Principles of community engagement for disaster resilience

Speed read

- There are six national principles of community engagement for disaster resilience.
- The principles of community engagement are intended to guide all sectors, partners and stakeholders.
- The principles of community engagement complement the *National Principles for Disaster Recovery.*

Key points

Principle 1: Place the community at the centre

Effective community engagement is responsive, flexible and recognises the community as the central reference point for planning, implementing and measuring success in any engagement process. Inclusive, respectful and ethical relationships between engagement partners and the community must guide every stage of the engagement process.

Principle 2: Understand the context

Effective community engagement requires partners to develop a strong understanding of the unique history, values, diversity, dynamics, strengths, priorities and needs of each community. It is also important to understand the environmental, political, or historical context that surrounds any hazard, emergency event or disaster.

Principle 3: Recognise complexity

Effective community engagement considers the complex and dynamic nature of hazards, disaster risk and emergency events and the diverse identities, histories, composition, circumstances, strengths and needs of communities and community members. Because of this complexity, effective community engagement to build disaster resilience is an evolving process that requires ongoing investment.

Principle 4: Work in partnership

Effective community engagement requires a planned and coordinated approach between the community and partners at every stage of the process. Potential issues arising from any imbalance in power, information or resources between the community and partners will be proactively managed during the process

Principle 5: Communicate respectfully and inclusively

Community engagement is built on effective communication between the community and partners that recognises the diverse strengths, needs, values and priorities of both community members and partners.

Principle 6: Recognise and build capability

Effective community engagement recognises, supports and builds on individual, community and organisational capability and capacity to reduce disaster risk and increase resilience.

Take action

- Save these principles in an easily accessible place or put up the poster of principles of community engagement for disaster resilience in your office.
- Aim to incorporate these principles into all community engagement activities.

More information

- *Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience Handbook* (AIDR 2020)
  https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/handbook-community-engagement
- Read the National Disaster Recovery Principles https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/national-principles-disaster-recovery