

## Approaches to community engagement for disaster resilience

### Speed read

- There are five approaches to community engagement for disaster resilience.
- One approach is not necessarily better than any other and the chosen approach should be tailored to the needs of the community.
- When deciding on the approach, take into consideration the local context, previous experience with hazards, purpose of the engagement, time and resources, investment of the community and partner and their capacity and capability to act.

### Key points

Table 1 on page 2 presents five approaches to community engagement. It summarises the relationship and expectations between a partner and a community. It provides examples of engagement actions and activities. It also describes and provides examples of different methods of engagement.

### Take action






- Use the [Practitioner's Guide: How to choose between community engagement approaches](#) (AIDR 2020)
- Review examples found in the *Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience Handbook* (AIDR 2020) describing different approaches:
  - Partner designed and delivered approach: Community Trauma Toolkit developed by the Australian National University, Emerging Minds and University of Queensland.
  - Partner leading with community input approach: Building extreme weather resilience with the homeless community in Adelaide, Australian Red Cross and Tasmania Fire Service's Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods.
  - Community and partner working together approach: Country Fire Authority and Nhill Karen Community film Prevention is Better than Cure.
  - Community and partner working together approach: My Resilient Community project with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Queensland Police Service and Moreton Bay Regional Council.
  - Community leads with partner support: Redland City Council's Community Champions.

### More information

- *Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience Handbook* (AIDR 2020)  
<https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/handbook-community-engagement>
- [Mapping approaches to community engagement for preparedness in Australia](#) (Johnston, Ryan, & Taylor, BNHCRC 2019)

# Quick Guide

**Table 1. Approaches to community engagement for disaster resilience**

Who leads the process	 Partner designs and delivers to community	 Partner leads with community input	 Community and partner work together	 Community leads with partner support	 Community designs and delivers
<b>Basis of engagement</b>	Partner provides community with information, options, solutions or services for a given situation or issue.	Partner provides leadership to community. Community provides input to the process.	Community and partner form a partnership. They co-design and develop options and solutions.	Community provides leadership to partner. Partner provides input to the process.	Community designs, decides and implements all actions. Minimal or no engagement necessary from any partner.
<b>Stated or implied, contract between external partner and community</b>	Partner understands the issue or situation, provides community with what they need and keeps community informed through the process.	Partner provides guidance, listens to community concerns and issues and takes them into account. Community input is considered necessary to ensure success.	Both community and partner bring expertise to the relationship. Mutual participation or collaboration contribute to success.	Community understands its own context and situation. Partner offers expertise and knowledge. This input is offered to support community-led action.	Community has a thorough understanding of its own context and situation and the hazards that may affect them. Community will ask for support when and if needed. External organisations may not be aware of projects at all.
<b>Methods of engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Information sessions</li> <li>• Training and seminars</li> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• Brochures</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Letter box drops</li> <li>• Door knocks</li> <li>• Online instruction videos or information</li> <li>• Traditional media</li> <li>• Social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Seminars</li> <li>• Consultations</li> <li>• Online or analogue surveys</li> <li>• Partner-led workshops and focus groups</li> <li>• Partner-led projects</li> <li>• Traditional media</li> <li>• Social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-chaired committees and working groups</li> <li>• Deliberative, participative and co-led workshops and focus groups</li> <li>• Online collaborative spaces</li> <li>• Shared research projects</li> <li>• Collaborative community-based projects</li> <li>• Traditional media</li> <li>• Social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Seminars</li> <li>• Consultations</li> <li>• Forums</li> <li>• Online or analogue surveys</li> <li>• Community-led workshops and focus groups</li> <li>• Community-led projects</li> <li>• Informal conversations</li> <li>• Traditional media</li> <li>• Social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Information sessions</li> <li>• Training and seminars</li> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• Brochures</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Letter box drops</li> <li>• Door knocks</li> <li>• Online instruction videos or information</li> <li>• Community-led working groups</li> <li>• Community-led projects</li> <li>• Traditional media</li> <li>• Social media</li> </ul>
<b>Examples of actions or activities that reflect methods</b>	Briefings by specialists in disaster preparation, response or recovery. Information based public safety campaigns.	Partner-led planning and recovery focus groups and workshops. Partner-led surveys and feedback sessions.	Collaborative disaster planning and preparation projects. Joint working groups to implement particular projects.	Community-led planning processes, recovery committees, meetings and projects.	Community-led, resourced and implemented recovery processes and projects.

**NB: Many of the methods of engagement can be either online, face to face, or both.**