

Community Disaster Resilience Planning Guide Resources

Community Profile Instructions

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Overview

As you move through group processes for completing and implementing your Disaster Resilience Plan, particularly step two, you will want to consider adopting a comprehensive Community Profile to better document community disaster resiliency and risk.

Introducing the Community Profile

Helpful tips and resources for filling in your Community Profile Template are provided, in addition to descriptions of social, economic, infrastructure and community-based resources that will help you better map and characterize your community's key strengths and weaknesses.

Community Profile Template

Based on information provided in introducing the Community Profile a template is provided for you to populate with community-based data. (separate document)

Introducing the Community Profile

What is a Community Profile?

Completing a Community Profile provides a way for members/residents to get together and understand their community and its quality of life. The process of putting together the Community Profile is as important as the actual profile itself. In a way, completing a Community Profile is similar to putting together a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece of the puzzle completes the picture of your community: who lives and works in your community, what services exist, what businesses exist and what factors make up the spirit of your community to make it different from every other community.

Why is a Community Profile Important?

Once it is completed you will find people returning back to the Community Profile time and time again. It can become a great information package to hand to newcomers in the community and it can also remind long-term residents of all that the community has to offer. A Community Profile can serve as a blueprint for the community's website. As the community considers its future direction and moves into developing action plans for becoming disaster resilient the information from the Community Profile will be critical. For example, a completed Community Profile will let you know:

- If we have to evacuate our community, how many people will have to be accommodated?
- Do we know what special needs may need to be accommodated?
- What skills do our residents have?
- If transportation to our community was cut off what services might we lose?
- Who is responsible for what services?
- Who supports our business community – what drives our economy?
- What hazards have the potential to harm our community?
- How prepared are we as community members?

A Community Profile is not about just gathering information; it is an opportunity to engage residents in identifying what makes their community different from every other community.

Collecting Information

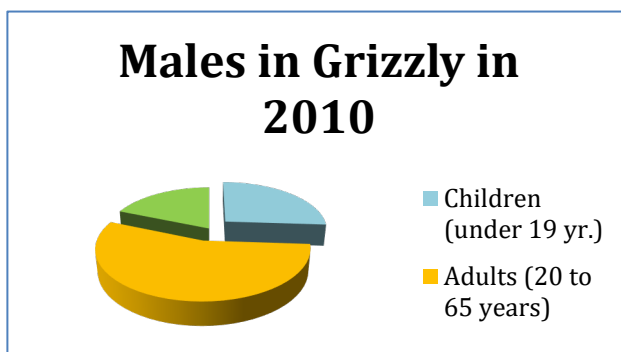
The Resources Section in this document provides you with sources for finding out information about your community – most of these resources are from the internet. However, there are many sources available to get more information for your community:

- Archeology Studies, local Museum, Government and Church archives
- Libraries
- Oral history
- Newspaper articles
- Magazines and books
- Scientists and universities
- Local departmental files
- Long time residents and Elders (Local Knowledge/oral history)

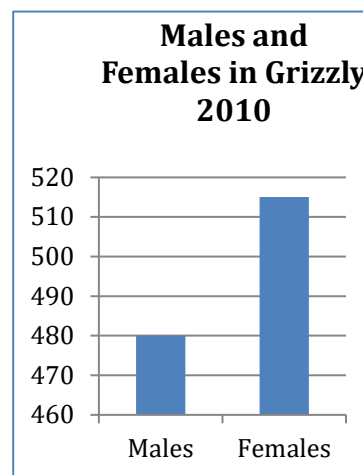
- Neighbouring communities (may have stringer history, i.e. stories in song)
- Research reports
- Industrial records
- Emergency management files
- AANDC and Government archives in general (local, provincial/territorial and federal) data bases
- Websites
- Ways to record information

There are many different ways of recording information that you receive. For example, you can simply record the information as is or compile a table, chart or graph.

