Emergency Resilience in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities

Challenges and Opportunities

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Red Cross acknowledges the Traditional Owners of all the lands we work on. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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Red Cross has been supporting Australians in a variety of ways since 1914 and has been recognised as being the first disaster response organisation in Australia, providing relief and recovery support during the 1918 influenza pandemic. As a humanitarian organisation, the Red Cross mandate during emergencies is to care for and support the wellbeing of those affected by disasters. The Red Cross Emergency Services program aims to support individuals and communities to cope with and manage the psychosocial impacts of emergencies.

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Content

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Executive Summary

Emergencies and disasters are an integral part of life in Australia. Bushfires, cyclones, floods, droughts, pandemics, industrial accidents or terrorist attacks can happen at any time and affect anyone. They can damage property and infrastructure, disrupt routines, cause injury or death, and bring long-lasting physical, psychological and financial consequences for those affected. With climate change predicted to increase the frequency and intensity of disasters, understanding what makes individuals and communities resilient or vulnerable to disruptive events has never been so important.

Among the various population groups, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities – migrants, refugees and asylum seekers – are widely considered more vulnerable to disasters' impacts due to such factors as unfamiliarity with Australia's physical and social environment, low English proficiency, poor awareness of local hazards, undeveloped support networks or previous traumatic experience. This research attempts to shed light on various aspects of CALD communities' experience with emergencies to deepen our understanding of the complex factors shaping resilience and vulnerability. Examined topics include the impact of the migration journey and settlement challenges; perceptions, knowledge and attitudes towards hazards; the influence of past experience on coping capacities; the role of social capital and community networks; and the challenges of culturally appropriate emergency communication.

Findings are derived from a comprehensive review of international and Australian research, insights from multicultural respondents, consultation with stakeholders in the emergency management and migration support sectors, and lessons learned during Red Cross community engagement. While the specific circumstances of CALD communities can create heightened vulnerability to disasters' impact, this research found that many migrants and refugees display high levels of resilience, knowledge and coping capacities – often as a result of having overcome the significant challenges of migration and settlement in a new country. This suggests that emergency management and community engagement strategies that focus on existing strengths can be more effective at generating resilience than approaches centred on vulnerability.

Despite these overlooked sources of resilience within CALD communities, many migrants and refugees remain highly vulnerable to the impacts of disasters. While emergency management actors are increasingly recognising the importance of multiculturalism for their work and embedding cultural considerations in preparedness, response and recovery activities, more needs to be done to address the disproportionate impact of emergencies on culturally diverse Australians. This report therefore concludes with concrete and achievable actions that various stakeholders can adopt to contribute to this effort.

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Part I
Setting the Stage

Chapter 1
Introduction

Australian Red Cross / Antoine Chandonnet

Disasters are an integral part of life in Australia. Bushfires, cyclones, floods, heatwaves and droughts strike every year, affecting thousands of people, damaging property and infrastructure, causing injury and death, and bringing about long-lasting consequences for affected communities. In addition to "natural" disasters, human-induced events such as industrial accidents, terrorist attacks or public health emergencies can lead to similar adversity. The Covid-19 pandemic served as a stark reminder of how quickly our lives can be disrupted by the unexpected.

We are all likely to be affected by emergencies. Our capacity to cope with their impacts is, however, highly unequal. What makes individuals and communities more vulnerable or resilient to disruptions has been the object of much inquiry. Researchers and practitioners are still unravelling the complex array of factors playing a role in disaster resilience – the capacity to prepare for, deal with and recover from disasters. They include our perceptions of risks, life circumstances, physical and mental health, support networks, previous experience with emergencies, and numerous others.

Research and practice suggest that some groups are likely to experience disasters' impacts more severely. Among those, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities – particularly recently-arrived migrants and refugees – are often considered more vulnerable due to such factors as unfamiliarity with their host country's physical and social environment, low English proficiency, poor awareness of local disaster risks, undeveloped support networks, or previous traumatic experience. It is therefore assumed that migrants and refugees are less inclined to take preparedness action, less able to cope with disasters, and more likely to experience challenging recovery journeys.

These "vulnerability factors" point out that CALD communities can experience disasters in very different ways compared to the "mainstream population". However, as will be shown throughout this report, many newcomers to Australia, far from being vulnerable, are in fact extraordinarily resilient, often as a result of having overcome the many challenges of migration. Therefore, while this research strives to uncover the underlying causes of migrants' and refugees' vulnerability, it also brings to light their tremendous resilience assets – from which much can be learned. Specifically, this research aims to:

- Enhance our understanding of CALD communities' experience with disasters – and of the factors that determine their resilience or vulnerability.
- Highlight the findings and lessons learned from international research and practice.
- Outline concrete and achievable actions that various stakeholders can take to increase disaster resilience in CALD communities.

This report provides community groups, emergency management agencies and migration support organisations with knowledge and tools to ensure that CALD communities' resilience can flourish in a world characterised by increased mobility, multiculturalism, and more frequent disasters. The rest of this introductory chapter outlines the research's rationale, methodology and structure.

Background and rationale

Two major trends underpin this research. The first is the significance of migration and cultural diversity. Never before in human history have so many people been on the move. Every day, thousands cross international borders in search of safety, employment opportunities, or to reunite with loved ones. In its latest World Migration Report[1], the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates the number of international migrants in 2019 at 272 million, equating to 3.5 per cent of the world's population. While travel restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic have curbed down this trend, human mobility remains a defining feature of our time, as shown by the steady increase over the past five decades in numbers of people living in a country other than their country of birth.

Adding to "traditional" drivers of migration is the impact of climate change, expected to increase movements within and across international borders. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre[2] estimates that severe weather events are displacing 14 million people on average every year (in 2016, this number amounted to 26 million due to major flooding in several countries and a devastating hurricane season).

Migration and multiculturalism are important features of our societies, with major political, social, cultural and economic implications. While projections on future migration trends are notably difficult to establish, it is likely that international migration will remain a defining aspect of our time.

Australia is not exempt from such movements. Its stability, dynamic economy, high living standards and education opportunities make it an attractive destination for people across the world. In 2019, there were 7.5 million migrants living in Australia[3], constituting almost 30 per cent of its population. During this year, Australia's population increased by 239,600 due to overseas migration. While historically, European countries such as the United Kingdom have accounted for the largest contribution to Australia's migrant population, this proportion is decreasing in relation to other regions of the world. As a result, characteristics of migrants in Australia are shifting toward increasing numbers from non-English speaking backgrounds, contributing to growing cultural diversity.

The second trend underpinning this research is the frequent incidence of disasters in Australia. While bushfires, cyclones, floods and heatwaves have always been part of Australian life, there is a strong consensus in the scientific community that their frequency and intensity are increasing due to climate change. The recent succession of major disasters illustrates this worrying trend, with the "black summer" bushfires of 2019-20 the most recent occurrence – 33 lives were lost, thousands of homes destroyed, wildlife and habitat devastated, cities shrouded in smoke, with an estimated $100 billion in damage. Addressing the multifaceted impacts of disasters is an ongoing challenge for individuals, communities and governments.

Methodology

Students of disaster resilience have mobilised a variety of methods to investigate this complex topic. This research primarily uses qualitative methods, with data derived from four different sources:

- A review of international and Australian research.
- Semi-structured interviews with 29 respondents from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Formal and informal consultation with stakeholders in the emergency management, community and migration support sectors.
- Practical experience and lessons learned from Red Cross engagement with CALD communities.

While significant efforts were made to investigate the subject matter in a comprehensive and rigorous manner, the generalisability of this research's findings is limited by the extreme variety of characteristics and circumstances in CALD communities, contextual factors, and by respondents' subjective perceptions.

How to use this report

This report is divided into three parts. The first "sets the stage": it reviews international and national policy frameworks relevant to CALD communities' disaster resilience, defines key terms and concepts, and summarises the main findings of previous research.

The second part presents the findings of this research, which investigated the impact of the migration journey; emergency perceptions, knowledge and attitudes; the influence of past experience; the role of social capital; and the challenges of culturally and linguistically appropriate emergency communication. These themes are examined alongside the findings of previous research to identify similarities and differences across contexts. The voices of research respondents – migrants and refugees from a wide a range of backgrounds – have a predominant place in this part, allowing readers to learn from their rich experience.

The third and final part outlines concrete actions that different stakeholders can take to develop disaster resilience in CALD communities.

Chapter 2
Policy Frameworks

Despite its relative novelty, the topic of multiculturalism in emergency management is reflected in various legislative and policy documents at both the international and national levels. This shows a growing recognition by government and non-government actors of the complex relationships between emergency resilience and a range of social, economic, political and cultural factors. This chapter elicits how these policy instruments conceive the relevance of multiculturalism in emergency management, and how they define the role of agencies, communities and individuals in attaining resilience outcomes in CALD communities.

International Frameworks

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 is the main document establishing the principles of disaster risk reduction (DRR) at the global level. Adopted by United Nations (UN) member states and endorsed by the UN General Assembly, it succeeds to and broadens the scope of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, setting standards, priorities for action and targets for stakeholders – primarily governments – to mitigate the impact of natural disasters and adapt to a changing climate. Several references to the importance of migrant and refugee inclusion within disaster management are found in this document.

In its preamble, the Framework calls for an "all-of-society" engagement and "a more people-centred preventive approach to disaster risk". It also stresses the need for emergency management practices to be "inclusive and accessible in order to be efficient and effective". This reflects an ongoing trend in the humanitarian field, where active community participation is preferred over traditional "top-down" approaches. The "inclusive and accessible" components of this approach apply well to CALD communities, with important implications for practice – particularly emergency risks communication or cultural competency within emergency management agencies.

More specific mentions of multiculturalism in emergency management appear in the Sendai Framework. While recognising the leading role of states in disaster risk reduction efforts, Article 7 encourages governments to strengthen cooperation "with relevant stakeholders, including women, children and youth, persons with disabilities, poor people, migrants, indigenous peoples, volunteers, the community of practitioners and older persons in the design and implementation of policies, plans and standards." This indicates a commitment to take into account the circumstances and needs of "vulnerable groups", including migrants, when designing and implementing emergency management policy and practices.

Further in the Framework, Article 27 calls to "empower local authorities, as appropriate, through regulatory and financial means to work and coordinate with civil society, communities and indigenous peoples and migrants in disaster risk management at the local level". The modalities of this "work and coordination" with civil society stakeholders are roughly outlined in the Framework, with a strong emphasis on capacity development, education and knowledge sharing.

Equally relevant is the plea for emergency management actors to "[take] into account specific audiences and their needs" in efforts to "strengthen public education and awareness in disaster risk reduction, including disaster risk information and knowledge, through campaigns, social media and

community mobilization" (Article 26). Chapter 9 of this report, which delves into the complex topic of emergency communication, will show that adapting messaging to CALD audiences is key to increase risk awareness and promote preparedness action.

Most importantly, Article 36 of the Sendai Framework acknowledges that migrants can "contribute to the resilience of communities and societies, and their knowledge, skills and capacities can be useful in the design and implementation of disaster risk reduction". It does not, however, define the required conditions for CALD communities' contribution to translate into policy and action. These are discussed in various parts of this report.

Overall, the Sendai Framework provides a sound, high-level rationale to pro-actively include cultural diversity and migration in the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction initiatives. Also relevant are frameworks developed by international humanitarian organisations, such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion, which emphasises the importance of cultural and linguistic inclusion in DRR activities.

Undoubtedly, the translation of these principles into the reality of policy and practice is imperfect and highly uneven between countries. Insufficient financial and human resources, lack of political will and competing priorities are some of the challenges standing in the way of their realisation. Part III of this report suggests realistic avenues for various stakeholders to overcome these hurdles and materialise these principles.

National Frameworks and Policies

While the Sendai Framework is a non-binding document, many states have adopted its principles and translated them into national policies and strategies. In Australia, the National Disaster Resilience Strategy (NDRS) is pivotal in this regard. Released in 2011, the NDRS outlines the axioms of emergency management thinking in Australia. While the Strategy does not explicitly mention multiculturalism, some of its principles and "priority outcomes" are nonetheless relevant to the topic.

Particularly important is the notion of shared responsibility. According to this principle, each sectors of society has its role to play in building resilience by leveraging its specific knowledge, capacities and experience. For instance, the NDRS brings attention to community leaders, who should "take responsibility for mitigating risks (…) where they can exercise influence". This has particular relevance for CALD communities, often considered "hard to reach" groups by emergency management agencies, and where leaders and influential figures can play a crucial role in disseminating information, promoting preparedness action and facilitating recovery.

Further in the NSDR, Priorities 2 and 3 acknowledge the importance of emergency information and disaster risks knowledge, recognise the challenge to "communicate meaningful information about risks to the community", and recommend that "[i]nformation on disaster risk should be communicated in a manner appropriate to its audiences, and should consider the different needs, interests and

technologies used within communities". It also states that "vulnerable individuals [should] have equitable access to appropriate information, training and opportunities." The implications of the above principles are numerous and crucial to resilience building. They are discussed at length in chapter 9.

The principles outlined in the NSDR are generally mirrored in state-level strategic documents, such as Victoria's Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management, Queensland's Disaster Resilience Strategy, South Australia's State Emergency Management Plan or Western Australia's Community Engagement Framework.

Another relevant document is the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework. While not overt on migrant communities, it establishes "inclusive engagement" as one of its guiding principles. It is also worth mentioning Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience's (AIDR) community engagement guidelines, which guide emergency management practices throughout the country.

The concern for multiculturalism in emergency management is also present at the local level. For example, some local councils (typically in urban areas) have signed memoranda of understanding with CALD organisations on emergency protocols, translated locally-relevant hazards risk information in various languages, or established "liaison officer" positions filled by "bi-cultural staff" to develop trust between CALD communities and response agencies, establish effective communication channels, and ensure that migrants and refugees can actively participate in emergency management.

Multicultural Policies and Documents

Outside the sole domain of emergency management, Australia's multicultural policy is also relevant to emergency resilience in CALD communities. While a comprehensive review is outside the scope of this research, it is worth mentioning that Australia's approach to multiculturalism puts a strong emphasis on an "inclusive and socially cohesive society where everyone can participate in the opportunities that Australia offers", as well as on "government services [that] are responsive to the needs of Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This highlights the need for a culturally-sensitive approach at all stages of emergency services provision: during preparedness, response and recovery.

State-level multicultural policies are equally relevant. One example is the Queensland Multicultural Recognition Act 2016 which "sets the vision for an inclusive, harmonious and united Queensland" and establishes the state's Multicultural Policy. Among other objectives, Queensland's Multicultural Policy focuses on "achieving culturally responsive government policy, services and programs" and calls for "the creation of opportunities that encourage the full participation of people from diverse backgrounds in the cultural, economic, political and social life of Queensland". The role of emergency response agencies is explicitly mentioned in this framework, as the strategy advocates to "support community services, such as police and fire and emergency services to be more culturally capable".

Finally, a range of social and economic policies, while not directly related to emergency management, can impact CALD communities' emergency resilience (for example visa policy which determines, for

different categories of migrants, levels of access to employment, education, health care and other government services).

Conclusion

The underlying rationale of the policy instruments reviewed in this chapter is to achieve equity in emergency management. An equity-based approach acknowledges both unequal resilience capacities (knowledge, connectedness, well-being, etc.) across different segments of the population, and the need for emergency management actors to actively consider the diverse circumstances and needs of different people. When applied to CALD communities, these principles translate into various interventions, such as:

- The provision of culturally-sensitive emergency management services (during preparedness, response and recovery);
- Direct engagement with diverse communities through consultation, participation, and informal or formal cooperation;
- Promoting inclusion, social connectedness, mutual understanding and trust;
- Developing cultural competence within the emergency management sector;
- Targeted communication strategies.

While not exhaustive, this review shows a clear commitment to enhance resilience outcomes in CALD communities through a community-centred approach. The implementation of these strategic principles is, however, fraught with challenges: resources may be scarce or political will feeble; priorities may shift, and intercultural dialogue may be hindered by the turmoils of global events. While reality is rarely as appealing as the high-level principles enunciated in strategic documents, the policies and frameworks reviewed in this chapter are nonetheless useful reminders of the importance of cultural diversity for the emergency management sector.

Chapter 3
Concepts and Theories

Australian Red Cross / Sally Kelso

Before delving into its findings, it is useful to define the key concepts used throughout this report. This will frame the subject matter while providing an overarching rationale for resilience-building actions proposed in Part III. This clarification is also made necessary by the ambiguity surrounding terms such as "culture", "resilience", "community" or "vulnerability", and their use in different contexts by scholars and practitioners in fields as diverse as behavioural psychology, economics, geography, political science, anthropology or social demography.

Key concepts

Culture and "culturally and linguistically diverse" (CALD)

Among concepts in the social sciences, "culture" may be both the most important and most controversial. No universally agreed definition of the term currently exists, for at least two reasons. Firstly, any attempt at defining "culture" fuels the debate about "human nature", a discussion often tainted by political or religious ideology. Secondly, defining "culture" has practical implications for studies on human societies. The present research, which places "cultural factors" at the core of the analysis, is no exception.

For the purposes of this research, culture is the dynamic sets of values, norms, languages, representations, customs, beliefs, rules, and practices shared by a particular group at a specific time. Dynamism and fluidity are central to this definition, meaning that cultures are constantly evolving and are not mutually exclusive. For example, a person could identify with more than one culture, or only with some elements of a particular culture.

> *For a whole range of reasons, no diversity-sensitive model or measure of resilience should invest in static understandings of ethnicities and cultures; all around the world, ethnocultural identities and communities are in a constant and sometimes accelerated state of dynamism, reconfiguration and flux.*
>
> Source: Grossman, Michele. 2013. "Prognosis Critical: Resilience and Multiculturalism in Contemporary Australia." M/C Journal 16 (no. 5)

This research is therefore not concerned with well-defined, static, mutually exclusive cultures. No mention is made of the "Indian culture", the "Congolese culture" or the "Belgian culture". Rather than conceiving cultures as wholly constituted ensembles, we examine particular "cultural factors" (such as language, norms, customs, values). This conceptualisation also acknowledges that identities (national, cultural or ethnic) are at least partly social constructs.

Closely related to the concept of culture is the designation "culturally and linguistically diverse" (CALD), which appears throughout this report. Primarily used in Australia, the term emerged in the mid 1990s' as a replacement to the term "non-English speaking background" (NESB), which, with its focus on language, overlooked other cultural traits.

In its wide acceptance, "culturally and linguistic diverse" may refer to a society whose members belong to various ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) provides a more operational definition, characterising CALD groups according to country of birth, language spoken at home, English proficiency, length of residence in Australia, parents' country of birth and religious affiliation.

For the purpose of this research, the definition of "culturally and linguistically diverse" has two components. The first is objective and relates to the traits included in the above ABS definition. Characteristics such as place of birth, native language, English proficiency, and length of stay in destination country shed light on the migration experience and its implications for emergency resilience.

