



# THE POSSIBILITY OF RESILIENCE

Resilience Road Marker (#2):  
Ideas for Implementation from  
Research and Practice

# WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Resilience captures that **positive sense of persisting and thriving in the face of adversity and unknowns.**

Preparing for increasing climate risks.

Fostering greater social cohesion.

Maintaining or creating thriving communities.

# BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

- Forming collaborations
- Understanding environmental, socio-economic and other risks and vulnerabilities
- Determining goals & objectives
- Developing and finalizing plans
- Implementing, maintaining and evaluating plans and actions

**... But in the context of climate change, building resilience  
is more than the familiar process.**

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR RESILIENCE

- **Embrace a “world of possibility”**—a truly novel mindset for approaching societal problem solving.
- **Moral, policy, and scientific principles** that motivate, fortify and safeguard effective resilience practice.
- **Processes for building** resilience that embrace these principles.

# A WORLD OF POSSIBILITY

Climate change puts us in a world of possibility:

**“The possibilities are endless!”**

**“Anything is possible, so what do I do now?”**

Opportunities emerge to **reimagine outdated systems and build new ones**. Progress here may not only allow improved performance during emergencies and natural disasters, but also better responses to chronic problems.

Resilience can engage diverse input about how to **bounce forward** in ways that are fair and equitable for the entire community.



# MORAL PRINCIPLES

**“Ancient legal and moral doctrines indicate that the most basic purpose of government and society is to stop us from harming each other.** Some actions—or in some cases, refusing to act—can inflict harm on others, resulting in serious legal, equitable, social and moral consequences. We believe that institutions and government have an affirmative duty to prevent one person or group from benefiting at the expense of others.”

- Ed Thomas, National Hazard Mitigation Association



# MORAL PRINCIPLES

Key moral principles include:

- Do no harm and limit suffering.
- Support those in greatest need.
- Safeguard against near-sighted and selfish behavior.
- Fairly distribute costs and “bounce forward” toward more equitable relations.

# MORAL PRINCIPLES



"Resilient communities have the resources to overcome many challenges, including those related to climate change. Quality, affordable housing is essential to resiliency, but it's not enough. **Federal investments in communities of color and in low income communities must enable access to jobs, transportation, good schools, and all the resources necessary for community residents to participate and thrive.** These actions are moral and economic imperatives."

- Angela Glover Blackwell, PolicyLink



# SCIENCE-DERIVED PRINCIPLES

“The application of **a disciplined process to define the perils, evaluate degree of preparedness and take consistent action to leverage spending** to achieve maximized benefit is the key to improve resilience. Solutions must be technically achievable, economically feasible, and politically acceptable.”

- Dale Sands, AECOM



# SCIENCE-DERIVED PRINCIPLES

- **Assess and evaluate your community:** Is it in a desirable condition?
- **Accept system complexity** and **embrace uncertainty.**
- **Systems are interconnected,** which can be a resource or liability.
- Examine the **implications of disturbances** at higher frequencies.
- **Interconnectivity, diversity, and redundancy.**
- Resilience has **multiple levels** (household, community, state).
- What are the **sources** of resilience?

# PROCESS-FOCUSED AND CONTEXT-SENSITIVE PRINCIPLES



“Here in San Francisco, we’re building resilience by implementing a multi-dimensional water strategy and optimizing all resources within the urban water cycle. **We’re investing in programs and projects that deliver multiple benefits:** matching the right water supply resource for the right end use, pursuing creative ideas and partnerships, planning for variable outcomes, and building in room to adapt to future changes.”

- Paula Kehoe, San Francisco

# PROCESS-FOCUSED AND CONTEXT-SENSITIVE PRINCIPLES

## ENVISION COLLECTIVELY:

- Use **passion and creativity** to confront realities that constrain/enable the possible
- Include **diverse interests** and perspectives
- Invest in **innovation, imagination, and creativity**

## COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY:

- Create opportunities for **dialogue**
- **Facilitate learning** through dialogue and community engagement
- Encourage **partnerships** and community **connections**

## ACT IMMEDIATELY:

- Building resilience can—and and must—be started **here and now**
- Emphasize **preparedness**
- Foster the **adaptive capacity** of people, groups, institutions, structures, and systems

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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