Pie Chart



Graph



For communities registered with Statistics Canada a good source for providing information is [Statistics Canada Census Profile of 2016](#).

In the end, it is up to you to decide how best to capture the information and write it up in a way that makes sense to others.

History

- Historical data (including past events)
- Past challenges – examples of resilience

It's good to know your roots and how your community has evolved to get to be the community it is today. Your community profile should identify challenges and acknowledge how the community has coped over time. The background history should not be long; it can be in point form but should set the stage for how your community's profile information relates to your history.

Population

Whether or not you have 1,000 people in your community or 200 people in your community, it is important to take a look at who those community members are. Various agencies, e.g., Public

Health, Prisons, Special Care Homes, Social Services, will have critical information regarding mobility, and vulnerable segments of the population. There is a lot of information available about who lives in your community. There are two main sources: one is through local, provincial or territorial governments and the other is through [Statistics Canada Census Profile of 2016](#). Various agencies, e.g., Public Health, Prisons, Special Care Homes, Social Services, will have critical information regarding mobility, and vulnerable segments of the population.

Also of note is that because a number of communities are remote and homes are not always easily accessible in many cases the “official” numbers may be underrepresented. If that is the case in your community, you will have to take extra care to capture any missing residents, and allowance should be made for tourists, visitors and transients.

Entrepreneurial Businesses and Services

Without small businesses, the communities are limited on how much revenue or social growth can occur. Following a disaster, once everyone is rescued, one of the most important tasks is to get the businesses back up and running. Youth in communities will leave to go to school and may not return if there are no careers or jobs for them to return to. As well, it is important to document what services are available in the community and what services are not available. If they are not available in the community, where are essential services located? A small community is unlikely to have a hospital – so where is the closest emergency hospital?

Community Businesses

Some businesses may be seasonal – e.g., fishing/ hunting guiding and it is important to note which are year-round and which are not. It is important to capture home-based businesses and that may be harder to determine. In numerous floods in small communities, it is often women running small businesses out of their homes (e.g., daycares are often in basements) who end up losing their business because their home is flooded. So we want to make sure that we identify these businesses.

Economic Development and Economic Sectors

Also it is important to capture the impact of tourism and visitors on the community. The town’s population may swell during the summer when tourists or visitors and seasonal membership arrive, only to drop substantially when the tourist season is over. Many communities host Assemblies and events that cause a major spike in population for brief periods of time.

Industrial/ Commercial Development Projects

We have seen the economic climb and collapse of effects of industry (i.e. logging/mining) over the past 30 years in small, rural or remote communities. Industry builds jobs and creates economic stability for communities until resources are utilized and industry closes down. How does your community look to have stability of industry or creation of balanced jobs?

Community & Recreational Services

There are a number of services that are often supported by the community. These may include library services, public works, and a number of recreational services.

Financial Services

Is there a local banking or credit union outlet in town? Or is there simply an ATM? Or do people have to leave the community to get cash? Be sure to identify how people acquire cash.

Government Services

There are a host of government services that are available at the local, federal and provincial government level. In many small communities these services are seldom provided in the community on a regular full-time basis. Sometimes residents have to travel to receive the services. In other cases, the government provides a worker one or two days a week.

Employment Related Services

When we think about employment services we generally think about an agency that can assist people to find work and provide financial assistance when we are without work. Where are those services located for your community?

Health Services

There is a range of health services to see us through from birth to death. Many small communities may have only a small medical clinic that is only staffed part-time; others have no medical services locally available. What level of health services is available in your community? Are these services culturally sensitive and supportive?

Educational Services

In a number of small communities the children have to be bused to larger regional towns to go to school. Often, however, there may be a kindergarten or elementary school and it is only when children are a little older that they have to be bused to other schools. In some cases, rather than have children leave the community to go to school children are home-schooled. Are the education professionals in your communities fostering and teaching tradition? While small communities are not likely to have a college in town, in some cases small private or technical colleges or post-secondary schools are located in small communities. For example, there may be training. What steps are being taken in the Education System to preserve Indigenous language and culture?

