

What is Community Resilience and Why is it Difficult to Measure?

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What is Community Resilience?

Traditional

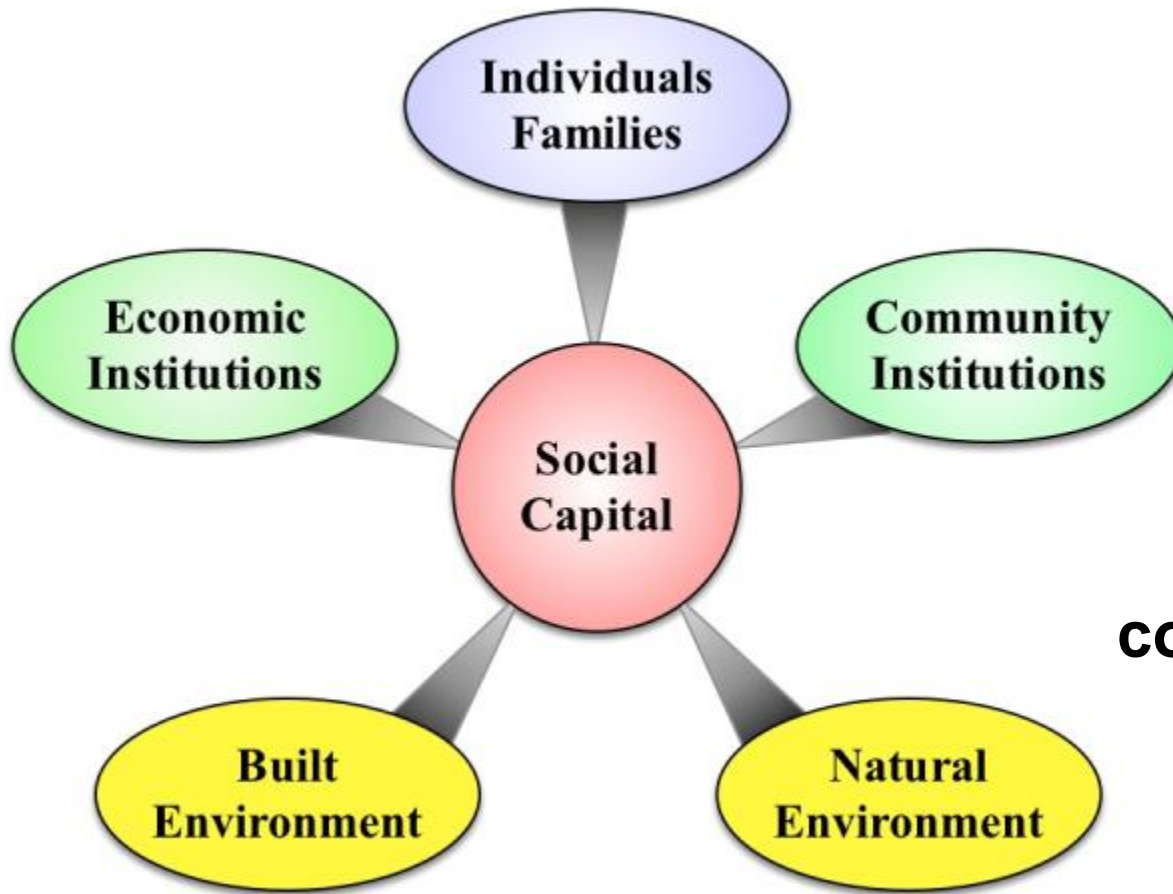
The community can withstand significant disruptions of any kind, lose as little capacity as possible and recover to an acceptable new state of normalcy that is at least as good and maybe better than the old.

And

Positive Adaptation to Change

The community anticipates a world of increasing uncertainty, turbulence and change and creates a culture that allows it to manage uncertainty and seek opportunity in turbulence.

A community is...



- ...an eco-system

Individuals and organizations bound together by *geography* and *self-interest* to efficiently provide common services, and...

- *a system of systems!*

Realities Facing Our Communities

- **Growing Complexity**
- **Accelerating Rate of Change**
- **New Spectrum of Risks**
- **Effects of the Great Recession**
- **Demographic Shifts**
- **Unrealistic Expectations**
- **Incomplete understanding of dependencies and interdependencies**



What Do Communities Say They Need?

- **To understand what community resilience means to their community**
- **To know if they are resilient**
- **Access to tools and processes that can help it reach a more resilient state**
- **Tangible rewards for the effort**



Measuring (?) Community Resilience...

- **Measurement must have practical value**
- **Some things we measure well; some things we don't**
- **Practice has outpaced knowledge**
- **We can't solve the measurement challenge linearly.
We must simultaneously address:**
 - **Measures of Effectiveness**
 - **Standards and Guidelines**
 - **Incentives**
- **Measures and standards must be flexible, adaptable, usable and used**

Questions worth considering?

- **How do we balance getting it (measuring/assessing resilience) right with getting it now?**
- **Do practitioners at the community level need a scientifically based set of metrics against which to measure their success or simply an agreed on set of heuristics to guide their actions?**
- **What can be done to speed the scientific underpinnings of resilience measurement so that practitioners have some degree of confidence that actions taken will actually increase their resilience to severe disruptions?**

A Final Thought

We know, of course, with regard to the market and similar social structures, a great many facts which we cannot measure and on which indeed we have only some very imprecise and general information. And because the effects of these facts in any particular instance cannot be confirmed by quantitative evidence, they are simply disregarded by those sworn to admit only what they regard as scientific evidence: they thereupon happily proceed on the fiction that the factors which they can measure are the only ones that are relevant.

Frederick Hayek