

CONCURRENT SESSION 2 – INSIGHTS AND APPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE TO DECONTAMINATION

Building Equity in Resilience Planning

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States and localities are looking for ways to integrate climate resilience and environmental justice into how they prepare, respond, mitigate, and recover from disasters. These efforts require effective and inclusive engagement with many broad constituencies. The research presented here uses human-centered design to develop the Equitable Resilience Builder, a social science-informed tool and process for under-resourced communities to measure their resilience and vulnerability in a holistic and inclusive manner and to identify actions to build resilience centered on equity. Identifying and taking actions to build equitable resilience before disaster strikes can reduce negative human health and environmental impacts of an incident, in particular impacts on a community's most vulnerable populations.

This presentation summarizes the findings from the two workshop with resilience planners to learn about their recent experiences with hazards and disasters and their key needs for building equitable resilience. In a second workshop, the team engaged practitioners in co-designing potential solutions for their communities two workshops. Takeaways from the workshops that informed the design of the tool were the need to acknowledge emotions and trauma, and the potential for storytelling to build relationships and complement resilience data. These takeaways will inform conference participants on the issues of equity and trust related to decontamination and the impacts on community resilience.

The Equitable Resilience Builder utilizes social science research on vulnerability and resilience in all aspects of the tool and approach, including the content, indicators, and the process of engaging community members and stakeholders, local data gathering, and identifying actions. A literature review of social vulnerability to hazards and disasters has informed the development of a framework for identifying the specific pathways of exposure and impacts for different social and cultural groups. The indicators emphasize locally meaningful, cross-scalar measures of resilience, social vulnerability, actionability. The Equitable Resilience Builder is an all-hazards tool, including indicators relevant for chemical, biological, radiological incidents as well as extremes associated with climate change.

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