Geography and Land Use

Most of the information regarding the geography of your community is covered in the Mapping Resources. However, there are some key items, which should be considered in terms of land use and potential hazards. The “Resources” section in this document includes some information under “Community Information,” “Drainage Basins and Watersheds,” “Ecology” and “Protected Conservation Areas” which may be helpful. Traditional spiritual grounds or sites should be recognized and protected. Many of our communities have contaminated sites due to government or industrial activities. These sites should be mapped, inventoried and brought to the attention of the appropriate agency / level of Government.

Vegetation and Wildlife

The Mountain Pine Beetle and Spruce Bud Worm have devastated some communities in Canada. Other communities have seen wildlife or fishing stock decrease very quickly. Identify any trends or changes to the vegetation and wildlife.

Climate

As well as considering the geography of your community you need to consider the climate of your area. Record average temperatures and levels of rainfall and make note of any changing weather patterns.

Community Infrastructure

Community infrastructure is considered to include those services, which help to support your community, or allow your community to function. Community infrastructure includes services such as hydro, gas lines, roadways and communication networks. Do note that we are not asking you to identify every phone line or hydro line, but rather those main trunks or connections that if damaged or not functioning would leave residents in the community challenged to cope with the elements and to communicate with the outside world. Additional information is also available in the “Ecology” and “Economy” sections under “Resources” in this document.

Communication and Information Technology

Today we are a connected society; however, some small communities are challenged by the lack of high-speed Internet and communications networks. Consider what communications infrastructure is in place in your community. (social media info should be listed)

Electricity

How does your community receive its hydro power? Is there a power generating station nearby? Is there a major substation in, or close to your community?

Water

Where is the water treatment plant? Is the water supplied directly to your community residents and businesses or is the water supplied through individual wells? What is the source of your potable water? How frequent are boil-water advisories necessary in your community? Hundreds of communities in British Columbia are on boil-water advisories, some have been on boil-water advisories for years.

Below are the links to Health Canada’s and Indigenous Services Canada’s website that will list any boil water advisories in any First Nations Communities in Canada.

- [Health Canada Short-Term Advisories](#)
- [Health Canada Long-Term Advisories](#)

Sewage

How is sewage handled in your community? Some communities have sewage systems including sewage lagoons or sewage treatment plants. Other communities are totally on septic systems.

Others might discharge sewage into rivers, lakes or the ocean (sometimes untreated). This section will cover how your community disposes of its sewage.

Landfill

Where does your garbage go? Some communities have easily accessible landfills and dumps; in other communities garbage is trucked away vast distances.

Gas and Oil

What is the main source of heating for your community? Does your community have access to oil and gas for heating and residential and business use? How does the gas or oil reach your community?

Transportation

What are the main transportation corridors to come and go from your community? Is there a highway nearby or does the highway go through your community? Is your community even accessible by road or is it only accessible by plane or boat? What happens in the winter? Is there only one way in or out (access/egress route)? Do you have seasonal access, ice roads in the winter boats in the summer? What happens during the off season – Spring and Fall? Is your community accessible by air only?

Food

Having a regular food supply is critical. In urban communities many people eat out a lot and don't keep much stored in the homes. In small rural communities people are generally much more resilient and have sufficient food to last for some time. But even so, there comes a time when lack of fresh produce, milk, or other food supplies can affect your community. Consider food supply and delivery. Traditional food harvesting and food storage knowledge should be documented along with the seasons and dates events occur in community.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

People come together in CBOs not because they are paid to but because they want to meet with others because they either care about the same things (e.g., caring for the poor or vulnerable populations or pets); because they like to do the same things (e.g., watercolour painting or curling); or because they like to think about the same things (e.g., elders groups, church groups, environmental groups).