The second component of our "CALD" definition is subjective and relates to self-identification to a "minority culture". Ethical considerations guide the choice of a subjective criterion to define who is "CALD" and who is not. Indeed, drawing a line between who is "diverse" and who is "mainstream" is a politically meaningful act. Moreover, the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of cultural identity makes rigid categorisation problematic. It is therefore critical to think about what cultural diversity means for the people who consider themselves as belonging, exclusively or not, to a non-mainstream culture.

It is also worth noting that culture is only one of the many variables in the resilience equation[4]. Other factors include age, gender, education, socio-economic status and physical and mental health, all of which influence the nature and extent of emergencies' impact on people's lives.

"Mainstream culture"

The term "culturally and linguistically diverse" implies that some people are considered to be "non-diverse" or "non-CALD". What does this mean? Throughout this report, mentions are made of the "mainstream culture", or the "mainstream Australian community". This concept is also problematic as it overlooks the wide variety of backgrounds, lifestyles and socio-economic situations among Australians. For practical purposes, the terms "mainstream culture" or "mainstream Australian community" in this report refer to people and groups for which Australia is their native country, who share the prevailing values of Western culture, and have English as their first language.

Emergency and disaster

While less ambiguous than culture, the concepts of "disaster" and "emergency" can refer to different phenomena depending on the context in which they are used. According to Australian Red Cross terminology, the term "emergency" encompasses both so called "natural hazards" (bushfires, floods, cyclones, earthquakes, etc.), human-caused events such as industrial catastrophes, power outages or terrorist attacks, and also disruptive personal events such as a sudden illness or accident. This "all-hazard approach" is consistent with research in psychology indicating that while different in nature, these events "result in similar psychological consequences, such as symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and physical ailments"[5] .

In line with this conceptualisation, this research adopts the definition of "disaster" outlined by McFarlane and Norris [6]: ''a potentially traumatic event that is collectively experienced, has an acute onset, and is time delimited; disasters may be attributed to natural, technological, or human causes.''

In this report, the terms "disaster" and "emergency" will be used interchangeably to designate such phenomena.

A key point is that emergencies are not defined solely by the physical nature of the event, but by their human impacts. Analytically, this allows for the inclusion of the role of perceptions, attitudes, experience and many other factors at the individual level, as well as the influence of various community-level processes such as social capital and institutional trust[7]. This explains why disasters are sometimes conceptualised as "social events", and why some authors characterise disasters as "extensions of everyday hardships" due to their tendency to exacerbate pre-existing vulnerabilities[8]. This has important implications for the study of emergency resilience among migrants and refugees, and will be explored throughout this report.

> *Vulnerability to disasters is unique to individuals and communities and is socially situated within larger social structures of power relations, access to resources and patterns of inequality.*
>
> Source: Lovekamp and McMahon 2011 [9]

Resilience

Widely used in research and practice, "resilience" has become a ubiquitous term. Its wide use and frequent appearance in high-level documents, programs and strategies has led some authors to note "the popularity of the term and the infinite ways resilience is used to describe varying concepts across disciplines."[10] It is therefore important to dispel the conceptual ambiguity surrounding resilience, clarify its meaning, and frame its relevance to our subject matter.

The concept of resilience originates from physics and describes the aptitude of a material to regain its original shape after being bent, compressed or stretched.[11] From there, the term moved to psychology, specifically referring to the capacity to recover from childhood trauma. The concept of "resilience" then found its way into a range of disciplines to describe different processes and phenomena.

Within emergency studies, "resilience" generally refers to the capacity of individuals and communities to cope with disrupting events and "bounce back" from their impact. It implies the capacity to return to normalcy after disruptions, or in the best cases an improved state of affairs – for instance more connected communities or increased levels of preparedness.[12] Resilience is therefore associated with potential growth, learning and adaptation.[1] A comprehensive definition of resilience is proposed by the IFRC as "the ability of individuals, communities, organizations or countries exposed to disasters, crises and underlying vulnerabilities to anticipate, prepare for, reduce the impact of, cope with and recover from the effects of shocks and stresses without compromising their long-term prospects."[13] Below are some other examples of how resilience has been conceptualised within emergency management:

[1] For example, it is not uncommon for survivors to talk about disasters as "turning points" or opportunities for positive life changes.

At the individual-community level, resilience describes a capacity to maintain levels of functioning following significant disruption by hazard activity using available resources.

Source: Douglas, Smith and Johnston 2005[14]

Successful adaptation in challenging circumstances.

Resilience has been defined as a "process or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenges or threatening circumstances," and "good outcomes despite high-risk status, sustained competence under threat and recovery from trauma".

Source: Clauss-Ehlers 2008[15]

Resilience is "a measure of how well people and societies can adapt to a changed reality and capitalize on the new possibilities offered".

Source: Paton 2006[16]

Community resilience is a term that describes the community's ability to function amidst crises or disruptions.

Source: Cohen et al 2013[17]

Resilience is "the existence, development and engagement of community resources by community members to thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise."

Source: Magis 2010

While there is no universally accepted definition of the concept, it is widely acknowledged that resilience refers to the capacity of an individual to do well in spite of exposure to acute trauma or sustained adversity. There is general consensus that resilience pertains to an individual's, community's or system's ability to adapt to and 'bounce back' from a disruptive event.

Source: Grossman 2013

A disaster resilient community is one that works together to understand and manage the risks that it confronts.

Source: Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience 2018[18]

Resilience in disaster preparedness refers to relationships and social structures that enable communities to prepare for or adapt to adverse conditions.

Source: Phillips 2016[19]

In hazards research, the definition of resilience is refined to mean the ability to survive and cope with a disaster with minimum impact and damage. It incorporates the capacity to reduce or avoid losses, contain the effects of disasters, and recover with minimal social disruptions.

Source: Cutter et al. 2008[20]

Resilience is a powerful analytical tool to study CALD communities' emergency experience. It therefore holds a central place in this report. However, the concept's analytical value is dependent on the possibility to break it down in measurable components – a considerable challenge faced by resilience students.[21]

Various models have been proposed to measure resilience. For example, Australian Red cross distinguishes four "domains of resilience":

1. Knowledge (accurate information on risks, appropriate preparedness measures, available support, etc.)
2. Security (shelter, safety and wealth, etc.)
3. Wellbeing (physical and mental health, coping abilities, etc.)
4. Connection (social capital, trust, connection to place, etc.).[22]

Most of these components are found in conceptual models of resilience, with a frequent emphasis on social capital and connectedness.[23]

Three additional points can be made regarding the use of "resilience" in emergency studies. Firstly, resilience is better conceptualised as a process rather than an outcome. It is not something that is achieved "once and for all", but an ability developed over time by individuals and communities.[24]

Secondly, resilience operates at different levels and is equally relevant – but with different implications – for individuals, households, "small communities" such as neighbourhoods, and "large communities" such as cities or countries. The concept can also be leveraged at the global, ecosystemic level. The multi-level nature of resilience has implications for analysis (where methodologies and indicators should be adapted to level of analysis) and for practice.

To effectively capture the different levels at which resilience operates, it is useful to conceive it as "neither entirely personal nor strictly social, but an interactive and iterative combination of the two."[25] This approach is reflected in policy, for example in Australia's National Disaster Resilience Strategy, which stresses that resilience building is a responsibility shared by stakeholders at different levels, from community members to governments and non-government organisations.

The third point to conclude our discussion of resilience is that while it is a universal concept relevant to all human societies, its specific displays are often context-dependent and vary according to places, cultures, and social environments. A context-dependent approach acknowledges the wide diversity of ways communities can generate resilience.

Vulnerability

Closely related to resilience is the concept of vulnerability, frequently appearing in the literature on CALD communities' emergency experience. In this vein of research, migrants and refugees are often characterised as "vulnerable groups" for reasons examined in the following chapter. Similarly to resilience, there is no universally accepted definition of vulnerability.[26]

> *Vulnerability arises from the relationships that we have with the things we value (people, places, objects, critical services, emergency services, etc.) and how these things may be disrupted as a result of an emergency or crisis. Vulnerability also arises from the tensions and trade-offs we have to make about where to allocate limited time, effort and money in disaster preparation, response or risk reduction to protect those things of value.*
>
> Source: Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience[27]

The World Health Organization (2017) defines vulnerability in the emergency management context as "the degree to which a population, individual or organisation is unable to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impacts of disasters". According to this conceptualisation, vulnerability can thus be seen as resilience's opposite.

In another example, vulnerability is conceived as "the pre-event, inherent characteristics or qualities of social systems that create the potential for harm", and as "a function of the exposure (who or what

is at risk) and sensitivity of system (the degree to which people and places can be harmed)".[28] This approach emphasises that vulnerability to disasters derives not only form the hazard itself, but from social, political and economic processes. Specifically, vulnerability has been identified as being "partially the product of social inequalities – those social factors that influence or shape the susceptibility of various groups to harm and that also govern their ability to respond".[29] These factors include "lack of access to resources (including information, knowledge, and technology); limited access to political power and representation; social capital, including social networks and connections; beliefs and customs".[30] As will be examined throughout this report, this approach to vulnerability is highly relevant to CALD communities, while reinforcing the understanding of disasters as "social events".[31]

Community

This report makes numerous mentions of "communities" (as in "CALD communities" or "the mainstream community"). Context and common sense usually provide a sufficient understanding of the term. It is nonetheless useful to clarify its use in this report.

While the most common criterion to define communities is geographical location[32], communities can be based on many other traits such as national origin or citizenship, a shared culture, language or religion, or even an interest or hobby. It is therefore important to acknowledge that "communities" are not mutually exclusive, and that individuals can belong to different "communities" at any given time.

Sport and hobbies can help bring communities together.

For example, a migrant from Kenya settled in Australia for some years can simultaneously identify with the "Kenyan community", the "Swahili-speaking community", the "Muslim community", the local community of the suburb where she lives, while also feeling an increasing affinity with the "wider Australian community". As research respondents will demonstrate, identity and cultural belonging in the context of international migration are rarely straightforward or unidirectional.

In this report, a "CALD community" primarily refers to people sharing common origin, background, culture and language. Despite its analytical convenience, it is important the recognise the limitations of this definition. Indeed, a "community" based on country of origin can include members of different ethnic, linguistic and religious groups who may have little more in common than the same passport. For example, the "Iraqi community" can encompass people from various ethnicities such as Kurds, Yazidis, Arabs, Turkmen or Assyrians, speaking different languages such as Arabic, Kurdish and various Aramaic languages, and practising distinct religions such Shia Islam, Sunni Islam or Christianity. This example shows the importance to avoid systematically equating country of origin with cultural identity.

This precaution has particular relevance for countries with recent experience of violent conflict. For example, in recent years South Sudan has been a theatre of deadly conflicts between various, opposing groups, predominantly delineated along ethnic lines. Therefore, assuming that a "South Sudanese community leader" represents all those who migrated to Australia from South Sudan is not only inaccurate, but can also lead to poor engagement outcomes, or even alienation from part of this "community". This highlights the importance of understanding "communities" for successful engagement.

Emergency management

The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience defines emergency management as "a range of measures to manage risks to communities and the environment; the organisation and management of resources for dealing with all aspects of emergencies. Emergency management involves the plans, structures and arrangements which are established to bring together the normal endeavours of government, voluntary and private agencies in a comprehensive and coordinated way to deal with the whole spectrum of emergency needs including prevention, response and recovery".[33]

Migrant

There is no universally agreed definition of "migrant". The term is also not a legal category in most countries. The UN Migration Agency (IOM) provides an umbrella definition of a migrant as "any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is." While this definition includes refugees, it is common to distinguish migrants – who move voluntarily across borders – from refugees – whose involuntary migration is triggered by the need for safety.

Refugee and asylum-seeker

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence[2]. Unlike "migrant", refugee is a legal category defined by the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (sometimes referred to as the Geneva Convention of 28 July 1951). The UN estimates that there are currently 25.9 million refugees worldwide, in addition to 41.3 million internally displaced persons and 3.5 million asylum seekers. An asylum-seeker is someone whose request for sanctuary (for the refugee status) has yet to be assessed.

Preparedness

The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience defines preparedness as "all activities undertaken in advance of the occurrence of an incident to decrease the impact, extent and severity of the incident and to ensure more effective response activities". This includes "arrangements to ensure that, should

[2] A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

an emergency occur, all those resources and services which are needed to cope with the effects can be efficiently mobilised and deployed", as well as "measures to ensure that, should an emergency occur, communities, resources and services are capable of coping with the effects." Similarly to resilience, preparedness operates at different levels: individual, household, local community, country, etc. At the individual and household levels, research has convincingly demonstrated that the adoption of simple preparedness actions (such as making an emergency plan and packing an emergency kit) can significantly reduce the negative impact of emergencies, facilitate coping and accelerate recovery.

Community engagement

Community engagement is "the process of stakeholders working together to build resilience through collaborative action, shared capacity building and development of strong relationships built on mutual trust and respect".[34]

Conclusion

This chapter defined the key concepts used throughout this report and discussed their implications for the analysis of CALD communities' emergency experience. These concepts have been mobilised by authors – from a range of disciplines – who have sought to better understand the various aspects of this experience. The following chapter summarises their findings.

Chapter 4
The State of Knowledge

Australian Red Cross / Frances Andijick

The literature on emergency resilience is vast and well-established. As early as the 1940's, scholars have sought to understand what makes individuals and communities more resilient or vulnerable to disasters. Within this vein of research, the study of how socio-cultural factors impact resilience is relatively recent.

The devastating Hurricane Katrina, which wreaked havoc on New Orleans (USA) in August 2005, can be considered a turning point for this line of inquiry. In the aftermath of Katrina, it became strikingly apparent that its impacts vastly differed amongst New Orleans's various racial groups. Overall, African Americans, Latinos and other minorities experienced more severe consequences than the "white" population with regards to loss of lives, property damage, psychological impact, and length of time elapsed before returning home after evacuation.[35] Unsurprisingly, a correlation was found between this uneven impact and entrenched socio-economic disadvantages in minority groups. While scholars have been studying the social determinants of disasters well before Katrina, the infamous hurricane sparked an interest for the role of ethnicity, language and other cultural factors in disaster contexts.[36] This chapter summarises this line of research and provides a reference framework for this report.

The most visible thread in this body of research is that CALD communities are "more vulnerable" to the impact of emergencies than the mainstream population. Examples of this trend are numerous in the literature:

> *Disasters that have taken place over the last few decades have shown that the challenges migrants face in accessing information, resources and services make them particularly vulnerable to the impacts of natural and man-made hazards.*
>
> Source: International Organization for Migration 2017[37]

> *There is little research that examines CALD communities' responses to disasters, but what is available suggests they are more vulnerable than the general public.*
>
> Source: Shepherd and Kitty van Vuuren 2014

> *Racial and ethnic communities in the US are more vulnerable to natural disasters, due to factors such as language, housing patterns, building construction, community isolation and cultural insensitivities.*
>
> Source: Fothergill et al. 1999 [38]

> *At particular risk of harm from disasters and extreme weather events are new and emerging communities.*
>
> Source: Hanson-Easey, Scott et al. 2018 [39]

Similarly, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are often put in the "vulnerability basket" alongside other "at-risk groups":

> *Previous research suggests that the elderly, those with low income, women (including those who are pregnant), individuals with low literacy, those with physical and mental disability, new immigrants with language barriers, and racial and ethnic minorities are at a greater risk than the general population during a major disaster.*
>
> Source: Der-Martirosian 2014[40]

> *The international and local literature emphasizes that natural disaster risk is elevated for particular groups in the community. These include people with a low income, families with young children, elderly populations, people with a disability and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community groups. These groups are at increased risk due to limitations in their access to, and control over resources and capacities essential to plan, prepare and recover from disaster.*
>
> Source: Howard, Blakemore and Bevis 2014.[41]

> *Among the generally accepted [factors determining the disaster experience] are age, gender, race, and socioeconomic status. Other characteristics identify special needs populations or those that lack the normal social safety nets necessary in disaster recovery, such as the physically or mentally challenged, non-English speaking immigrants, the homeless, transients, and seasonal tourists.*
>
> Source: Cutter et al 2003 [42]

Several factors have been identified as contributing to this heightened vulnerability:

- Unfamiliarity with a new environment and poor knowledge of local emergency risks
- Social isolation, lack of support networks and reduced access to community and government resources
- Limited proficiency in majority language (English in Australia)
- Low income, financial resources and poor socio-economic conditions to support post-disaster recovery
- Limited insurance or employment to minimize loss
- Low levels of trust towards emergency management agencies
- Marginalisation or discrimination
- Traumatic past experience likely to create retraumatisation during emergency events
- Lower levels of well-being and self-confidence due to adaptation challenges (for example protracted unemployment)

These “vulnerability factors” are examined in detail throughout this report in the light of existing literature and original research.

While vulnerability is reputedly difficult to measure, some studies have generated quantified evidence on CALD communities. In Australia, research conducted in Adelaide during severe heatwaves found that “37% of patients hospitalised with direct heat-related illnesses were born overseas – although this group represented only 25.1% of Adelaide’s total population”. This finding is consistent with another heatwave study conducted in Los Angeles, where mortality rates for African Americans was “nearly double that of the city’s average”. Another example is a study of the H1N1 Pandemic Influenza of 2009-2010 in the United States, which found that “diverse residents suffered significantly higher rates of illness, hospitalization and death compared with whites”.


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The impact of the Covid-19 crisis has been severe for CALD communities.

At the time of writing this report, the unfolding Covid-19 crisis is showing, beyond any doubt, the disproportionate impact of public health emergencies on minorities. According to the United States’ Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “there is increasing evidence that some racial and ethnic minority groups are being disproportionately affected by COVID-19”, citing discrimination; healthcare access and utilisation; occupation, educational, health and wealth gaps; and housing as factors causing “more COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in areas where racial and ethnic minority groups live, learn, work, play, and worship.” In New York city, African Americans accounted for 92 deaths per 100,000 people, and Hispanic or Latino people for 74, significantly higher than for whites (45).

Similar trends have been identified in the United Kingdom, where it is estimated that “the overall risk of COVID-related death is estimated to be 10-50% higher in BAME [Black, Asian and minority ethnic] people, with social inequality being a likely cause.”[43] While in Australia, data is still limited about the discrepancies of Covid’s impact according to ethnic backgrounds, similar trends are becoming apparent.[44]

Levels of preparedness for disasters were also found to differ along ethnic lines. A study from the Philippines on self-perceived preparedness found that “63.6 per cent of the migrants, as opposed to 48.2 per cent of the rest of the population (that is, the non-migrant members of the community), believe that they do not have the capacity to respond to, cope with and recover from disasters.”[45] Lower levels of preparedness are frequently attributed to poor knowledge of local risks, lack of proficiency in the dominant language, discrimination and protracted socio-economic challenges.[46]

Whilst it is important to understand that refugees are not inherently vulnerable in disaster contexts, numerous factors (in addition to those previously mentioned) can increase vulnerability for this group.

Source: Marlowe and Bogen 2015 [47]

The statement that "CALD communities are more vulnerable" is recurring in the literature and cuts across geographic and social contexts. While understanding what causes this vulnerability is crucial to addressing it, an overemphasis on vulnerability has pitfalls with implications for policy, practice and research.

