the house was bought in the 90s, the garden is abundant - with apple pears, persimmons, peas, and guas (瓜). These ways of simply doing were not radical acts of environmentalism, although possibly rooted in conservation and preventing waste. In fact, spending most of my life around my elders has reinforced the fact that small actions do matter as I grew up being taught to do things "the right way" which has now become a pillar in how I view intentional action. This is not to say it will be universal as a Chinese or East Asian diasporic experience, but exploring how intentionality and understanding potential applications of taking the time to tend to a garden or wash out your cans could be an integrative practice. Beyond these wonderful, nature-connecting acts of gardening and caring even about our waste, it could be interesting to explore how the mindset of intentionality, applying these "practices" when teaching climate justice, can be leveraged for resources and spaces for the East Asian diaspora. This is not to say it will resonate universally with the diaspora, but the now Oscar Award-winning film "Everything Everywhere All At Once" served as not only the first film I truly saw my own East Asian diasporic experience in but also a testament to how impactful making things that are weird and oddly specific to our personal experiences can be. A film that featured an everything bagel as its central metaphor still resonated in the mainstream, and in ways, I believe crafting spaces and resources to discuss climate justice with the East Asian diaspora that are very specific can lead to so much success. I believe there must be room, for an "Everything Everywhere All At Once", but for Asian folks to access climate action, education, joy, and get to use their civic rights, and not get left behind. Acknowledging the

emotional and logistical labour put on community organizations to meet needs and foster these communities, these spaces and resources simply don't exist. Even more, researching online to understand the municipal election space, climate change, or what anti-colonialism means on our land is challenging for me as someone privileged with English as my first language, a justice-oriented community of friends, and access to an abundance of education and digital literacy.

I feel for my family the ideals of collectivism are sometimes, not always, kept to the reaches of our inner community of extended family, friends, and neighbours. Family always comes first, and that is the strength and unending love I so greatly appreciate, that I sometimes feel ungrateful and guilty for investing so deeply in reading and caring about broader racial, equity, and climate justice.

I had always been interested in learning about climate change and the planet, as it was the subject I was most drawn to in elementary and middle school science. My conceptualization of climate was very basic; we needed to recycle cans, sort plastics, and turn off lights to "save the environment". Until high school, my main interactions with environment were sorting trash and recycling. My education and interaction with climate justice did not begin until late 2019 when I became engaged in the Fridays for a Future movement online and was exposed to environmental protests and friends I knew from other extracurriculars who began leading organizations and climate groups. I also began closely following the Sunrise Movement's just transition political mobilization campaigns. Energized and inspired by the incredible climate activists I had met and movements I had read and watched content about, I joined the newly formed Burnaby, New West and Tri-Cities regional branch of Sustainabiliteens right as the pandemic hit. Virtually organizing with ample time at home, I attended a multitude of climate justice workshops led by activists only a few years older than me on topics such as Indigenous sovereignty in the climate movement, situating climate science in a justice context, environmental policy, and intersectional approaches.

These workshops often stressed the importance of racial justice to the climate movement although I did not reflect on how my own culturally informed experiences impacted how I viewed climate justice. In the wake of the multitude of anti-Asian hate incidents during the pandemic in Metro Vancouver, I remember the feelings of heavy grief while I processed fear for my grandparents. This all felt separate from climate organizing, and there wasn't always space held within these meetings to discuss ongoing events. I think I struggled to reconcile the urgency I felt for the planet with the sadness I felt scrolling through news stories about Asian hate. As many friends as I had made in my time as a climate organizer, very few were Asian, and very few I felt I could connect to talk about the nuances of these feelings.

Further, while reflecting on cultural differences I remember a specific instance where my mom painted the picture that the crosswalk protest I helped organize outside of the MPs office against the Trans Mountain Pipeline like I would get arrested. My parents were by no means unsupportive, in fact they encouraged me to continue following my passions, but it certainly felt different than seeing many of my non-Asian organizer friend's parents attending our events. I realize now there's a gap in the normalcy of non-violent civic disobedience, informed by a multitude of things, whether the impacts of the survival mentality under immigration or Tiananmen Square occurring when my parents were my age now.

