CabinetOffice

Strategic National Framework on Community Resilience

March 2011

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This framework explores the role and resilience of individuals and communities before, during and after an emergency. Local emergency responders will always have to prioritise those in greatest need during an emergency, focusing their efforts where life is in danger. There will be times when individuals and communities are affected by an emergency but are not in immediate danger and will have to look after themselves and each other for a period until any necessary external assistance can be provided. Communities will also need to work together, and with service providers, to determine how they recover from an emergency. This framework, therefore, invites individuals and communities to prepare themselves in the event of an emergency and provides examples of how to do so.

The framework is intended to provide the national statement for how individual and community resilience can work. It should be relevant to all hazards and threats, and all communities. The framework covers the drivers for this work, consultation work to date, proposed policy statement, scope, aims and timescales. It sets out the benefits of engaging in community resilience and outlines the Government contribution to this work. This programme is part of the Government's 'Big Society' commitment to reduce the barriers which prevent people from being able to help themselves and to become more resilient to shocks.

The framework is intended to engage interest and facilitate discussion between central government departments and agencies, devolved administrations, emergency services, local authorities, relevant voluntary sector bodies, private sector bodies, elected members and community and faith groups. All of these bodies can have a part to play in supporting the building of community resilience.

The establishment of this programme demonstrates the Government's commitment to enhancing our national security, including by seeking to build and develop the existing structures and capabilities with a contribution from interested members of the public to strengthen resilience at a local level. This commitment was set out in the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review, published in 2010.

The framework has been amended using the results of a public consultation held between March and July 2010. The Government response to the consultation can be found at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/communityresilience.

1.1 Definitions

Throughout the document, resilience is defined as:

"The capacity of an individual, community or system to adapt in order to sustain an acceptable level of function, structure, and identity"[1]

A working definition of community resilience is given as:

"Communities and individuals harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves in an emergency, in a way that complements the response of the emergency services."[2]

These definitions will be used throughout this framework and associated products.

1.2 The framework:

- provides a set of guiding principles which invite individuals, communities and practitioners to engage in community resilience;

- explains the desired outcomes of the Programme and what success can look like;

- facilitates dialogue between relevant partners to share good practice in community resilience and seek views on the proposed way forward;

- sets the national direction for community resilience, outlining the proposed Government contribution and how this relates to local activity;

- outlines the roles of the wide range of public and private sector bodies involved in supporting community resilience; and

- seeks support and ideas for further developing this work.

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1 Edwards C (2009) *Resilient Nation*, London, Demos
2 *Civil Protection Lexicon* (2010) www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/cplexicon

1.3 The aims of the Community Resilience Programme are to:

- increase individual, family and community resilience against all threats and hazards;

- support and enable existing community resilience, and expand and grow these successful models of community resilience in other areas;

- remove the barriers which inhibit or prevent participation in community resilience at a local level;

- support effective dialogue between the community and the practitioners supporting them;

- raise awareness and understanding of risk and the local emergency response capability in order to motivate and sustain self resilience;

- provide tools to allow communities and individuals to articulate the benefits of emergency preparedness to the wider community; and

- provide a shared framework to support cross-sector activity at all levels in a way that ensures sufficient flexibility to make community resilience relevant and workable in each local area/community.

The framework sets out a programme of activity for the Government to contribute to building and enhancing community resilience in the UK. The framework and associated products are intended as a set of guiding principles which encourage and enable people to take steps to be prepared for an emergency and to encourage their community to do the same. The framework does not require or compel anyone to prepare at an individual level, or on behalf of their community, but it does set out the possible benefits of doing so.

1.4 The Government believes that this approach will:

- facilitate an exchange of ideas at all levels;

- provide an explanation of the benefits of this work to gain support and engagement; and

- set out a framework that does not overrule or interfere with what has already been done - it is a proposed way forward, not a mandated statement of expectations for individuals, communities or local emergency responders.

1.5 The Programme

The first phase of the Programme has been to speak to some people already involved in doing this work at a local level. They have provided us with a comprehensive and valuable source of advice and guidance. The second phase has used their feedback to develop this document and associated guidance and templates.

The third phase of the Programme (from Spring 2011) will deliver further projects and products requested by those we have spoken to, such as fact sheets on insurance and liability, and toolkits for motivating and incentivising participation in community resilience by those not currently engaged in community emergency planning. The third phase will also include supporting and seeding local initiatives by making tools and opportunities available to communities that have not previously engaged in resilience activity.

