



What is Community Resilience?

A community's resilience is simply its ability to overcome adversity. This can either mean recovering rapidly from the shock of a natural disaster, or working to solve grinding chronic problems such as unemployment or blighted neighborhoods. More formally, community resilience can be defined as

The ability to anticipate risk, limit impact, and bounce back rapidly through adaptation, evolution and growth in the face of turbulent change.

What is the Community Resilience System (CRS)?

The CRS brings together people, process, and technology to support communities in building their resilience and managing the risks they face.

- **People:** Community leaders who are committed to improving the resilience of their community by engaging the whole community for input and feedback in visioning, goal setting, action planning, implementation, and evaluation with support from CRS mentors and the larger community of CRS users.
- **Process:** A six-stage approach to assess and improve community resilience with guidance, examples, and tools provided at every step.
- **Technology:** Web-based software that guides and supports community leaders through the resilience-building process and simplifies analysis and reporting.

How can the CRS help my community?

- **Provides Real Benefits** – Evaluating community resilience and rewarding continual, incremental improvement leads communities to function better day to day and during a crisis. The CRS helps communities identify and take action on numerous social, economic, and environmental improvements that bolster resilience and helps them gain other tangible and intangible benefits.
- **Resonates with Diverse Audiences** – Individuals, households, and organizations of all kinds contribute to community resilience. The people who live, work, and play in a community can easily see how their concrete actions can boost their community's resilience. The CRS provides tools to help community leaders communicate with their community about resilience.
- **Catalyzes Leadership** – Resilience requires visionary, cross-sector leadership and networks of champions who are able to implement and manage efforts before, during, and after a crisis. The CRS helps communities bring forth and inspire leadership for resilience.
- **Is Flexible and Adaptable** – The CRS can be applied in communities of different sizes with diverse forms of government, demographics, geography, and cultural identity.
- **Captures Critical Information and Informs Analysis** – The CRS helps communities understand, optimize, and leverage existing assets and interdependencies (both local and regional) while identifying and mitigating vulnerabilities. It helps them recognize their uniqueness (e.g., sense of place, culture) and incorporate these intangible assets into their planning and implementation efforts.

- *Encourages a Long-term View* – The CRS prompts communities to develop a vision of a resilient future long before a crisis occurs. It helps them develop resilience goals and design actions to meet those goals, including the development of a comprehensive recovery plan.
- *Helps the community find the opportunity in crisis* – If disaster strikes a community, its devastation can also provide opportunities for positive transformation. The CRS helps community leaders identify these opportunities. Post-crisis, communities travel a path towards a “new” normal.

Who developed the Community Resilience System?

- **The CRS was developed by a national effort led by the Community and Regional Resilience Institute (CARRI).**
 - CARRI is focused on enhancing the resilience of communities and regions by combining research and practical experience to provide the tools communities need.
 - CARRI tasked leading researchers to integrate what is known about all aspects of community resilience.
 - CARRI worked with national stakeholders and partner communities for 3 years to learn about the resilience of communities and understand what communities want and need to become more resilient.
- **In 2010, CARRI launched a national, collaborative effort to develop the CRS.**
 - More than 150 people from across the country, each knowledgeable about key aspects of community resilience, worked together to develop the CRS.
 - Participants included elected and appointed local government officials and representatives of key government agencies; representatives of nongovernmental sectors such as private business, non-profit and community service organizations, and faith-based organizations; and prominent resilience researchers. In particular, special effort was made to incorporate input from industries and programs that might reward improvements to community resilience (e.g., banking, insurance, government grant makers).

Visit CARRI at www.resilientus.org.

