

Understanding Community Resilience

A GUIDE FOR COMPANIES



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Introduction

The success of a company is directly linked to the resilience of the communities where it operates, as well as the resilience of the communities of its workers, its suppliers, and its customers. Increasingly, communities around the world are starting to contemplate their resilience and long-term sustainability. As a result, companies are expected to account for their impacts on community resilience. This guide helps companies understand why community resilience matters, how communities are beginning to approach resilience, and how companies can explore their role in fostering community resilience.

From Disaster Response to Wellbeing and System Adaptability

The concept of resilience has its roots in the field of ecology. It describes the capacity of a natural system to maintain or recover functionality when affected. A single disturbance, such as a flood, can affect a system, as can enduring stress like climate change or deforestation.¹ In psychology, resilience refers to our ability to cope with stress and trauma and to continue functioning, or even to function better as a result of it.²

A person's resilience can be influenced by the resilience of their community. Yet, community resilience is not simply the sum or average of the resilience of its members. Instead, communities are intricate systems. They consist of social and physical infrastructure that forms part of broader, interconnected environmental, social, and economic systems.³

¹ C.S. Holling, *Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems*, (Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics, 1973) 4: 1-23. <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.es.04.110173.000245>

² Stephen Lepore and Tracey Revenson, *Resilience and Post-Traumatic Growth: Recovery, Resistance and Reconfiguration*, (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Handbook of Posttraumatic Growth: Research and Practice, 2006). <https://www.worldcat.org/title/handbook-of-posttraumatic-growth-research-and-practice/oclc/62078285>

³ Fikret Berkes and Helen Ross, *Community Resilience: Toward an Integrated Approach*, (Society and Natural Resources, 2013) 26 (1). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263529519_Community_Resilience_Toward_an_Integrated_Approach

Community resilience describes a community's ability to respond and adapt to acute shocks and long-term stresses. Emergency preparedness is a frequently cited component of community resilience that comes to the fore when communities face natural disasters, industrial catastrophes, or disease outbreaks. However, perspectives on community resilience have also evolved, and the concept now also includes an assessment of current community wellness levels and the ability to ensure future community wellbeing. Together, current wellness and resources for future wellbeing are thought to mitigate a community's vulnerability to adverse events. And, if disaster does strike, they can help communities bounce back or even bounce forward.

The notions of "bouncing forward," "building back better," or even "designing the future we want" require careful consideration. How are 'better', 'forward' and 'what we want' defined and who decides? Often, short-term relief is required in the immediate aftermath of a crisis. Is the immediate post-disaster period an appropriate time to address long-term systems change? We also know that stress reinforces existing biases in individual and group decision-making.⁴ And lastly, is it even desirable to build back in all cases? Communities in precarious locations may need to consider whether they should not be building back in these same locations.

⁴Ralph Hamann, *The Promise and Peril of "Building Back Better"*, (Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development, 2020) 62 (6): 41-50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00139157.2020.1820296>

Elements of Community Resilience

There is no single common definition of community resilience. Those researching resilience and those working on the ground focus on the issue at various scales, working in diverse though interconnected fields that include disaster response, urban management, infrastructure, and social networks in communities.⁵ In this guide we use the term 'communities' holistically, to encompass a range of settlements that includes towns, cities, rural communities, and traditional territories.

While the way community resilience manifests is place-specific, we identify four common elements of community resilience:

1. The foundation of current community wellness
2. The resources available for future wellbeing
3. Preparedness to respond to and withstand acute shocks
4. Transformative capacity and adaptability in response to stresses or changing circumstances

⁵ Markus Keck and Patrick Sakdapolrak, *What Is Social Resilience? Lessons Learned and Ways Forward*, (Erdkunde, 2013) 67: 5-18. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235989714_What_Is_Social_Resilience_Lessons_Learned_and_Ways_Forward

In the event of acute shocks in particular, specific characteristics can help communities rebound or even bounce forward, as they integrate learnings to improve future outcomes.⁶ These include spare capacity (like the availability of hospital beds or stored energy); flexibility in the use of resources (like the conversion of a school gym to a temporary shelter); resourcefulness; inclusivity of diverse perspectives; integration of community systems; and reflectiveness.

The common elements of community resilience, as well as the characteristics that support them, are dynamic: they can erode over time, making a community more vulnerable, or they can be cultivated to increase resilience.

This guide focuses on the resilience of geographically bounded communities. Human communities, of course, can also be identity-based. Such communities can exist within physical communities or can transcend specific geographies. Identity communities could include Indigenous Peoples across the world, LGBTQIA2 communities, race-based or ethnic communities, refugees, people living with a disability, religious communities, or even nature enthusiasts and many other groups. The resilience of identity communities has different dimensions than the resilience of settlements. But companies should ensure they also understand their impact on these groups.

⁶ Based on the *City Resilience Framework* (developed by Arup with support from the Rockefeller Foundation, 2015). <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/City-Resilience-Framework-2015.pdf>

Why Community Resilience Matters to Companies

Community resilience and company resilience are intrinsically linked: each impacts the other. The broader systems that a community and company are part of further affect the complex and dynamic relationship between them. For example, local employment opportunities may decline when global market forces require a slowdown in your company's local operations. Conversely, your company may have difficulty hiring local workers when a community can no longer ensure safety for its residents or access to local healthcare services. Below are four ways in which community resilience can influence your company's continuity, profitability, relationships, and social acceptance.