1.6 Providing feedback

We will continue to refine and add to these documents and welcome views on this and other aspects of the Programme on an ongoing basis. Please email us at community.resilience@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk.

What other information is available on Community Resilience?

The Preparing for Emergencies – Guide for Communities document introduces you to the first steps you could take to become better prepared to deal with emergencies. It uses case studies to explain the benefits experienced by communities that are already involved in community resilience. You are likely to find this document most useful if you are new to community resilience and want to find out more about what is involved.

The Community Emergency Plan Toolkit sets out a number of practical suggestions for how you can get started in building resilience in your community. This includes a suggested generic template plan that you can adapt for use locally. You are likely to find this document most useful if you want to see an example of the practical steps you could take to create a community emergency plan.

The Preparing for Emergencies web pages are aimed at individuals, families, communities and businesses that want to find out more about how they can prepare for emergencies. The pages aim to answer questions about individual and community resilience and increase awareness of risks and vulnerability to risk. They also set out some easy steps for how you can improve your household preparedness. You are likely to find this document most useful if you would like more general information about emergency preparedness.

2. INTRODUCTION

Community resilience is a part of many communities and it continually changes and evolves. While the goodwill and initiative that people demonstrate on the day during an emergency is vital, people are now taking steps individually and collectively to prepare themselves in advance of an emergency actually happening. They are using existing community networks and structures or forming local Community Emergency Groups to engage with local emergency responders to ensure a co-ordinated response. In many areas, people are now taking responsibility for their own resilience and recovery, challenging decision makers in their local area to ensure that adequate provisions and preparations are made in the event of an emergency and determining how recovery occurs and improvements should be made.

The framework has been amended using the results of a public consultation held between March and July 2010. The Government Response to the Consultation can be found at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/communityresilience.

2.1 Purpose

This framework sets out the drivers, existing good practice, scope, aims and workstreams for a long-term programme to increase the personal and community resilience of the UK population. Its purpose is to set out the proposed national framework for community resilience in order to enable individuals and communities to be more prepared and more resilient when facing emergencies and their consequences. The Programme has been designed using the results of national consultation, led by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office.

This framework uses the good examples of community resilience activity seen all across the UK. It builds on the existing work done in communities with the aim of enabling other areas to use these successful models and adapt them to their locality.

The Government contribution to community resilience is not to dictate or measure what is being or should be done locally. Instead, the role is to support and enable local activity by making existing good practice available to others who are interested, and removing the barriers and debunking the myths which prevent communities from taking local action.

2.2 Background

The National Risk Register illustrates the kinds of risks the country as a whole faces and the potential impacts should these risks become realities. Major coastal flooding, flu pandemics and attacks on the transport system are just some of the risks the UK is preparing for with the potential to cause significant consequences.

We rely on complex and interdependent infrastructure to go about our daily lives. Food supply chains reach across the globe and movement of people and animals create opportunities for diseases to spread quickly. Transport networks enable us to

move around with relative ease and independence. Our ability to live day to day relies on these systems operating efficiently. The consequences of emergencies are demonstrated by the impacts on the infrastructure we rely on. This was shown in the Cumbrian floods of 2009 where a significant number of bridges and other infrastructure were lost, some of which will take years to rebuild.

In his report on the floods of summer 2007, Sir Michael Pitt highlighted the benefits of community resilience and recommended that the Government:[3]

"...should establish a programme to support and encourage individuals and communities to be better prepared and more self reliant during emergencies, allowing the authorities to focus on those areas and people in greatest need."

The Government accepted this recommendation and asked the Civil Contingencies Secretariat to consider what the Government contribution should be.

The Programme outlined in this framework encourages people to think about their vulnerabilities using the information about risks placed in the public domain and to consider the infrastructure they rely on. Using this information, the next steps are for people to consider what risks they face and whether they need to take steps to prepare themselves to deal with the potential consequences of an emergency.

The framework is intended to engage interest and facilitate discussion between government departments and agencies, devolved administrations, emergency services, local authorities, relevant voluntary sector bodies, private sector bodies, elected members and community and faith groups. All of these bodies can have a part to play in supporting the building of community resilience.

The establishment of this Programme demonstrates the Government's commitment to enhancing our national security, including by seeking to build and develop the existing structures and capabilities with a contribution from interested members of the public to strengthen resilience at a local level.