Reflecting on how lived experiences impact our own, our parents, and our elder's conceptualizations of climate justice, I have to remind myself of the grace I must give to myself and others as an East Asian diasporic person discovering my own identity and its place in our lived environment. It is not to say that older generations are incapable of growing and enriching their worldview and understanding of current justice issues. My parents are educated, aware, news consuming individuals, but during recent, pivotal cultural moments, the pandemic, the death of George Floyd, or when the bodies of 215 Indigenous children were found in Kamloops, BC, I had conversations with my parents that moved past the conceptualization of "injustice" and moved towards a broader understanding of the power imbalances, white supremacy, and identity. I'd raise how our own immigration stories and Chineseness both bound and disconnect us from the land, the environment, and climate justice itself. These were justice conversations we had never really had, whether it be me getting older or the context of the situations.

Having never worked together in person, our 2-hour long meeting on Friday, March 31st was filled with palpable energy, as we went on tangents relating our stories of diasporic and immigrant experiences to each other. Our GA, Manvi, noted that diaspora is an intersecting identity, and we further discussed that traditions and culture are so meshed that the cultural ideas from the "motherland" are sometimes inseparable from what we perceive or don't as "Canadian culture". I prompted the conversation about our own family's immigration stories and I realized I didn't know the exact reason for my family's immigration. As I shared, I felt as if I was pulling threads from my childhood, realizing potentially a deeper connection to the environment and climate than I had previously realized. I remembered off-hand my grandmother mentioning that my mother was often sick as a child and had a variety of ailments including asthma, which she blamed as a consequence of the pollution in Hong Kong. "Why would I want to go back? The air and the water is so clean in Vancouver," she said once after I asked about Hong Kong. Maybe that was part of the idealization of Canada, maybe there were factors of health and vitality, beyond the pursuit of opportunity and schooling. As a talkative and curious child, I knew I was the family historian, but I had never asked for the reasoning behind coming to Vancouver, likewise, I really wouldn't know how to approach talking about climate justice with my elders.

I don't have any recollection of my grandparents truly doing things for themselves. I am blessed with a true, all-giving generosity and palpable love for their children and grandchildren, whether in making our food, playing, teaching, having such deep patience, or keeping alive the tradition of red pocket money. They not only provided the foundation which has built doors to a bountiful education, but have provided me with the privilege of having time to conceptualize climate justice rather than just survive it, and in turn led me to the opportunity to conduct this research. Speculatively, approaching intergenerational and culturally nuanced discussions about climate justice, I think about how knowledge can be both a burden and lead to amazing enrichment. For me, the more my understanding of climate change evolved into a more nuanced understanding of climate justice that considered how disproportionately climate emergencies impact poorer countries and racialized people during high school, the more emotionally invested, passionate, and angry I became. How tiresome and anxiety-inducing truly learning, situating your identity and your own emotions into the context of climate change means. I feel for my elders, the burden of anxiety for future generations, that specific generation being me and all my cousins that are held so tightly by our elders. What it means to think about the rising sea level's effect on the only two coasts my elders have called home (those being Hong Kong and Vancouver). How the limited education they have received, and consistent loop of media in a world that demands nuanced media literacy, impacts

how they understand and read news about climate. How much they've sacrificed and struggled and how incessant their survival mindset was, how adding something new to discuss that could cause emotions, like climate change could feel like an additional unnecessary burden to face. To raise as well, that it is a right to have the tools to learn and build their own understandings in order to inform equal involvement. The nuances of climate justice as I conceptualize it require deep foundational knowledge that can take years to situate ourselves in. This is probably the biggest barrier in itself, let alone the lack of translated materials applicable to the so-called "Vancouver" context. We must view, especially our elders, as equally curious and able to learn and grow as us. We can't discredit and overgeneralize a whole group of people simply because work in providing spaces for conversation or creating learning materials has not been done yet. Further then, our elders and parents are just as complex and able to choose what they learn about.