Risk management

Understanding a community's ability to maintain community wellness while responding to shocks and stresses (including those caused by companies) helps your company better assess community risk and business risk, as well as identify opportunities to support resilience building. Community vulnerability may increase business risk in areas as diverse as business continuity, access to talent, hiring and retention, supply chain management, worker health and safety, social acceptance, sales, and company reputation. For example, when there is already water scarcity in the region where you operate, the water used by companies may further erode the ability of local communities to meet their water needs, particularly during times of drought. Access to clean drinking water is a human right that companies are required to respect and uphold. And pressure on community water access may create additional business disruption risk for your company, if your employees and their families are unable to reliably access potable water. Company interests that are misaligned with community resilience make communities more vulnerable. In addition to the possibly significant human or environmental toll, such impacts may result in community or employee protest, vandalism, or conflict, which can significantly and even permanently affect business continuity.

Community relations

Community vulnerability to shocks and stresses can considerably undermine relations between your company and the community. First, your company and its engagement commitments or consultation requirements may not be a priority for a community under stress. From a community's perspective, your company is likely one of many influences on its resilience and long-term sustainability, even in areas with a single dominant industry. As a result, your company interests simply may not take precedence unless your engagement supports community priorities. Secondly, certain company actions with negative community consequences in a community already experiencing stress, such as lay-offs, environmental impacts, or resettlements, may stifle relationships. Adverse actions may make your company vulnerable to community retaliation or opportunistic political action.

Community resilience and company support for resilience building can, instead, help create the foundation and space for a positive, trusting relationship. Resilience building can even offer a topic for positive transparent engagement, aiming to surface opportunities to invest in communities or contribute to systems change. Lastly, a resilient community is better positioned to adapt to changes, including those your company may initiate.

Collaboration

Resilience is community specific. When communities and companies are co-located, it offers unique shared opportunities, including the development and use of shared infrastructure or initiatives. Community, local government, or multi-stakeholder/multi-sector collaborations can benefit from the perspectives, local knowledge or expertise, resources, and relationships of all parties to achieve better outcomes. Additionally, such collaboration can offer access to sources of support or funding not otherwise targeted towards companies. Resilient communities, or those with a clear vision for resilience, are better positioned

to invite company support for, or collaboration in, activities that help achieve their vision, such as the design of post-secondary curricula in local educational institutions, to ensure local graduates have skills relevant for employment. When deciding whether to share local infrastructure or resources, your company must carefully consider and communicate the duration of its intended engagement and its obligations. In some instances, it may be appropriate to contribute funds for future repairs and maintenance, so that company performance or longevity does not undermine the intent of the collaboration.

Systems influence and social acceptance

Community acceptance of a company and its local operations is crucial to company success. Acceptance is affected not only by actual outcomes but also by the perceived impacts of a company on local communities and the perceived value of the relationship. Acute shocks often expose otherwise hidden vulnerabilities in company-community relationships. For example, your company's bulk-buying power may absorb so much of the local supply chain that it limits local capacity for food security, energy access, or medical supply procurement during supply chain disruptions. Or your water consumption may cause community shortages and ecosystem service impacts in times of drought. Understanding your company's place in the broader system and its potential for both positive and negative systems influence can help surface opportunities to strengthen systems resilience. Your company's participation in industry associations or multi-sector networks, your government relations activities (including lobbying), and your approach to value chain engagement all influence how your organisation is perceived. Each of these offers opportunities to do your part in creating systems resilience and can help or hinder your organisation's ability to build trusting relationships and social acceptance.

Resilience Frameworks

Several existing resilience frameworks offer useful insights for companies and can support communities as they begin to understand, assess, and advance their resilience. Other frameworks may help companies determine what community resilience topics may be salient to their own business operations or where they may have impacts or opportunities for influence. We identify the key frameworks in the table below.

No single framework currently offers a definitive, comprehensive perspective on community resilience, how to assess it, or how to understand company impact on it. Instead, each of the key frameworks included below contributes to our growing understanding of the topic. In each case, we note how the framework may help your company's efforts to support local resilience. In Appendix 1 (starting on page 25), we further identify 1) whether a framework takes a holistic approach to resilience or whether it focuses on a specific dimension of resilience such as wellbeing, sustainable development, disaster preparedness, or emergency response; 2) the scope of the framework, and its applicability to the community level; and lastly, 3) whether it addresses human rights and Indigenous rights.

