



Aboriginal Disaster Resilience Planning Guide

Step Two: Resilience Assessment

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Published 2015.
Printed in Canada.

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Step Two Resilience Assessment - Introduction

The resilience assessment step involves a series of activities to evaluate the risks a community faces and strengths a community can draw on to decrease risk and build greater resilience.

Here is a summary of the activities for this Step:

Activity 1 – Developing a Risk Profile

The first activity is to identify what hazards pose the greatest threat or threats to your community. The Hazard Risk Profile that you develop will help focus some of the resilience assessment

Activity 2 – Gathering Information for Resilience

Once you have completed a Hazard Risk Profile you will gather the information required to assess your community's resilience to those hazards that pose the greatest risk

Activity 3 – Recording Information

The third activity is to summarize this information about the community using maps and templates.

Activity 4 – Assessing Resilience

The fourth activity is to use this information to assess resilience using the two parts of the Aboriginal Resilience Index (ARI) and the relevant sections of the Hazard Resilience Index (HRI). The ARI includes two categories for assessment: Community Resources and Disaster Management. The Hazard Resilience Index includes factors to evaluate your community's resilience to all of the hazards your community might face.

Activity 5 – Develop an Integrated Resilience Profile

Your assessment will result in the fifth and final activity of this step – the development of an Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile. This profile provides a picture of the community as it currently is in terms of its resilience – the areas of strength and the areas that need some improvement. This profile will be used to develop a plan for expanding the community's resilience by building on its strengths and reducing risks.

Activity 1: Developing a Risk Profile

To develop a risk profile you should work with the Hazard Risk Analysis (HRA) tool and identify which hazards pose the greatest threat for your community. From the results of this assessment you will produce a Hazard Risk Analysis Report that rates each hazard from “High Risk” to be a major threat, to those that just couldn’t happen at all in your community.

Some hazards will be obvious. For example, a town surrounded by forest lands would probably select “forest fire”, while a coastal community might select “tsunami”. However, the community may never have considered other risks, such as serious disease outbreaks either amongst humans or animals and how these might affect the community. For example, a serious and widespread disease outbreak (such as a pandemic flu) could have serious economic consequences because of the potential for preventing people from working and therefore disrupting workplaces, causing fear and stress, crippling critical services such hydro or food transportation. Other kinds of disasters in distant regions or centers could shut down major transportation and supply routes, or disrupt health care provision, or cause a mass exodus into rural areas. Considering not only local risks but risks that may have a local impact is, therefore, an important part of a risk assessment.

You may also want to identify which parts or zones of your community are most at risk for a specific hazard. For example, homes on a flood plain are more likely to be affected by flooding than those built further away or at a higher elevation. You may want to refer to your community map and when you have identified which areas are most at risk, add that information into your map. The hazards the team selects and records on its Hazard Risk Profile will be the ones the team will focus on throughout the remainder of the planning process. For a more detailed analysis and to complete ratings by zones, download the *Hazard Risk Profile Template* (available on the ‘Resources’ page).

Resources

To complete the Hazard Risk Profile Template, refer to the following tools and resources:

- Hazard Risk Analysis Tool Overview and Instructions
- Hazard Risk Analysis (HRA) Tool
- Integrated Disaster Risk Profile Template

Activity Summary:

- Integrated Disaster Risk Profile Template
- Hazard Risk Analysis

Complete

Notes:

Activity 2: Gathering information for Resilience

In the first activity for Step 2, your planning team selected the hazards you feel are most important to focus on using the **Hazard Risk Analysis** (HRA) tool. In Activity 2 you will identify and collect whatever information about your community that you will need in order to fully complete the **Aboriginal Resilience Index** (ARI) and the **Hazard Resilience Index** (HRI).

Some items in the ARI may be easy for your team to answer, and others will require expert knowledge. For example, people involved in the fire department, first response or search and rescue may have knowledge about disaster and emergency plans and equipment in the community. Local and regional government representatives may provide important information, such as the community's demographics, and land use and economic plans. Others may know what hazards pose risks for the community and how prepared the community is to face them.

It is also true however, that as you collect information it is likely you'll come across some surprises. Others in your community may know about "hidden" strengths, such as knowledge of medicinal plants or past disasters, grant writing skills, or the knowledge a local business might offer. Remember that the more community members you involve in the process, the more you build awareness of disaster preparedness and resilience. The more you build awareness the more resilient your community becomes.

Once you have a good handle on the information you will need to decide what method or methods you'll use to gather it. Some of these are quick and easy, others are more time consuming, but are likely to gain richer, more accurate information.

- **Consult Subject Matter Experts**

Some members of your community, such as the fire chief, local governance representatives, (such as the Chief/Mayor and Council or other community leaders), first responders, or those responsible for emergency management will have specific information for the Disaster Management section and parts of the Community Resources section of the ARI.

- **Conduct Interviews and/or Focus Groups**

One-on-one interviews or small group interviews (focus groups) are a good way to get community members' opinions about the community and its resilience.

- **Hold Community Meetings**

Community meetings are a way to reach a number of people at once, and the discussion is especially valuable in getting a deeper and shared view of resilience factors.

- **Distribute Surveys**

A short survey with specific questions is an inexpensive method of getting community input on resilience factors. These can be distributed at high-traffic areas such as the post office or library, along with a collection box at the distribution site. They can also be used like questionnaires to guide the interviews and focus groups.