The first problem is generalisation. As seen in the previous chapter, "CALD" is an umbrella term for a wide range of people with extremely different life situations. Not only do CALD communities greatly differ between one another, but members of the same community can show varying levels of resilience. Equally, members of the "mainstream community" can display vulnerabilities caused by similar factors as those affecting minorities. In other words, too strong a focus on cultural and linguistic characteristics can make us oblivious to other factors (age, gender, socio-economic status, social capital, etc.).[48]

The second problem is to equate diversity with vulnerability[49], or conceiving diversity and CALD communities as a "problem" that needs to be "solved". This viewpoint can lead to overlooking CALD communities' strengths, knowledge and skills from which host societies can benefit. Indeed, "the description of CALD communities as 'vulnerable' precludes asking questions about what they do have, what they do know, and what they do or can contribute to how we respond to disaster and emergency events in our communities."[50] Consequently, that CALD communities are vulnerable may become an assumption rather than the result of careful investigation.

Migrants are exceptionally resourceful individuals, whose resourcefulness and capabilities are key for the resilience of their host communities.

Source: International Organization for Migration 2017 [51]

Thirdly, a focus on CALD communities' vulnerability may obscure the fact that this vulnerability is partly caused by limited capacities in the emergency management sector to understand and address these groups' circumstances, both in "normal times" and during emergencies. This applies to cultural competency, community engagement, trust-based communication, and the availability of multilingual information material.

> *Disaster resilience initiatives that do engage with culturally, linguistically and geographically diverse communities, focus on a two-pronged approach of disseminating safety information and conducting preparedness training. However, this approach limits learning to a one-way flow of information and ignores the possibility of understanding people's life experiences, cultural beliefs and everyday practices for feeling safe and secure. As a result, the need for safety and home preparedness among newly arrived and recently settled refugee and humanitarian entrants can often fall between gaps and remain unaddressed.*
>
> Source: Lakhina 2017 [52]

> *Thinking about resilience as context-dependent is important because research that is too trait-based or actor-centred risks ignoring any structural or institutional forces. A more ecological interpretation of resilience, one that takes a person's context and environment into account, is vital in order to avoid blaming the victim for any hardships they face, or relieving state and institutional structures from their responsibilities in addressing social adversity.*
>
> Source: Grossman 2013 [53]

Conclusion

International research leaves little doubt about migrants' and refugees' "heightened vulnerability" in times of disaster. Acknowledging and understanding this vulnerability is vital to addressing its root causes. However, a careful examination of these causes indicates that far from deriving from inherent characteristics, this vulnerability is most often generated by specificities of the migration experience. It is therefore useful to conceive CALD communities' emergency vulnerability as extensions of settlement challenges.[54] Equally important is the need to prevent a vulnerability-focused approach to overlook existing strengths and capacities, from which resilience can be built.

This section attempted to "set the stage" for the presentation of this research's findings. The reader is now equipped with background knowledge on migration and emergencies in Australia, the concepts and theories used to study their relationships, and essential findings from international research.

Part II
Research Findings

Chapter 5
The Migration Journey


Australian Red Cross / Dilini Parera

"My cultural background is not really Australian because I was born and raised in Africa, but I also feel Australian, because its' easy to adapt. Most Australians have diverse backgrounds. We have indigenous groups, we have migrants from different parts of the world… If you mix them together, they become Australians."

How we experience emergencies largely depends on our life circumstances. Some of the numerous personal factors coming into play are our place of residence, family situation, lifestyle, age, employment status, income, education, physical and mental health, and the extent of our support networks. Also important is what we know – and don't know – about the hazards we face, how we perceive risks, whether we have previous experience with emergencies, and our perceived and actual ability to cope with them. In other words, our experience of emergencies is not only determined by the events themselves, but also by who we are and what we've been through. This approach provides a useful starting point for the study of emergency resilience in CALD communities.

As discussed in the previous section, "CALD communities" is an umbrella term for an extremely varied array of groups and individuals, who may have little more in common than a "non-Australian background". However, despite this variety in backgrounds and circumstances, many culturally diverse people share the very meaningful experience of migrating to a new country – a journey replete with challenges and opportunities and often considered a milestone event in personal life stories. The experience of migration and settlement can also influence perceptions, behaviours and attitudes, including with regards to emergencies. Therefore, the study of emergency resilience in CALD communities should start with understanding the migration journey and its multifaceted impacts.

This chapter delves into the life stories of research participants – migrants and refugees who recount the reasons that led them to embark on the migration journey, the complex identities they developed along the way, and the opportunities and challenges of settling in a new country.

Migration pathways

Reasons leading people to migrate from one country to another are numerous and very diverse. They can also determine the challenges likely to be experienced during the settlement process. A fundamental distinction to appreciate migration motives is between voluntary and involuntary migration.[3]

Involuntary – or forced – migration includes refugees and asylum seekers fleeing violence, conflict, war or persecution. Since 1977, Australia has admitted approximately 600,000 people under its Humanitarian Program. In the last ten years, the country welcomed approximately 16,300 refugees per year on average.

> *I arrived in Australia in August 2003 following wars and genocide we experience back in my country. I had to flee my country. I was lucky to be settled in Australia.*

[3] It is important to note that the distinction between "voluntary" and "forced" migration should be conceived as a spectrum rather than mutually exclusive categories. For example, "economic migrants" can include people who are "forced" to migrate to escape extreme poverty, but who are considered "refugees" under international law definition.

[The situation is my home country] is not stable. [Terrorists groups] want to kill anyone working with the government. I've been helping the government, I've been working with them, even they [the terrorist groups] have my name, they would kill me if I go back there.

Some were persecuted in their country of origin for belonging to an ethnic or religious minority. This paradoxically echoes the experience of becoming a cultural and/or linguistic minority in their new country of residence, albeit without the associated persecution.

I came to Australia in 2007 because of suffering from discrimination, harassment by the other ethnic groups, because I am from a minority indigenous group in my country.

I was born in Rwanda. We arrived in Australia in 2010.

What was the reason for coming to Australia?

Insecurity and persecution forced us to leave our country and seek refuge in a peaceful country.

Involuntary migration is often associated with severe hardship, such as the death of close relatives, separation from loved ones, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and lack of control on one's life. In addition to negatively affecting well-being and complicating the settlement process, challenges refugees face can significantly impact their capacity to deal with disruptive emergency events, a topic examined in detail further in this report.

While forced migration is a reality for thousands of migrants arriving in Australia every year, the vast majority of newcomers migrate on a voluntary basis. Reasons leading people to voluntarily move from one country to another – temporarily or permanently – are highly diverse. A common motive is to seek employment and education opportunities:

If there are problems back home, with money and so on, you look elsewhere. And education as well, [people from my community] have more chances here than then they did back home.

What was the main reason why you moved to Australia?

For better future opportunities for my children.

What was the main reason for moving to Australia?

My husband got a profession here. He's a scientist by profession and he got a job here. That's the main reason for us to come in here.

Another common reason is to reunite with family members dispersed in different countries.

I was born in Bangladesh, I moved here in Australia one and a half year ago because I got married to an Australian, I had to follow him here. It's great I'm with him now.

While voluntary migration is generally undertaken for a specific purpose, it is common for plans and expectations to change along the way.

What was the main reason you moved to Australia?

I came here to study

You arrived on a student visa?

Yes. And after that I liked it here and didn't want to go back [to my home country].

Did your parents support you?

My family's financial situation was very bad. I came here to study and earn money. But then I couldn't continue my study, I started to work because I needed to support my younger brother and sisters.

Far from being straightforward or unidirectional, migration journeys are often complex, with multiple "stops" before reaching a final destination.

I was born in India, in the South part: Kerala. My parents were already working abroad in the UAE [United Arab Emirates], so I was born in India and then I was brought up in UAE. I did my schooling there and then I went back to India to do my bachelors. After that I came to Australia to do my Masters, I did my master's in public health with a major in emergency and disaster management.

You decided to stay after [your studies] and try to find work?

Yeah, I had an opportunity. Because I was a full-time student they had a visa which allowed me to stay for an extra two years. So I thought it's a good opportunity to stay back, work and see how it is.

Each migration journey story is unique. While its hardships can be detrimental to resilience, the migration experience can also be a rich source of learning, self-confidence and self-efficacy, equipping those who undertake it with increased capacities to cope with disruptions. Another "side effect" of migration is to generate complex identities.

Complex identities

Resilience researchers have identified place attachment – the experience of feeling "at home" in a given place – as positively correlated with the adoption of preparedness behaviours and higher levels of resilience (a topic discussed in detail in Chapter 8). The extent to which we feel attached to a place partly depends on whether our self-defined identity "fits" with the socio-cultural environment surrounding us. While a "good fit" will generally facilitate adaptation and promote well-being, a "gap" can lead to some degree of alienation, with negative impact on resilience.

Therefore, to study the relationships between migration and emergency resilience, it is useful to understand the complex identities migrants develop during their journey. We therefore asked participants to describe their cultural background and whether they felt "Australian", "non-Australian", or both.

I'm basically Indian, so I have non-Australian cultural background.

My cultural background is both Australian and Burundian.

I think that I am both non-Australian and Australian because I have got some integration since I arrived.

My cultural background is both Australian and Rwandan.

Can you explain more about that?

Because I cannot forget my original culture.

While some respondents regarded the culture of their home country as constituting their "primary identity", the majority felt they were *both* "Australian" and "non-Australian". This suggests that most migrants feel a certain degree of identification with the socio-cultural environment of their host country.

It also shows that identity, far from being static, is constantly evolving according to life circumstances and the amount of time elapsed since arrival. Indeed, some respondents felt they were "in between" two cultures: not totally Australian, but also somehow disconnected from their home country.

I think that I haven't been here long enough [5 years] to feel fully "Australian". But if I go back to Colombia, I'm definitely not 100% Colombian anymore.

How would you describe your cultural background?

I think it still is Bangladeshi, because all the thinking and all the stuff that's inside me is all about Bangladesh. But now I'm here, I'm following more the Australian culture I think. For example, back in my home [country] the dress code was different, I used to wear the traditional clothes, but here at work, like anyone I wear t-shirt and jeans, so that changed.

Further showing the complex nature of identity, some respondents saw it as composed of different "elements" they can pick and choose from, not unlike from a restaurant menu:

How do you describe your cultural background? Would you say you are more Australian or Sri-Lankan?

Mainly I picked the good things from Australian culture.

What about your family?

I encourage my family to stick with our culture.

Picking the good things from Australian culture

Were your children all born here?

Yes, they're all born here, but I ask them to stick with our culture and pick the best parts from the Australian culture.

Finally, it is important to note that cultural identity is not always based on cultural, ethnic, linguistic or religious traits, as civic belonging often plays an important role.

My cultural background is not really Australian because I was born and raised in Africa, but [I also feel I have some] Australian background and culture, because it's easy to adapt. Most Australians they have [diverse backgrounds]. The cultures and communities are diversified. We have indigenous groups, we have migrants from different parts of the world, so if you mix them together, they become Australians. Everyone is qualified to be Australian. Somehow, I still have some values [from my home culture], but trust me in 10 years to come maybe I will have forgotten them already.

Although we are settled here and we are Australians now, everyone asks "where do you come from?" Even though I've been here for 16 years I keep hearing the same question.

This brief review shows how the complex identities developed by migrants during their journey can generate feelings of belonging (associated with resilience) or alienation (correlated with vulnerability). While the role of identity in determining levels of resilience and vulnerability is certain, it pales in comparison to the immediate challenges migrants face during the settlement process.

Opportunities and challenges

For those who undertake it – voluntarily or not – the migration journey presents both opportunities and challenges. Research participants told us about common issues, feelings and experiences associated with settling in a new country. Their insight shows that this adaptation process is closely related to important aspects of emergency resilience such as self-confidence, self-efficacy, social connectedness, social trust, and many others.

Migration as a search for safety

For many, migration is perceived as a "fresh start" and associated with feelings of hope, renewal, and new opportunities.

When we came here we had a lot of support from organisations and the community, also from the Somali community here. So people gave us a fair go, to do what we want. There was plenty of opportunities here, that's what we wanted. From there we started to study at university.

For refugees fleeing violence, war or persecution, arrival in the host country is often experienced as a positive feeling of restored safety.

> *Most [people from my community] settled here because of refugee status. They fled their country following war, terrible war. I always say we were fortunate because very few [people from our community] settled here. We recognise that many of them experienced disaster created by humans.*

This feeling of safety is crucial for those who experienced violence-induced trauma. However, it has been found that overly associating a new environment with safety may paradoxically lead to negative resilience outcomes, such as under-estimating risks. For instance, a study conducted in the United States found that "[s]ome immigrants who had survived wars and civil conflict in their native lands believe that America is a safe place; therefore, there is no need to prepare [for natural disasters]".[55]

For both refugees in search of safety and voluntary migrants looking for opportunities, Australia's reputation as a safe and affluent country often generates high expectations:

> *The primary reason I moved to Australia is because it's easy to get jobs here.*

> *I would say the main reason for the migration of our community members to Australia is that it is seen as a land of opportunity.*

In many cases, this period of hope and excitement is short-lived and followed by frustration when initial expectations collide with the daily challenges of settlement. Some never experience this "honeymoon period" at all.

> *How would you describe the situation of your people in Australia?*

> *Australia is a country of opportunity, when you arrive here you have very high expectations because you are in a very rich country where you can improve your life. However, it's not straightforward. Then this expectation goes down when you start looking for a job, when you apply for lots of different jobs and get denied. Then life becomes very difficult.*

The first time, the first years or days for refugees coming here is frustration. There is a shock of culture, you don't know what's happening. They are struggling with things like social worry, settlement issues such as housing, education, finding work and socialising with Australian culture.

Separation from loved ones and reduced support networks

Separation from loved ones – temporary or permanent – is a common feature of the migration experience. This is particularly true for refugees, for whom separation often occurs in the trauma-inducing contexts of violence and war.

I was born in Rwanda and I came to Australia in 2016 because of family reunification. After we fled Rwanda because of the war, my family also was in the refugee camp, they got resettlement to Australia, then I came also to join them.

Separation from loved ones is also common in times of disasters and other types of emergencies. The Covid-19 pandemic is illustrative in this regard, with social distancing measures, disruptions to transport networks and border closures separating family members for protracted periods. That separation from loved ones is a common feature of both the migration experience and emergencies should be taken into account in emergency management practices, particularly to reduce risks of re-traumatisation and long-term psychological impacts.

For many newcomers, migrating also entails the loss of the social support from which they benefitted in their home country: relatives, friends, colleagues, the comforting familiarity of known faces sharing a same culture and language. As discussed in chapter 8, social support is a crucial ingredient of resilience as it helps people cope with the disruptive impact of emergencies.

The biggest challenge for people from our community when they first come here, is never getting their way around Western life. Some have family already established here, so when they come they've got that support, but then there's others who do it on their own.

When they come here, there is suddenly no support for them, that's where we [community organisations] come in.

Communities that are well established – meaning that they have been settled for some time and/or effectively self-organised – generally benefit from better support than those who settled recently. Research from the International Organization for Migration[56] found that "[c]ommunities that have been resettled for longer periods of time may be more likely to have professional and broader networks that can help them survive and thrive in times of disaster."

During the 2011 Canterbury earthquake in New Zealand, a study[57] found that the Bhutanese community, who settled in Christchurch just a few years before the disaster, "found additional challenges to respond, as they did not have the established networks (both internal and external) that had developed over nearly 20 years [in other, more established communities]". In Australia, other research[58] found that length of residence in host country was positively correlated with higher levels of resilience during the 2010-11 Brisbane flood.

Employment

Work is a central part of most people's life. Not only does it provide income – it also contributes to self-realisation, self-confidence, provides opportunities for learning and growth, gives a sense of purpose and fulfilment, and facilitates social connections. For newcomers, employment is a crucial adaptation pathway, and can directly contribute to resilience. Unfortunately, securing employment is also one of the most salient challenge of settlement:

> *When [refugees from my country] arrive here, the most common difficulty they have is language. Also, when they arrive they have nothing with them, no money, they lost everything. But after [overcoming the most immediate challenges] they try to live normally here, and they have this other challenge, which is the most important: work.*

> *I want to mention one thing: employment. It's a problem in Brisbane, maybe in the whole of Australia. We discussed this during a community leader meeting, all the communities in Brisbane attended this meeting. When they asked us what is the biggest problem, all of them mentioned employment.*

> *[People from my community¬] are coping very well in Australia because there is safety here. We feel very safe, also we are well organised within our community in Queensland. We have representation, we can advocate for ourselves and our people. But employment is the number one issue – it's very difficult to get a job.*

A significant barrier to accessing employment is the non-recognition of qualifications, skills and experience acquired overseas.

In my country, I'm an electrical engineer, but here my qualifications are not recognised, because they need some documents. But all my documents were destroyed [when my house was destroyed during bombings in Syria].

That's what happened to my son, he had to start from the beginning. He studied medicine for six years in my country, but when he came here he had to start from the beginning. He lost five or six years, that's a very long time.

Skills in migrant communities are not recognised in Australia, because we don't have the certificates. You can see a person who was a doctor, or a person who was a nurse in Africa, or [or someone working] in a refugee camp, helping people and getting a lot of experience, or a midwife… they arrive in Australia, they have to start from TAFE.

There's been a lot of cases like that, the problem is that Australia doesn't recognize qualifications [of migrants]. So you have to do another course. It's really hard, I've got cousins who are teachers back home, qualified teachers. They come here in Australia, they've got to do another course to get those skills recognised, so it's really hard.

Finding a job is only part of the challenge: staying employed on the long-term is just as difficult. The Covid-19 crisis has sadly illustrated this problem. It is estimated that nearly 19,000 refugees and asylum seekers on temporary visas will lose their jobs due to the economic impact of the coronavirus, with unemployment rates rising from 19% to 42% among this group. As a result, homelessness could affect as much as 12% of refugees and asylum seekers, showing that economic vulnerability is compounded by pre-existing factors specific to refugees.[59]

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Skills in migrant communities are not always recognised.

The impact of employment challenges reaches far beyond income security: they have major consequences on well-being and resilience. A recent paper assessing Covid-19's impact on refugees identified that "the experience of unemployment can lower self-esteem, self-acceptance, self-confidence, morale, life satisfaction and sense of purpose." The study also found that "unemployment can increase social isolation and damage the 'buffering effect' that a social network normally provides, while also contributing to risky health behaviours such as increased smoking, alcohol and drug misuse."[60]

Research respondents confirmed this assessment when reflecting on their own employment challenges, frequently alluding to their psychological impact:

> *If you see a doctor that has been told "you cannot work here because you're not qualified", the problem is not about employment, it's about the depression and anxiety that he will have.*

The experience of unemployment has important implications for emergency resilience. Indeed, research has found that a lack of self-confidence and self-efficacy precludes the adoption of preparedness behaviour and hinders the capacity to cope with and recover from emergencies. This relationship reinforces the idea that resilience, far from being the result of inherent personal traits, largely depend on social, economic and political processes.

