Strengthening Disaster Resilience and Justice for Community-Based Organizations in Oregon

Insights from
Disaster Resilience Learning Network Members
and Disaster Resilience Literature

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Land Acknowledgement:

Our project team currently resides in Ann Arbor, Michigan. We "acknowledge the University of Michigan's origins through an 1817 land transfer from the Anishinaabek, the Three Fires People: the Odawa, Ojibwe, and Bodewadami as well as Meskwahkiasahina (Fox), Peoria and Wyandot. We further acknowledge that our university stands, like almost all property in the United States, on lands obtained, generally in unconscionable ways, from Indigenous peoples."[1] We, as individuals and students of sustainability, "benefit from access to land originally gained through the exploitation of others." While this acknowledgement does not change the past, understanding and highlighting the impacts of colonial practices is essential as we work towards a more equitable and sustainable future.[1]

Additionally, we call on the University of Michigan to step beyond recognition of colonial practices by taking actions including but not limited to: fulfilling the promises of the land transfer[2] by providing free education to all tribal members ancestrally from Tribes displaced by UM, not just those from federally recognized Tribes[3] and working with the Sault Tribe to center tribal land management on the Sugar Island Chase Osborn Preserve.[4]

We also acknowledge our partnership with organizations in Oregon, and elevate Portland State University's Living Land Acknowledgement.[5]

1 The section of our land acknowledgement prior to this footnote is based off of the School for Environment and Sustainability land acknowledgement https://seas.umich.edu/about/land-acknowledgement
2 www.mipolonia.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Ste.-Anne_1701-1976_Detroit_MI.pdf (document page 23)
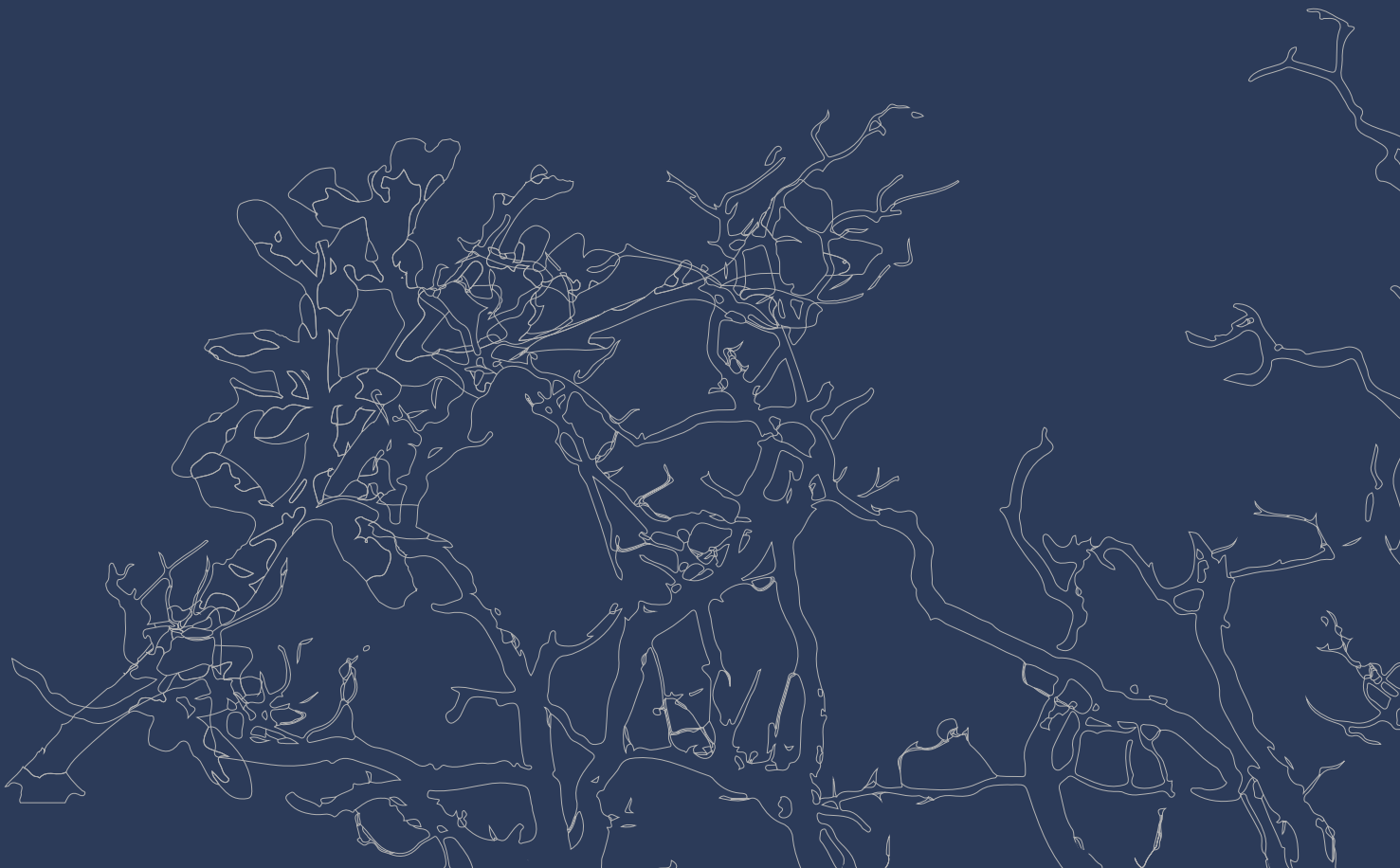3 admissions.umich.edu/costs-aid/michigan-residents/michigan-indian-tuition-waiver
4 Information was gathered on this initiative by fellow graduate students at the University of Michigan working on a project to build partnership between the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe and the University of Michigan to expand tribal access to the Chase Osborn Preserve.
5 pdx.edu/conflict-resolution/land-conflict-acknowledgement

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About This Report

"[A]n alternate, inclusive understanding of resilience recognizes that we don't always have to be resilient. It is okay to be vulnerable and ask for help"
Christy da Rosa, Trauma Informed Oregon (2022)

Summary

Oregon is experiencing increased frequency and severity of climate-related disasters, including wildfires, flooding, and smoke events. During and after these disasters, many community-based organizations (CBOs) divert from their typical workload to support impacted communities. There is an increasing need to understand how CBOs support their own workers, interact with other organizations and government agencies, and hold and create safe spaces for community members during disasters. Our team partnered with the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette (UWCW) and Trauma Informed Oregon (TIO) to provide specific recommendations to the Disaster Resilience Learning Network (DRLN). The DRLN is a network of culturally specific and/or people of color serving community-based organizations in Oregon. Through interviews with the DRLN and an analysis of relevant literature, the team aimed to understand challenges the DRLN faces and synthesize potential recommendations for continued disaster resilience. This report presents recommendations from disaster resilience literature in the context of challenges facing the DRLN.

Key Terms:

- DRLN: Disaster Resilience Learning Network
- CBO: Community-based Organization
- CHW: Community Health Worker

- LTRO: Long Term Recovery Organization
- VOADs: Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster
- FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency

Introduction

The above reflection about the Disaster Resilience Learning Network (DRLN) encompasses some of the shared learning of the network, and reflects experiences of other community-based organizations navigating similar challenges. Through discussions and surveys, the DRLN found that the word "resilient" held negative connotations for many individuals in their network. The negative connotations stem from the idea that resilience is the ability for a community to return to "normal" after a time of crisis. In partnership with the DRLN, our project aimed to understand how community-based organizations (CBOs) approach disaster resilience and what opportunities exist to create more equitable, adaptable disaster response efforts in Oregon. The purpose of this report is to provide organizations, networks, and governments with a list of recommendations they can utilize to better support CBOs engaging in disaster resilience. These recommendations are specific to wildfires in Oregon. As disasters become more prevalent, however, some of this guidance may be useful and applicable in other forms of crises.

About the DRLN

The DRLN is a network facilitated by Trauma Informed Oregon (TIO), the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and United Way of the Columbia-Willamette (UWCW). TIO and UWCW have been our main contacts and partners throughout this project. UWCW is an organization that focuses on educational systems, housing stability, and disaster response. Our project specifically supported their work in prioritizing communities of color and the needs of their community-based organiztions. UWCW serves Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties in Oregon and Clark County in Southwest Washington which encompass the greater-Portland area. TIO is based in Portland, Oregon but serves the whole state through collabora-tion with university, public, and private part-ners. Their mission centers learning resources, implementation and accountability, wellness, and community-building in trauma-informed efforts. TIO hosts the DRLN which consists of twenty-two organizations that primarily work with communities of color. CBOs in the DRLN provide critical services to communities that are systematically under-resourced, disproportionately affected by disasters, and culturally overlooked. The DRLN is committed to fostering spaces that are culturally grounded, healing-centered, and trauma-informed and gathering resources for these CBOs.

DRLN MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Beyond Toxics	Beyond Toxics works towards a society based on community-driven decision-making with equitable access to healthy food, clean air, and clean water.
Bridging Cultures	Bridging Cultures works to build relationships and create a community where diversity is embraced, compassion is centered, and everyone feels like they belong.
Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos	The Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos provides farm workers with translation services, legal representation, paperwork assistance, and notary and referral services.
Coalitión Fortaleza	Coalitión Fortaleza works with the Latinx and Indigenous community in Rogue Valley to center healing and hope in the collective preparation for climate challenges.
Familias en Acción	Familias en Acción works to strengthen the health and well-being of Latino families and communities in Oregon.
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)	LULAC works to advance the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health, and civil rights of Latino people.
Living Islands	Living Islands celebrates and advocates for the diverse cultures of Micronesian people by forming relationships, locally and internationally, through storytelling, cultural research and other knowledge-sharing methods.
Micronesian Islander Community	Micronesian Islander Community brings Micronesians together to help with justice issues and citizen rights, raise awareness, and conserve Micronesian cultures.
Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA) of the NW, Inc.	NARA works to provide culturally-appropriate education, health services, and substance abuse treatments to American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and others in need.
The Next Door Inc.	The Next Door Inc. works to provide support services to youth and families in Oregon and Washington.
Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Environmental Public Health Section	OHA works to improve health and healthcare for Oregonians.
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR)	Oregon PSR works to protect the climate, end nuclear threats, promote peace, and advance justice.
Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN)	PCUN, Oregon's Farmworkers Union, engages in policy advocacy, voter engagement, as well as worker outreach and organizing to fight for low wage workers and families.
Radical Rest	Radical Rest provides communal trauma healing experiences and education to Black, Indigenous, and Peoples of Color (BIPOC) folks in the Portland Metro Area.
Raíces de Bienestar	Raíces de Bienestar works to improve and strengthen the mental and emotional well-being of the Latinx community through culturally-grounded activities.
Rogue Climate	Rogue Climate organizes for climate justice to empower the Southern Oregon communities most impacted by climate change.
The Stronghold: A Culturally Responsive Peer Support Program (The Stronghold)	The Stronghold provides culturally relevant healing practices for and by individuals who are enrolled in or are descendants of Tribes and live a life of mental health, an addiction, in recovery, or both.
Trauma Informed Oregon (TIO)	TIO works to promote and sustain trauma-informed practices and disseminate strategies to support wellness and resilience.
Únete Oregon (UNETE)	UNETE empowers farm workers and immigrants through education, cultural presentations, advocacy, and representation in legislative issues.
United Way of the Columbia-Willamette (UWCW)	UWCW works to support communities to access quality education, build economic mobility, and live a healthy life.
Unite Oregon	Unite Oregon works to bring community voices to decision-making on issues of climate, housing, economic justice, education and health equity, and community safety.
Voz Workers Rights Education Project	Voz empowers diverse day laborers and immigrants to improve working conditions and protect civil rights.

Report Guide

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WHO MIGHT USE THIS REPORT

People at the organization, network, or broader level navigating community-level disaster resilience challenges.

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HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

This report is a resource guide that draws on insights and expertise of individuals engaged in disaster response work and literature about this area. We hope the report will foster connections between issues prevalent in DRLN, adjacent communities, disaster response workers and relevant existing literature.

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HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS REPORT

In each of these sections you will find a description of the section and a table. For the first three sections, the heading of the table contains the theme and a description of how the research team understands the theme. Many themes are similar across the sections to create connections between the different scales (see the Theme Color Key). The left column of the table contains summarized recommendations from the literature and the right column of the table contains insights from the interviews. The final section includes recommendations from interviewees specific to the DRLN.

 The project team aimed to summarize recommendations from the literature without changing the intent of the original authors. In doing this, we recognize that the recommendations often focus on a need to improve a community or an organization. This results in deficit-based language, as opposed to asset-based language.[1] Asset-based language would recognize the strengths and abilities that CBOs in the DRLN already have. Therefore, while the recommendations suggest actions organizations, communities, and governments "can" take, this is not to take away from the powerful, meaningful actions these entities have taken and continue to take in their resilience work. We also want to acknowledge that these recommendations do not take into account the capacities, needs, experiences, and interests of organizations to maintain the intent of the literature. We encourage the reader to adapt these recommendations to the context of their organization.

| COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | COMMUNICATION | MENTAL HEALTH | PUBLIC HEALTH | INFRASTRUCTURE | NETWORK ENGAGEMENT | INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE |

1 Comparison Between Asset and Deficit Based Approaches - Engaged Scholar - The University of Memphis. www.memphis.edu/ess/module4/page3.php

Positionality Statements

We are a team of five second year masters students studying different disciplines within the School for Environment and Sustainability at the University of Michigan. We all come from different backgrounds, hold different perspectives, and have different motivations for joining this project. Below are individually written statements reflecting on these differences and our role in this project, to provide perspective on our positions in engaging in this project.

NAOMI CUTLER

My life has been primarily spent living in Michigan and Vermont, places that people often refer to as "climate havens." In summer of 2023, smoke from Canada impacted my family and friends in both places and intense flooding harmed communities in Vermont. Prior to coming to the University of Michigan, I volunteered with a refugee resettlement organization in Vermont and saw the need to create physical and social infrastructure that can support climate migrants. Both of these experiences inspired me to think more about how my work can support more resilient communities to climate disasters. I am particularly drawn to being a communicator and thinking about how maps, storytelling, and other forms of communication can be a tool to educate, inform, and inspire people to take action in their communities. This project has been an opportunity for me to learn more about wildfires and see the importance of community-based organizations in keeping their communities safe and healthy in the face of climate disasters.

BAILEY NOCK

I traveled to Oregon to conduct interviews and met with network members at the Latino Health and Equity Conference in Portland, Oregon. This experience truly showed the level of community and work that is needed to carry out the tasks that are asked of these organizations. I saw how invested respondents were in their communities and I saw the passion and dedication it takes to be within this line of work. Prior to coming to the University of Michigan I was a part of a community severely impacted by the Marshall Wildfire in Superior, Colorado. I learned the importance of communities coming together to work through the after effects of such a disaster. However, I also saw the mental toll this line of work can take on people to be working within the community in which they live. During my time in Oregon I aimed to engage in meaningful dialogue, establish trust, foster mutual respect, and contribute to a collaborative exchange of knowledge that uplifts and empowers every member of the community.

RACHEL FINK

I was drawn to this project because of its emphasis on the mental health of care workers in disasters, due to my previous study in the area of environmental psychology. I have not personally experienced wildfires and grew up relatively privileged in the suburbs of Washington D.C. So, from the beginning of the project I was extremely conscious of how my perspective would influence the direction of the project. This project has been a continually collaborative process. We have frequently reflected and reevaluated our scope, direction, and roles with our partners and within our team. Learning from the experiences of individuals working in their communities during a disaster through our interviews, combined with knowledge I have gained in the course of my degree, has expanded my interest in this area. I am now more invested in improving the mental health of care workers by solving systemic issues through collective power.

GINGER HARRIS

I am from Sacramento, California and have witnessed worsening wildfire seasons in my lifetime. I have observed response efforts following wildfire disasters and seen both the systemic failures of disaster relief and, in contrast, the strength a community-led response can exude. I was motivated to contribute to this project because of my personal connection to the 2020 wildfires in the West and the emphasis on improving the sustainability of both community-based organizations and the workers that comprise them. I am particularly interested in understanding how disaster resilience can become more place-based and meet the needs of an affected community. Through our research process, I have learned how complex and nuanced organizational structure, collaboration, and prioritization can be in disaster response. While engaging with this project, I have aimed to amplify the voices of communities disproportionately impacted by disasters and systemically excluded from disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

CHLOE BRUSH

Growing up in Oregon and Washington, I have felt the impacts of Western U.S. wildfires first-hand and have seen them worsen within my lifetime. I have also witnessed the power of community organizing and support in the wake of wildfire, and how integral it is to disaster recovery. Living through worsening wildfires motivated me to join this research. My involvement in this project has helped shape my studies at Michigan, where I focus on the intersections of environmental justice, policy, communication, and advocacy for increasing community involvement in rapidly expanding environmental policies and programs.

As a team, we are mindful that the stories we have collected often stem from traumatic experiences. Completing interviews and heavily incorporating them into this report allows us to present our findings not as a voice for our respondents, but as relayers of important information. Our goal with this report is to showcase their experiences and use the literature to further amplify their voices.

Approach

Project Timeline

1
SPRING 2023

SCOPING & BACKGROUND

Reviewed resources recommended by UWCW and TIO.

Reviewed references within the provided literature and gathered resources by searching on Google Scholar, the University of Michigan library, and Web of Science.

Gained background knowledge to inform the creation of interview questions.

Reviewed fifty-six resources which consisted of reports, academic research, and gray literature,[1] all from non-profits, local governments, TIO, and Oregon Health Authority (OHA).

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1 Defining Grey Literature - Public Health - LibGuides at Cornell University guides..library.cornell.edu/public-health/what-gray-literature-is

31 PEOPLE CONTACTED:
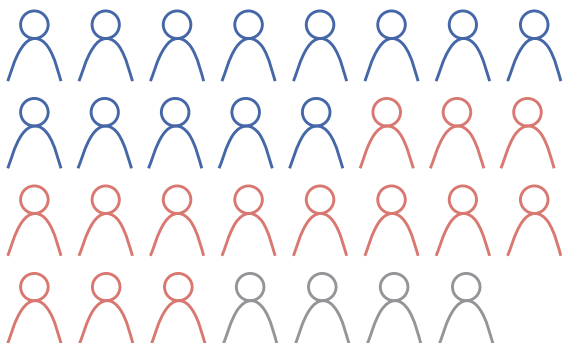
13 INTERVIEWED
14 DID NOT RESPOND
4 DECLINED

12 ORGANIZATIONS

13 INDIVIDUALS

2
SUMMER 2023

INTERVIEWS

One team member conducted interviews with the goal of learning about respondents' disaster resilience experiences (see Appendix II for interview questions).

Intentionally formatted the interview as a conversation for respondents' comfort and to their voice in the data collected.

Contacted thirty-one individuals at twenty-one of the twenty-two total organizations in the DRLN.

- Thirteen individuals representing different organizations agreed to participate in an interview.
- Four individuals declined to be interviewed
- Fourteen did not respond.
- Interviews were around an hour long each.
- Six of the interviews were conducted in person and seven were conducted on Zoom

Recruited by emailing network members with an attached flier describing the project and interview request (see Appendix I) then attended the Latino Health and Equity Conference in Portland, Oregon.

Called network members who were originally emailed with a voicemail left if they did not initially answer.

Offered individuals a fifty dollar incentive as compensation for their participation in the interview.

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SUMMER-FALL 2023

DATA ANALYSIS

Transcribed interviews and proofread to make respondents anonymous using the online programs Otter.ai and Dovetail.

Coded (organized thematically) interviews by the following categories:

- Disaster Response
- Cultural Practices
- Burnout
- DRLN Feedback
- Financial Situations

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SPRING 2024

DELIVERABLE CREATION

Included twenty of the resources from the literature reviews in this report using the following criteria:

- Relevance to the DRLN (wildfires, disaster response, disaster resilience, CBOs, etc.)
- Provision of recommendations (inclusion of concrete, useful, specific, & action-based)

Organized insights from interviews and resources into a report with key themes and categories.

Frequently discussed and refined approach as a team and with our partners.

4

FALL 2023

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conducted another literature review based on several categories that appeared in the interviews: community organizing, disaster response work, mental health, and organizational structure.*

Specifically sought resources that were related to wildfires, case studies on the U.S. West Coast, or both.

Reviewed twenty-nine academic resources which were found by Google Scholar search using keywords found in the interviews and the theme verbiage listed above.

The result of this literature review is the set of recommendations found in the rest of this document.

*We noticed that resources in these categories contained distinct recommendations for different scales.

Thus, we organized this report into four sections:

1. Recommendations for organization
2. Recommendations for community/network
3. Recommendations for policy/governments
4. Recommendations for the DRLN as a network.

We grouped recommendations from the first 3 levels into several themes (see the theme color key).

Recommendations
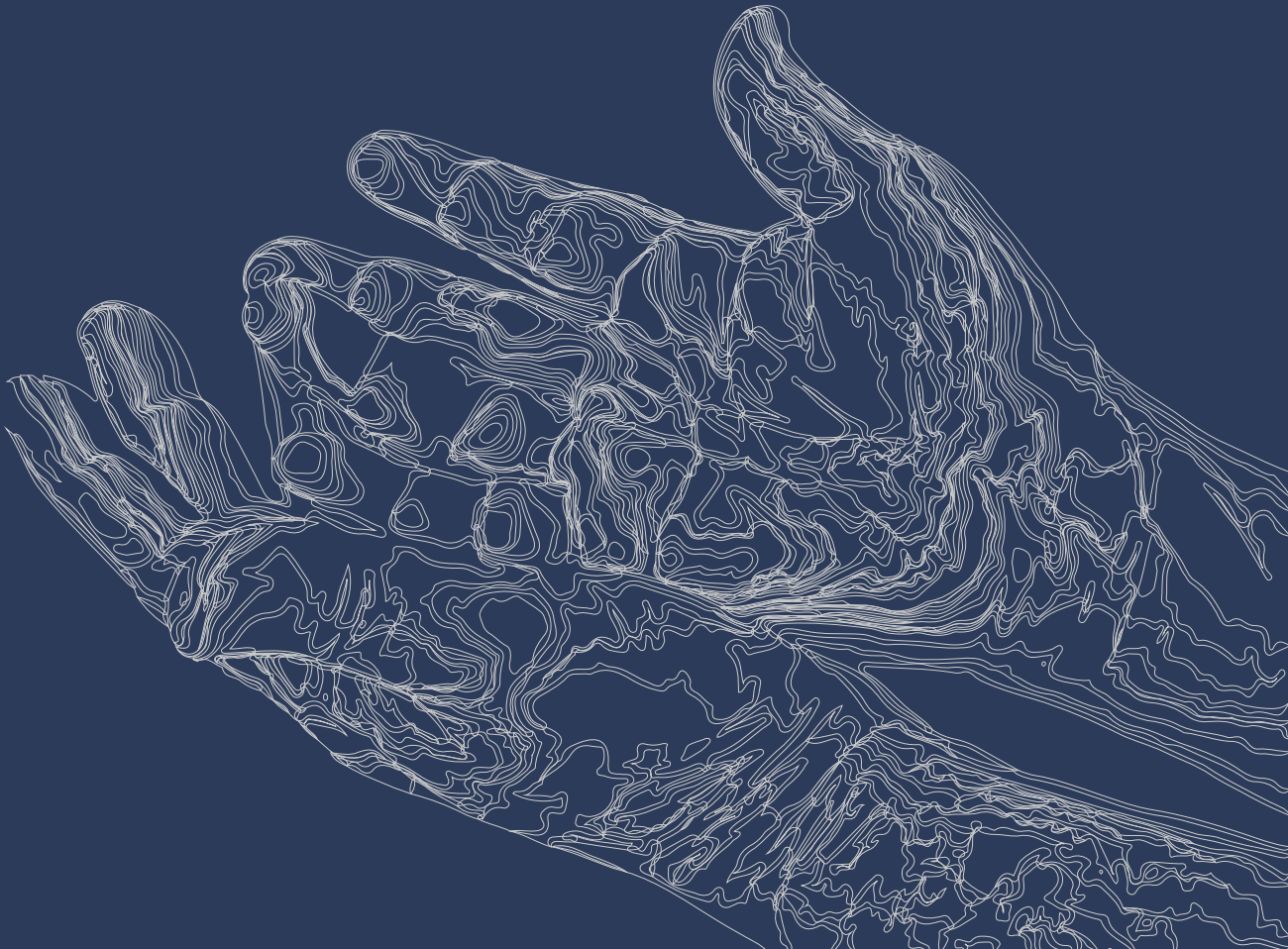
Organization Level Insights

Interviewees and literature identified several challenges at the organization level, including the mental health of workers, public health within communities, and the communication and engagement gaps between organizations and their communities. The following section highlights recommendations and insights for organization leadership to consider, including improving emergency communication, workforce support, and overall disaster resilience. We define "organization" as a group of people with a united purpose that interacts directly with the community within which they operate.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Description: We define organization-level community engagement as ways organizations interact with members in their community. In the context of disaster resilience, organizations can provide avenues for community members to be involved in resilience planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Organizations can encourage community members to participate in community resilience planning with community resilience organizations to build social connections and improve community mental health outcomes.[k]

Organizations can provide ways for community members to engage in positive social behaviors in their community during and directly following a disaster to improve social support and mental health.[i]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

[following the 2020 Labor Day Wildfires] "encouraging [community members] to tap into those cultural practices of being in community, of dance and moaning and doing whatever activates that parasympathetic nervous system is what I think helps build or retain their resilience"

COMMUNICATION

Description: We define organization-level communication as ways that organizations relay information to communities and provide spaces for community members to connect. In the context of disaster resilience, these communications post-disaster can prioritize healing by providing safe spaces for community members to share their experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Organizations can use storytelling and narrative in conversations with community members to discuss emotional topics that may be difficult to describe.[k]

Organizations can foster safe spaces for community members to share stories about their wildfire experiences, which can help people cope and heal from traumatic events.[k]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"[In a disaster] where they [community members] don't have any kind of internet connection and we're [organizations] thinking of how to reach them[…] radios provide communication when a disaster may hit, and at least [those without internet would] have access to be able to get any kind of updates and know when to evacuate and such."

"Community members were not receiving information in their language. So they didn't know what was happening and they just left the place and people were following traffic and they didn't know what to do. So I was directing families by the phone and going back and forth with what was happening in the report and where the fire was going and just looking at the news and telling people 'find a place where you can just continue driving, like you can't stay there, you have to move'"

MENTAL HEALTH

Description: We define organization-level mental heatlh as the ways organizations support the mental wellness of their workers and community members. In the context of disaster resilience, mental health is increasingly important, especially as the role of CBOs becomes more focused on supporting their communities through trauma.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Wellness programs (i.e. yoga classes, nutrition classes, healthcare 'shopping' workshops) within an organization can:

- Be run by qualified and certified instructors
- Have explicit support from workplace administration
- Have a wellness committee made up of a diverse group of employees
- Have a wellness champion who oversees feedback implementation from employees.[j]

Due to complex interactions of during and post-disaster events on mental health and the long-lasting effects of mental health issues, organizations can advocate for the securing of sustainable and long-term mental health service for community members.[c]

Health care institutions can incorporate trauma informed care by:

- Building interdisciplinary health and social service teams to provide more holistic patient care.[r]
- Training health care providers on ways to communicate with patients to understand their personal history and ways to screen for traumatic experiences.[r]
- Engaging staff at all levels in trauma-informed care (TIC) initiatives and utilizing diverse communication channels (regular meetings, lunch seminars, posters/brochures) to facilitate organization-wide TIC communication.[r]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Providing resources [in the form] of people that you can reach out to who have that expertise in helping support people who are a part of communities of color and staff of color, who have gone through some of those experiences [such as a wildfire] and [the resources] can help them work through that [trauma]"

"Organizations do have individual resource navigation[for staff members] but it's mostly for utilities assistance or not really around mental health. There's just so much need that we can't realistically help everybody, and I think that's the difficult part and that's where I see the gap of how we respond to that[...]there are a few trainings coming up around like ethics and trauma-informed care that are more specific to our work, but they're in progress. There isn't really that sense of like, 'wait a minute, we also have to strengthen our knowledge [surrounding our own wellness].' "

"At our team monthly meetings we make potlucks. So it's always nice to like to break bread with your team. It has been, for me personally, most of the in-person community building has actually occurred outside of work because we have shifted to a remote work status primarily."

PUBLIC HEALTH

Description: We define public health as creation of a healthy environment for community members by organizations and government entitites. In the context of disaster resilience, organizations can centralize resources and information to address public health needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Organizations can support community members efforts to find permanent housing post disaster in an effort to decrease food and housing insecurity.[h]

Local organizations can include air quality, water quality, and dust testing in their disaster response plans to mitigate community health impacts.[h]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"...we have a veterans outreach team and a houseless outreach team. They were going out taking bottles of water, giving them food coupons, even air conditioners and cooling kits so they could stay cool during the heat at that time [following the 2020 fires]."

'Whether it's providing sleeping bags, tents, first aid kits, food pantry type items, gift cards for gas, all these [types of] things our organization has helped provide because it seems that the rural, Tribal communities are the least likely in my experience, to receive a rapid response [from local government]."

"... we made sure that when we were distributing the food boxes, since this was going to Latinx farm working seniors, that they were getting tortillas, that they were getting the food that they were going to be able to eat. Not just canned food… Because again, our culture doesn't eat canned food [...] so it's [about] understanding not just the languages but also the culture and what [food] you provide for them to also understand and feel at home. 'Cause I couldn't imagine how it must feel getting a food box and you're like, 'well I don't eat any of this'."

Community/Network Level Insights

Interviewees and literature identified several challenges at the community and organizational network level including a need for BIPOC affinity spaces, a need to address the mental health impacts of disasters, and the strength that social connection can provide in the face of disasters. In this section, we define "network" as a group of organizations that have come together intentionally to share resources and knowledge. We define "community" as the individual constituents those organizations serve. This section highlights recommendations and insights for participating in a network that aims to improve connections with other organizations and create structures for community interactions. Many of the recommendations are rooted in a need to make disaster resilience efforts more place-based and culturally-grounded.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Description: We define community engagement as ways networks of organizations interact with members in their community. In the context of disaster resilience, highlighting relationships between organizations is important to facilitate connections throughout the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Organizational networks can facilitate or support community wide events* to encourage an increased sense of connection, belonging, and normalcy amongst community members.[P]

Medical facilities and emergency services can host public events (i.e. open houses, sports activities, parties) in partnership with trusted local nonprofits to improve sense of community.[a]

Organization leaders can establish a digital infrastructure** for communities to engage virtually post-disaster; this includes improvements in the availability and accessibility of technology (computers and smartphones) and internet access to foster meaningful and equitable recovery.[P]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"But it really showed that once we were able to start our powwows again [after the COVID-19 lockdown], our picnics that we did, because we do everything culturally specific, the attendance was more than it had ever been. We have triple the [number of] people that will come out to these because they're just so hungry for this social gathering that we have, the celebrations that we do to carry on our traditions, to have our traditional foods, our dancing, our camaraderie"

"Gathering together, eating food, exercising, dancing, moving, like art, theater, all those different types of things I consider as cultural practices. And you find communities of color access those activities, I think in more dynamic ways. You know, it's kind of woven into their experience."

*An example of community-wide events is "Party in the Park," held in Paradise, California following the 2018 wildfire. https://www.paradisechamber.com/party-in-the-park/

**Digital Infrastructure means without physical sites, due to the potential loss of gathering spaces after a disaster.

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Description: We define network engagement as how various organizations can connect and build relationships to with each other to strengthen their capacity to support their communities. In the context of disaster resilience, organizations can draw on other organizations and entities in their network to provide information and resources that they lack.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Planning and building capacity in local organizations before an event can help response and recovery during a disaster, rather than relying on communities to organize amidst the chaos of a disaster. Forming long-term recovery organizations (LTROs)* prior to disasters can help with this.[f]

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can coordinate with other local NGOs and government agencies before, during, and after a disaster to enable greater success in long-term community recovery.[t]

Organizations that are well-connected in the network can foster learning and problem solving amongst other organizations in the network to mediate any boundaries that these organizations may have in sharing resources.[l]

Engaging with schools, faith-based organizations, and special interest groups that are trusted sources of information can facilitate connections between national, state, and local organizations, and policy makers because of their unique knowledge about the history, culture, and expectations of community members.[n]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"'During [the recent wildfires a lot of people wanted to donate [to our organization], but then they were bringing things like used clothing that maybe we weren't prepared to handle. So it's also understanding what we can and cannot do… We only serve [this area] and there's other organizations that are more effective elsewhere. We now have those connections [with other organizations] where if a family member comes in and is like, "Hey my family's being affected in the Columbia River Gorge", then we have more of a connection with another organization that's close by that may be able to help them."

"We [government organization] contract with CBOs, knowing that they have the networks within a community and that they're trusted partners, [and that] they can deliver a message in a way that's unique to their position, and that's distinct from the way that governments provide messaging. So we provide those resources to the community at large, but then are also kind of trying to expand our network of risk communication to include community-based organizations as part of the public health risk communication delivery system."

* "Long-term recovery organizations (LTROs) serve a community's recovery needs post-disaster by:
- providing a coordinated entry point where impacted community members may seek support and access to resources.
- remaining dedicated to the communities they originally formed to support for years after the disaster.
- consisting of community members, representatives from organizations involved in the recovery process, or a mix of both.

papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2119879

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Organizations can partner with fire departments and similar agencies (i.e. county level Offices of Emergency Management) to ensure that these community-preferred bridging actors* are mobilized to work with large scale wildfire response teams.[o]

Networks of organizations that respond to wildfires can interact outside of fire season (i.e. response drills) to:

- Build a more diverse network with established lines of communication during times of disaster
- Identify local agencies that could potentially serve as bridging actors* with federal agencies during a disaster
- Build trust and relationships between organizations across various scales (i.e. local to federal).[o]

Community leaders can form relationships with regional and federal government scientific agencies** (i.e. researching climate change) in order to improve community trust and increase engagement in government agencies disaster planning.[b]

Networks providing disaster aid or resilience programming can partner with schools, faith-based organizations, and special interest groups to identify resource inequalities, highlight available resources, and mobilize diverse networks after a disaster to better meet the needs of community members.[n]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"I built really strong relationships with people across the state that when I called, they were there for me. We came together and that really helped me to give more and to bring more to the collective power. That trust, that building relationships takes years, it's not just one time. It's an investment that you have to continue. You know, you can't do it on your own. It's impossible. You need people, you need multiple resources."

"And then [as] the [DRLN] grows and adds more agencies into our cohort, [we get to] hear more stories, let each other know what we can do for each other's organizations, and be able to share our resources and be able to create new resources. So I love the group 'cause we definitely empower each other. Just hearing the feats that other network members have done is inspiring."

*"Bridging actors connect disconnected actors and groups in a given network. Bridging processes entail fundamentally working across boundaries—specialization, organizational, sectoral, scalar, and often geographic. Information-sharing is associated with increased learning capacity in partnerships and cooperation can be more effective if there are ties that span multiple boundaries of geography, expertise, and ideology. Actors who serve as bridges in networks, connecting different subgroups, have proven critical in facilitating the flow of information and influence (Burt, 1992; Kapucu, 2006) and have access to more diverse resources beyond their organization, group, or jurisdiction than do other members of the network."

** "Bridging actors connect disconnected actors and groups in a given network. Bridging processes entail fundamentally working across boundaries—specialization, organizational, sectoral, scalar, and often geographic."

NETWORK ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

During disaster preparedness planning, community care networks* can use Geographic Information Software (GIS) to determine network capacity, locate medical supply sites (i.e. needle exchange services), and understand health care disparities.[g]

During disaster response, community care networks* can use Geographic Information Software (GIS) to locate community members and ensure they have access to transportation, medical needs, and behavioral health support.[g]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"We [government organization] really wanted to partner with a local community group who did have deep ties to folks there and they already had that sense of trust built up over time. And are able to culturally understand and respond in a specific way. To have that knowledge was just really important in responding [during the Labor Day fires]."

* "The Oregon legislature created coordinated care organizations (CCOs) through a Medicaid 1115 Demonstration waiver as a way of integrating physical, behavioral, and oral health in a single funding stream. The intent of the legislation was to facilitate the development of regional organizations that would coordinate comprehensive care for their Medicaid populations". We are using the term coordinated care networks as an extension of coordinated care organizations."

MENTAL HEALTH

Description: We define mental health as the ways networks can support the mental wellness of community members. In the context of disaster resilience, network connections between groups such as public health agencies, schools, and disaster response agencies are key to bolstering communities' mental health post-disaster.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Organizations can create a network with other types of first responders (i.e. firefighters) to share knowledge in mental health first aid and disaster preparedness to create more holistic mental health support for community members during and after wildfires.[k]

Community leaders and health agencies can:

• Encourage discourse about mental health experiences in religious gathering spaces, family units, and other social networks to normalize the prevalence of mental health challenges post-fire, create community support, and continue information sharing on subjects such as signs of mental health struggles and experiences of grief.[h]

• Address shortages of mental health care providers especially in school settings for at least two years after a disaster by relocating or re-assigning trauma recovery providers.[h]

Organizations can partner with school teachers and caregivers to hold prevention interventions focused on children's psychosocial skills (i.e. conflict resolution, emotional and behavioral regulation) post-disaster in a school setting.[n]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"When you're a first responder and you are also living in the community impacted, you're both a professional and your family's also impacted. That's a really tough spot to be in. And so normalizing that taking breaks is important and part of [your individual] overall well being is really important."

"There's not a lot of conversation…[around how mental health] affects your family's stability, how that affects future generations, how trauma is a part of it… So we have a whole mental health curriculum for traditional health workers. There's the six biggest topics of mental health, which are depression, anxiety, stress, domestic violence, or healthy relationships, suicide prevention, and substance abuse."

"But I also believe that there is a shortage of mental health providers, bilingual, bicultural mental health providers. Counselors that we need to also invest in that infrastructure through nonprofits that are doing that type of work… we don't have that many [bilingual mental health providers]"

"…train people [in trauma informed care] in the local [community]. Especially people that are also trained to meet the needs of different cultures or different communities who might approach things in a different way and be able to [do tasks such as] translate materials."

MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUED

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Networks can provide trauma-informed training for first responders to:

- Improve their understanding of the multifaceted (physiological, emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal) impact of trauma.[r]
- Help them to identify potential trauma victims, their trigger points, and how to proactively respond to avoid re-traumatizing.[r]
- Give them tools on practicing proactive coping strategies, self-care, mindfulness, and emotional intelligence for their own mental wellness.[r]

Health care institutions can incorporate trauma informed care by:

- Building interdisciplinary health and social service teams to provide more holistic patient care.[r]
- Training health care providers on ways to communicate with patients to understand their personal history and ways to screen for traumatic experiences.[r]
- Engaging staff at all levels in trauma-informed care (TIC) initiatives and utilizing diverse communication channels (regular meetings, lunch seminars, posters/brochures) to facilitate organization-wide TIC communication.[r]

Organizational networks can provide support and resources for organizations to facilitate opportunities for social connection between community members.[k]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"I think education and like building that resiliency, providing space for families or people affected to come and talk about their experiences. And what we usually get called for is having these conversations we call 'platicas' or 'charlas' because they're conversations with the community around, like, what they can do to support their mental health, or their families."

"We learned after the 2020 fires that a lot of community members did not have access to clinical therapists that looked or spoke like them. So you have a lot of deeply under-resourced individuals who have already lost not just housing and not just their regular community space, but also have lost the ability to understand how to have conversations or find the right kind of support to unpack what they have seen or experienced or been part of."

INFRASTRUCTURE

Description: We define infrastructure as the physical and social structures within communities. In the context of disaster resilience, networks can invest in equitable, affordable public infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Local offices of Emergency Management and FEMA can network with CBOs to:

- Broaden the types of facilities that are deemed "critical"* to include facilities that are associated with a sense of community and belonging for Latinx community groups.[a]
- Incorporate more inclusionary policies within existing critical facilities to increase communities' capacity to respond and recover from natural hazards.[a]

To become more trusted and accessible in a community, established critical facilities can clearly advertise their anti-discrimination policies.[a]

Following a disaster, local leaders can invest in the reconstruction of public infrastructure and gathering spaces that enable community life, as well as the places where casual connections are often formed, such as walking trails, side-walks, and local businesses.[p]

Organizations can partner with health clinics and food pantries to monitor local food insecurity and provide resources (i.e. creating and operating meal sites, publicize services to community meals, assisting with the recruitment of volunteers) to community members post disaster.[h]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"Some of the things that I consider: one, creating some sort of space specifically for community members, I think it in general has to be comfortable for them… maybe it's like a church that these people have gone to for a really long time, or they feel comfortable in because …they already feel accepted. Because especially with many communities of color, they're not going to go to a [place set up by a government agency], and know that they're gonna be able to feel trustworthy, and trust with the people that they know"

"We have different situations here in Oregon, and sometimes they [the government] don't focus [on certain] communities, …[in] the wildfires in 2020… the Latino community lost everything… And they didn't know about the resources that they have [available], they were afraid to go to the shelters, because it was a FEMA resource. So I think it's important to create secure and safe spaces for other communities."

*Typically, critical infrastructures encompass several sectors such as transportation, healthcare, energy, and governance; for example, the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) states that "typical critical facilities include hospitals, fire stations, police stations, storage of critical records, and similar facilities. Yet how—and who—decides what facilities and infrastructure are marked as "critical" and therefore presumably protected, is rarely considered, particularly regarding social vulnerability, equity, and place attachment."

INFRASTRUCTURE CONTINUED

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster* can be deployed in vulnerable (rural, under-resourced) communities to fill gaps in resources and skills post-disaster by:

- Training individuals to help negotiate, organize and document efforts in a disaster (especially outlining needs for federal assistance).[d]
- Creating smoother transitions between short, intermediate and long-term recovery post-disaster.[d]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"I think what's important are steps that the agency has taken to nurture a workforce that is more reflective of the communities that we serve as a state agency… the more we do that the more that culture will shift towards wellness and towards safe spaces for folks who identify with socially vulnerable groups."

"Making sure you [organization] give space just to have those conversations [about traumatic experiences], or being able to talk to your neighbors who have gone through similar, really horrible experiences. And setting up a space where you can talk about that, because that isn't something that has really received attention"

"Having community was a pivotal turning point for me as a leader of color to recognize that one of the main ways to manage my own stress and systems that are a lot bigger [is through community care and not being alone].

*"Numerous NGOs now coordinate under the collective heading of Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADs). VOADs enables participating NGOs to coordinate aid provisions and share new information as it becomes available to maximize response efficiency."[d]

Policy/Government Level Insights

Interviewees and literature identified a variety of challenges that individuals and organizations cannot fully address themselves. Table 4 highlights recommendations for government level policy and practice changes. These changes would support organizations navigating disaster resilience by lightening financial, infrastructural, and other significant burdens. Though they may not be immediately implementable solutions, these insights provide clarity as to the needs of the disaster-resilience space beyond the organization and network scale. Some of the literature named which level of government (local, state, federal) is best positioned to address the recommendations, but many did not specify this.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Description: We define indigenous knowledge as an understanding that Indigenous communities and people have developed through the relationships with land and the natural world. In the context of disaster resilience, governments can embrace the importance of Indigenous Knowledge and work collaboratively to center it in decision-making.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Governments can understand and honor Indigenous perspectives on historical trauma and resilience (healing, resistance, community, culture storytelling) in community-based development and implementation of interventions around the environmental changes that result in disasters.[s]

Governments can partner with Tribal and marginalized communities to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into interventions around the environmental changes that result in disasters.[s]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"The pressures placed on our Indigenous population, our Tribal population because of the scarcity of our fish, the scarcity of our herds, you know our Indigenous foods that feed us, so we're dealing with health disparities within our people, you know, like, because we have to rely on going grocery shopping because there's not enough herds out there. And then the lateral oppression of us policing each other because we just want to all make sure that we can have a deer"