FRAMEWORK	COMPANY APPLICABILITY
<p>The City Resilience Framework aims to help cities understand their complexities and the drivers that contribute to city resilience. An accompanying Index helps cities benchmark resilience levels and determine corrective actions.</p>	<p>This framework is designed for cities. Your company could use this framework to understand the elements of resilience. If the community benchmarks its resilience levels, your company could use that effort to understand key resilience issues for the community. The framework and benchmark are not designed to help your company understand or measure its community resilience impact.</p>
<p>The Doughnut Model identifies the boundary conditions for human thriving and environmental sustainability.⁷ The City Doughnut deploys this global model to the level of the city system through the Creating City Portraits methodology.⁸ It helps a city analyse itself with social, ecological, local, and global lenses to determine where to focus systems change efforts.</p>	<p>This framework is designed for cities and is applicable only if the community uses the City Doughnut process. If so, your company could partake in the process as a stakeholder, taking care not to skew it to corporate advantage. Your company could use the resulting analysis to better understand its local context and assess the type and scope of its impacts.</p>
<p>The Embedding Project Issues Prioritisation Radar tool (outlined in our Embedded Strategies for the Sustainability Transition guidebook) helps organisations evaluate the business relevance of emerging issues, understand their direct and indirect environmental, social, and governance impacts, and recognise their potential to influence positive systems change.</p>	<p>This tool is designed for companies. It draws on other resilience frameworks and can help your company evaluate the business relevance of community resilience, understand its own direct and indirect environmental, social, and governance impacts, and recognise its potential to support resilience in the communities where it operates.</p>
<p>The ICOR Community Resilience Framework identifies five primary systems on which all communities function and which contribute to either vulnerability or resilience. It helps communities understand what dimensions and characteristics can help build their resilience.</p>	<p>This framework is designed for communities of all sizes. Your company could use this framework to understand key systems dimensions that contribute to community resilience. The framework supports issue identification but does not help your company understand or measure its community resilience impacts.</p>

⁷ Johan Rockström and others, *Planetary Boundaries: Exploring the Safe Operating Space for Humanity*, (Ecology and Society, 2009) 14(2): 32. <http://www.stockholmresilience.org/download/18.8615c78125078c8d3380002197/ES-2009-3180.pdf>

⁸ Kate Raworth, *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist*, (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2017)

FRAMEWORK	COMPANY APPLICABILITY
<p>The OECD Framework for Measuring Wellbeing and Progress goes beyond macro-economic indicators to understand local living conditions. It measures wellbeing and progress in three distinct domains: 1) material conditions, 2) quality of life, and 3) sustainability. The framework addresses both current wellbeing (foundations) and resources for future wellbeing (stocks or capitals).</p>	<p>The framework is designed primarily for public policy makers. Your company could use the framework for understanding certain dimensions of resilience. The framework supports issue identification but does not help your company understand or measure its community resilience impacts.</p>
<p>Poverty Stoplight measures the multiple dimensions of poverty and helps families improve their situation. Household self-assessments help families to identify their poverty status and develop a household action plan. Together, geo-tagged household assessments can generate poverty maps for communities that can inform resilience initiatives.</p>	<p>This framework is designed primarily for families. If local families use this framework, your company could use the aggregate community poverty maps to the identification of issues and of potential areas for company support. However, the framework does not help your company understand or measure its community resilience impacts.</p>
<p>The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs or Global Goals) are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. They offer a common language and a roadmap toward socially and environmentally sustainable development globally. As the SDGs are framed at a national level, it can be challenging to apply the goals at the community level.</p>	<p>The SDGs have a broad audience, including public policy makers, non-profits, and companies. Framed nationally, the SDGs do not easily support local community resilience understanding or strategy. Your company could use the Goals as an opportunity to engage with communities (and countries) about their development priorities. The SDGs could also help your company understand and communicate how its local contributions foster the global commitment to leave no one behind.</p>
<p>Vital Signs is a community check-up framework that uses local knowledge to assess community wellbeing across 70 indicators and to support action towards improved quality of life. The process focuses on gathering relevant data to support civic engagement and designing local solutions to improve community wellness. The program has engaged more than 100 communities around the world.</p>	<p>This framework and accompanying facilitated community conversations (Vital Conversations) seek out insights through community input, including input from local decision-makers. Your company may be invited to participate. The framework does not help your company understand or measure its community resilience impacts, but the process and resulting report support issue identification and may explicitly identify community investment opportunities.</p>

Understanding Local Community Resilience

Vulnerability and resilience have location-specific characteristics. Because of this, companies must understand the local socio-economic and environmental context of the communities where they operate and those communities' local definition and vision of resilience. This effort includes deepening your understanding of interconnected local social, environmental, and economic systems, including their thresholds and vulnerabilities. To understand your context, your company should seek out and rely on a combination of Indigenous and traditional knowledge, community knowledge and vision, research, and, where appropriate, the best available science.

Essential information may be available by consulting with local elders and knowledge holders. Locally commissioned studies or community development and land use plans may also contain pertinent information. Your company could learn through community engagement and outreach with local municipal and Indigenous governments, businesses, not for profit entities, and youth or community voice boards. And social research and impact evaluation can help your company deepen your contextual understanding. But these efforts should be culturally responsive, include Indigenous and traditional knowledge, and avoid 'data harvesting' without community benefit. Collaborative design, planning, and implementation of research, in addition to a strengths-based approach (as opposed to a deficits focus), help support dignity, cultural responsiveness, and alignment with both community needs and corporate objectives.