Cultural adaptation and generation gap

Adapting to a new cultural environment is another challenge newcomers face. In addition to the obvious issue of language, cultural adaptation includes overall norms and values, as well as numerous aspects of daily life.

> *The majority of us have come from villages, straight into this big Western city. That's why there's a lot of struggle. You're dealing with a group of people who have come straight from that communal way of life, and you put them into an individualistic society – there is a struggle there.*

> *[Adapting to] the way of life here is difficult. This is a new country. You know, back home we used to have land and grow crops, which we were used to eat, but here we don't have that. We don't have access to the food we're used to back home.*

While some migrants adjust with relative ease to a new cultural landscape, others experience adaptation as a long and arduous process. How effectively and rapidly one adapts depends on many factors such as the degree of similarity or difference between cultural environments in country of origin and country of destination; individual personality traits; opportunities for meaningful interaction with people from the host culture; the availability of support networks; and many others.

Age often plays a key role. Young people tend to adjust faster, learn new languages more easily, and are generally more willing to embrace diverse cultural norms and practices. In contrast, those who arrived as adults often face more protracted adaptation challenges. These different "rates of

adaptation" can create generational gaps within families: it is common for children to adapt more easily and rapidly than their parents due to different learning capacities and socialising opportunities – primarily at school. As a result, some migrant parents feel they "lag behind" in comparison to their children, or feel conflicted between their satisfaction at seeing their children adapt and their desire for them to retain "original culture", in particular with regards to language, religion and family values.

In terms of family, we experience cultural shock because we're in a new country, and our children don't speak our mother tongue, and also they are more distant to the parents. This creates a cultural shock.

This generational gap impacts the expectations between parents and children regarding support provided, both in "normal times" and during emergencies. Typically, in "collectivist societies" children are expected to provide more support than in "individualistic societies". Misunderstandings can therefore arise in migrant families where parents adhere to collectivist values while their children have been socialised to more individualistic norms. This dynamic was identified by parent-respondents as limiting the availability of immediate support they can realistically expect during disruptive events such as natural disasters.

Generation gaps can impact expectations regarding family support.

The young people from our community are integrating well. They go to school and become really Australian. My last-born came here when he was 6-year-old, now he's at university, and his English is Aussie English. He has no problem communicating, he's integrating well. Those who are not integrating are old people like us, who came here already adult with a strong African culture. Old people like me, we always think that our children will look after us, for that reason we don't try to access senior services. Aussie people, they know they should not depend on their children. I believe that my children will look after me, but it is not true, because they will be outside working or studying, or scattered around Australia. When the time comes for me to be in a situation where I need assistance and support, my children will not be able to help.

Conclusion

The migration journey and ensuing settlement process is a meaningful and foundational experience for most members of CALD communities. For some, overcoming the challenges of migration can be a rich source of learning which facilitates self-confidence and generates resilience. For others, the migration experience can exacerbate existing vulnerabilities – or generate new ones – thereby negatively impacting their capacity to prepare for, cope with and recover from emergencies.

By outlining the challenges and opportunities of migration, this chapter enables a better grasp of the life circumstances of migrants and refugees, and provides the overall context for the analysis of emergency resilience. Building on this understanding, the next chapter will turn to emergency perceptions, knowledge and attitudes among Australia's diverse communities.

- Reasons leading people to migrate are numerous and varied, and often determine the settlement process.
- As a result of complex journeys, newcomers often develop complex identities, borrowing elements of various cultures.
- Most newcomers identify with at least some aspects of the mainstream Australian culture.
- Settling in a new country entails new opportunities and challenges, including language barriers, the loss of social support, difficulty securing employment, and the struggle to adapt to different cultural norms and practices.
- Depending on the circumstances in which it takes place, migration can be both a source of resilience or vulnerability.

Chapter 6
Perceptions, Knowledge and Attitudes

Australian Red Cross / Antoine Chandon

"Before migrating here, how much did people from your community know about natural disasters in Australia?"

"Nothing. To be honest, we knew about kangaroos, we didn't know about cyclones"

Psychological processes play a central role in our personal experience of emergencies. Because of their influence on our behaviours before, during and after disruptive events, perceptions, knowledge and attitudes are considered key components of resilience.

The extreme variety of experiences and life circumstances in diverse communities makes unrealistic any attempt to draw general trends about their perceptions and attitudes. It is nevertheless important to examine the role that the migration experience can play in shaping them. How much do migrants know about emergency risks in Australia prior to arrival? What do the concepts of "emergency" and "disaster" mean to them? Do they have an accurate perception of risks in their new country of residence? What factors determine these perceptions and levels of knowledge?

This chapter strives to answer these questions using existing research and multicultural respondents' insights. Their implications for emergency management are also discussed, in particular with regards to preparedness education and emergency communication.

Risk perceptions and knowledge

The importance of risk perceptions for emergency resilience

Perceptions of risks are central to emergency resilience. Research has shown that people who recognise risks accurately (in terms of their likelihood and impact) tend to show higher levels of resilience. On the contrary, those who underestimate risks are less likely to take preparedness action, while overestimating risks can cause anxiety and stress detrimental to protective decision-making. This is why risk perception is often considered a "precursor variable" in behaviour change models.[61]

> *In a study on the factors impacting compliance with evacuation instructions, Perry and Lindell found that risk perception was "the best predictor of compliance". In other words, people who perceived risks as more salient were more likely to evacuate when asked to do so.*
>
> Source: Perry and Lindell 1991 [62]

How people perceive and interpret risks has important implications for emergency communication and preparedness education. Research has shown that emergency education has little impact on preparedness levels when risks are not perceived as salient[63]. For example, practical advice on how to prepare for a cyclone will have little effect on people who do not think they are is at risk of being impacted by a cyclone. Accurate appreciation of risks is thus a prerequisite to preparedness action.

> *[G]iving information or education to the community doesn't necessarily lead to disaster and emergency preparedness (…); how the risk itself would be interpreted by individuals could partially determine the process and the level of disaster and emergency preparedness at a given time.*
>
> Source: Ejeta et al 2015

> *Only when natural hazards are perceived as salient or critical, by a person, are they likely to motivate protective behavior.*
>
> Source: Paton 2013

Emergency perceptions are not limited to "external" factors such as risks. They also include perceptions of our own coping capacities. A strong body of research has demonstrated that "individuals who have an accurate perception of their vulnerability are more inclined to appropriately respond to warnings and undertake protective behaviours".[64]

Considering the importance of psychological processes for resilience, studying the emergency experience of CALD communities requires examining perceptions and knowledge levels at different stages of the settlement process, and whether emergencies are considered a "salient problem" among the various issues they face.

Meanings and interpretations

A simple but effective method to grasp migrants' perceptions is to ask what the words "emergency" and "disaster" mean to them. Indeed, these concepts may have various meanings for different people due to differences in both language and life experiences. The responses of research participants provide an overall indication of their perceptions.

The first category of responses relates to generic events, with an emphasis on their unexpected and disruptive character.

When you hear the word "emergency", what are the first things coming to your mind?

Emergency is something bad, a catastrophe, which you don't choose, and you cannot control.

Emergency, it's anything that is not planned, it just happens without your consent. It happens with a great chance of displacement. [It] can destabilise you emotionally, economically, socially, and you cannot stop it. That's an emergency.

I think something bad, a catastrophe, the loss of life and property.

Survival. When something out of the ordinary happens and it's a risk to your life or your safety.

Some respondents emphasised personal emergencies, particularly of a medical nature.

Medical situations, illness, all of a sudden falling ill, choking, heart attack, because I have experienced so many in my family.

For many respondents – in particular refugees – the meaning of "emergency" is closely associated with traumatic experience in their country of origin, in particular violence from war and conflict.

How we define "emergency" partly depends on our experience.

I would say [man-made] disasters is number one for me. Because when war erupts it's a catastrophic event, many people leave the country because you have no choice, you leave everything behind you and run away, and there is no one to assist you. You run away with nothing and there is nothing to help you in these situations, you just save your life if you're lucky. But we also have natural disasters, we experience bushfires for example, landslides and volcanic eruptions.

For the Congolese people, emergency situations are war, when they were sleeping and hearing gun shots. This is a disaster. For the Congolese people who live here, their idea of disaster is war and political confusion.

What happened in Iraq and Syria is more than natural disaster, it's like an un-natural disaster. So many people, until now, have problems of depression, they're not accepting what has happened to them.

I think in my country we experience different kinds of disasters. The natural disasters are always there, but man-made emergencies are more violent, lots of blood you know, I experienced a lot of deaths.

In some cases, the word "emergency" is associated with displacement caused by violence, war and conflict, and by extension with the migration journey itself, perceived as traumatic.

The first thing that comes in my mind when you're talking about emergency is displacement of people from their home to a new land, to another kind of life that they did not even expect. The worst part of it is when you're in a war situation because of political instability, then you find that people in the family have scattered, gone in different directions from other members of the family. So the first thing that comes in my mind when you talk about emergency is displacement from one place where you originally belong to another place which is actually new place for you.

The minority of respondents who associated the word "emergency" with disasters occurring in Australia did so in a rather generic manner.

Calling 000 is the first thing that comes to my mind. However, if it is a disaster I will think of a point of encounter, like an evacuation point.

When it comes to emergency now I just see water. I don't know why, if I hear the word "emergency", it takes me to the evacuation centre.

Importantly, meanings associated with the concept of "emergency" vary due to language and translation.

What is the word in your language for "emergency"?

The word that we have is light actually, you can use it for very simple things. When you hear "emergency" [in English], it's really serious, but the word we have [in our language] it's like, maybe you forgot your phone, that's an emergency! Actually we have more emergencies than in Australia, but we don't have that strong word. We use the same word for small emergencies and heavy emergencies, like a flood.

Overall, participants' responses show that past experience is determinant in shaping emergency perceptions. In psychology, this phenomenon is called the "availability heuristic".[65] This means that we mainly rely on the repertoire of our personal experiences to interpret a specific topic or situation: our most recent and significant experiences act as "landmarks" allowing us to assess the world around us. This explains why refugees frequently associate the concept of "emergency" with violence and war, rather than with "natural" disasters. The implications of the availability heuristic for preparedness education and communication strategies in culturally diverse communities are critical, and discussed in upcoming chapters.

Risk knowledge

Knowledge is a crucial aspect of resilience. Accurate information about risks, their potential impact, and how to prepare and cope with them, allows people to make the best decisions to limit their negative consequences. Levels of emergency knowledge were thus examined at different stages of the settlement process.

Before the migration journey, most respondents showed very limited knowledge – or no knowledge at all – about emergency risks in Australia.

How much did you know about natural disasters in Australia before you moved here?

I didn't know anything, I start learning while I was studying. When I came I had zero knowledge.

Before I came? I didn't know. I came like blind. Like, 'I just want to go there'.

I was not very much aware. I think there's a very different picture painted about Australia when you look at it from an international perspective.

Only a small minority of respondents had some awareness of disaster risks in Australia before arrival.

Before you arrived, how much did you know about risks of emergencies here in Australia?

This country being surrounded by water, definitely I knew about floods. So I was excited in a way [to move to Australia], but also aware of the situation. I learned about [flood risks] in the news. It's important for people to develop confidence and know [about risks].

The 2011 Brisbane flood. (Source: ABC)

I researched the natural disasters of the country before moving in, and it was all about the bushfires and the flood which happened in 2011 [in Brisbane]. Those things were a little concerning for us, but we were not going to live in an area affected by bushfires.

Respondents also showed limited knowledge of risks after they arrived in Australia.

How much do feel you know now [about natural disasters risks where you live]?

I don't know anything. The place where I live now is not a flood area, that's what I'm thinking. Also, I'm living in a high rise building so I would be spared in case of floods. This is the knowledge I have about my area.

Since I didn't witness an emergency situation, I don't know much about it.

Were people from your community aware about the possibility of floods before it happened in Queensland [in 2010-11]?

We did some training with them about cyclones with QFES [Queensland Fire and Emergency Services], we explained to people what can happen and how it goes, but it was a very shallow, brief understanding.

Factors found to increase knowledge include previous experience with emergencies in Australia, training, and involvement in emergency management (for instance through volunteering). Interestingly, government support associated with different migration pathways and residency statuses also seem to impact levels of emergency knowledge:

A lot of young people [from CALD backgrounds and recently arrived in Australia] may not know basic emergency services information, like triple-zero. I've talked with people who have had a motorbike accident or something like this, and didn't know what number to call. So in terms of knowledge I think it's a mix. Some young people have some knowledge if they've received support, because they've come as refugees and they've received support and information [from government and non-government agencies]. But if they haven't come to Australia as refugees, often they don't have any support, so they have to slowly figure it out.

Attitudes and salience

Similarly to perceptions, attitudes towards emergencies are strong determinants of resilience, and can be conceived as a spectrum ranging from passivity to proactivity. At the passive end of the spectrum, low awareness of risks prevents the adoption of preparedness action. At the opposite extreme, an overly involved attitude can lead to excessive worrying about risks, without necessarily increasing levels of resilience. Somewhere in the middle, we find a proactive attitude characterised by an accurate interpretation of risks and the adoption of appropriate protective behaviours.

A helpful lens to study attitudes towards emergencies is the concept of salience. This means that risks are not interpreted in isolation, but according to their relative importance compared to other issues we face in daily life. Research in disaster psychology suggests that "'social hazards' encountered on a daily basis (…) are perceived as more salient", independently of their potential impact. [66] This acknowledges the finite amount of attention, time and energy we can devote to the competing issues of our lives. The more "salient" an issue is, the more likely we are to act upon it. It is therefore necessary to appreciate emergencies within the context of migrants' life as a whole.

The most common trend regarding the salience of emergencies among research participants is that the many challenges of settlement leave little time, energy and headspace to think about emergency risks – let alone to prepare for their occurrence.

Do you know if people in your community have taken some action to prepare for natural disasters?

I don't think so, because you know when they first came here, there are many things we must do for settlement, we must care about health, Centrelink, how to send kids to school, to uni… And you prepare yourself [to find employment], you improve your [English] language, and then, maybe, when we're finished with all this (laughs), we can prepare to face disasters.

It's a slower learning curve if you don't have that extra support in the beginning [of settlement in Australia], but even with that support there's a lot of things going on: find out where to live, where to get a job, what to do, all of those things are competing [against preparing for disasters].

The salience of disaster risks is also impacted by the perception, shared by many newcomers, that Australia is a "safe place".

Because expectations about life in Australia are so high – and often unrealistically high – that naturally progresses to the expectation that such things [natural disasters] aren't going to happen here. So on one level it's a double shot to realise that Australia too has its problems. I think that explains the level of distress experienced by some people [from CALD communities who experienced natural disasters] who think "how could this be happening to us here in Australia?". It shook their sense of security.

This finding is consistent with research conducted in other contexts. For example, immigrants to the United States who experienced war and conflict in their home country believed that "America is safe place" and that "therefore, there is no need to prepare" for natural disasters.[67]

Salience is also determined by the comparison of risks between people's previous and current place of residence.

Are you concerned about natural disasters?

I don't worry about natural disasters [here] because they're much smaller than in Taiwan.

We have a lot of emergencies in Somalia, but here [Australia] and Somalia are different, it's Africa. Here you can prepare, you can have all the stuff, you know where to go. But in Somalia emergencies happen every day [in relation to war and conflict]. You walk in here, someone dies. Everyday there is an emergency.

Interestingly, the experience of war and violence often seems to decrease the salience of disaster risks in migrants' new place of residence:

Comparing to things we faced [war in country of origin], it's worse than here. Especially if you walk under the bombing or the shooting, and the rockets falling everywhere. And the deaths all around. That's very bad, people here don't face this disaster. We can't compare.

While it can be argued that everyone is busy with competing life priorities, many migrants and refugees face additional settlement-related challenges, often experienced as psychologically overwhelming. These include learning a new language, acquiring new skills, finding employment, and more generally learning to navigate a new cultural, social and political environment. This tends to generate a passive attitude towards emergencies, and relegates the issue to the lower end of priorities.[68]

Does culture play a role?

We have seen that life experience, the migration journey and the challenges of settlement play important roles in determining emergency perceptions and attitudes. But what about culture? Do norms, values, religion and cultural beliefs influence how people "read" emergency risks? A significant body of research suggests that it might be the case[69], even though the nature and degree of this impact is difficult to measure.

For example, Douglas and Wiladvki have posited that "what human beings perceive as threats to their wellbeing and how they evaluate probabilities and magnitudes of unwanted consequences, are less a question of predicted physical outcomes than of values, attitudes, social influences and cultural

identity".[70] Other researchers have pointed out that "cultural groups respond to risk and crisis communication on the basis of their perceptions and ways of thinking, and these differ from group to group."[71]

> *(A)ttention needs to be paid to how people's interpretations of risks are shaped by their own experience, personal feelings and values, cultural beliefs and interpersonal and societal dynamics.*
>
> Source: Eiser et al 2012[72]

> *Further, refugee and minority groups may maintain different social constructions on values than the wider society and state institutions. For instance, cultural beliefs and attitudes will shape how particular communities view the threat of a potential hazard, and therefore will affect how they prepare for a disaster and whether they take heed of government warnings and advice. In the post-disaster context, distinct communities may identify and value different areas in need of attention and recovery efforts.*
>
> Source: Marlowe and Bogen 2015[73]

For example, one respondents hinted at the role of religious beliefs in shaping attitudes towards emergencies:

Do you think that you will be affected by an emergency or a natural disaster in the future?

Emergencies and natural disasters are uncontrollable because they are acts of nature, acts of God.

The highly diverse spectrum of cultural outlooks renders the analysis of their impact on perception difficult – and outside the scope of this research. It is nevertheless worth mentioning, in line with previous research, that "the failure to pay adequate attention to the ethnic and cultural background of citizens, when tailoring messages, can potentially undermine how hazard warnings are interpreted." [74]

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated the importance of perceptions, knowledge and attitudes for emergency resilience. While these psychological processes are the result of personal life circumstances and thus differ across people independently of cultural background, some aspects of the migration experience were found to have a significant impact on perceptions and attitudes. The next chapter therefore examines in detail the relationship between migrants' past experience and their resilience to disruptive emergency events.

- How people perceive and interpret risks is a crucial element of resilience.
- The meanings of "emergency" and "disaster" vary widely between people; past experience appears to be the main determinant of these meanings. For example, many refugees associate "emergency" with violence and conflict, rather than with natural disasters.
- Overall, the level of emergency risks knowledge among migrants and refugees is low.
- For many migrants, emergencies are not a salient problem because of the numerous competing priorities in their lives – many of them related to settlement.
- While culture probably influences emergency perceptions and attitudes, its impact is difficult to measure.

Chapter 7
The Impact of Past Experience

"For my people, the biggest emergency situation is war, violence and conflicts."