2.3 Framework

This framework is aimed at Government departments and agencies, local emergency responders, voluntary sector bodies, researchers and academics, faith

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3 Sir Michael Pitt (2007) *The Pitt Review: Lessons learned from the 2007 floods*, London, Cabinet Office

groups and interested members of the public. It is intended to be used as a way of drawing attention to the importance of community resilience and to provide guiding principles from which to operate.

2.4 The framework:

- provides a set of guiding principles which invite individuals, communities and practitioners to engage in community resilience;

- explains the desired outcomes of the Programme and what success can look like;

- facilitates dialogue between relevant partners to share good practice in community resilience and seek views on the proposed way forward;

- sets the national direction for community resilience, outlining the proposed Government contribution and how this relates to local activity;

- outlines the roles of the wide range of public and private sector bodies involved in supporting community resilience; and

- seeks support and ideas for further developing this work.

3. DEFINITIONS

This chapter sets out the definitions that will be used by the Programme and within this framework.

3.1 Emergency

The non-statutory guidance accompanying the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) provides the following definition of an emergency which is used by emergency responders to guide them in their planning:

"An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom; the environment of a place in the United Kingdom; or the security of the United Kingdom or of a place in the United Kingdom."[4]

However, communities and individuals are free to determine what an emergency means to them and may take steps which, for example, make them better equipped to detect house fires or deal with sudden illness.

3.2 Resilience

The Demos publication *Resilient Nation* defined resilience as:

"The capacity of an individual, community or system to adapt in order to sustain an acceptable level of function, structure, and identity."[5]

In his review of the 2007 flooding in England and Wales, Sir Michael Pitt defines resilience as:

"The ability of a system or organisation to withstand and recover from adversity."

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4 *Emergency Response and Recovery* (2009), London, Cabinet Office
5 Edwards C (2009) *Resilient Nation*, London, Demos

For the purposes of this document, we are using the first of these definitions, but the spirit that we are trying to achieve is captured in both.

Resilience is also a key part of other kinds of community activity, for example the Transition Towns movement and the Greening Campaign where resilience is a longer term ambition for communities looking to adapt to climate change. The consultation has shown that social capital built through community resilience creates wider benefits for the community. Similarly, the benefits to the community of social capital are best demonstrated in the way in which a community copes during and after an emergency.

3.3 Personal or individual resilience

Individual resilience is not a constant state. Vulnerability and resilience can change depending on factors such as location, health, financial stability and knowledge.

Individual resilience is about having an informed understanding of the risks faced and the likely impacts of those risks. The work to date has explored the idea that even if individuals have an understanding of risk, they need to be able to assess their proximity or vulnerability to these risks and use this as motivation to act and be prepared.

3.4 Community Resilience

The definition of community resilience used throughout this framework is:

"Communities and individuals harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves in an emergency, in a way that complements the response of the emergency services."[6]

In general terms, communities are groups of people linked by a common bond. In this framework, the definitions of community and communities have been informed by the consultation process undertaken by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat. These definitions are intended to be used to think about groups that are already or could be involved in community resilience activity. The framework does not create or use a single definition of community, but instead refers to four conceptual 'communities' relevant to this work.

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6 *Civil Protection Lexicon* (2010) www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/cplexicon

3.5 Geographical communities

These communities may have recognised geographical boundaries such as parishes, wards or towns, or could be a result of proximity, for example a street, tower block or village. The geographical community is likely to be affected by the same type of natural hazard (such as flooding) and may (but not necessarily) have a shared government/authority such as a parish or ward council.

Geographical communities are the obvious choice for, and primary beneficiary of, community resilience - however many people do not recognise their community as the people they live near. As such, other communities (such as those outlined below) should be considered as valid groups within which to prepare for emergencies.

3.6 Communities of 'Interest'

These communities consist of groups of people who have affiliations which have grown as a result of their interaction with each other through a shared interest or work, such as sports clubs, parent groups, faith groups, online communities and business groups. Members of these communities are generally people voluntarily doing something together to achieve a common purpose but possibly for different reasons.

3.7 Communities of 'Circumstance'

These communities are created when groups of people are affected by the same incident, such as a train crash. These groups of individuals are unlikely to have the same interests or come from the same geographical area but may form a community in the aftermath of an event. Although this sense of community may be temporary, some communities of circumstance grow and are sustained in the long-term following an emergency.

