



Community Resilience System Results

The Community Resilience System (CRS) is a “Whole Community” approach that helps communities identify and implement actions that will increase their resilience and improve their day-to-day functionality. As a result of using the CRS:

- The community develops well-established, trusted community networks based on the full fabric of the community.
- Communication and action networks are proven through collaborative planning and continuous interaction before disasters occur.
- The community has a well-planned, rehearsed, trusted communications plan for getting information to all of its citizens based on the collaborative use of all resources available and not just government.
- The community has a well thought out plan for engaging all of its citizens in the resilience effort.
- The community has a better understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, and its interdependencies and vulnerabilities.
- The community has identified those assets critical to its vitality that are at risk, has identified its own resources that can be used for recovery, areas where there are gaps, and ways to fill those gaps from outside the community.
- The community as a whole will create and adopt a vision and develop concrete goals to achieve that vision.
- The community will develop and implement an action plan based on their vision of the future of their community. The plan will identify a series of actions that are specific, measurable and supportive of improving day-to-day community function. This “road map” will also include a broad-based recovery plan that the community can follow should a disaster occur.
- The community ensures there is an established organizational home for the community resilience program either through creation of a new organizational entity or by embedding it in an existing organization public or private.
- This organization is empowered by the community to maintain the resilience program over time and supervise the work of the implementation working groups. This action helps ensure that the program becomes embedded into the community’s ethic and lives beyond the energy of the initial organizers and supporters.
- The community is better able to survive and thrive after a disaster, i.e., becomes more resilient.

The Community Resilience System (CRS) is composed of six stages, that build on each other to help a community become more resilient. In each stage, the community is guided through a series of actions focused on the community itself. In that sense, the CRS is customized to the community.

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Stage 1 – Engage the Community at Large

Actions:

Community champions organize a Resilience Leadership Team.

The Resilience Leadership Team (RLT) develops a community engagement and awareness strategy.

The RLT defines the community's boundaries and its key connections both in the community and its region.

Stage 2 – Perform a Community Resilience Assessment

Actions:

The RLT constructs a profile of itself; its strengths and weaknesses and the characteristics that make it unique.

The RLT identifies the most significant threats the community faces, among natural disasters, economic crises, technological threats (e.g., oil spills), acts of terror, and pandemics.

The RLT analyzes how well the whole community is poised to withstand, respond to, and recover from its most significant threats. Significant gaps or shortfalls in both capabilities and resources are identified.

The RLT presents its analysis to the entire community to help drive development of a realistic vision and action plan.

Stage 3 – Develop a Shared Community Vision

Actions:

Under the leadership of the RLT, the community creates an encompassing vision for a post-disaster community or adapts its current community vision to address the gaps or shortfalls identified in the whole community analysis in the previous stage.

The Resilience Leadership Team uses the networks and communications plans created in Stage 1 to engage the entire community and gain its acceptance for the vision, and the goals to achieve that vision, as a basis for action planning.

Stage 4 – Action Planning

Actions:

The community led by the Resilience Leadership Team and supported by a wider base of involved individuals and organizations (public and private) develops a prioritized community action plan.

Using the networks and communications plans created in Stage 1, the community at large accepts the action plan as a basis for community preparation, response, long term recovery and, in the absence of disaster, community growth and evolution.

Stage 5 – Establish the Mechanism to Implement the Action Plan and Sustain the Resilience Program

Actions:

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The community formalizes and institutionalizes ownership for the community's resilience program.

The community launches the implementation working groups that will implement the action items within the action plan.

Stage 6 – Evaluate and Revise the Community's Resilience Program

Actions:

The community monitors and evaluates the progress of the working groups and the implementation of the plan's actions making adjustments as required.

The community conducts periodic tests of the effectiveness of the resilience program.

If there is a significant disruption or disaster, the community performs a post-crisis assessment of community resilience and adjusts the program as required.

How would a Community Resilience System community recover from a disaster?

A CRS community has assessed its vulnerabilities, catalogued its assets and determined which assets were most vulnerable, which could/should be restored first and identified the gaps for which outside resources would have to be requested well before the disaster. This has been done by all parts of the community -- individuals and families; local government; small and large employers, and other organizations.

A CRS community has a well planned and well-rehearsed communications plan for getting information to all of its citizens based on a collaborative use of all the resources available to the community rather than just government. The information provided by such a coordinated plan is useful, relevant and acted upon, because it is trusted.

A CRS community has community networks that are trusted because they include the full fabric of the community (government, private business, faith-based, associational). Those networks have been honed and matured through collaborative planning and continuous interactions before the catastrophic event. The community also has developed similar networks with other communities within its region. The time to meet your neighbor (individual or community) is not post-disaster.

A CRS community has a vision for its future and a plan to achieve that vision. The vision is accepted by all as a basis for action. Because time is critical post-event, this vision guides the thousands of individual decisions that have to be made at all levels so that the community rapidly recovers in a manner that supports achievement of their vision of the future.

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