More guidance on understanding how to bring context into core strategy can be found in our *Embedded Strategies for the Sustainability Transition* guide.⁹

⁹ Stephanie Bertels and Rylan Dobson, *Embedded Strategies for the Sustainability Transition: Setting Priorities and Goals Aligned with Systems Resilience*, (Embedding Project, 2020). <https://embeddingproject.org/resources/embedded-strategies-for-the-sustainability-transition>

Community-Designed Visions for Resilience

The vision for community resilience that a company uses for its business planning should ideally be a community's own, self-defined vision, used with community permission. It should not be a vision designed, even with the best intentions and frameworks, by the company for the community.

Many communities have started contemplating what resilience means in their local context and what fosters or erodes it. For example, The Kanaka Bar Indian Band of the Nlaka'pamux Nation in Canada developed a comprehensive [Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment](#) to help the community design adaptation strategies needed to support its visions of a self-sufficient, sustainable, and vibrant community in the Kanaka Bar Traditional Territory. While some communities design and maintain comprehensive community development plans, these processes can be complex and resource intensive. Time constraints, competing priorities, or limited access to skilled process supports may prevent the development or completion of such plans.

Companies may offer development support, but the design of such a vision, and the processes or frameworks used to do so, should always be first and foremost community led and for the benefit of the community, rather than to support a company's needs and processes.

Self-defined community goals do not always exist in an explicit, accessible format. This can affect a company's ability to identify representative community-wide priorities. Local municipalities, neighbourhood associations, community foundations or other non-profits, and their strategic plans or assessments can also be a source of information on community objectives and priorities. Additionally, to support community input or direction on company contributions to community resilience, your company could establish local advisory boards or decision-making structures. For example, Suncor and the Suncor Energy Foundation helped establish an Indigenous Youth Advisory Council which creates an opportunity for Indigenous youth to engage with company and foundation leaders on issues that affect these youth and their communities. Teck Resources Limited makes contributions into a Village Improvement Fund created by the 11 villages in the northwest arctic region where Teck operates to support their community development initiatives. Requests submitted by local governments or organisations are evaluated by a Village Improvement Committee which is made up of representatives from each community and which decides, entirely independently of the funder, what opportunities to support.

Multi-stakeholder processes are complex. And power imbalances within and between stakeholder groups may affect outcomes. Companies should be mindful of such challenges to avoid bias in benefits to those with power, a form of corruption also known as "elite capture" in participatory development.¹⁰

¹⁰ Diya Dutta, *Elite Capture and Corruption: Concepts and Definitions, a Bibliography with an Overview of the Suggested Literature*, (National Council of Applied Economic Research, 2009). https://www.academia.edu/237917/Elite_Capture_and_Corruption_Concepts_and_Definitions

Case Study: Designing a Path out of Poverty: Thunder Valley Regenerative Community

In the early 2000s, a group of Lakota youth and young families decided to take ownership of their future. The Lakota People on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota, had been stymied by the systemic challenge of poverty and effects such as food insecurity, poor employment and housing options, poor education and health outcomes, violence, and deaths of despair. Engaging the community from the youngest children to community elders to understand needs and dreams, this young generation developed a vision for a regenerative community that empowers its people, builds equity, and overcomes intergenerational poverty in a way that heals and strengthens their Lakota identity.

Based on a balance between people, planet, and prosperity, they started the [Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation](#) (CDC) and designed a 34- acre sustainable community, building local skill and leadership capacity, cultivating food security, and building affordable energy efficient houses and community and educational facilities. The project continues to create opportunities and pathways out of poverty for community members through jobs and access to home- ownership and capital through what the CDC calls an “ecosystem of opportunity.” This collaborative process of lasting and transformative change towards a more resilient and healthy community also changed the nature of the community’s relationships with its neighbours and beyond. Non-profit leaders and political leaders, and philanthropic, corporate, government, and research partners support the community’s vision for change.

The Thunder Valley Regenerative Community has become a model for community resilience building through grassroots community design and action, supported by aligned partners. The community freely shares its research and learnings to the benefit of other communities.

The Need for a Systems Approach

Communities are made up of and are part of intricate environmental, social, and economic systems, which means that building community resilience needs to be approached from a systems perspective. Systems challenges like poverty, climate change, biodiversity loss, growing deaths of despair, or economic inequality are complex in nature; they are often made up of intersecting, interrelated and deeply rooted issues that the current systems are structured to reproduce (or exacerbate) again and again. When companies (or communities) seek to support system resilience, it is important that they recognise the interrelatedness of systems challenges and that the actions they take to improve one aspect of system resilience may erode community resilience in other ways. Anticipating potential unintended consequences, or responding to them if they occur, requires the type of approaches offered by multi-stakeholder collaborations, multi-sector networks, and systems change processes. While your company may support or participate in such processes, the community should drive them, ideally based on its broader vision for community resilience. The intentional centring of local knowledge, and the lived experience of those affected by the issues to be addressed, help ensure systems change initiatives are accountable to those they aim to help and are impactful.