3.8 Communities of 'Supporters'

This refers to the communities within organisations (both statutory and voluntary) that provide emergency response services including planning for and responding to emergencies, for example, police officers, fire-fighters, local authority emergency planning officers, St. John Ambulance or Salvation Army volunteers, special constables and flood wardens.

The people providing these services will also be members of a geographical community. These practitioners often live and work in the same area and therefore can be affected in the same way as the geographical communities they serve, as well as being required to be involved in formal emergency response activity.

4. THE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROGRAMME

4.1 The aims of the Community Resilience Programme are to:

- increase individual, family and community resilience against all threats and hazards;

- support and enable existing community resilience, and expand and grow these successful models of community resilience in other areas;

- remove the barriers which inhibit or prevent participation in community resilience at a local level;

- support effective dialogue between the community and the practitioners supporting them;

- raise awareness and understanding of risk and the local emergency response capability in order to motivate and sustain self resilience;

- provide tools to allow communities and individuals to articulate the benefits of emergency preparedness to the wider community; and

- provide a shared framework to support cross-sector activity at all levels in a way that ensures sufficient flexibility to make community resilience relevant and workable in each local area/community.

4.2 Scope

The Programme sets out the proposed UK Government contribution to community resilience in England and Wales, although the products will be freely available to all. The implementation of community resilience initiatives in Wales will need to take account of devolved issues. Further details of the work being done in the Devolved Administrations are available at http://walesresilience.org (Wales) and http://www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/justice/public-safety/ready-scotland (Scotland).

Many communities, emergency responders and voluntary sector organisations already have in place arrangements for building and supporting community resilience. The Government's role in building community resilience is not to prescribe and override what this should look like in local areas but to share good practice from existing models.

The Programme will, therefore, work in partnership with those groups, government departments and wider community networks to further understand activity already underway and learn from good practice models. The Programme will engage representatives from these groups and use their expertise to steer and direct its work.

The Programme will also include work to increase public understanding of risk and awareness of how emergency responders work to serve local communities before, during and after an emergency. Responsibility for communicating and managing national risks is owned by the Government which publishes information about risk and how to manage risk through products such as the [National Risk Register](#). The framework also invites those responsible for risk communication at a local level to consider how they might also increase awareness and understanding of risk by enhancing the public accessibility of the Community Risk Register (as part of discharging duties to communicate with the public). Further detail about this will be included in the revised *Emergency Preparedness* and *Local Risk Assessment Guidance* published by the Cabinet Office.

The consultation findings highlighted concerns about a culture in which people expect immediate support and assistance whatever the emergency and the impact on them. Emergency services will always have to prioritise those in greatest need during an emergency, predominantly where life is in danger. Increasing public awareness of risk will be related to educating people about the services they can expect to receive and how to influence those services in the response and recovery phase of an incident.

4.3 Principles/Approach

The Programme will be based on the following principles:

- community resilience work should prepare for all relevant hazards and threats, prioritised as the community considers appropriate.

- participation should be on a voluntary basis.

- community resilience should be done in the spirit of co-operation, with community members acting in support of each other and the emergency services.

- the Government role is to support, empower and facilitate; ownership should always be retained by communities who have chosen to get involved in this work.

- responders do not have a duty to facilitate or support community activity. Responders would however, be expected to try and provide support where asked to by their communities.

- responders, as local service providers, who offer support and encouragement to communities should try to help them to focus on what the community considers to be the biggest and most relevant risks.

- community resilience activity should be mainstreamed into existing citizen engagement initiatives where possible in order to sustain interest and motivation, and to use local knowledge and networks effectively.

- community members should not put themselves or others at risk during an emergency.

- responders and the Government should consider how to make risk information available at the point at which people need to know about it rather than just when we wish to make it available.

4.4 Key features of a resilient community

This section sets out some of the key features we believe can be seen in resilient communities. Communities may not have all or even many of these features, but these features have been seen in the communities we have engaged with who have undertaken resilience planning to date:

- People in resilient communities use their existing skills, knowledge and resources to prepare for, and deal with, the consequences of emergencies or major incidents.

- They adapt their everyday skills and use them in extraordinary circumstances.

- People in resilient communities are aware of the risks that may affect them. They understand the links between risks assessed at a national level and those that exist in their local area, and how this might make them vulnerable. This helps them to take action to prepare for the consequences of emergencies.

