

Resilient Nation Partnership Network

Insights and Reflections: Resilient Decision Making

Every year, resilient decision making becomes increasingly critical to a community's ability to withstand and recover from natural disasters. On August 18, 2021, the Resilient Nation Partnership Network convened a panel of leaders for a conversation on Resilient Decision Making to discuss how we can better prepare for tomorrow.

The panel identified the following key themes for fostering and advancing resilient decision making.

- Make resilience real and actionable. Resilience must be prioritized for the long term and include everyone. Where the risks of climate or natural hazards are tangible, it's not always a matter of motivation, but rather actionable knowledge. Communities need to be equipped with the skills and resources to develop systems that promote adaptation. For those who may need motivation or feel disassociated from impacts, we should consider how to bring the future closer to those individuals. When you can visualize yourself adapting to future climate and natural hazard impacts, you are more likely to invest in protecting it.
- Bolster resilience through elected official accessibility. Inclusive public engagement and two-way communication are key components to ensuring political investment in the issues that matter to a community. It's important to bring constituents and decision makers together—in diverse spaces and through various methods—so there are opportunities to voice concerns. You are encouraged to contact your local elected official but remember to be concise, genuine and respectful.
- Prioritize resilience in the built environment. Underserved and historically marginalized populations often have some of the least structurally sound buildings. Building resilient structures is basic to long-term resilience. Once it becomes standard practice to implement policy into development, we can have honest conversations about how we prepare traditionally disadvantaged communities to become more resilient through infrastructure and building back better.
- Make community engagement fair, transparent and equitable. Leveraging connections, building and maintaining relationships, and engaging the Whole Community are key to gaining acceptance and building trust. When making decisions, do not prioritize one voice over another. Never assume that the usual suspects or the loudest voices represent the full diversity of perspectives. Be open and equitable to the ways certain populations are engaged and invited to the table.
- Prioritization and tradeoffs must account for Whole-Community impacts. When it comes to decision making for resilience, think often about tradeoffs relative to overall objectives. Understanding the tradeoffs you're asking individuals and interest groups to make as you work to prioritize one issue over another is critical to advancing community resilience. Not everyone has the resources to tackle their ideal resilience projects, but everyone can work to ensure that the decisions being made benefit the Whole Community.

Contributors: [Groundswell](#); [National Governors Association](#); [The Ohio State University](#); [Palm Beach County, FL](#); [State of Oregon](#); [FEMA](#)



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