Understanding Your Company's Impacts on Community Resilience

Given the multifaceted nature of community resilience, companies have multiple points of intersection in building or eroding local resilience. One way to begin to understand your potential influence is to engage in a structured scanning exercise. Our Issues Prioritisation Radar, outlined in our [Embedded Strategies for the Sustainability Transition guidebook](#), can help you navigate this process.

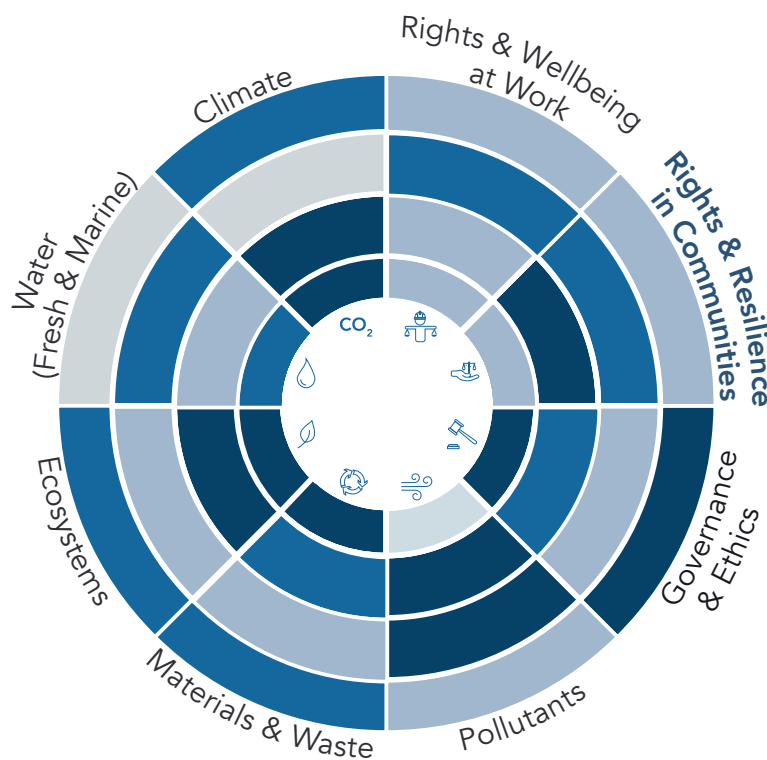


Figure 1: Embedding Project Issues Prioritisation Radar

Clarity on what maintaining community resilience means locally, why that is important to company success, and how your company affects resilience, helps you identify what it will take for your company to do its part. Your company can then develop an embedded strategy with credible goals and begin do its part to help foster the social, environmental, and economic systems that are the foundation for community resilience.

How Companies Can Support Community Resilience

Your company can act on its evolving understanding of its potential areas of influence on community resilience by initiating change in the areas outlined below. Positive action in these areas can significantly influence your company's continuity, profitability, relationships and social acceptance, positive community impact and, ultimately, overall success.

Risk management

Company procedures and policies designed to manage company risk, and the ways in which they are implemented, can either erode or help foster community resilience through their impact on workers and families, the environment, infrastructure, the local economy, and local supply chains. As part of social risk assessment processes and human rights saliency reviews, your company has an opportunity to identify the community risks of adverse scenarios and manage such risks according to likelihood and severity of impact. Additionally, risk identification processes can also surface opportunities to affect positive change: intentional integration of opportunity identification into risk processes positions your company to make strategic as well as impactful contributions to community resilience.

Community relations

As a potentially significant influence on community resilience, your company should not view its community relations efforts as an end in themselves or impose them on the communities in which you operate. Instead, your company should anchor community relations in genuine efforts to understand the needs and priorities of your local context and how your company can do its part in supporting local

community resilience.¹¹ For example, by understanding where your company's actions and policies may undermine community resilience, you can take measures to address this. A community's own resilience efforts may also offer a positive engagement opportunity, as your company seeks to understand its role and identify opportunities to provide support. Your company's investment in resilience building efforts that advance community priorities, in turn, can help build or maintain trust at the core of your community relationships and signal company sustainability values.

Community relations can refer to the state of a relationship between a company and a community (or communities) or identify a professional field of expert community engagement practice. Even if your company has a dedicated community relations specialist or team, any employee across the organisation who engages with community members has the ability to influence your company's community relations. All employees would therefore benefit from being able to understand and represent the company's values and objectives, including your company's support for community resilience building.

Collaboration

Well thought out collaboration can extend company infrastructure or create broader benefits for communities (for instance, by extending telecommunications services, water filtration systems, transportation infrastructure, or even improved access to global supply chains). Integrated, co-designed solutions to local challenges such as disaster response may offer cost-savings, enhanced outcomes, and opportunities for co-financing, while also supporting critical infrastructure, processes, and capacity building that help enhance local resilience. Your company should consider the legacy and sustainability of its contributions, and consider designing ownership and maintenance structures that ensure sufficient funds remain available to maintain the asset or infrastructure independently of your company's presence, if required.