- The resilient community has a champion, someone who communicates the benefits of community resilience to the wider community. Community resilience champions use their skills and enthusiasm to motivate and encourage others to get involved and stay involved and are recognised as trusted figures by the community.

- Resilient communities work in partnership with the emergency services, their local authority and other relevant organisations before, during and after an emergency. These relationships ensure that community resilience activities complement the work of the emergency services and can be undertaken safely.

- Resilient communities consist of resilient individuals who have taken steps to make their homes and families more resilient. Resilient individuals are aware of their skills, experience and resources and how to deploy these to best effect during an emergency.

- Members of resilient communities are actively involved in influencing and making decisions affecting them. They take an interest in their environment and act in the interest of the community to protect assets and facilities.

4.5 Phasing and timetable for the Community Resilience Programme

The Community Resilience Programme is a long-term programme leading to cultural and behavioural change across the country. It has been split into four phases:

Phase 1 – Learning from those already engaged in community resilience activities and identifying good practice (November 2008 - March 2010).

Phase 2 – Development of, and consultation on, key guidance documents, seeking validation from local experts on the content and approach (March 2010 – spring 2011).

Phase 3 – Enabling local areas to use the guidance documents to target existing community groups, organisations and networks that are not yet engaged in preparing for emergencies. Supporting and seeding local initiatives to build resilience by giving local communities opportunities and tools to be able to undertake resilience and preparedness activity (spring 2011 onwards).

Phase 4 – Assessing the Government's contribution to determine what more is needed, consolidating existing contribution and continuing to provide support to ongoing projects (late 2011 onwards).

4.6 Projects

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office will continue to lead the Community Resilience Programme, working in partnership with other government departments, the Devolved Administrations and partner organisations.

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat will continue to provide support to third party projects, for example, the *Developing Community Resilience through Schools Project* (as referenced in chapter 6). The nature of this support will depend on what is required by those leading the project and available resources. It could include:

- help to make links to other relevant projects;
- promoting projects to other partners, Ministers, international counterparts and to the media;
- collation and sharing of case studies;
- providing advice and expertise on what has worked elsewhere;
- use local learning to inform national policy;
- connecting community groups so they can help each other with specific issues; and
- providing a steering function as to how projects can be best aligned with Government policy.

4.7 Measuring success

The success of individual and community resilience planning is difficult to measure. Emergencies can have tragic consequences. Losing loved ones, homes and precious possessions are just some of the ways we can be affected by emergencies. The emotional and physical stress of these incidents should not be underestimated for the short or long term. Each person affected will recover from an emergency in their own way and at their own pace.

The early response following an emergency is necessarily focused on the preservation of life. At the same time, those providing support to the community during emergencies are mindful of the potential human consequences of the way in which practical and emotional support is delivered.

Successful community resilience should be determined by the communities that own the process. Government is not appropriately placed to determine what success looks like at a local level; this must be decided by the local community which owns the process and the outcomes. Suggested ways to assess whether the preparedness work undertaken by communities is being effective include considering the following questions:

- Is the community well informed about risks to their community and their vulnerability to those risks?

- Does the community feel confident about their ability to cope and adapt should risks become realities?

- Is the community in dialogue with local emergency responders tasked with providing the professional response to an emergency and voluntary sector providers?

The real test of community resilience will be how communities cope during an emergency, particularly emergencies with significant impacts, and how they respond to and recover from those emergencies. Emergencies often cause destruction of property and infrastructure, and sometimes cause loss of life. The recovery from these events can be protracted and painful. The emotional impact of emergencies will affect how a community perceives its own recovery and the help it receives. As such, any success measures need to account for the emotional impact of emergencies on those affected and how this will determine 'successful' response and recovery.

4.8 Provision of funding and resources

There is no dedicated funding for the Programme, but guidance on how to access possible funding options is provided to communities seeking to participate within the *Preparing for Emergencies – Guide for Communities* document. The findings from our consultation work to date indicated that communities do not need to invest significant amounts of money to become prepared. For example, some rural communities we have spoken to have spent no more than £200 procuring equipment for a community emergency box.

The valuable investment in this process comes from the time given by community members to consider how best to prepare themselves. Community members have explained that they needed information and support from the Government and local emergency responders, not necessarily large amounts of investment or grant money. In addition, communities required local risk information to be available and accessible to everyone, including those who are not online. However, having some funding for printing materials was helpful. We are working with the Office for Civil Society to explore opportunities for including community resilience into the scope of any future Big Society funding.