Experiencing an emergency can have profound and long-lasting impacts on people's lives. It is not uncommon for people to refer to disasters as "defining moments" or "turning points", especially when they entail high levels of stress and uncertainty, damage to property, injury or death. For some individuals and communities, overcoming the physical and psychological challenges of disasters can be opportunities for learning, growth, self-development – ultimately generating resilience. For others, it can have the opposite effect and lead to fear, anxiety or trauma, thus reducing resilience capacities and increasing vulnerability to future disruptive events.

Past experience can impact numerous aspects of resilience, including our perceptions and attitudes towards risks, our likelihood to adopt preparedness actions, our coping abilities, recovery capacities, and how we relate to emergency response authorities[75]. This chapter therefore examines the relationships between past experience and resilience, with a focus on CALD communities.

Past experience: reviewing the evidence

The evidence regarding the impact of past experience on resilience is somewhat contradictory.[76] On the one hand, studies found that prior exposure to disasters increases people's awareness of hazards and promotes the adoption of protective behaviours. For example, recent experience of flood-induced evacuation was found to increase the perceived probability of future flooding and encourage preparedness behaviours. A similar effect was identified for other hazards such as avalanches, earthquakes, landslides and hurricanes.[77] In some cases, this positive impact on risks awareness lasted for up to 18 months after the initial event.[78]

A study conducted two years after major flooding in the United Kingdom found that "recent exposure to flooding increased awareness of flood risk, adoption of protective behaviours, and ultimately, increased feelings of preparedness compared to a similar high-risk population".[79] Research from Indonesia found that people with direct or indirect experience of the 2004 December tsunami showed better preparedness behaviour than people who were not affected.[80] In Australia and with regards to migrants and refugees, Shepherd and Kitty van Vuuren found that "CALD communities' previous experience of disaster seemed to affect preparedness and perception of risk during the Brisbane flood"[81], another example of past exposure being positively correlated with protective behaviour. This positive impact of past experience is sometimes attributed to the effect of the ''availability heuristic" discussed in the previous chapter. This phenomenon means that we are more aware of – and therefore more likely to prepare for – the types of events we can recall from past experience.[82]

While the above examples suggest a positive impact on resilience, other studies found an opposite effect. For example, past disaster experience can create a "falsely optimistic bias" – the perception that emergencies "don't happen twice", and that "things can't be worse than last time".[83] Past experience is also detrimental to resilience when it causes trauma, with well-known negative impact on coping capacities. Finally, other studies have found simply no relationship between past experience, risk perceptions, preparedness behaviours and overall resilience.[84]

Past experience, the migration journey and trauma

While relevant to all, past experience has particular implications for CALD communities. As outlined in Chapter 5, migrants' and refugees' life experiences often radically differ from those of mainstream Australians due to the specific challenges of migration and settlement. Moreover, hazards in migrants' new place of residence are often different from those in their country of origin. This raises the question of the degree to which disaster experiences can be "transposed" across contexts. For example, does the experience of an earthquake in Nepal can impact a migrant's propensity to prepare for cyclones or bushfires in Australia? Additionally, the experience of violent conflict, war, terrorism and death is common amongst refugees and often generates psychological challenges such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), known to hinder coping capacities and overall resilience.

> *Personal experiences are also highly relevant in CALD communities where previous trauma, cultural or social influences can exacerbate feelings of helplessness, fear and anxiety during disasters, and therefore how or if individuals seek and accept emergency risk information.*
>
> Source: Shepherd and Kitty van Vuuren 2014[85]

Overall, a strong vein of research suggests that CALD communities' distinctive experiences have implications for disaster resilience, a phenomenon illustrated below by our multicultural respondents' insights.

> *Prior experiences with emergencies influence one's response to a new one. In studies of responses to the Los Angeles earthquake, Bolin found that Mexican immigrants who experienced the Mexico City earthquake responded very differently from those without experience, and undocumented residents responded very differently from how U.S. citizens responded.*
>
> Source: Carter-Pokras et al 2007[86]

When past experience generates resilience

For many respondents, past experience with emergencies – including events such as conflict and war – is conducive to positive resilience outcomes by increasing self-confidence and coping capacities, a phenomenon known as post-traumatic growth.

> *I think these emergency situations [previously experienced by members of my community] prepare them to face hardships in a better way in the future. They tend to plan much more for eventualities occurring in life and are better prepared.*

If a family faced this disaster [the Syrian civil war], I think they are more interested [about emergency preparedness] than the family who didn't face this disaster before.

Past experience with emergencies can contribute to resilience.

Do you think that having been through an emergency in the past makes you more or less prepared for future emergencies?

Definitely it makes me more prepared. I'll be more cautious and I'll also make my family more cautious about [disaster risks].

Past experience can generate resilience in various ways. Some respondents expressed that it allowed them to gain some perspective on the challenges and hardships of disaster situations.

Our youth were very helpful for the wider community in Townsville [during the 2019 flood]. We packed a lot of sand bags, we were helping the elderly people from their houses, and we helped our community get out from the flooded places. Some lost their houses, so we [moved] to another house. People were staying with each other two or three weeks, because renting was too expensive.

How was your experience of living in the same house with several families?

We used to do that in Africa, in the refugee camp. We used to have fires in our camp, sometimes everything was wiped out, so we lived together. We don't think about having our own place, if it's necessary, we stay together.

Some people had to stay in a shelter [during the 2019 North Queensland flood]. Most are used to being in refugee camps, where there is no proper accommodation.

Past experience can also increase self-confidence and self-efficacy, both key components of resilience.

Do you feel that that having been through an emergency in the past makes you more or less prepared for future ones?

Yes partly, because I have experience of past emergency my brain is partly prepared for anything that can happen.

Past disaster experience also prompted some respondents to develop their knowledge about hazards, effective preparedness measures and the availability of support services.

We have [gained] experience in these [previous] natural disasters and we can help more effectively our community members. Before it was just trial and error, but now we know what to do in the event of a natural disaster. If a flood arrives for example, or if a house takes fire, we can tell the affected persons that they are not alone and there are people who can assist, like Red Cross or the government, and that the community is there to support them.

Respondents' insights suggest that the most positive impact of past experience may relate to social capital. When disasters are experienced collectively, they can generate resilience by strengthening social connectedness, solidarity and support networks, while fostering a sense of empathy:

You mentioned that you experienced emergency situations in your home country. What were the main impacts of these experiences for you?

I developed a sense of humanity, I felt so concerned about these people who were in trouble. So emergencies, to me, means that someone has to be helped, we need to feel sympathy and empathy toward people who are affected.

In my culture we say that somehow disasters are good, because people become united, and when we experience another disaster, we can compare to the disaster back home, this unites the community, the community reacts strongly to fight the disaster. (…) The strength in our community is that we share past experience, we share the trauma of the refugee camp. When [disasters] happen here, which reminds us of the past, we become stronger, we unite and we try to manage the situation.

This positive "side effect" of previous experience was identified by researchers in several disaster contexts:

> *With respect to what was most helpful to these communities in responding to the earthquakes and aftershocks, all three communities expressed the importance of having their local ethnic community around them as a form of support. They noted that their collective past experiences provided them with some resiliency, allowing them to view the current situation relative to the sometimes more traumatic experiences of their lives pre-migration.*
>
> Source: Marlowe and Lou 2013

Past experience, trauma and retraumatisation

Previous experience, however, does not always generate resilience, particularly when it is associated with psychological distress. For example, disaster survivors often experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for years following the event. PTSD is also common amongst refugees who witnessed or experienced acts of violence during war or conflict. The resulting trauma often impedes coping capacity and resilience due to increased anxiety and reduced self-efficacy and self-confidence. Some respondents hinted at this negative impact on resilience:

Imagine if we run away from war, and then you have another war which is not weapons but water coming up, it makes things psychologically hard, have an impact on many [people from my community], that's the reality.

What do you think was the impact of the [2019 Townsville] flood on CALD communities?

Well, some people got very frightened. A few left town, and a few were very hesitant to accept housing that was offered because they were frightened it might get flooded again. Theoretically one would think that pre-arrival experiences engender survival instincts, that people would prepare well and that they would be more resilient and able to adapt or cope, but I can't unequivocally say that that is the case.

What happened in Iraq and Syria is more than natural disaster, it's like an un-natural disaster. So many, many people still, until now, have problems of depression, they're not accepting what has happened to them.

Psychological vulnerabilities deriving from past experience can lead to "retraumatisation", the re-experiencing of traumatic events triggered by exposure to situations, places, events or people reminiscent of the original traumatic occurrence. [87] [88] For example, flames and smoke caused by bushfires could trigger memories of bombing and destruction for a refugee with first-hand experience of war. Retraumatisation can lead to feeling of chronic insecurity, stress, fear, hypervigilance, lack of self-confidence, which are detrimental to protective behaviours in emergency contexts. Retraumatisation can also impede the healing process from previous trauma.

Disaster preparedness education can reduce the risks of retraumatisation by normalising risks and providing people with stress management techniques. However, preparedness education sometimes relies on elements of "shock" to encourage action (for example showing footage of destruction from disasters or distressed people), which can cause retraumatisation. Preparedness education for people with a traumatic past (common for many refugees) can thus become a delicate balancing act between encouraging action and avoiding retraumatisation. While measures to prevent retraumatisation should be determined on a case-by-case basis, the following principles provide useful guidelines:

- Learn about the audience's past experience and adapt training content and delivery modalities accordingly.
- Ensure that educational material does not contain elements – footage, images, stories, activities – likely to cause retraumatisation.
- Use a strengths-based approach focusing on existing capacities, experience and knowledge.
- Emphasise the locality of risks by establishing a clear distinction between the context where trauma occurred and the new settlement environment (to dissociate past trauma from potential future emergencies).

While risks of retraumatisation should be taken very seriously, research has shown that disasters occurring in migrants' and refugees' new place of residence do not automatically trigger difficult past memories, even in the presence of traumatic past experience.

The present study has found that participants drew upon their past experiences to put their present situation into perspective. Additionally, Osman et al. (2012) found that most of the Christchurch-area refugees in their study did not experience re-traumatisation caused by the earthquakes as a result of recent experiences triggering traumatic memories.

Source: Marlowe and Lou, 2013

Trauma is a factor that increases risk, however, recent research suggests that it is current social and economic stressors that are more salient issues for former refugees than historical experiences of trauma and dislocation.

Source: Hanson-Easey, Scott et al. 2018

Conclusion

This chapter strived to unravel the complex and multifaceted impact of past experience on emergency resilience. While for some, previous experience can be a rich source of learning, growth and self-confidence, it can have the opposite effect for others, thereby increasing vulnerability to future disruptions. Whether past experience leads to resilience or vulnerability is dependent on a wide range on factors, including individual personalities, the context of the event, the extent to which its psychological impacts are "processed", and the availability of long-term formal and informal psychological support.

It is telling that many respondents expressed feeling more resilient following disaster experience, even when it involved trauma. This reinforces the idea that policies and approaches that build on existing strengths and capacities may be more effective at generating resilience that those focused on vulnerability.

I think sometimes that kind of [emergency] experiences can make people more resilient, but it depends on the person, it's really individual. It's good to be mindful that the person you're speaking to, or the group you're working with, may have resources and capacity. A lot of [emergency preparedness] messaging assumes no [previous] knowledge. It's good to keep in mind that people may have experienced things, that they have the tools and capacity to be able to get everything better than I can teach.

- Past experience is considered a major determinant of resilience, as it influences our perceptions, attitudes, behaviours and capacities to cope with disruptions.
- For many migrants and refugees, overcoming challenging past experience can generate a sense of self-confidence, self-efficacy, and thus lead to increased resilience to face disruptive events.
- However, when past experience has caused trauma, it can hinders coping capacities and be detrimental to resilience.

Chapter 8
The Role of Social Capital

Australian Red Cross / Rodney Dekker

"[Community involvement] brings connections, it brings understanding, integration, sharing, getting together with different people with different values and cultures. It's a multicultural thing, you find yourself exposing what you have to other people, and they also influence you with their values – It's sharing."

Social capital is widely considered a key component of disaster resilience. A growing body of research shows that well-developed social networks and strong community connections can significantly increase people's capacity to deal with disruptions such as natural disasters, personal emergencies and socially traumatic events. Social capital also provides a powerful conceptual lens to study CALD communities' emergency experience.

This chapter starts with a discussion of the concept and its relevance to disaster resilience. It then assesses the presence of different types of social capital within CALD communities and their implications for emergencies.

What is social capital?

Similarly to other concepts in the social sciences, "social capital" is mobilised in a variety of contexts, for different analytical purposes, to label different realities. Clouded by a degree of confusion, the concept has been described as "an elastic term with a variety of meanings"[89] and its analytical value has been questioned. A brief clarification of social capital and its relevance to emergency resilience is therefore required.

As its core, social capital stems from the universal human need for connection and belonging, essential to individual and communal well-being.[90] It was first conceptualised more than a century ago by Louis Hanifan, who linked it with "good will, fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse".[91] Although authors have conceptualised social capital differently, its definitions cohere around the benefits that individuals and communities get from a sense of belonging, social connections, and reciprocal trust at different levels of society.

> *Social capital refers to the networks that connect individuals to each other either through weak or strong ties. These connections provide information, reliable data on the trustworthiness of the other network members, and access to resources.*
>
> Source: Aldrich 2017 [92]

> *Social capital can be described as the networks and support that people rely upon in their daily lives, the trust that they develop, with each other and institutions, and the degree to which people are prepared to help each other without obligation (called reciprocity).*
>
> Source: Australian Red Cross 2012 [93]

> *Social capital is a feature of social life, including the networks, norms and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively towards a purpose or shared objectives.*
>
> Source: Cohen et al. 2013 [94]

Authors frequently distinguish three types of social capital: bonding, bridging and linking. This categorisation provides a useful grid of analysis to study emergency resilience in CALD communities.

Bonding social capital refers to relationships that link people from the same "social group" and who typically share similar cultural backgrounds, values, and socio-economic characteristics. Often described as "horizontal", bonding social capital is associated with high levels of trust and closely-knit networks revolving around friends, immediate family, or groupings based on culture, language, faith, etc. In times of emergencies, bonding social capital usually provides the most immediate support.

There are three types of social capital: bonding, bridging and linking.

Bridging social capital acts at a higher level and connects people across social groups. An example relevant to our subject matter is the extent to which a specific cultural group is connected to the mainstream Australian community through formal and informal networks. While trust and shared values play a lesser role in bridging social capital, it provides crucial access to networks and resources situated beyond the more restricted realm of bonding social capital.

Finally, ***linking*** social capital refers to formal, institutionalised or hierarchical relationships, typically between individuals and institutions (primarily government). It is therefore commonly viewed as "vertical" social capital. An example of linking social capital applied to the emergency management context is the degree to which citizens trust government agencies to provide support in times of disasters.

These different types of social capital interact and complement each other. Individuals and communities who attain a balance between the different types are likely to display higher levels of resilience. Inversely, an imbalance is generally detrimental to coping and recovery capacities.[95]

Why is social capital important for disaster resilience?

Social capital has widely been identified as one of the key components of emergency resilience – some authors consider it as the single most important factor. It has been pointed out that "unlike many stressors, disasters happen to entire communities" whose "members are exposed together and must recover together".[96] During disasters, immediate support is more likely to come from family members, neighbours and friends than from emergency services personnel, even in countries where government support is well developed.[97]

Because of the practical and emotional support they provide, social networks are crucial resilience assets. Consequently, the nature and strength of connections in a given social system can largely determine communities' coping and recovery abilities, and consequently the extent of disasters' impacts. Thus, intangible, informal social relations "materialise" into concrete support when the need arises.

The relevance of social capital is apparent at all stages of the emergency management cycle. Before disasters, a healthy stock of social connections can promote preparedness behaviours. For instance, research has shown that a sense of belonging to a neighbourhood will favourably influence the transition from intentions to actions with regard to preparedness measures.[98] Another study found that informal networks might be more effective than formal institutions to bring about behaviour change, including in terms of disaster preparedness.[99]

At the response phase, social capital has been linked to more effective emergency communication, higher levels of trust between citizens and response agencies, and increased community solidarity. For example, a study on evacuation decisions before hurricanes found that people who benefited from stronger social networks were twice as likely to evacuate than those with less-developed networks.[100] This suggests that social connections may be just as important as disaster-proof infrastructure to save lives and reduce the human impact of disasters.[101]

Beyond the preparedness and response phases, a strong body of research links social capital with positive recovery outcomes. Studies conducted in various post-disaster contexts have shown that communities with high levels of connection, solidarity and trust recovered faster compared to others with similar levels of financial, infrastructural and other types of recovery resources.[4] In some cases, strong social capital allows communities to "use" disasters as opportunities to not only "bounce back" to normality, but also to extend community well-being indicators beyond pre-disaster levels.

Overall, in addition to promoting individual well-being, social capital contributes to higher levels of preparedness, more effective emergency communication, enhanced mutual support during disasters, and more effective recovery. Consequently, creating conditions under which social capital can flourish may be one of the most effective ways to generate resilience.

While relevant to all population groups, social capital offers a particularly useful lens to study emergency resilience in CALD communities due to common life circumstances among this group,

[4] See several examples from the work of Daniel Aldrich in bibliography.

including the migration journey, settlement challenges such as employment, complex cultural identities, language barriers, community isolation, and diverging values from those of host societies (which can generate feelings of alienation). Informed by respondents' insights, the following sections examine levels of bonding, bridging and linking social capital among migrants and refugees, and their impact on resilience.

Bonding social capital

In this research, bonding social capital primarily refers to relationships and networks connecting people who share similar cultural, ethnic or linguistic backgrounds.[5] Because of its strong link with immediate practical and emotional support, assessing levels of bonding social capital within CALD communities provides a measure of their members' capacity to effectively deal with disruptive events.

Overall, respondents indicated high levels of connection with people sharing a national origin, or similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

> *I have attended community events with people from various backgrounds, but mostly [people I interact with] are from my cultural background, from my community. When it comes to language, most of the time it's from my language.*

These "intra-group" social connections provide significant benefits for newcomers, empowering them to overcome settlement challenges and better prepare for disruptive events. Respondents specifically mentioned benefitting from the knowledge and experience of community members who have been in Australia for a long time.

> *Many Syrian who lived here from the old time [before the migration wave caused by the current Syrian war], when the flood hit Brisbane in 2011, they told us what the flood means. There are many areas [at risk of flooding], especially near the Brisbane river, I think some Syrian families know about it [thanks to Syrians who experience the Brisbane flood].*

> *Being involved in community activities has brought solidarity among us. We came to know each other and share useful information related to the country where we live, even to disasters because some of [our community members] are local and they know well English, they help you to create a network, they can even refer you [for] employment, they teach you many things. Community belonging is very important, it has many advantages.*

[5] In other words, this refers to the connections found within, for example, the Vietnamese community in a given area.

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Community leaders are often important sources of information.

Bonding social capital also includes support provided by community leaders and influential figures, who often are an important source of information and practical assistance:

What was the role of community leaders during and after the Brisbane floods [of 2010-11]?