¹¹ The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) has developed a framework that helps organisations identify the type of engagement needed (inform, consult, involve, etc.) to gain the appropriate level of public participation to help improve the quality of decisions the organisation makes. https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf

Systems influence and social acceptance

Understanding your company's place in the broader system and its potential for both positive and negative systems influence can help you understand how best to support community resilience, including during times of crisis. With attentive planning, your company can avoid further deepening the potential impacts of a crisis and instead support response and recovery, fostering social acceptance. For example, your company could make arrangements that make it possible for employees to vote in government elections during work hours. It could leverage its supply chain to ensure local availability of personal protective equipment during a health emergency. Or your company could convene a broad range of stakeholders to collaboratively address the issue of local economic resilience. The audiences and resources your company can access and leverage in support of local resilience have a reach and influence that a community may not otherwise be able to achieve. Participation in industry associations or multi-sector networks, government relations, and value chain engagement all offer opportunities to do your part. Leveraging its systems influence can help signal your organisation's commitment to sustainability, build social acceptance, and foster lasting community resilience.



Our *Partnering for Community Resilience* guide may be a useful reference as you explore this concept further and consider establishing partnerships to support community resilience.¹²

In short

By better understanding how communities are defining and approaching their own resilience and by respecting and upholding that vision, your company may be able to participate more fully and strategically in collaborating with communities towards building their resilience. Companies must make the effort to understand what it means to do their part, because community resilience is both the right of a community, and a critical factor in a company's long-term success.

¹² Ralph Hamann and Lulamile Makaula, *Partnering for Community Resilience*, (Embedding Project, 2018). <https://www.embeddingproject.org/resources/partnering-for-community-resilience-south-african-case-studies>

Other Resources

The following frameworks take a narrower lens on community resilience but may be helpful if your company seeks to deepen its understanding of emergency preparedness, city services, or public spaces and their impact on resilience.

International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Standards

ISO has developed two complementary standards that support community resilience: [ISO 37123](#), *Sustainable cities and communities – Indicators for resilient cities*, with a focus on emergency preparedness and disaster response, and [ISO 37120](#), *Sustainable cities and communities – Indicators for city services and quality of life*, focused on wellbeing as a source of city sustainability.

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

Adopted at the 2015 Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, [this framework](#) was designed to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risk in communities. Its four priorities are: understanding disaster risk; strengthening disaster risk governance; investing in disaster risk reduction; and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. The [Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities](#) helps local governments assess their disaster resilience against the Sendai Framework.

WELL Community Standard

Building on the WELL standard for individual structures, [this standard](#) offers a Global Benchmark for Healthy Communities, focused on enhancing individual health and wellbeing through the design of public spaces and districts based on ten core concepts ranging from air and light to sound, materials and mind, so as to promote inclusion, integration, resilience, and social engagement.

Appendix 1

THE CITY RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

The [City Resilience Framework](#), designed by consulting company ARUP with support from the Rockefeller Foundation, divides a city’s essential systems into four dimensions that support resilience: 1) Health & Wellbeing; 2) Economy & Society; 3) Infrastructure & Environment; and 4) Leadership & Strategy. It aims to help cities understand their complexities and the drivers that contribute to city resilience. An accompanying [Index](#) helps cities benchmark resilience levels and determine corrective actions. The framework has a strong focus on emergency preparedness and response; integrates social, environmental and economic dimensions; and addresses human and Indigenous rights through its focus on a just society.

From 2013 to 2019, the 100 Resilient Cities programme used the framework to engage 100 member cities worldwide in the implementation of inclusive, holistic strategies for resilience to physical, social, and economic challenges. A [Global Resilient Cities Network](#) is currently under development.

FOR COMMUNITIES

This framework, along with the accompanying index, offers communities – particularly more complex city systems – a benchmarking tool to understand resilience through the strengths and weaknesses of their systems. It also offers guidance on how to enhance community resilience.

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The City Resilience Framework helps companies understand how complex community systems can enhance or erode resilience, how communities understand their own resilience, and it helps companies identify what are key issues for communities. The framework does not easily lend itself to helping companies understand or quantify their impact or determine their role in supporting community resilience.

THE DOUGHNUT MODEL AND THE CITY DOUGHNUT

The [Doughnut Model](#) introduces social sustainability into the Planetary Boundaries framework for environmental stewardship¹² by identifying the Safe and Just Space for Humanity that keeps the impacts of socio-economic activity between an inner minimum threshold for human thriving (the Social Foundation) and an outer maximum threshold for environmental sustainability (the Planetary Boundaries).¹³

The framework has been deployed by the city of Amsterdam as the [City Doughnut](#), to understand and improve the city’s resilience as a system. Thus, the Doughnut framework appears to be scalable from the planetary level down to the community level (or, at this stage, to larger communities at least). The notion of a social foundation incorporates basic human rights. The framework does not explicitly address Indigenous rights, though they could be incorporated. With global sustainability as its original objective, the model does not focus on acute shocks and emergency response, but it continues to be tested and refined at the city level.

FOR COMMUNITIES

The City Doughnut uses the planetary model to develop a practical tool to foster community resilience. While the tool does not currently offer an assessment or roadmap, it helps create a holistic community perspective (“city portrait”) through social, ecological, local, and global lenses. This portrait is designed to become the starting point for collaboration on innovative approaches to address system-level challenges.