4.9 Engaging government and local emergency responders

Local emergency responders are already actively engaged in supporting community resilience in many areas. Methods for achieving this and measures of success vary from area to area. This framework sets out options for participation in aiding communities to become more resilient and explains the benefits of such participation. This has been informed by existing good practice.

The supporting guidance accompanying the Civil Contingencies Act (*Emergency Preparedness* and *Emergency Response and Recovery*) encourages those delivering front line services to consider the needs of the community and engage community members when developing and delivering services to them. This framework aims to encourage local emergency responders to connect their work (such as the production of Community Risk Registers) more effectively to the work of the community and further articulate the work they do to increase resilience in local areas and involve the community in emergency planning and exercises.

The framework invites those supporting activity at a local level to consider possible levers and incentives to motivate and sustain community interest in resilience planning and preparedness. This could include arranging events for community emergency co-ordinators and groups, and providing recognition and praise ranging from a 'thank you' from the local mayor to more formal recognition for example via the honours system.

Further information about how to do this, including examples of good practice, will be contained in the Supporters Toolkit to be published in Phase 3 of the project.

4.10 Supporting community members

Consultation preceding the production of this framework considered existing incentives and rewards and found creative, simple and low-cost options such as 'thank you' letters from community leaders and/or figures of authority to be effective. Recognition of the value of the community's work was deemed by the consultation participants to be the appropriate reward for building community resilience.

The benefits of some form of accreditation for this work were considered during the consultation, but it was recognised that the bureaucracy and restrictions that this might place on local activity would be detrimental to the Programme. This sort of approach would also conflict with the principles that community resilience is owned by the community, not something driven and controlled by the Government.

4.11 Encouraging corporate resilience

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat is in the process of producing a Corporate Resilience Strategy which will be published on the UK Resilience web pages (expected in 2011). This strategy will outline the Government's strategic objectives for corporate resilience – building business resilience to emergencies. Alongside this work, the Civil Contingencies Secretariat will also consider how to encourage corporate support for community resilience. This will include:

- how businesses might be able to support their staff and local community during an emergency;

- encouraging local businesses to get involved in local community emergency plans; and

- encouraging retailers to look for commercial opportunities to promote community resilience.

A number of pilot ideas for corporate support were offered by businesses during the consultation period. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat will offer support to these organisations to find suitable communities that they can work with.

4.12 Limitations

All guidance and associated products delivered by the Programme will reiterate the need for community members to act safely and not to put themselves or others at risk when responding to an emergency. All work done by the community should be safe and appropriate. The Government does not expect the public to take unnecessary risks during an emergency.

5. ROLES (LINKS AND INTERDEPENDENCIES)

Effective community resilience will rely on good working relationships within communities, between communities and those who support them on a professional or voluntary basis, and between agencies and organisations engaged in this work. It is, therefore, important that all parties are clear about their roles and the linkages and interdependencies between them. These are outlined below.

5.1 Community

Community members are encouraged to develop their individual, household and community resilience. Key to the success of this is for the public to have access to the right information about risks both locally and nationally, and details of how to consider their proximity to these risks and any potential impacts. Guidance to individuals, households and communities can be found at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/communityresilience.

5.2 Elected Members

Elected members are chosen by their local communities to represent their interests. Elected members can play an important role in communicating with their constituents before, during and after an emergency and should consider what role they could play in facilitating and encouraging community resilience activity in their local areas. Good practice examples of elected members leading this work in their community exist in a number of places around the country. The consultation has highlighted some effective local guidance to elected members on supporting community resilience. This will be used to produce generic guidance that can be used locally.

5.3 Category 1 Responders

Category 1 Responders[7] are asked to continue to fulfil the duties set out in the Civil Contingencies Act on warning and informing the public. They may also wish to

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7 A person or body listed in part 1 of schedule 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act, normally at the core of the response to an emergency. This includes police, fire and ambulance services as well as local authorities and the Environment Agency.

consider involving members of the community in assessing risk and finding ways of building community resilience, where resources allow. This will be set out in the revised *Emergency Preparedness*.

Category 1 Responders regularly carry out exercises to test their emergency plans and train staff in how to use them. Some areas already seek opportunities to involve members of the community in these exercises. Category 1 Responders are invited to consider how they might build on existing good practice in their area to enhance community resilience through involving the community in training and exercising.