Community Events

Some communities have a Spirit of the People Powwow, Assemblies, music festivals, rodeos, food festivals or other community-wide events, which are attended by local residents and attract visitors to the community. They are educational, a great way to have fun and to bring dollars into the community.

Capacity Inventory

We know that significant positive community development only takes place when community residents are committed to contributing of themselves and their resources. For many small

communities the cavalry is not going to arrive to save the day; it is the community residents who will have to create a better, stronger community. The reality is that most residents don't think about the vast number of skills and resources they have at their disposal – individually they may not seem that significant but when they are combined they form an incredible force. As well, don't forget the teenagers in your community. They can have incredible skills and can contribute a great deal to your community.

Governance Structure (Chief and Council/Clan Leaders/Mayor and Council)

Your community will have elected members/councilors for a local governance council, board or committee. Identify your elected officials and when and where meetings are held.

Fire Services

Many small communities have volunteer fire departments. You may have a fire hall in your community, or firefighters may be responding from a regional location, or neighbouring community. Is your community's fire department sustainable, do they have a strong enough volunteer capacity? If you rely on outside response, do you have a Memorandum of Understanding or an Agreement in place that outlines commitment to respond, response times etc. How long does it take to access outside resources?

Police Services

You may have a police station in your community, or the RCMP/provincial police may be responding from a regional location, or neighbouring community. Some communities in Canada also have tribal policing.

Ambulance

You may have an ambulance station in your community, or the ambulance may be responding from a regional location, or neighbouring community. Is there a Memorandum of Understanding or an Agreement in place? What are the average response times?

Provincial and Territorial Emergency Acts

Provincial and Territorial Acts provide legal definitions associated with emergencies and outline specific responsibilities and what extraordinary powers the local authority can use if they have declared a state of local emergency. Provincial and Territorial Emergency Acts do not apply on reserve/ First Nations land unless clearly defined through treaty or self-governing legislation. For communities that are not designated as "local authorities" any declarations in Canada on reserve must be done in conjunction with provincial or territorial governments in collaboration and wherever possible in conjunction with neighbouring communities. The important thing for your community to know is if there is a current plan for your community and what it actually says. Incorporated communities should have an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) – a location where all those responsible for emergency operations can meet and communicate with other agencies. Some unincorporated communities also have an EOC which enables them to communicate directly with other regional representatives when there is an emergency. The EOC does not have to be a fancy building – often it is just the corner of the fire hall or band health center/community office. As well, your community should be aware of what emergency management volunteer programs exist. There are several categories of volunteers that are

referenced on provincial and territorial Emergency Management Organization (EMO) websites, and sometimes in provincial and territorial legislation itself. According to Canadian EMO websites (see your provincial or territorial resource guide for your local EMO website), commonly recognized volunteer categories include:

- **Search and Rescue (SAR):** Search and Rescue volunteers are called out anytime there is someone lost, missing or injured in the wilderness. They could be lost in the forest, on a ski mountain, or involved in a rafting or other water related incident. Provincially and territorially this classification of volunteers is also sometimes broken down into areas of specialty, for example: Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR), Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), Cold Water Ice Rescue (CWIR), and Inland Water Rescue (IWR).
- **Emergency Social Services (ESS):** Emergency Social Services provide short-term assistance to those who are forced to leave their homes because of fire, floods, earthquakes or other emergencies. This assistance includes food, lodging, clothing, emotional support and family reunification.
- **Road Rescue:** Road Rescue is an organized service with members who may be requested to provide support to people involved in out-of-jurisdiction motor vehicle accidents where specialized skills and equipment are required.
- **Amateur Radio:** During disasters and other serious emergency situations, when many other systems fail, a proven reliable means of communication has been emergency radio communications, notably “amateur” or “ham” radio.
- **Air Search and Rescue:** Air Search and Rescue’s primary function is to assist Canadian Forces during search and rescue missions when additional resources are required.
- **Volunteer Fire Fighters:** With dynamic training in a variety of areas and access to rescue equipment, Volunteer Fire Fighters often serve as First Responders during a disaster situation. Depending on the training available, Volunteer Fire Fighters might tackle everything from hazardous material spills, to forest fires and the aftermath of earthquakes.
- **Emergency Medical Services (EMS):** Many provinces and territories have disaster-related Emergency Medical Services training available for volunteers, either directly through provincial or territorial governments or more commonly through St. John Ambulance Canada or the Canadian Red Cross. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid skills are commonly emphasized in EMS training.
- **General Service Volunteers:** General Service Volunteers may also contribute to disaster mitigation, response and planning. The general service component is often comprised of volunteers who provide their services to either a local authority or a provincial or territorial EMO, including clerical staff, drivers, exercise facilitators, and manual workers. Volunteers who offer to perform short-term services in response to a specific emergency or disaster response task are also considered General Service Volunteers.
- **Auxiliary Constables:** The Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and some Provincial and Territorial Acts provide for Auxiliary Constables (policing volunteers) to assist with local emergencies and day-to-day policing activities. On a day-to-day basis Auxiliary Constables generally provide assistance with community policing and efforts to find missing persons.
- Whether or not your community is incorporated, a disaster ready community should have volunteers at the local level who are able to provide SAR, ESS, Road Rescue, Amateur Radio services, EMS, general support services, and depending on your community’s structure and resources, firefighting services and auxiliary policing. Assess the state of your community’s emergency management system and your provincial or territorial

resource guide provides resources specific to your region, including excerpts from your local Emergency Management Act.

Hazards Information

What we know is that although Canada has not had many disasters, nevertheless, the numbers of disasters in Canada is continually increasing.

The frequency of disasters in Canada has risen consistently over the past 100 years. The trend line is enough to give our emergency management professionals a few sleepless nights worrying about what the future will bring. They know that Canada's capacity to respond is underdeveloped for our level of risk.

The [National Disasters Country Profile Series](#) is an excellent source of information on Canadian hazards.

Your Community Profile should document the following:

- Is this a hazard that appears to exist in our community?
- Has this hazard had an impact in our community in the past?
- If so, when and where did it occur and what happened?
- Is this a hazard that exists outside of our community but that has the possibility of impacting our community?
- Has this hazard had an impact in our community in the past?
- If so, when and where did it occur and what happened?

You may find the [Canadian Disaster Database](#) helpful in identifying past hazardous events.

Changing Times

This last section asks you to consider what changes you have seen in your community over the past decade (or perhaps even longer). Some of these trends will have identified questions about hazards, geography, or climate. In other cases, the trends may not be so obvious. To track population changes or shifts over the past twenty years you can access the population data at the [Statistics Canada website](#) or through your band and membership records.

Document any other trends that you have noticed in and around your community.

Resources

Community History

Provincial, territorial and local archives are a great place to search for early history on your community – it may be a bit confusing to access information at first, so take some time to get orientated to each website. See your provincial or territorial resource guide for resources specific to your region. Discussions should be held with community Elders as oral history can hold very strong disaster history even through song and dance. Elders possess Traditional Knowledge and recognize changes brought about by certain events such as climate change, which may impact the environment. For example, drought caused either by man (rerouting waterways – dams) or by global warming can result in forest fires that interface with established communities.

Community Information

The following are examples of the types of resources that are available on local, provincial and territorial community profile mapping websites. Both the content and degree of detail varies from province to province and territory to territory, but these websites may be invaluable when it comes to completing your Community Profile.

Examples of the Types of Resources Available:

- Ecozone Classification For Lakes and Streams
- Forest and Fisheries Tourism Opportunities
- Recreation Corridor Management Strategies
- Land-Use Planning
- Coastal Information Resource Inventories
- Predictive Modeling and the Existing Archaeological Inventories
- Extensive lists of literature, resources and maps.

