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## Mitigation and Community Resiliency

Natural hazards and disasters lead to long-term effects and long-term risks to communities. However, taking the appropriate risk management actions may reduce and even eliminate some of these risks. Mitigation plays an important role in reducing the impact of disasters. Among many of the key roles and mitigation activities, one important one related to community resilience is that it supports protection and prevention activities which in turn ease community response and speed recovery. This leads to better preparedness and thus more resilient communities. As stated in the chapter on Community-based disaster risk reduction and disaster management, Luna highlights that local communities are inevitably the first line of defense in facing disasters, therefore, it is important for them to be aware of skills and resources that may be useful when faced with hazards and disasters.<sup>1</sup> There have been programs, such as the Community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) and community-based disaster management (CBDM), developed in order to foster this so-needed participation of local communities. This allows them to develop the necessary knowledge to assess potential risks of disasters to be able to reduce these risks and manage disasters, which will allow for more efficient response and a speedier recovery.

Just like mitigation can play a role in community resiliency, resiliency can also play a role in mitigation. Developing community resiliency without a doubt benefits disaster planners as it expands the so-called traditional preparedness practices by encouraging community members' actions. In other words, encouraging local communities to act if faced with a disaster will not only build preparedness but it will also promote strong community systems and address other factors that may not be accounted for otherwise. Training local communities by developing preparedness activities are essential not only because they build social connectedness but also because they improve the health, wellness, adaptation, and recovery of communities.<sup>2</sup> A resilient community is not only one which can withstand, adapt and recover, but it is also one that is socially connected, has efficient health systems, can collectively act if faced with an adverse event, and has the necessary resources needed to reduce the impact of disasters.

### References

1. Lopez-Carresi A, Fordham M, Wisner B, Kelman I & Gaillard JC. Disaster management : international lessons in risk reduction, response and recovery. London, New York, Earthscan from Routledge, 2014, pp. 43-63.
2. National Preparedness and Response Science Board (NPRSB) 2014. *Community Health Resilience Recommendations*.