5.4 Voluntary and faith sectors

The voluntary and faith sectors will already have strong community links and networks that can be built upon. Some voluntary sector organisations are already closely involved with emergency preparedness activities (such as the British Red Cross, St John Ambulance, Salvation Army and WRVS).

The framework invites voluntary organisations that do not have emergency response as their primary objective but do have an interest in resilience issues, for example Neighbourhood Watch groups or Scouts developing skills in sustainable living and community engagement, to engage in the Programme.

The framework also invites faith communities to consider what role they might play in supporting community resilience, for example through their existing network of volunteers and provision of facilities, etc.

5.5 Cabinet Office

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office is charged with delivering the Community Resilience Programme including developing this national framework for community and personal resilience. It is also responsible for publishing documents informing the public about national risk and how to prepare for risks, such as through the National Risk Register. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat will have an important role in sharing good practice across the country.

The Cabinet Office will report the work of the Programme to the Cabinet Committee responsible for resilience and will provide secretariat support to the Community Resilience Programme Steering Group overseeing the work of the Programme. Details of this group can be found www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/communityresilience.

The Cabinet Office has considered potential legislative changes to the Civil Contingencies Act, regulations and guidance (such as *Emergency Preparedness*) required to facilitate this work. This has been done as part of the Civil Contingencies Act Enhancement Programme. The response has shown that new legislation is not necessary but a better understanding of how to support community resilience, including through enhanced Community Risk Registers, would be useful. These views are being considered in the redrafting of relevant chapters of *Emergency Preparedness* and in the provision of advice under the Community Resilience Programme.

5.6 Government departments

All government departments have been asked to deliver the commitments and principles of the Big Society Agenda, as led by the Office for Civil Society within the Cabinet Office. Any departments with relevant workstreams and programmes are engaged with the Civil Contingencies Secretariat through the Community Resilience Programme Steering Group to provide advice and comment on the developing products in order to ensure consistency with existing citizen engagement initiatives.

5.7 Devolved Administrations

The framework applies to England and Wales only but is, however, available to all areas of the UK. Extensive work is under way in Wales and Scotland to make a government contribution to community resilience. Building on the learning from this Programme, Welsh and Scottish colleagues are developing local approaches to supporting community resilience and identifying existing good practice.

6. WORK TO DATE

6.1 Consultation process/workshops

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat arranged three national workshops from November 2008 to February 2009 to consult interested parties on community resilience and the Government's contribution to this work. The workshops were held in London, Birmingham and Manchester and were attended by over 200 organisations and 300 delegates. Those invited included representatives from all local emergency responders, the voluntary sector, industry, government and members of the community interested in personal and community resilience.

The workshops consisted of a range of presentations from those with experience in organising community resilience activity in their local community, and from practitioners who support community members. There were also a series of discussion sessions to gather information and experience, define terms and understand expectations of what the Government's contribution should be. The workshop outcomes can be found at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/communityresilience.

The workshops were complemented by a subsequent series of visits and meetings with partners across the UK to enable the team to test the findings from the workshops and see community resilience in action. This included attending parish council meetings, visiting a community drop-in centre, community safety learning resource centres, local community resilience events, hospital-based drop-in centres, allotment gardens and the Scouts' HQ. We are very grateful to all those people who shared with us their time and knowledge with us.

6.2 Support to existing projects

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat has provided support to existing community resilience projects such as the Developing Community Resilience Through Schools project, led by Essex and Nottinghamshire County Councils and other partners across the UK. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat representatives sit on both the project working group and the project board, providing support and advice to the local authorities involved on how to create products which can be shared and used nationally to build community resilience in schools. The final products can be found at www.schoolemergencies.co.uk and we would encourage all interested parties to use these resources.

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat has also been involved in a research project, led by Lancaster University, on flooding in Hull. This was a longitudinal real-time study using an action research model, collating and analysing diaries written by those affected by the floods. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat has participated in the steering group for the project, attended workshops and met the diarists to understand the experiences of those affected by major flooding. Access to the diarists and hearing their experiences, influenced the consultation process and provided a constant reminder of the need to ensure that community resilience is

accessible and useful to all community members. It also reiterated the need to facilitate increased risk awareness within the population to better inform their decision to get involved in preparing for emergencies.