They make sure their community members are safe. They are the ones who can [help] people who lack communication [skills], members in the community who don't speak English, these people are more [comfortable] talking to community leaders than to strangers. So if community leaders do not intervene these people will experience a worse disaster because they feel they are rejected by others, by the wider community.

Have you ever called emergency services?

I'm the emergency person, so people [from my community] would call me.

Beyond practical support, bonding social capital also alleviates the common feeling of missing home, allows to maintain some connection with culture of origin, and provides a sense of personal fulfilment and meaning.

What does involvement in your community organisation bring to you?

It brings me the feeling of being home. Here [in Australia] it's all different cultures and lots of people are not at all living their religion, so I get updates about [cultural events in my community] and it keeps me enthusiastic about my own culture, not forgetting my background and my roots.

What does your community involvement bring to you?

It brings a good feeling of helping the community. It develops my knowledge or updates existing knowledge and provides me with opportunities of new learning to take place.

It is common for people connected by strong bonding social capital to live in the same neighbourhood, therefore forming place-based communities.

Even though I don't support people from a cultural community to reside together in one suburb, you understand why they do it, it is where their support networks are.

Inversely, geographical dispersion is often seen as an obstacle to bonding social capital:

Our community started as a small one and is now much bigger. But the problem is, most of the families live in the North [side of the city], some of them live in the south, and these two areas are far away. And because of this we can't contact them all the time. [There are] problems with transport, and most of them work, their work takes all their time. We try to come together during events or festivals. We do our best to keep our community together.

It is important to point out that for many migrants and refugees, bonding social capital can be de-localised, and that support networks can extend beyond national borders and across continents.

If something happens overseas in their country, to their families overseas, they will be sending more money over there, while struggling to look for their own roof over their heads.

To support their members in overcoming settlement challenges, many communities have self-organised in more or less formal structures. Given their understanding of the problems their members face and their social influence, CALD community organisations are important counterparts to emergency management agencies. Part III of this report provides recommendations to achieve successful, trust-based and long-term engagement with such organisations and groups.

Why are some communities more active and organised than others?

I think it depends on their leaders, [the circumstances of their migration] to a new country, and the need to continue to get together in the same language and cultural group. There is a huge need for certain communities to get together because of language, as English is not their main language. So a lot of these groups will form. Those are some of the things [that unite them], the migration journey, identity, stories, language.

What led you to start this community organization?

The purpose mainly is to get together, and also if something happens, there's a place to come to, there's an organisation to help.

The purpose of our group is to have a single platform to communicate, to exchange some cultural and linguistic values, that's what we're trying to do, to keep our kids attached to the culture.

The relevance of bonding social capital for emergency resilience was explicitly mentioned by some respondents.

The strength in our community is that we share past experience, we share the trauma of the refugee camp, and when [disasters] happen here, which remind us of the past, then we become stronger to unite and we try to manage effectively the situation. Also we are well organised, the most important thing is to recognise it and use [this organisation] in these natural disaster situations.

All communities are unique and show varying levels of cohesion and organisation. Moreover, some migrants and refugees can feel little identification with people sharing similar backgrounds, display low levels of community involvement, or experience social isolation. However, despite differences between communities and isolated individuals, our assessment shows an abundance of bonding social capital within CALD communities, that their members generally benefit from well-developed networks and, in some cases, some degree of formal organisation.

Bridging social capital

For the purposes of this research, bridging social capital is conceived as the relationships – formal or informal – connecting CALD communities and "mainstream Australians". This includes, for example, activities based on volunteering, hobbies, sports or faith, where people from diverse backgrounds and mainstream Australians have the opportunity to interact and connect. This type of social capital is particularly important for emergency resilience, as bridging connections strengthen community solidarity, reciprocal trust and mutual understanding between social groups, while extending support networks beyond one's immediate social circle.

Respondents indicated some degree of "bridging connections", most often facilitated by formal or informal organisations providing inter-communal interaction opportunities:

I volunteer mostly with [people from] multicultural backgrounds […], from different parts of the world. It's wonderful to meet people from across the globe.

The people coming to your organisation's activities, where are they from?

We have mostly migrant communities, with English as second language, but we also have other Australians who come here for socialising, talking to the people, advising us.

Are the community activities you participate in mostly attended by people from a similar culture and language as yourself, or mostly by people from various backgrounds?

It's a mixture of communities, for example in football clubs we have many youth from different backgrounds, church members are from different continents, and we share different cultures.

Respondents identified bridging social capital as a major asset for the settlement journey, as such connections widen social networks, generate self-confidence, and provide opportunities for meaningful engagement in their new social environment.

[When I first arrived in Australia], I was isolated, I was not getting out much. That [involvement in local emergency services] is a huge thing for me. It's helping people help themselves. It's much better when you are doing something for someone else and you're not getting anything back, not even thinking of it, it really feels good.

What does this involvement [in volunteering and community groups] bring to you?

You get to learn a lot, both from people from Australian cultural background and non-Australian cultural background, [about] communication, language difference, their culture. I go to learn, and it helps with my confidence to deal with people, it gives me more security in myself, knowing that people are good enough in this country.

Community involvement in local emergency services activities.

When I arrived here it was really hard and [volunteering] helped a lot actually, because I really needed to engage with something you know, feel useful and not so isolated, so it really helped.

What does this involvement bring to you?

It brings connections, it brings understanding, integration, sharing, getting together with different people with different values and cultures. So it's a multicultural thing, you find yourself exposing what you have to other people, and they also influence you with their values – it's sharing.

Applied to emergencies, bridging connections can positively impact preparedness by facilitating the circulation of information between groups with different levels of knowledge and experience. For example, a respondent indicated that conversations with mainstream Australians allowed her to become familiar with local natural disaster risks and appropriate response measures.

Since you arrived in Australia, have you had any discussions with people from your community, family members or friends about emergencies, natural disasters, and what you can do to prepare for them?

Oh yes, I have had many such discussions with friends. Because my first experience of bushfires was in 2001 in New South Wales, when I was travelling with my close Australian friends. They in fact educated me on bushfires and what to do when they happen.

Most importantly, members of CALD communities involved in emergency management through volunteering or paid work can become powerful "points of contact" between their community and these response agencies. This can facilitate the sharing of emergency information in "hard-to-reach groups", generate reciprocal trust between emergency response authorities and CALD communities, encourage participation in "mainstream organisations", and facilitate inter-communal bridging connections. The tremendous potential of this "community ambassador model" is discussed further in this chapter.

If someone in your community needs help in an emergency, where would they go?

They'll come and call us first because we're neighbours and we know each other very well, and of course I work at SES now, so they know a bit more about it because they see me going there SES every week, so they ask me questions "what it is?", "how it works?". Even though they [knew] SES stands for "state emergency services", they still don't know how what they do, so I explained a little bit, now they know.

The benefits of bridging social capital are undeniable, far-reaching, and clearly apparent in both the literature and our original data. Unfortunately, most respondents indicated that opportunities for meaningful interactions between CALD communities and mainstream Australians are limited.

Do you see a lot of initiatives and events that bring together [people from your community] and mainstream Australians?

The government has tried through grants, also with their big multicultural programs and events. I think what's happening is that within communities, we have [our own events] and communities run them. I say, let's open this and invite some [other] community groups. I think there's great opportunities for that to happen, but it's still a long way, because in our community we still have that "them and us" [mentality].

Do you feel well connected to the people in your neighbourhood to people living around you?

Not very well because [other] communities have their own culture… it's very difficult to integrate with them. I can say I'm well connected with some African communities. It also depends on which club are you attending, which church you are following.

Some [CALD communities] are stuck in their own group. They come into the country [Australia], they should branch out, but instead they stay within their own people. It's a safe place, but they don't get to know any other cultures.

The most important thing is that we connect Australians and migrants together, that they have a chat, talk to each other, so [migrants] feel they're welcomed. But they don't have that chance to talk [very often]. The cultural shock makes the gap wider. It's like the neighbour living next to you doesn't know about your food and culture, so you don't share anything.

For some, language barrier is an obstacle to the flourishing of bridging connections.

[People from my community] meet within their own group, bingos and stuff like that, to fundraise. For example, here in the library I don't think they volunteer because of the language barrier.

If you are person who has a religious or personal faith, [points of connection] will often be your mosque or synagogue or temple. It depends on your language as well. If you don't speak English, obviously that can be harder to connect with the broader community.

Age also plays an important role, with younger people generally benefiting from more opportunities to connect with mainstream Australians and people from other cultural backgrounds.

How do newly-arrived young people develop social connections?

It depends at what stage they're at. Obviously for young people in school, they'll naturally be connecting with people in their school, but for people outside of school, it's really hard. It might be your immediate connections and family or friends and loved ones that you've come over to see. It's a small group, but connecting with wider community [is much harder]. I found quite a few people don't know where to go [to develop their social networks].

Poorly developed bridging social capital can directly hinder coping capacities and overall resilience during emergencies. For example, respondents who did not benefit from strong bridging connections expected little support from the mainstream Australian community in disaster times due to the absence of pre-existing networks.

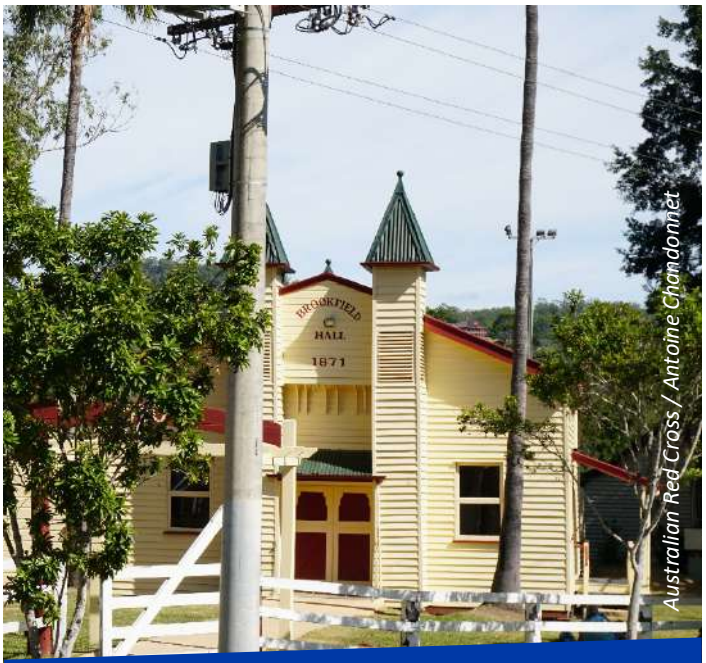
Do you feel comfortable asking you neighbours for help?

It's hard to say, I might just wait for someone [from my family/community] to get back rather than knock on my neighbours' door. Especially if you haven't really met them, it would be very weird to go knock on their door to ask for help.

If there were a natural disaster, here in Brisbane, what would you expect that the main impact would be for you? What are you most worried about?

Because it's just me here and there's no family or friends, I don't live with anyone I really I'm close to, so I think that's a concern. [Australia] is still very much a different country to me, so I think "how would I cope [with a natural disaster]"?

Only a minority of respondents expressed feeling comfortable asking "mainstream Australians" (such as their neighbours) for help during emergency situations. Most indicated that they would first turn to members of their own community for immediate support.



Australian Red Cross / Antoine Chandonnet

Places of worship are often important "go to points" during emergencies.

Where would your people from your community seek help first in the event of an emergency?

It's the family and the church, that's the first "go to point". So for us, one of our strategic goals is to build the capacity of our community and church leaders because they are the ones who are go-to points for our people. That's where they would start, their family, or their social support system. Primarily it's the family, the church and the village community and affiliations.

In case of a disaster, where would people from your community go for help?

They would contact their [community] leaders. For the most experienced ones, they know that Red Cross is there. But for a few people that are isolated, they only rely on family members and community members.

If, for example, tomorrow there was a flood here, where do you think that [people from your community] would seek help first?

I think they would turn within their own families. […] That's how a lot of our people survive in Australia, they turn to other families, to church if they know about the help that can be provided. But mainly I think they will turn to each other.

The above analysis suggests a scarcity of opportunities for meaningful interaction between members of CALD communities and mainstream Australians. As a result, many migrants and refugees find themselves in a state of "community insularity", limiting their ability to tap into wider support networks and therefore increasing their vulnerability to emergencies.

Respondents showed a strong willingness to address this deficiency in bridging social capital, and expressed that all sectors of society have their role to play in creating opportunities for inter-communal interaction, including government, the mainstream Australian community, and CALD communities themselves.

I've got [Australian] friends at work, but outside of work I only have two Australian friends. I have been in this country for so long, refugees and migrants are blamed for not interacting but we can't do it alone.

I think the government is doing enough for our communities, I guess the challenge for [CALD] community leaders is what can we do. Like not being too insular within our group, take a step towards trying to incorporate, and bring in other cultures within their own communities.

My own personal feeling is that there is not enough integration between the mainstream community and refugee and migrant services clients. […] We do have situations where people are supporting their neighbours. […] But when there are cultural activities here it is usually the migrants that attend. In comparison I feel like there is not enough participation from the mainstream community.

Part III outlines concrete actions that stakeholders can implement to develop bridging social capital, strengthen inter-group solidarity and generate resilience.

Linking social capital and trust

Whereas bonding social capital is conceived as "horizontal", linking social capital is often viewed as "vertical" as it primarily entails formal, institutionalised or hierarchical relationships between individuals and institutions, primarily government. Among the various aspects of linking social capital, this research examines reciprocal trust between members of CALD communities and emergency response authorities.

Trust is a core element of social capital and widely considered a key resilience asset. At the preparedness stage, trust is "seen to be vital to preparedness efforts" as "[i]nformation from a trusted source enables people who aren't necessarily familiar with disaster preparedness initiatives to access and act upon information."[102]

During emergency response, trust was identified as a "critical moderator of the effectiveness of any policy for risk communication and public engagement".[103] In other words, people who trust a source of information are more likely to act upon this information – for example complying with evacuation orders.

> *Trust is a crucial factor in disaster risk communication, which when broken can negatively impact a person's predisposition to accept or respond appropriately to emergency warnings.*
>
> Source: Ogie et al. 2018 [104]

> *Developing trust and credibility between message provider and receiver is paramount to information reception and ensuing behaviour change.*
>
> Source: Hanson-Easey et al. 2018 [105]

At the recovery phase, the presence of trust between individuals and institutions is conducive to better awareness of, and propensity to access, recovery services provided by government and non-government organisations.

While relevant to all population groups, trust has particular implications for CALD communities considering the unfamiliarity of many newcomers with their host country's institutions, as well as the impact of previous experience – often negative or traumatic – with authorities in their country of origin. The degree to which migrants and refugees trust their adopted country's institutions was found to "largely depend on their experiences with host community authorities in domains as diverse as law enforcement, service provision and employment, as well as their relationships with members of their host communities." [106] Overall, trust is the result of long-lasting engagement, dialogue and relationship

building. It is developed over time and should not be taken for granted, for as the saying goes, it is hard to build but easy to break.[107]

It is also worth noting that trust is a reciprocal phenomenon. In emergency management, this means that it is not sufficient for citizens to trust institutions; response agencies must also trust citizens to take action to support preparedness, response and recovery efforts. The reciprocal nature of trust is reflected in the concept of "shared responsibility", a central tenet of Australia's National Strategy for Disaster Resilience.

> *In an emergency management context, reciprocal trust, i.e. citizens of their government and government of its citizens, is essential during times of natural disasters, major incidents and other catastrophic events. […] Citizens rely on government to provide accurate information, adequate resources and to make decisions which will enhance their safety, wellbeing and protection. The government relies on citizens to accept and comply with information and instructions and to actively support and participate in prevention, preparation, response and recovery efforts.*
>
> Source: Roberts and Fozdar 2010 [108]

To what degree do CALD communities trust the institutions of their host countries, particularly those involved in emergency response? Previous research found that "[g]iven the differential experiences during disasters based on group membership, it is not surprising that a lack of trust in public authorities exists among some subgroups", including among migrants and refugees.[109] For example, during the 2010-11 flood in Brisbane, CALD communities have been described as a group who "appears to place less trust in authorities and prefer to rely on the interpretations of known others – gatekeepers – for their risk communication and information needs".[110] A similar trend was identified during an influenza pandemic, where "many racial and ethnic minority communities may be less willing to initially trust government communications."[111] This "trust deficiency" is detrimental to resilience and can aggravate the impact of disasters on migrants and refugees.[112] For example, a lack of trust in authorities may avert people from complying with evacuation orders, exposing them to additional risks.

To probe CALD communities' trust in authorities, we asked respondents how they feel when they see "people in uniforms". Many expressed a deeply entrenched, almost instinctual feeling of mistrust towards symbols of authority.

When you see someone wearing uniform or other signs of authority, what is your first reaction? How do you feel?

My first reaction is to remember what happened in my life. [I feel] they are looking for something bad, so my first reaction is to avoid any contact with them.

If I see uniformed police I get a feeling of avoiding them, as I was taught that [in my country]. I don't feel safe with them.

One of the challenges specifically related to emergency services, is that a lot of people even if they know where to call, there can be a real fear (…), when people call [emergency services] they're scared they're going to get in trouble.

Mistrust towards authorities can have serious consequences during emergencies.

This mistrust can have serious consequences during emergencies. A respondent working in an organisation supporting newly-arrived refugees described how mistrust of authorities complicated the evacuation process during the 2019 flood in North Queensland.

How would you describe the level of trust between CALD communities and emergency management authorities during the [Townsville] flood?

I don't know that they immediately trusted those authorities, those people in the army [who were evacuating residents]. Some staff [of our organisation] where getting called by emergency services personnel saying "this person is not willing to evacuate and they have to". For me it was a case of walking alongside them so they understood, and that they were not frightened by emergency services personnel, because as you know, sometimes those symbols, the police, the army and the authorities bring up past traumas.

Other respondents, while not experiencing fear or mistrust towards authorities, did not perceive them as a reliable source of support due to the ineffectiveness of similar agencies in their country of origin:

Do you feel members of your community trust emergency response agencies?

It's not black and white. Back in our country, what we experienced is traumatising because we did not have these emergency organisations to support us. I know for sure [that the] majority of our community members do not trust these organisations because of the past in our country. They feel these emergency organisations, they don't [do anything] in emergency situations, but only in times of peace. In emergencies, they run away, which happened in my country.

Interestingly, excessive trust in authorities can be detrimental to resilience. A respondent compared the "inefficient" authorities in his country of origin with Australia's more effective response agencies. This seems to generate unrealistic expectations regarding support services, shifting the personal responsibility to prepare entirely to institutions.

Here the government is better [than in my home country], they predict [natural disasters] really well and they inform us, so we may be able to evacuate and they may be able to help us, so I'm not that worried about it.

Unsurprisingly, respondents pointed out that the degree to which they trust Australian institutions is primarily determined by previous interaction with authorities in their country of origin.

What is the general attitude of [members of your community] towards authorities here in Australia?

It just depends on people and their experiences with the police [in their country of origin].

If you see someone with uniform, how do you feel?

