

# Quick Guide



Australian Government  
National Emergency  
Management Agency



## National principles for disaster recovery

### Speed read

- Australia has developed National Principles for Disaster Recovery to provide guidelines for good practice.
- There are six national principles.
- These principles can guide a variety of organisations and individuals across sectors, from local through to national levels.

### Key points

#### Principle 1: Understand the context

Successful recovery is based on an understanding of the community context, with each community having its own history, values and dynamics.

**Consider the event:** disaster type | scale | rapid versus slow onset | geographic focus

**Consider the community:** ageing population | population movement | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders | culturally and linguistically diverse communities | gender | patterns of employment | household composition | low incomes | gender | diverse gender and sexual identities | children and young people | people with disabilities | business owners, operators and primary producers | family violence.

#### Principle 2: Recognise complexity

Successful recovery is responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of both emergencies and the community.

**Consider:** pre-existing or prior experience of disaster | predictable human behaviour: biological, psychological, behavioural, social | recovery myths | duration of the disaster and the recovery | relocation of people | politics of disasters | donations and appeals | physical health impacts | psychosocial impacts on individuals, emergency response, relief and recovery workers.

#### Principle 3: Use community-led approaches

Successful recovery is community-centred, responsive and flexible, engages with community and supports them to move forward.

**Consider the event:** disaster type | scale | rapid versus slow onset | geographic focus

**Consider the community:** communities managing their own recovery | integrating disaster recovery and long-term development | community development in recovery | community engagement | asset-based community development | processes in managing conflict | adaptive change opportunities | community resilience | building resilience through recovery | vulnerabilities of communities.

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## Principle 4: Coordinate all activities

Successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach, between community and partner agencies, based on continuing assessment of impacts and need.

**Consider the event:** disaster type | scale | rapid versus slow onset | geographic focus

**Consider the community:** impacted communities, individuals and families | local, state, and territory government | commonwealth government | schools, universities and other education providers | non-government organisations | local community and social service organisations | local community groups | emergent groups | emergency services | local businesses | industry networks and associations | insurance companies and banks | media | utilities and statutory authorities.

## Principle 5: Communicate effectively

Successful recovery is built on effective communication between the affected community and other partners.

**Consider communication in recovery principles:** provide public information, not public relations | respect people | community's right to know | acknowledge the impact | build on local assets | ask the community how they want to receive information | remember the 'unaffected' | repeat information | no 'spin'.

## Principle 6: Recognise and build capacity

Successful recovery recognises, supports and builds on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience.

**Consider:** predictors of capacity and capability | mobilising capacity and capability | recovery workers and volunteers.

## Take action

- Put up the [National Principles for Disaster Recovery poster](#) in your office or recovery centre ([bit.ly/RecoveryPrinciplesPoster](http://bit.ly/RecoveryPrinciplesPoster))
- Use the Checklist: [Planning for recovery pre-event – applying the principles](#) (SRRG 2018) ([bit.ly/RecoveryPrinciples](http://bit.ly/RecoveryPrinciples))
- Use the Checklist: [Applying the principles post-disaster](#) (SRRG 2018) ([bit.ly/RecoveryPrinciples](http://bit.ly/RecoveryPrinciples))

## More information

- [National Principles for Disaster Recovery Brochure](#)
- [National Principles for Disaster Recovery on the Knowledge Hub](#)
- [Social Recovery Reference Group](#)