Community Resilience Center Goals Development
Community Conversations Guide

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Preparing to listen and engage

Asking yourself these questions before engaging with community members can help prepare you to listen actively and build relationships.

- What assumptions are you making going into this conversation? What do you think you know about your audience?
- What are your key beliefs about what services are needed in a community resilience center?
- What topics may come up in this conversation that might cause you to respond in a way that could make others feel unwilling to engage?
- What has been your own personal experience with climate impacts and climate resilience in the community? (e.g. Do you live in the community? Have you experienced climate impacts firsthand?)

Structuring the Conversation

These examples of prompting and probing questions can provide a sample structure for engagement conversations to develop CRC goals. When engaging, remember to listen actively, ask for clarification, and test assumptions.

1. Opening Questions: First, encourage community members to think about the important functions or aspects that make their community what it is (e.g. a great arts community; a beach community; a center for regional medical services, etc.) and the important people, places, and institutions that help residents thrive (e.g. their awesome library building!)

- What are three things you would want anyone to know about your community when beginning a discussion on climate resilience? These can be cultural, geographic, environmental, or anything else.
- What are the key characteristics and assets that make your community what it is? This might encompass a number of different dimensions (e.g. people, buildings, community services, etc)

Ask probing questions to help hone in on specifics regarding the community's most valued assets and how people access them, such as:

- Can you share an example that illustrates why that's so important to the community?
- How do people get there?

Also start to explore problems and needs through questions such as:

- What challenges do community members face?
- What keeps you up at night?

2. Directing the conversation towards climate impacts

Questions like these can help you glean community members' perspectives about how climate change impacts community assets, or may impact them in the future:

- What changes have you observed in your community in your lifetime? (These may be environmental, economic, social, or something else.) How have these changes affected the community? How do you think climate change may intersect with these changes?
- How has extreme weather affected [asset/access to asset as described previously]?

You can get more specifics to help you brainstorm specific services your community resilience center could offer by asking probing questions such as:

- How does [impact] affect your daily schedule?
- Where specifically does [impact] happen? (e.g. specific street names; schools; businesses; homes; routes to work)
- What types of people are most affected by [impact]? (e.g. specific members of your family? People with limited mobility? People of a certain age?)
- How do you experience [impact] differently during [time of year]?
- What messages resonate most [for you/for community members] around climate change, climate resilience, and disaster preparedness?

Here are some questions to help you get community context that can be used for planning CRC services over the longer term:

- How do you anticipate community members' needs changing over time?
- What might community members experience if [type of impact] got [worse/more frequent]?
- What are your hopes for how the community will grow, change, and improve over time?

3. Testing ideas about CRC goals*:* Once you have good context about community assets, challenges, and experiences with climate change and extreme weather you can start to connect that to CRC goals. Make sure to summarize what you've learned from previous parts of the conversation and clearly connect your suggestions to that information.