I think it's a very hard thing to change [your perceptions] because you've grown up with a thing like "when you see policeman it's trouble".

This trust deficiency was acknowledged by interviewed community leaders, who associated it with past experience, language barriers, community insularity, and unfamiliarity with host country's institutional environment.

We need to find a link [opportunities for connection] between these emergency organisations and community members, otherwise mistrust will continue.

Trust levels, however, are not static, but evolve over time. Our data suggests a correlation between trust and length of residence in host country. Despite an initial lack of trust in the early stages of settlement, respondents who have been residing in Australia for some years appear to progressively change their perceptions of Australian authorities towards the positive.

[People from my community] who come here for the first time, when they see the police they run away because back home a policeman is a threat to us. If you don't have money you are in trouble. We don't see them as friends to us. But luckily enough, when they come here [settlement] services teach them […] how to deal with the police. The police is our friend [here], and that's the reason why they start off with [learning] triple zero. So when you spend time here you become familiar to that culture of considering police like someone who [works] for my benefit, not for creating problems for me.

When you see someone wearing a uniform, how does it make you feel?

I feel safe. I came from a culture that see these entities, these government entities, are corrupted, so I don't feel safe at all [back home]. So then when you come to Australia, even if there could be a little bit of corruption, I don't know, these entities like the police and the firemen, they are well trained. I mean you respect them.

When members of you community see people in uniform, what do you think is their first feeling or reaction?

I think it's a mixture. Some of them have come here recently, so they are looking at the police behaviours back home. It depends on where they are coming from. If they are coming from a community where there is a lot of corruption and [the] police can't be trusted, then the reaction is going to be [mistrust]. But over time that will change.

Here again, age plays an important role, with younger people more likely to shift their perceptions of authorities.

Do you think this negative feeling towards authorities will change with time?

For the old people, it's very difficult, but for the young people it will be a bit easier to change. Everything depends on their experiences.

Previous research and respondents' insights confirm the critical role of trust for emergency resilience. Proposed actions to build reciprocal trust between CALD communities and emergency response agencies are outlined in Part III.

Place attachment

While the argument has been made that the concept of social capital has lost some of its relevance in our digitalised age of virtual and de-localised social interactions[113], place-based communities such as neighbourhoods remain highly relevant in people's lives, both in "normal times" and during emergencies.[114] An interesting body of research studies the psychosocial processes through which

people relate to their physical environment, and their implications for emergency resilience and preparedness. This chapter's final section therefore examines the concept of "place attachment" and its relevance to CALD communities' resilience.

> *The connections between people and their physical environments have received some attention from scholars, who have proposed a number of concepts to describe the varied associations. These have included 'sense of community', 'sense of place', 'place identity', 'rootedness to place', 'place dependence', etc. Although these likely refer to different phenomena, these point to the close ties individuals have with specific places.*
>
> Source: Mishra,Mazumdar and Suar 2010 [115]

The literature generally distinguishes two key components of "place attachment": place dependency – the reliance on a place for livelihood; and place identity, which refers to a more symbolic function.[116] Taken together, they determine the degree of attachment to a place, typically the environment where daily life unfolds such as a neighbourhood, suburb, city, town, village or rural community.

Research suggests that place attachment is conducive to preparedness.[117] The underlying assumption is that people who feel a strong sense of belonging to a place are more likely to undertake action to protect it from the destructive impact of emergencies. For instance, research conducted in a flood-prone area of India observed that "[o]verall, place attachment was found to significantly influence flood preparedness".[118]

In the aftermath of disasters, place attachment was positively correlated with a participatory approach to recovery. Overall, it was convincingly argued that "affective bonds to places can help inspire action because people are motivated to seek, stay in, protect, and improve places that are meaningful to them."[119] Most authors therefore identify place attachment as a component of emergency resilience.

> *Sense of community (feelings of belonging and attachment for people and places) encourages involvement in community response following disaster and increases access to, and utilisation of, social networks. Individuals who perceive themselves as having no investment in their community may develop a level of detachment which, following a natural disaster, may trigger feelings of isolation, encourage learned helplessness, and heighten vulnerability.*
>
> Source: Paton and Johnston 2001 [120]

Sense of community (feelings of attachment for people and places) can influence adjustment decisions [and] moderate the conversion of intentions to preparations. People with strong feelings of belonging to a place may be more likely to convert intentions into actual

Source: Paton 2003 [121]

The concept has important implications for CALD communities. As place attachment seems to be correlated with length of residence – it develops over time – we can expect recently-arrived migrants and refugees to display relatively low levels of attachment. Additionally, place attachment was found to be interdependent with community solidarity, suggesting that "those who are more attached to their neighbourhoods also interact more with neighbours and watch over their communities more", which fosters "social cohesion, no matter how diverse the community members might be".[122]

As seen in chapter 5, the migration journey generates complex identities, often blurring perceptions of "where home is". However, most respondents developed some degree of place attachment over time, and viewing Australia as their new "home".

I was born in Kenya in East Africa and migrated to the UK, I got married there, had my children over there and got educated there. And now I am here, and this is home.

Today I consider Australia as my home.

Most of us treat Australia as home now.

Place attachment not only facilitates the settlement journey: it can also create resilience by strengthening place-based solidarity and creating incentives for protective behaviours. Considering its complex nature, its context-dependency and the numerous psychological processes involved in its development, there is no simple "formula" to create attachment. However, initiatives encouraging citizen participation in neighbourhood life can help migrants and refugees to develop a sense of belonging to place, while generating bridging and linking social capital along the way. Examples of such initiatives are outlined in the concluding section of this report.

Conclusion

Our analysis suggests that while CALD communities benefit from well-developed bonding social capital, levels of bridging and linking social capitals are much lower. In other words, while strong relationships and support networks connect people who share a similar origin, culture or language, interactions between CALD communities and “mainstream Australians” are relatively rare.

This imbalance between different types of social capital is detrimental to CALD communities’ resilience to emergencies. The deficiency in bridging and linking social capital hinders migrants’ and refugees’ access to preparedness information, extended support networks, and the benefits of reciprocal trust. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of an Australian Roundtable of Disaster Resilience showing that the “abundance of bonding (within community) capital, and an absence of ‘bridging’ and ‘linking capital’ (networks with institutions and other groups), for ethnic minorities [is] a challenge for effective risk communication." The Roundtable also argued that “disaster awareness and preparedness is contingent on having strong forms of all three of these types of social capital.”[123]

Considering the critical role of social capital in generating resilience, measures to promote interaction, connection, mutual understanding and reciprocal trust between CALD communities, mainstream Australians and emergency response agencies may be one of the most effective way to reduce the disproportionate impact of disasters on migrants and refugees.

- Social capital relates to the nature and strength of the relationships connecting people within and across social groups. Authors generally distinguish between bonding, bridging and linking social capitals.
- Social capital is widely considered a key ingredient of emergency resilience, as social relationships largely influence access to resources and support before, during and after emergencies.
- Overall, members of CALD communities benefit from strong “intra-group” bonding social capital (connecting them with people sharing similar backgrounds and culture/language), but display weaker bridging and linking social capital (connecting them with the mainstream culture and formal institutions).
- Building social capital by creating opportunities for connections between CALD communities, mainstream Australians and formal institutions is an effective way to build resilience, while facilitating the settlement journey for migrants and refugees.

Chapter 9
The Challenges of Emergency Communication

"A trusted source of information is the most important resilience asset that any individual or group can have." – Longstaff, 2005 [1]

Principles of emergency communication

Communication is one of the central issues of emergency management. The importance of information[6] and its circulation at all stages of the disaster management cycle cannot be overstated. Before emergencies, information allows people to identify local risks and take adapted preparedness measures. During disasters, it allows people to make informed decisions, which sometimes can make the difference between life and death (an example is information about the safest evacuation routes in a bushfire-affected area).[7] Finally, in the aftermath of emergencies, information is crucial for affected communities to be aware of and benefit from recovery services and resources. For these reasons, the ability to access, understand and act upon emergency information is a critical determinant of resilience.

Effectively communicating before, during and after emergencies is also one of the great challenges of emergency management, with numerous considerations coming into play: What key messages should be emphasized at different phases of emergencies? What are the most effective channels and dissemination strategies for information to reach different audiences? What is the appropriate volume of information required to be comprehensive while avoiding "information overload"? How can emergency communication be designed so that it leads to the adoption of protective behaviours by individuals, households and communities? These are some of the issues that emergency management practitioners face when communicating before, during and after emergencies. Emergency communication is further complicated by the vastly different characteristics and needs of different population groups, with implications for dissemination strategies and messaging design.

The challenges of emergency communication are particularly salient for CALD communities due to "vulnerability factors" such as poor knowledge of local risks, low English proficiency, or unfamiliarity with host country's institutional environment. This is why CALD communities have been described as a "group that cannot be reached effectively" during emergencies.[124] Research conducted in a variety of contexts has shown that communication is one of the major pitfalls of the emergency management sector when engaging with CALD communities.

> *One of the most crucial factors for risk reduction with CALD groups is the ability to access and understand safety and official information.*
>
> Source: Marlowe and Bogen 2015

[6] Emergency risk communication can be defined as "information that allows individuals, stakeholders, or an entire community to make the best possible decisions about their well-being" (Shepherd and Kitty can Vuuren 2014, 470)

[7] Research has demonstrated that accurate information can increase survival rates in emergencies, provided it is ''correct and correctly transmitted.'' (see Longstaff 2005 above)

> *Unfortunately, time, system and personnel constraints mean that emergency services adopt a utilitarian approach to risk communication, which does not take the individual's language and cultural needs into account, but rather aims to send the same message to as many people as possible in the shortest timeframe and in the dominant language.*
>
> Source: Ogie et al. 2018

Failing to adapt emergency communication strategies to CALD audiences can have dire consequences, including low levels of preparedness, non-compliance with warnings and alerts, severe physical and psychological impacts, and protracted recovery. For example, research on heatwave impacts on migrant communities in South Australia found that "culturally and socially appropriate public service announcements about dangers and preventive strategies of heat stress to people in ethnic minorities can help save lives and reduce morbidity."[125] Other research in the United States has shown that the "paucity of credible, accessible, and culturally appropriate information" was a contributing factor to low levels of preparedness among Latino immigrants.[126] Yet another study found that "the language in which [emergency management] knowledge is produced can either privilege or further marginalize particular disadvantaged groups by justifying action or inaction in particular ways."[127] Ensuring that migrants and refugees have equitable access to emergency information is therefore one of the most effective ways to build resilience within this often disadvantaged group.

Before delving into the various aspects of emergency communication with CALD communities, it is useful to emphasise that any form of communication is, by its very nature, a cultural phenomenon. This allows for framing communication in a broad socio-cultural context, in which language proficiency is just a component among others. For example, just as "body language" varies among individuals, communication practices differ across cultures.

> *Communication occurs in, and is mediated by, the social and structural context in which it operates. Social, economic, cultural and experiential factors shape how information is received and moulds social constructs such as risk perception. It is well documented that if these needs are not met by communicators, inequitable access to crucial risk information will ensue.*
>
> Source: Hanson-Easey et al. 2018 [128]

A respondent from Somalia illustrated the cultural nature of communication by explaining how much easier it is to learn English when the teachers share their culture and speak their native language.

A lot of schools help migrant communities [to learn English], but [the Australian teachers] cannot speak the language [of migrant students]. If you talk about like kangaroo without showing a picture, if you say it has fur and it jumps, the [students] will think it's a rabbit, because we don't have kangaroo in Africa. That's why they use their own terms and language, it's easier for them to understand.

This chapter investigates some of the specific issues of emergency communication with CALD communities. It examines the barriers preventing this group to access information, the preferred and most trusted sources of information for migrants and refugees, the effectiveness of various targeted communication strategies, and how social capital can be leveraged to overcome communication challenges.

Language as resource and barrier

Language is undoubtedly one of the most salient aspects of emergency communication with CALD communities. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), there are more than 300 different languages spoken in Australia, with as much as 21 per cent of its population speaking a language other than English at home. Many migrants and refugees arrive in Australia with a wealth of linguistic knowledge, a significant life asset.

My native language is Kinyarwanda.

Do you speak any other languages?

Yes, I speak Swahili, Kirundi, French, Spanish and of course English.

Language is also a central component of cultural identity. For some newcomers, this can lead to a difficult balancing act between the necessities of adapting to a new country and the desire to preserve their original culture. For example, first generation migrants commonly want their children to quickly learn English, but without sacrificing the cultural connections that their native language provides.

What language do you speak at home with your family?

With my wife we speak Kinyarwanda and with the children we speak English, but also I mix English and Kinyarwanda so that they will not forget their origin.

While most newcomers benefit from rich linguistic assets, the challenges of low English proficiency are a reality for many. They include the difficulties of navigating daily life, accessing education and employment, developing social networks, or accessing government services.

We do refer [refugee clients] to mainstream services, but they are often not very helpful, because if there is a language barrier they are put in the 'too difficult basket', you know. And then they get referred back to us.

Language as both an asset and a barrier.

For migrant and refugee groups, language is the biggest barrier. We do have access to interpreting services, but our mental health program has not been funded for interpreting services. But you know, we work around it and we get interpreters when we have to. Because the clients' needs are important, they need to be able to express what they are going through.

Low English proficiency can also prevent newcomers from benefitting from community involvement.

Here in the library I don't think [people from my community] volunteer because of the language barrier.

Numerous studies have shown that limited proficiency in the dominant language is detrimental to resilience as it can prevent access to information before, during and after emergencies. This includes information on hazard risks, preparedness measures, warnings and alerts, and recovery messaging.

For example, a study on Latin American migrants working in United States farms found that "the most significant barrier in accessing emergency services or information […] was a lack of information in Spanish".[129] In Australia, a study on the impact of the 2010-11 Brisbane floods on CALD communities concluded that "the absence of translated messages during the flood resulted in many CALD communities not adequately taking heed of the warning messages, underestimating the risks to which they were exposed, and therefore not taking appropriate protective action".[130]

Language and cultural barriers pose significant challenges in communicating disaster risk to migrants and CALD communities.

Source: Ogie et al. 2018 [131]

Respondents explicitly mentioned language proficiency as a significant barrier to accessing emergency preparedness information in Australia.

> *[The emergency information I received] was not useful for me, it's too difficult to understand because it's written in English.*

The challenges of low English proficiency are also apparent when emergencies unfold. A respondent volunteering during the 2019 Townsville floods shared her experience of supporting recently-arrived, non-English speaking refugees in an evacuation centre:

> *There were definitely language barriers, some people had no knowledge of English, that was always a challenge. We had to talk in a sign language sort a thing, but it was still so hard. We had to wait for a different agency, who would know the language, we had to literally wait for them to come in, they wouldn't come in every time, and it was just during daytime, so if we had something during night it was a big struggle.*

Language barriers can also lead to low self-confidence and reduce people's inclination to seek assistance and connect with the wider community. A respondent shared his experience of such challenges during the 2010-11 Brisbane flood:

I remember when the flood arrived, it was night time and I was sleeping, but I heard the neighbours around my place, but me I stayed in the house, I was scared, the neighbours were running around and knocking on the doors to see if people were safe, but we were trying to hide because I did not know what was going on outside. With our family we tried to hide at night time, I was not courageous enough to open my door and ask my neighbours for help even though they were knocking and running around. The wider community felt more confident, but the next morning I approached them and participated with the community to help others. There is a cultural difference. I felt people who do not speak English tend to be more isolated. (…) The wider community, although they have good hearts to help everyone, there is not enough time to explain [the emergency situation and appropriate measures]. [There is no] time to approach someone who is slow [to understand because of limited English proficiency]. I'm not condemning the wider community because they are doing what they can, but I think there is miscommunication from both sides.

Miscommunication caused by linguistic and cultural differences can be a significant obstacle to appropriate response during emergencies. A respondent mentioned how much easier it is to cope with disasters when surrounded by people sharing the same culture and language.

When it happened to me [the Brisbane 2010-11 floods], the only people I could approach and discuss the event with were [members of my community], because I thought if I tell my problem to other people they will misinterpret my situation. We trust more our community members more than people outside of the community in times of war or natural disasters.

The negative impact of language barriers on resilience often persists after disasters, during the recovery phase. For example, following the 2010-11 Canterbury earthquakes in New Zealand, it was found that the lack of multilingual health and safety communication impeded recovery in refugee communities.[132]

For refugee background communities, language proficiency (most often English in resettlement contexts) is a clear barrier to receiving and accessing the correct information regarding disaster preparedness, mitigation efforts and associated responses. (…) [A] deficit in linguistic capital can lead to misunderstanding hazard warnings, and can create difficulties seeking and applying for relief assistance following the disaster.

Source: Marlowe and Bogen 2015 [133]

Most newcomers successfully learn English following arrival in Australia thanks to government and non-government settlement assistance. However, different learning abilities, similarities or

differences with native language, age and past experience means that people learn languages at different paces. While some need merely a few months to attain the proficiency needed to understand emergency information, for others learning English can be a long and challenging journey:

> *Most [people from my community] are bilingual, they can speak English quite well and [our language] too. People who came here recently, the young ones are ok because they have migrated as students. But now that some have become permanent [residents], their families are coming with them, their wives and children. Children pick it up [English] at school, but the parents may have a problem with the language.*

Strategies to reduce the negative impact of language barriers on emergency resilience are discussed further in this chapter.

Sources of information

Designing effective emergency communication strategies requires an understanding of the preferred sources of information within CALD communities, the degree to which they trust these sources, and their likelihood to seek and act upon this information.

Only a small minority of respondents indicated that they actively looked for emergency information. This suggests that "passive" methods of information dissemination (for example making it available online) may be partly ineffective at reaching CALD communities. The minority of respondents who indicated actively seeking emergency information used a range of different media, with internet and social media most often mentioned.

> *Generally I look for such information through internet or social media. Mainly I prefer that. I trust internet more than any other media.*

What is your preferred way of receiving information about disasters and emergencies?

> *These days social media is very active, Facebook and Instagram, people never stop watching all this (…), so I believe that social media is a fast and effective [way to share information]. Second is radio I would say, third one is TV, and fourth like a city council or something else.*

Online emergency information from reliable sources is generally up to date and easy to access. It however requires a basic level of IT literacy that not all possess. Traditional media such as television, newspaper or radio therefore play an important role in disseminating emergency information.

One of the issue I see in [my] community is that they are not too much connected to services […], they are not connected to internet. Today everything is online: government services, health services… But we're not used to do these things online, so it prevents me from accessing those services.

What is your preferred way of receiving emergency information?

Brochures through mail, not email. I need the hard copy. Because sometimes we don't read a lot of junk emails we receive, lots of information we don't even open and we delete it. So if it's hard copy, we would definitely read it.

When the flood was approaching, did you receive any warning?

Yes I listen to radio, every ABC radio will update [information] all the time, so I only listen to radio, and TV also.

Overall, respondents painted a rather diverse picture of their preferred sources of emergency information. A range of factors seem to play a role, including English proficiency, literacy levels, age, IT skills, and individual preferences. This suggests that a multi-pronged approach might be most effective in reaching diverse groups.