- **Transect Walk or Drive-about**

Sometimes called a "walk about", in this method you travel through the community to visually inventory resources, assets, vulnerabilities and other important community features including where key buildings are, where rivers and other natural features are that may present risks, where groups of potentially 'at risk' people might live or gather (such as a care facility, school).

- **Photo Voice**

Take photographs of community features such as key infrastructure (fire hall, community hall, school, bridges, communication towers, etc.), areas of vulnerability (flood plain or landslide areas, public facilities in disrepair, etc.) and other interesting features that you feel help

“define” your community. Create a collage of these photographs in a high-visibility location such as the community hall. (Note: you can combine this with your map from Step 1.)

- **Research Documents**

Some information might be available from Stats Canada, a higher-level organization (e.g., Assembly of First Nations), your community’s local government or band office (if you have one) or the local library or historic archives.

Resources

For more information about the various ways of gathering information in your community, refer to the following resources in the *Resilience Resource Guide*:

- Working Together - Holding a Community Meeting
- Collecting Information – Transect Walk or Drive
- Collecting Information – Photo Voice

Activity Summary:

Information gathered to complete the ARI and HRI.

Complete

Notes:

Activity 3: Recording Information

In order to complete the **Aboriginal Resilience Index** (ARI) and the **Hazard Resilience Index** (HRI), the relevant information should be recorded in some way. This can be as simple as a set of notes, pictures taken during information collection, or adding this information on the map you began working with in Step 1-Activity 3: Define Community Borders, by marking where your community's assets/strengths and vulnerabilities or potentially vulnerable people are located. If you have identified specific hazard zones, you could also add this information to your map. Alternatively, you may choose a more formal approach by developing a Community Profile - a comprehensive inventory of important details about your community to accompany your maps. One advantage of recording your findings is that the information is more easily shared, and can be used for additional purposes, such as grant applications or community decision making.

Resources

For more information about community profiles and a community profile template, refer to the following resources in of the *Resilience Resource Guide – Community Profile Section*:

- Introducing the Community Profile
- Building a Community Profile

For more information about how to conduct a Skills-Knowledge Inventory refer to the *Resilience Resource Guide – Skills and Knowledge Inventory*.

Activity Summary:

Information for ARI and HRI assessments recorded.

Complete

Notes:

Activity 4: Assessing Resilience

Assessing your community's disaster resilience is done by completing the **Aboriginal Resilience Index** (ARI) and the **Hazard Resilience Index** (HRI). These tools were reviewed specifically for use in Aboriginal settings. You will need to complete both categories in the ARI (Community Resources and Disaster Management), and those hazard categories in the HRI that you have identified as "High Risk" in your *Risk Profile*.

For some of this activity you may choose for your team to fill out the assessments, based on the information you gathered earlier in Step Two. For other parts of the ARI you might ask large or small groups of community members to fill them out. Pay particular attention to the discussions about different dimensions and characteristics (the checked/unchecked items). These discussions can increase awareness and result in a more complete assessment process.

Resources

To complete the resilience assessment, refer to the following instructions, tools and template:

- Hazard Resilience Index (HRI) Overview and Instructions
- Hazard Resilience Index (HRI)
- Aboriginal Resilience Index (ARI) Overview and Instructions
- Aboriginal Resilience Index (ARI)

Activity Summary:

HRI completed
ARI – Community Resources completed.
ARI – Disaster Management completed

Complete

Notes:

Activity 5: Develop Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile

In Step 2-Activity 1: Developing a Hazard Risk Profile, you worked with the **Hazard Risk Analysis** (HRA) tool and report to develop a *Risk Profile* for your community. Now you will develop an *Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile* to form a clear picture of your community's disaster resilience. This profile will consider all the categories you have worked with – community resources, disaster management and the specific hazards you assessed in **the Aboriginal Resilience Index** (ARI) and the **Hazard Resilience Index** (HRI).

Developing the *Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile* will allow you to think through some of these more complex relationships between risk and resilience. Your profile will provide a portrait of resilience. It shows where your community is doing well, and where it could benefit from improvement. The result may help you decide on priorities and goals when it comes to developing your community's *Disaster Resilience Plan* (see Step Four).

There are four key steps in developing your *Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile*:

1. The first step in this process is to transfer the results of your ARI and HRI assessments to the *Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile Template*.
2. The next step is to consider the positive and negative implications of the different characteristics of resilience and how these might interact with one another. This can be done on a number of levels.
 - a. For the ARI categories you can analyse your results by category (Community Resources and Disaster Management), by dimensions of resilience (such as “Our community is stable and sustainable” and “Our community is disaster aware”) and by specific characteristics of disaster resilience (the check boxed items under each dimension of resilience).
 - b. For the hazards you have assessed using the HRI, you can analyze your results by considering the hazard generally, and at the factor (or check box) level.
3. You should review your findings and consider how different resilience characteristics might influence each other, either increasing risk or reducing resilience. For example, having the first response facilities located in an area of high fire or flooding risk might decrease a resilient first response ability. Or a low number of Elders participating in community events might combine with low hazard awareness, putting those seniors at even greater risk during a disaster.
4. Once the *Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile Template* is complete, you can organize and display your findings in a variety of formats that help make this information understandable to others in your community (such as graphs, written report, lists, etc.).

At this point in the process it is a good idea to get the word out. Make your *Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile* available to community members – on paper or electronically - and let them know where to find it. By getting feedback and input from your *Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile*, you can refine it.

Resources

To develop a resilience profile, refer to the following resource:

- [Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile Template](#)

Activity Summary:

Integrated Disaster Resilience Profile Template completed.

Complete

Notes:
