

## Characteristics of Resilience

There are many resilience frameworks. Most of them take into account the complex interrelationships between the systems that people rely on, the organizations that run them, and the resources available. They are very powerful, but they take time to understand. For many purposes, simply a list of what makes things more resilient will do in a pinch. The following list explains some common characteristics of resilience, and how to apply them.

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>What it means</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>How to Remember It</b>
<b>Flexibility</b>	The ability to meet needs when conditions change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are multiple evacuation routes in disasters instead of just one</li> <li>• Community centers double as flood shelters when needed</li> <li>• Staff in an organization are cross-trained so that the organization can continue to function when some staff can't get to work</li> <li>• There is more than one trader to buy farming inputs from or sell crops or livestock to.</li> </ul>	Go with the flow.
<b>Diversity</b>	Different parts of the system are not identical, different types of things perform similar functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff have different sets of skills</li> <li>• Farmers plant multiple varieties of crops</li> <li>• Families have different sources of income, including remittances from the city or abroad</li> </ul>	It takes all kinds.
<b>Redundancy</b>	Systems have back-up options for when things go wrong, systems are broken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A village has multiple sources of water in case one dries up or is contaminated</li> <li>• Farmers keep livestock in different places tended by different people</li> </ul>	Don't put all your eggs in the same basket.

	down into independently functioning parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A city has more than one water treatment plant. The hospital has a back-up generator.</li> </ul>	
<b>Connected through multiple relationships</b>	People and organizations are part of networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections with neighbors, family, local government officials, as well as people in distant places such as other villages, cities, or other countries.</li> <li>• Businesses have multiple suppliers</li> <li>• Government has relationships with NGO service providers who can be mobilized quickly in disasters</li> </ul>	It's who you know.
<b>Resourcefulness (including financial resources, knowledge, information, etc.)</b>	The knowledge and means to get things done.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A city or village has the financial reserves, technical knowledge, and ability to organize to run a safe water system. When disaster strikes, local authorities can borrow money to rebuild infrastructure.</li> <li>• Communities know how to operate their early warning system, and how to connect to the national level system</li> </ul>	Necessity is the mother of invention.
<b>Safe Failure</b>	Systems are designed to fail in ways that do not cause further disaster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dams are built with spillways so they can fill up and let water continue to flow without damage</li> <li>• Crop insurance pays farmers in case of crop failure</li> </ul>	Land on your feet.
<b>Ability to Learn</b>	People adapt systems with each experience to improve their situation – bouncing forward rather than merely bouncing back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People adapt their farming systems to deal with increasingly unpredictable weather, such as changing planting times, setting up irrigation options, and planting a greater diversity of crops</li> <li>• Engineers build back bridges and roads after disaster to make them stronger than before</li> <li>• There are opportunities for public and private discussion of lessons learned from dealing with shocks and stresses.</li> </ul>	The educated person is not the one who knows everything but the one who knows how to find out.

<b>Transparent, accountable and responsive decision making</b>	Methods for making social decisions allow for clear and fair decisions that take into account power dynamics in society and favor the poor and vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land use regulations governing fair compensation for agricultural land or restricting where you can build are open, straightforward, and equitably enforced</li> <li>• Groups such as women, ethnic or religious minorities, or the elderly or handicapped are not excluded from planning or decisions</li> </ul>	Open book.
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