There are some sources that I've come across which can be a bit complicated for people who might not be very good in English. The terminologies can be a bit confusing. (…) That's sort of a barrier.

We have a multicultural radio so we advertise how to prepare for [emergencies], because a lot of older people listen to the radio. It's better to go on the radio because the older people they're at home, they're not working you know, the ones who have come here they listen, they tune in to the radio, they love the [community] programs.

In times of emergencies, if there is flood coming and he [an elderly community member] is at home, how is he going to run away or to follow directions from the government because he's not online, he is waiting for his children to come and tell him 'go out'.

Approaches to culturally diverse emergency communication

The challenges of emergency communication with CALD communities have led to the adoption of targeted communication strategies by governments and emergency management actors. The most common are reviewed below with an assessment of their effectiveness, advantages and disadvantages.

Translated material

An obvious way to overcome the language barrier is to translate emergency information in various languages, a measure generally welcomed by CALD people with low English proficiency.

If emergencies happen they put [information] on TV only in English, there's no translations for other communities. So if we can [get] involved with emergency services, then we [community leaders] can explain to the community what is happening. Or if we can translate information in our language, that would be great.

People who come here [from overseas] are different and their level of English skills are different. Therefore the State can prepare the message in different languages and [make it] accessible to the people in their respective communities. That [multilingual messaging] can have a positive impact for community members. For example I can watch the TV in my house while they are talking about disasters without knowing what they have said [because of limited English proficiency]. And then the disaster can affect me before I can escape. [Using] diverse languages is the best way to inform people.

Translating basic preparedness information is a common practice in many countries and has been found effective to convey basic messages. However, it is not without disadvantages. Firstly, literal "word to word" translations are not always able to convey concepts for which words may not exist in other languages.

> *If you can get people who are qualified [at interpretation] that's awesome because it's hard to explain [emergency information] in various language. For instance, [a volunteer] was talking about water safety in Farsi, he's trying to explain what a rip tide is, it was really difficult.*

Another disadvantage is that some communities rely more on verbal communication than written material to access information. Moreover, it would be unrealistic to translate locally-relevant risks information in the hundreds of different languages spoken in Australia. This raises the difficult dilemma of choosing the languages into which information is translated, considering that the most widely spoken may not be those in use in communities that need it most. Financial resources can also be an obstacle to translating material in numerous languages.

> *We generally find that written information that's provided by disaster [management agencies] hasn't been available in diverse languages. Even if it is and people can read it, they are currently available in languages of value to those is who have been here for some time, they aren't necessarily up to date with the languages [of the most recently arrived migrants and refugees].*

Finally, while generic preparedness information generally remains relevant for a long time and can therefore be made available in various languages ahead of disasters, it is not always possible to translate "live" emergency information such as warnings, alerts or evacuation advice considering how rapidly disasters unfold.

The translation of emergency information can play a key role in communicating with CALD communities and should therefore be adopted by emergency management and migration support actors. However, due to its limitation, it should be used in conjunction with other strategies rather than as an exclusive solution to tackle the challenges of communication.

Multimedia material

Respondents indicated that multimedia material such as videos, audio clips or animations can be effective at conveying the basic preparedness message for some communities. While it can be an engaging strategy to overcome the challenges of literacy, it also requires significant resources, especially when multimedia material is made available in various languages.

Any message you want to give [to our community], [make them] in short clips, videos, you put it on Facebook, on YouTube, you put it on TV.

Face-to-face interaction

The dissemination of emergency information can be considered a "passive" communication strategy, as it does not involve direct social interaction. By contrast, "interactive" communication takes place in "face-to-face" contexts such as training sessions, workshops, presentations or community events.

Interactive emergency communications has several advantages: it allows to adapt in real time messaging content and delivery modalities to the characteristics and needs of various audiences; it provides a convenient context to promote, disseminate and explain written material; it promotes social connectedness and allows for relationship-building between emergency management actors and CALD communities; it creates opportunities for community members to be directly involved in emergency management; and allows practitioners to learn from CALD communities' experience. On the other hand, these "active" communication strategies can be resource- and time-intensive, dependent on the availability of a trained workforce, and reach a smaller number of people.

Most of the [emergency] information that community members get is from the media and the internet. The information is definitely useful. It could be improved by having sessions and classes that community members could attend.

In your opinion, what is the best way to share information about emergencies with people from your community?

The best way is a presentation, because people need to see what is happening.

If you're reaching out to multicultural communities, especially people who are newly-arrived, having [preparedness information] in their own language is helpful. It depends on the group, (…) not everyone has had schooling, [refugees] may not be very literate in even in their own language. For people with that kind of background, who have had interrupted schooling, that could still be a challenge [to share printed emergency information]. I think to get around that, having groups where you can meet face-to-face and interpreters available has helped in terms of information.

Community leaders and networks

CALD communities are sometimes described as "hard to reach". This means that they may use communication channels different from those of the mainstream population and are more likely to rely on community-based networks for information. This reliance on community networks takes various forms and is validated by a strong body of research.[8]

> *A Florida study found that Latino homeowners are more likely than non-Latino homeowners to prefer to use friends and family as sources of disaster preparation information. Latinos are also more likely than non-Latino Whites to use social networks and neighbourhood meetings as communication channels for disaster and hazard information.*
>
> Source: Carter-Pokras et al 2007 [134]

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The immediate social circle is often the main source of emergency information.

The previous chapter highlighted the strength of bonding social capital within CALD communities. While all communities show different levels of connectedness and self-organisation, most have developed community-specific networks and communication channels. Many respondents indicated that their first source of emergency information was their immediate social circle such as relatives, friends and community leaders who have lived in Australia for a long time and acquired some emergency knowledge.

> *I know my community, I have neighbours here from Bangladesh, they say they don't have much information about emergency preparedness. And we [the Bangladeshi community] don't watch news much, so if I think of [my neighbour] maybe she wouldn't even know that [an emergency] is coming unless I go and tell her.*

[8] As early as 1991, Perry and Lindell found that "minorities are much more likely than whites [sic] to cite social network contacts as the source in which they place the highest confidence."

Your neighbours from your country, they would rely almost entirely on you to get information about emergencies?

Yes. Because their kids are not at school yet, I know that sometimes here [emergency services] talk to school kids, they try to educate them, but when the kids are not in school or childcare there's no way [the parents] can get that kind of information.

Community-based groups on online platforms play a critical role for many CALD communities. They are often used to share information and provide practical support to overcome the challenges of settlement.

How do you share information in your community?

We have a WhatsApp group, so we can say "this is what has happened and it's affecting this area". We can ask each other who lives there, have we heard any news from them? So we say "what can we do?" All of us are volunteering to go and help. Today we had someone who had an accident, we went visit that person.

Leveraging CALD communities' strong bonding social capital is undoubtedly one of most effective ways to ensure they benefit from reliable emergency information. This can be achieved by connecting with community leaders, who can be a powerful "point of entry" into "hard-to-reach groups" considering their positions of trust and influence within their communities. Emergency information originating from such trusted figures will generally be perceived as reliable and important and is therefore more likely to lead to the adoption of preparedness actions.[135] Community leaders can also provide emergency management practitioners with opportunities to share information during community events.

> *Community leaders, in particular, are valuable collaborators in efforts to contextualize and tailor messages for NEC; meaningful, dialogic and interactive relationships between EM [emergency management] and community leaders are imperative to this.*
>
> Source: Hanson-Easey et al. 2018

Community leaders can also provide valuable advice on how to adapt emergency messaging to CALD audiences as they often have a refined understanding of their community' strengths and vulnerabilities.

That's the way to do it: train the community leaders. Because at the end of the day when something happens, they are the ones who know things like "so and so lives there and might need help". Also, leaders can help identify that this family can't speak English.

To get [community members] to prepare you can ask community leaders and church leaders, when there's an event you can ask them to talk about things that are important.

The "community champions" model

Another effective way to leverage existing social capital to communicate emergency information is the "community champions" or "community ambassadors" model. While this strategy has various iterations, it generally entails the recruitment and training by emergency management agencies of motivated CALD community members, who can then share emergency information with their community in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. This model was successfully implemented in various countries, including in the United States to promote emergency preparedness among Latino migrants.[136]

The effectiveness of this approach is validated by global research.[137] Using community members as "champions" ensures that message content and delivery are culturally and linguistically appropriate, it increases the intake of emergency information, provides opportunities for community involvement, and contributes to social connectedness and adaptation. Many respondents mentioned the benefits having members of their community trained in basic emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

What do you think could be done to make your community more prepared for emergencies?

You could connect me with some training. If I have training I can help the community, raise awareness and talk to them. Most of my community don't speak English, they're very isolated.

What I would like to see happen is training people, community leaders, in [emergency preparedness], relevant to the area, and then let them deliver this information in their language to their communities.

What is the best way to share [emergency] information with members of your community?

The best way is to create a link. If they can employ some community liaison officers, working with emergency organisations that would be good. At least someone in the community who can work with community members, that will help a lot.

While the community ambassador strategies can require significant resources to establish, the sustainable nature of its outcomes outweigh its costs.

The limits and precautions of direct community engagement

Working with community leaders or "champions" can leverage the power of social capital to share important emergency information and build resilience. However, care should be taken to ensure that leaders are perceived as legitimate and representative of the entire group. This can be problematic for communities with recent experience of violent conflict, where the sense of identity or leadership may be divided along regional, ethnic, religious or linguistic lines. This highlights the importance of actively researching the recent history and backgrounds of the communities' emergency management actors engage with.

Moreover, despite the abundance of bonding social capital in most CALD communities, some are less connected and organised, making communal networks less effective for information dissemination. Previous research has found that smaller communities, as well as those who arrived most recently, may not always benefit from strong connections and leadership.[138]

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the primacy of information in emergency resilience, as well as the challenges and opportunities of communicating with CALD communities. Existing research and respondents' insights suggest that no single communication medium or strategy is alone sufficient to ensure that migrants and refugees possess the required information to prepare for, cope with and recover from emergencies. A combination of different approaches that consider the specificities and needs of each community seems to be most effective.

Building trust-based relationships with CALD communities and their leaders is probably the most powerful way to ensure their members are informed. The development of such communication channels should be an integral part of emergency managers' work ahead of emergencies. When disasters strike, it is too late. Moreover, when conducted as genuine dialogue and participation,

emergency communication can contribute to the development of bridging and linking social capital, with benefits for migrants and refugees extending beyond emergency resilience.

- The ability to access, understand and act upon emergency information is a key determinant of resilience for individuals, households and communities.
- Some migrants and refugees face challenges in accessing emergency information due to factors such as language barriers and unfamiliarity with their host country's institutional environment.
- Communicating emergency information with "hard-to-reach" CALD communities is a significant challenge for emergency managers. Most often, a combination of various strategies where interactive, face-to-face communication plays a key role, is most suitable to address the information needs of CALD communities.
- To be effective, trust-based communication channels with CALD communities must be developed before emergencies strike.
- Leveraging existing networks (such as community leaders and organisations) can ensure that emergency information reaches migrants and refugees. However, care should be taken when working with smaller, less organised, divided or more recently established communities.

Australian Red Cross / Alexandra van der Merwe

Part III
Acting for Change

> *In a nutshell, disaster readiness is about social change.*
>
> Source: Norris et al.2008

This research has shed light on various aspects of CALD communities' experience with disasters and emergencies. Its findings suggest that resilience – the individual and collective capacity to prepare for, cope with and recover from disasters – consists of innumerable components such as perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, abilities, experiences, relationships, and many more. Because of this complexity, the task of "building resilience" can seem daunting.

Fortunately, the multifaceted nature of resilience also means that many different actions can contribute to its flourishing. A combination of achievable measures undertaken in concert by a range of stakeholders can bring about significant resilience outcomes for CALD communities. A range of data sources were analysed to develop recommendations supported by converging lines of enquiry. They include:

- A review of international and Australian research.
- Insights from culturally diverse research respondents.
- Formal and informal consultation with community leaders, community-based organisations, and stakeholders in the emergency management and migration support sectors.
- Practical experience and lessons learned from ongoing community engagement by Australian Red Cross.

Translating research into action is a long-standing challenge for emergency management practitioners. Most organisations navigate in challenging environments characterised by competing priorities, limited resources and imperfect information. While these challenges can thwart resilience-building initiatives, the actions outlined below consider the strengths and capacities of different stakeholders, and are achievable with modest resources.

While recommended actions are categorised by types of stakeholder, it is important to keep in mind that they are interdependent parts of a collective endeavour, as they often involve communication, interaction or collaboration between different actors. It is also worth noting that many of these measures are relevant not only to CALD communities, but to other groups as well. This work therefore contributes to the broader social inclusion objectives outlined in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

Overall, they aim to realise the following outcomes:

1. Increased mutual understanding, trust, communication, interaction and collaboration between CALD communities and emergency management authorities.

2. CALD communities…

- Have increased awareness of local emergency and disaster risks.
- Have the capacity to access, understand and act upon reliable and culturally appropriate information allowing them to prepare, cope with and recover from emergencies (see chapter 9).
- Develop an increased sense of belonging and shared identity with the wider community and the physical and social environments where they live (see chapter 8).
- Benefit from stronger social support networks allowing them to cope with the disruptive impacts of disasters.

3. Emergency management actors…

- Recognise the importance of cultural diversity for emergency management activities.
- Are aware of CALD communities' demographics in the areas under their mandate.
- Recognise that migrants and refugees may have different experiences during emergencies and understand specific vulnerability factors in CALD communities.
- Recognise that CALD communities often possess experience, knowledge and resilience capacities that can inform emergency management practices in Australia.
- Actively engage with CALD communities and their leaders to promote emergency preparedness and resilience.

Recommendations

Recommendations are given for three practical areas (or domains) of action:

KNOWLEDGE
The production, dissemination and promotion of information allowing individuals, communities and organisations to reduce the negative impact of disasters by informing decisions regarding preparedness, response and recovery.

CONNECTION AND COMMUNICATION
The creation or strengthening or formal and/or informal connections between, within and across individuals, organisations and communities, to enhance mutual understanding and trust, the development of support networks and the effective circulation of information.

CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY
The development and promotion of skills and abilities that contribute to resilience in CALD communities. This can occur at the individual, community or organisational levels.

The following table outlines concrete action for stakeholders to build resilience at different levels and to support other actors to build capacity in this area.

For community members

KNOWLEDGE	• Find out about disaster risks in the places where you live, work and play through reliable sources such as your local council, library, local emergency services, or from people who have lived in your area for a long time. • Learn about people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds who live in your communities. You can do so through local cultural organisations, events, festivals, etc. • If you have been living in the same area for a long time, share disaster risks information with people in your community who recently arrived in your area.
CONNECTION & COMMUNICATION	• Start a conversation with members of your local community (neighbours) about how you can mutually support each other before, during and after emergencies. • Get involved in your community by participating to community events, hobby and sport, groups, festivals, etc. • Volunteer in organisations that support migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

CAPACITY & CAPABILITY	• Attend emergency preparedness training provided by local organisations.
	• Volunteer in emergency management organisations such as your State's Emergency Service, Rural Fire Service, Red Cross Emergency Services and others.
	• Take concrete actions to prepare for emergencies, including:
	  ○ Gathering information about disaster risks
	  ○ Developing your support network
	  ○ Making an emergency plan
	  ○ Packing an emergency kit

For community-based organisations and leaders

KNOWLEDGE	• Gather locally-relevant information from reliable sources on the risks that members of your community face. Choose information in a format that is easy to understand for community members. • Share emergency information through the networks and channels most in use in your community, ensuring it reaches as many members as possible. • Support community members to understand and act upon emergency preparedness information.
CONNECTION & COMMUNICATION	• Promote opportunities for community members to connect with the wider community through volunteering, participation to groups and events, festivals, celebrations, etc. • Organise an annual meeting with community members (preferably before the "disaster season") to discuss disaster risks and make a community emergency plan. Invite representatives of local emergency services.
CAPACITY & CAPABILITY	• Reach out to local emergency services to organise preparedness education for community members. This can be training sessions, presentations during existing events, workshops, or any other format appropriate to your community. • Organise visits to emergency management facilities to increase migrants' and refugees' familiarity with Australia's emergency response practices.

For emergency management organisations

KNOWLEDGE

- Identify the relevance of cultural and linguistic diversity for your organisation.
- Gather data about CALD communities in the areas under your responsibility. Seek information about:
  - The demographics of CALD groups, their collective experience, reasons for migrating, how long they have been in Australia, etc.
  - Where they are located and whether these locations are disaster-prone.
  - Whether they have organisations and leaders you can connect with.

CONNECTION & COMMUNICATION

- Establish contact with CALD organisations and leaders using multicultural directories, cultural organisations or migration support organisations. Ensure that CALD organisations and leaders are aware of emergency preparedness resources relevant to their community.
- Consult CALD organisations/leaders regarding the most effective channels to disseminate emergency information in CALD communities. When disseminating emergency information, use a variety of platforms to ensure it reaches the highest number of community members.
- When feasible, adapt emergency preparedness information to CALD audiences by translating basic material in targeted languages or producing easy English material. Consult with CALD organisations/leaders before adapting material to ensure it effectively addresses community needs.
- If your organisation currently employs staff or volunteers from CALD backgrounds, seek their advice on strategies to establish connections and share information with CALD communities.
- Consult with CALD organisations and leaders to ensure that the perspective, knowledge and experience of CALD communities are considered in emergency planning.
- During emergencies, use established connections with CALD leaders, networks and organisations to ensure that CALD community members can access critical safety information in a timely manner.

CAPACITY & CAPABILITY

- Facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and skills about cultural diversity among your workforce by conducting training (face-to-face or online), with a focus on migrants' and refugees' circumstances and vulnerability factors (language barrier, legal status, cultural practices, past traumatic experience, mistrust of authorities, etc.).

- Recruit volunteers and/or staff from CALD backgrounds through targeted recruitment campaigns. Having a culturally diverse workforce is one of the most effective way to increase cultural competency and sensitivity at the organisational level.

- When feasible, embed cultural considerations in emergency planning (for example, plan for interpreter services in evacuation centres, dietary requirements, women's privacy, etc.).

- Ensure that existing emergency management training curricula include a component on cultural competency & sensitivity in emergency contexts.

- In the aftermath of disasters, consult with CALD organisations/leaders to evaluate the cultural sensitivity of emergency response, focusing on possible improvements for future events.

- During interaction with CALD communities, identify existing knowledge and experience that can inform emergency management practices in Australia.

For migration support organisations

KNOWLEDGE	• Gather reliable and updated emergency preparedness information adapted to clients' circumstances and needs. • Disseminate emergency preparedness material during routine client interaction.
CONNECTION & COMMUNICATION	• Identify and promote opportunities for migrants and refugees to develop connections with the wider community.
CAPACITY & CAPABILITY	• Identify and promote opportunities for clients to get involved in emergency management organisations through volunteering. • Embed emergency preparedness education into routine settlement services (for example by adding a preparedness component to "life skills" training or organising dedicated workshops).

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