FOR COMPANIES

The City Doughnut model helps companies identify key dimensions that are necessary to foster community resilience. By participating as a supportive stakeholder in a community’s doughnut process to develop a city portrait, companies have the opportunity to support systems change and resilience.

The community portrait sets a vision for resilience and can help a company better understand its local context. Companies could also use the framework as a lens through which to evaluate the type and scope of their own impacts on community resilience.

¹² Johan Rockström and others, *Planetary Boundaries: Exploring the Safe Operating Space for Humanity*, (Ecology and Society, 2009) 14(2): 32. <http://www.stockholmresilience.org/download/18.8615c78125078c8d3380002197/ES-2009-3180.pdf>

¹³ Kate Raworth, *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist*, (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2017).

EMBEDDING PROJECT PRIORITISATION RADAR

The Issues Prioritisation Radar tool (discussed in our [Embedded Strategies for the Sustainability Transition guide](#)) was developed by the Embedding Project as a supplement or alternative to current materiality matrix processes. The radar aims to help organisations evaluate the business relevance of emerging issues, understand their direct and indirect environmental, social, and governance impacts, and recognise their potential to influence positive systems change.

The radar includes social, environmental, and economic dimensions and encourages users to take a systems lens. It explicitly addresses community resilience. The radar embraces human rights and Indigenous rights and is designed to scale from individual company locations to cross-boundary structures and multinational enterprises.

FOR COMMUNITIES

This tool, designed primarily for companies, is less directly applicable to communities seeking to understand and strengthen their community resilience. However, it can help communities better understand the ways in which specific companies (or business in general) can impact local resilience or vulnerability and, as a result, it can help inform and enhance community development plans and community-company relations.

FOR COMPANIES

Drawing upon several different community resilience frameworks, the tool helps companies evaluate the business relevance of community resilience, understand their own direct and indirect environmental, social, and governance impacts, and recognise their potential to support resilience in the communities where they operate. The Radar does not exhaustively cover the elements of community resilience, but instead focuses on those issues most likely to intersect with companies' spheres of influence.

ICOR COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

In 2016 the International Consortium for Organizational Resilience designed a [framework](#) identifying five primary systems on which all communities function and which contribute to either vulnerability or resilience: 1) a healthy environment, 2) responsible governance, 3) a strong economy, 4) a prepared system, and 5) quality of life. This framework suggests that each of these systems are interconnected and that resilience increases when these systems are strong and flexible, can evolve and adapt when needed, and can take advantage of opportunity.

This holistic systems-based framework embraces social and natural systems, foundations and stocks of wellbeing, and emergency preparedness. However, some macroeconomic and geopolitical components may not translate as well to single or smaller communities. And while several basic human rights are included, Indigenous rights are not explicitly addressed.

FOR COMMUNITIES

While this framework is not a how-to guide or benchmarking tool, it helps communities understand what dimensions and specific characteristics help build community resilience.

Recognising there is no one-size-fits-all approach to resilience building, ICOR encourages each community to design a local resilience vision and roadmap, taking a systems lens.

FOR COMPANIES

This framework helps companies adopt a systems lens on community resilience and identifies key dimensions that contribute to community resilience from the local to the national level.

The framework does not include metrics; as such it supports issue identification but does not help companies understand or measure their community resilience impacts.

THE OECD FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING WELLBEING AND PROGRESS

Recognising that macro-economic indicators are not reflective of local living conditions, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) designed a [framework](#) to measure wellbeing and progress, built around three distinct domains: 1) material conditions, 2) quality of life, and 3) sustainability. The framework addresses both current wellbeing (foundations) and resources for future wellbeing (stocks or capitals) and includes such dimensions as safety, civil engagement, and natural, economic, human, and social capital. Measurement focuses on averages, inequalities between groups, inequalities between top and bottom performers, and deprivations.

The framework includes basic human rights but does not explicitly address Indigenous rights. It offers a macro perspective at the societal level or even global level, which does not always translate easily to the community level, particularly for economic dimensions. Its focus on wellbeing does not explicitly address disaster risk reduction, emergency response, or adaptation.

Research into wellbeing and its many dimensions continues as part of the OECD's Better Life Initiative.

FOR COMMUNITIES

This framework helps communities identify key issues in supporting a social foundation of wellbeing and the resources needed to maintain wellbeing in the longer term but does not provide a roadmap or assessment tool or benchmark to help advance community resilience.

FOR COMPANIES

The framework's focus on wellbeing and progress offers companies a lens on key areas that matter in understanding community resilience against chronic stresses. It also offers an input in the identification of potential sources of local such chronic stresses. The framework does not help companies understand or measure their own community resilience impacts.

POVERTY SPOTLIGHT

[Poverty Spotlight](#) is both a metric of the multiple dimensions of poverty and a methodology to help families to understand and map their levels of poverty and to develop strategies to improve their situation.

The Poverty Spotlight identifies six interconnected dimensions of poverty: 1) Income & Employment, 2) Health & Environment, 3) Housing & Infrastructure, 4) Education & Culture, 5) Organisation & Participation, 6) Interiority & Motivation.