6.3 Engaging with international partners

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat has engaged with international partners and has attended a number of meetings and conferences to share good practice examples from the UK and learn from the work of European and other international counterparts. These opportunities for dialogue have informed the strategic framework.

This dialogue illustrated that between countries with different cultures and different approaches to community resilience, there are many common principles underpinning efforts to build resilience in communities. Similarly, common barriers to engagement and success are shared across countries and continents, such as sustaining motivation and building interest and concern for risks perceived as 'invisible' in the community. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat will continue to engage with international partners to learn from different approaches and experiences.

6.4 Research into existing good practice

Our consultation findings demonstrated the significant appetite within communities to become more resilient, particularly from those who have been affected by one or more significant incidents in the past. The same enthusiasm was expressed by local emergency responders and voluntary sector representatives to support this work and connect it to emergency planning, response and recovery. Just as international research demonstrated international diversity in the way resilience work is organised and executed, this diversity can be found at local level around the UK.

The consultation process also highlighted the range of existing and ongoing research into issues relevant to community resilience, for example community empowerment, citizen engagement, community recovery and many more. This framework sets out the priority areas of interest to the Government in relation to community resilience. Researchers and academics are invited to consider how this relates to their existing and potential future work. We would encourage academics and researchers to engage the Cabinet Office in their work and discuss future proposals to consider potential links between the Programme and their work.

An investigation into existing literature has identified a number of gaps in research findings for the UK. These include:

- a need for further analysis of the way people behave and what motivates them to be prepared rather than simply willing to respond; and

- further information on motivation and sustaining interest in community resilience activity before, during and after an emergency.

7. CONTACTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND LINKS TO WEBSITES

Further information

For further information on the Community Resilience Programme, please contact community.resilience@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk or write to Community Resilience, Civil Contingencies Secretariat, 22 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2WH.

Preparing for Emergencies

www.direct.gov.uk/preparingforemergencies

The home of resources for individual and community resilience.

Local Resilience Forum

http://interim.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience/preparedness/ukgovernment/lrfs.aspx

This web page provides contact details for Local Resilience Forums throughout England and Wales.

National Risk Register

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/national-risk-register

The online home of the National Risk Register.

Environment Agency

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

08708 506 506

For information on environmental risks, including flood warnings.

British Red Cross

www.redcross.org.uk

0844 871 11 11

Information on the simple precautions that can be taken to prepare for a range of emergency situations, along with advice on how to cope when they do.

WRVS

www.wrvs.org.uk

0845 601 4670

Information about the services WRVS provide (including emergency response) across the UK.

St John Ambulance

www.sja.org.uk

08700 104950

Information about how first aid training can make a difference to people in an emergency.

RSPCA

www.rspca.org.uk/in-action/international/emergencyresponse

0300 1234 555

The RSPCA has put together some guidelines so that you can be prepared to get your animals to safety in the event of flooding.

Informed. Prepared. Together.

www.informedprepared.eu

A gateway to resources, information and practical tools for developing the ability of individuals, communities and organisations to be better prepared to cope with emergencies and disasters.

Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network (RAYNET)

www.raynet-uk.net

The UK's national voluntary communications service provided for the community by licensed radio amateurs.

8. GLOSSARY

Cabinet Office

Department of the United Kingdom Government responsible for supporting the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Community Resilience

Communities and individual harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves during an emergency, in a way that complements the work of the emergency services.

Community Risk Register

An assessment of local risks that have been identified within a Local Resilience Forum area. It is written, maintained and published by the Local Resilience Forum.

Emergency

An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom; the environment of a place in the United Kingdom; or the security of the United Kingdom or of a place in the United Kingdom.

Emergencies can also affect you at home, for example house fires, broken down boilers, burst pipes etc.

Local emergency responders

These are organisations that respond to emergencies in your local area. They include the fire, police and ambulance services, as well as your local authority and other organisations.

Local Resilience Forum (LRF)

A group formed in police area boundaries of England and Wales by key local emergency responders and specific supporting agencies for the purpose of fulfilling their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

National Risk Register

A report produced by the Cabinet Office, as part of the National Security Strategy, which outlines the Government's assessment of significant potential risks to the United Kingdom.

Rest centre

A building which is designated by a local authority for the temporary accommodation of evacuees. This may include overnight accommodation.

Risk

A measure of the likelihood and impact of a potential emergency.