See your local, provincial or territorial resource guide for resources specific to your region.

Provincial and Territorial Statistics

In addition to population statistics, provincial and territorial statistics agencies provide lots of reports on the economy, tourism and the environment, among other things. For example, on these websites you might find information addressing:

- Indigenous Peoples
- Business & Industry
- Census
- Immigration
- Economic Statistics
- Environment
- Exports & Imports
- Labour & Income
- Labour Market Information
- Mapping & Geography
- Population & Demographics
- Population Distribution and Forested Areas
- Regional Statistics
- Social Statistics
- Surveys & Analysis

See your provincial or territorial resource guide for resources specific to your region.

Historical Indian Treaties

Between 1725 and 1930 agreements between two or more nations and European and Canadian governments. See [Indian Historical Treaties](#) below for more info:

Statistics Canada

The primary source of national population data will come from Statistics Canada. The [Population Census Data](#) is from 2016 the last census data available. You simply enter the website, enter the name of your community, and all kinds of information will appear! Statistics Canada information includes:

- Population and Dwelling Counts (how many homes)
- Population Density
- Age and Gender
- Common-Law and Marital Status
- Types of Homes (i.e. type of construction and when constructed)
- Family and Household Characteristics (e.g., income)
- Mother Tongue and Languages
- Immigrant Status and Citizenship
- Mobility Status (i.e. how often people move)
- Aboriginal Populations
- Educational Information and Field and Location of Study
- Labour Force Employment and Occupation, Earning and Income
- Mode of Transportation to Work

Vital Statistics

Vital statistics are released through a variety of provincial and territorial government websites. See your provincial or territorial Risk and Resilience Information Guide for resources specific to your region.

Climate

The [Government of Canada Weather Information](#) can provide you with:

- Current weather, 24 hour and seven day forecasts
- Weather Alerts
- Marine Alerts
- Air Quality
- Analyses and Modelling information of forecasting and wave modelling, etc.
- Past Weather
- Information on Weather
- Canadian Centre for Climate Services

The best way to access the information for small communities is to enter the name of your community under [Canadian Climates Normals](#). As long as your community has been recording the weather for 15 years you will be able to identify average temperatures for each month. As

well, you will be able to identify maximum and minimum temperatures for each month and when these temperatures occurred. Rain precipitation is also recorded for each community.

Drainage Basins & Watersheds

The [Open Government Portal](#) includes over 10,600 data sets of Canadian river basins and watersheds. maps of drainage basins and watersheds (areas that drain all precipitation received as a runoff or groundwater) into a particular river or set of rivers. The website also provides a map for hydrometric stations in Canada (used to measure water height and speed).

The Natural Resources Canada site on "[Water](#)" provides information on the distribution of water, water quantity and climate change.

Ecology

The Government of Canada provides extensive information about [ecology and Canada](#) – with maps of locations of rare plants, sites of special biodiversity and threats to the ecology. Additionally, information is available on:

- [Wastewater Management](#)
- [Industrial Discharge Sites Map](#)
- [Road Density Map](#)
- [Sewage Treatment Map](#)
- [Species at Risk Map](#)

Economy; Nature and the Environment; Government and Politics; and Science and Technology

The [Open Government Portal](#) is a portal provided by the Government of Canada and provides geospatial data at no cost and without restrictions. Keywords include:

- Canada lands
- Earth sciences
- Geophysics
- Land management
- Tables

Subjects include:

- Economics and Industry
- Form Descriptors
- Government and Politics
- Nature and Environment
- Science and Technology

Resources include:

- Dataset
- Guides
- Publications

CDRP Resources

- Web services
- Websites

Environment

Natural Resources Canada provides [The Atlas of Canada](#) which has a lot of information including interactive maps, landscapes, and population changes. Natural Resources Canada also supports [GeoGratis](#) which provides topographical Information.