Through a visual self-evaluation survey, families identify their poverty status (extreme poverty, poverty, or nonpoverty) for 50 indicators. Combined, these then form the foundation for a household-specific action plan to overcome poverty.

FOR COMMUNITIES

The framework focuses on individual households and aims to inspire families to overcome elements of poverty identified in a poverty map. Geo-tagged household assessments generate poverty maps for communities that can be used by communities and community organisations to understand prevalence of poverty dimensions and to provide targeted supports or interventions.

FOR COMPANIES

This framework and the aggregate measurements of family self-assessment helps companies understand the poverty status of communities. This helps support issue identification and potential areas for company support, but does not help companies understand or measure their community resilience impacts.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

[The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) (UN SDGs) were adopted in 2015 by UN member states as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The 17 goals and 169 targets offer a common language and a roadmap toward socially and environmentally sustainable development at a global level. As the goals are framed at a national level, it can be challenging to apply them at the community level.

The SDGs address human rights and reference Indigenous Peoples, but do not reference Indigenous rights. Some of the underlying targets do address disaster risk reduction, emergency response, and adaptation. And while these high-level goals for sustainable development do not directly translate into a strategy for resilience building in local contexts, they do offer common language that can help bring governments, companies, development organisations, academia, and others together in a global effort to leave no one behind.

FOR COMMUNITIES

The high-level UN Sustainable Development Goals and metrics do not easily lend themselves to strategy development for local resilience building but can help communities understand the issues that contribute to their sustainability.

FOR COMPANIES

The SDGs are not so much a driver for company strategy, as they provide an opportunity, and globally relevant language, for companies to engage with communities and countries about their development priorities. The framework can help companies understand and communicate how their local contributions advance the global commitment to leave no one behind.

VITAL SIGNS

The [Vital Signs](#) framework is a community-driven data program developed by Community Foundations of Canada to measure community vitality, and has been implemented in more than 100 communities around the world. Vital Signs is a community check-up framework that uses local knowledge to assess community wellbeing across 70 indicators and to support action towards improved quality of life. The process focuses on gathering relevant data to support civic engagement and designing local solutions to improve community wellness. The community organisation leading the collaborative effort typically produces a [Vital Signs report](#), which may detail findings, insights, community priorities, and initiatives seeking support.

The framework has aligned the data in its assessment process with the UN Sustainable Development goals but maintains an intentional lens on local context and relevance to support local solutions. Focus on relevant demographic groups can help ensure Indigenous communities’ unique realities are integrated, but there does not appear to be an express focus on Indigenous rights.

FOR COMMUNITIES

The Vital Signs framework and Vital Conversations help your community gain insight into local community wellness levels. They are typically initiated by community organisations or foundations, but engage broad community input to produce insights, priorities, and actionable initiatives that foster local wellness.

FOR COMPANIES

This framework seeks out insights through community input, including input from local decision-makers. Your company may be invited to participate. The framework does not help your company understand or measure its community resilience impacts, but the process and resulting report support issue identification and may explicitly identify community investment opportunities.

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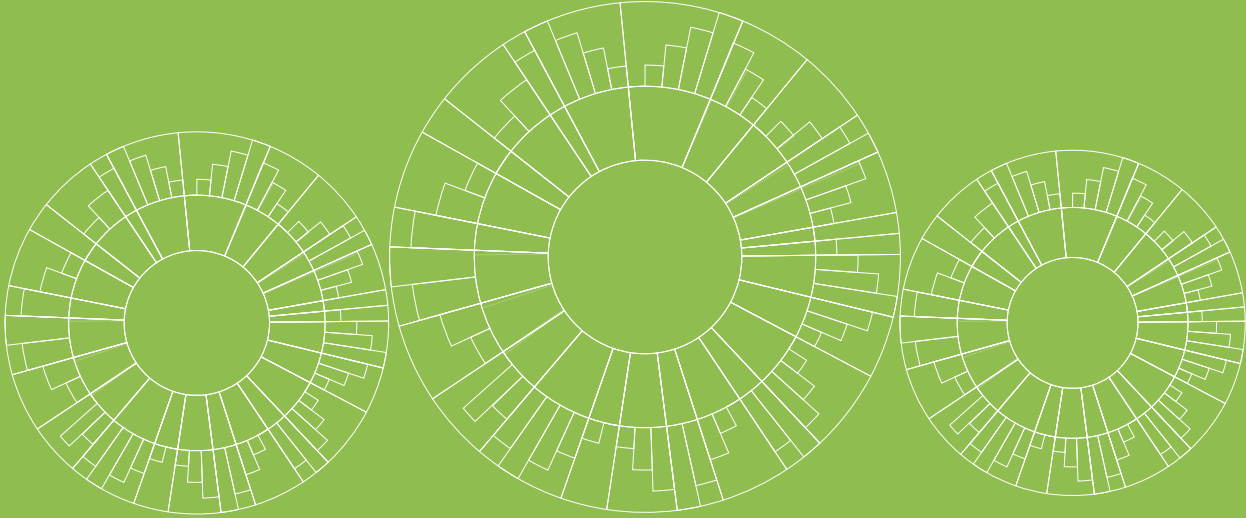
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