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Description: We define community engagement as ways governments interact with members in their community. In the context of disaster resilience, governments can provide avenues for community members to be involved in resilience planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Government officials can initiate and sustain dialogue with community members and organizations in their constituencies to inform agency decision-making.[m]

Government leadership can create resources about Oregon-specific climate impacts in order to stimulate conversations and engagement towards more community-based adaptation strategies.[b]

FEMA assessment and aid criteria for rural populations needs to:

- Prioritize communities most likely to experience significant losses during fire events using existing or emergent risk simulation research.
- Develop and disseminate more approachable summaries for the FEMA decision processes (i.e. criteria, logic) among prioritized communities.
- Coordinate with Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster groups in communities experiencing wildfire impacts.[d]

* "Numerous NGOs now coordinate under the collective heading of Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADs). VOADs enables participating NGOs to coordinate aid provisions and share new information as it becomes available to maximize response efficiency"

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"...the lack of reciprocity is another piece… in those decision making tables, government entities… are already getting billed and paid for their time. Whereas community leaders and CBO leaders are doing their regular jobs and also adding these activities and these sessions for free essentially."

"[The local government] could create more resources on how to be prepared ahead of time that are localized to [a specific county]. [It would be helpful to know] exactly who to call in an emergency, and what that looks like, as well as having it in other languages."

"And the exciting thing that's coming [is something called] Tech tax, [which are] little hubs that are going to be placed throughout the state to help apply for funding that's coming down the pipe, because those federal grants are so extensive and it's really difficult for smaller organizations to have the actual capacity to be able to apply for them. In a lot of communities they need these resources and this funding, but they just don't have the capacity to actually apply."

"But usually it's somebody setting the table for us [community of color] and then inviting us later. It's like, 'no, we need to be there at the get go.' So, that was a really hard thing to advocate for, asking 'why are you [the government] making decisions for us without us?' "

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Federal government officials can make FEMA assessment criteria and recovery aid information more readily accessible to the public, organizations, and local governments to increase transparency about the federal recovery aid process.[d]

Decision-makers can counter structural racism in disaster resilience planning by including Latinx communities in decision-making.[a]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"After fires or after droughts or after floods, oftentimes communities of color leaders get invited to be part of conversations or interviews or like larger, where government entities try to attempt to get more of a community understanding of what's happening out there. But there have been multiple times throughout the last three years where now we have been over tapped as a community[...]A lot of people will do this for free just because they want to support either their organization or their community group, but oftentimes we'll not get paid or reimbursed or get stipends for their time and skill and effort."

INFRASTRUCTURE

Description: We define infrastructure as the physical and social structures within communities. In the context of disaster resilience, networks can invest in equitable, affordable public infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Governments can provide financial assistance to communities to build and expand affordable housing options for disaster response workers after the disaster takes place.[f]

Governments can waive permits and streamline the insurance claim process for residents who need to rebuild their home after a disaster.[h]

Local governments can enhance emergency shelter systems in their area in anticipation of future disasters.[k]

Governments can support critical facilities with staff that reflect the diversity of the community to increase a sense of belonging in users of the facilities.[a]

Governments can provide translations of all emergency response resources.[a]

State governments can use Geographic Information Software (GIS) to identify residences that would experience power outages before making decisions to cut power.*[g]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"many counties [after the 2020 wildfires] did not have anything at minimum translated and/or the translations were poorly done or emergency managers and alerts did not have relationships built with community leaders or community-based organizations, which led to that long-term trauma that we keep experiencing as more climate related challenges impact our state when communication is not addressed."

"When [community members] go through that process [of getting new identification], [government agencies] want to know who you are, but how can you expect people to have any form of identification when you know that everything was burned [in the wildfire]. And so it was just connecting with the right people to bring the right people to[gether]…but there was a hesitation for people to [receive help] because it was at the beginning of the pandemic and people were scared, people were scared to come together."

"At least here in Oregon, in [our city] and in surrounding cities, if you need assistance specifically for rental assistance or energy assistance or any of that, you either have to go to Portland or to Salem. A lot of our community members can't drive, they don't have licenses… they can't take time off work. I tried to get grants to help them but it took time away from other work that needed my attention"

*Cutting power is an effort to reduce the risk of high winds and power lines causing fires

PUBLIC HEALTH

Description: We define public health as the health of a community, municipality, state, etc. In the context of disaster resilience, governments can organize efforts to protect the public health of their constituencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Local and state authorities can test air quality and water quality for health impacts, especially following disasters.[h]

Local and state authorities can monitor safety hazards on roads following disasters.[h]

Local and state authorities can establish a health registry to track ongoing conditions of disaster survivors.[h]

Local government officials and agencies can support the operation of food pantries by publicizing their service, recruiting volunteers, and they can create and operate congregate meal sites, and provide food assistance to community members post-disaster.[h]

Public health officials and emergency managers can:

- Fund training and permanent placement of community health workers (CHWs)* in areas vulnerable to disasters [e]
- Include community health workers (CHWs) in disaster response teams and planning.[e]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"I think it would be helpful if there were just more resources around any type of crisis... Some of the work that we do out in the community heavily deals with amounts of trauma that comes from just living within this community due to industrial pollution and other things that have been out there. And there have been staff members who have been heavily impacted by it. And just acknowledgement recognizing those impacts from the toll it may take over time."

"Then again, during the pandemic, and when the heat wave came it was really hard to get out to the people that were houseless and were sick to give them food boxes, anything that they needed. And that really changed a lot on realizing there's more than just a pandemic, but there's a heat wave and food insecurity too that we would have to meet as well… and that was just really hard [on top of other job obligations]."

*"The ideal CHW is a trusted community member who understands community norms and needs and is fluent in the language and culture of the people served. CHWs are typically trained to promote healthy lifestyles, to improve health literacy, to perform basic clinical duties, and to identify and publicize relevant resources. As frontline public health workers, some are employed in health care organizations such as hospitals, hospices, and health clinics, whereas others operate outside the health care system in community-based or faith-based organizations."[e]

COMMUNICATION

Description: We define communication in this section as the methods and strategies that governments use to share information with their constituencies. In the context of disaster resilience, governments can be prepared to adjust and increase their communication channels before, during, and after disaster events.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Agency social media messaging after fires can include advice for individuals, businesses, and organizations on disaster preparedness strategies (e.g., "Making a plan," Supply kits, etc.).[m]

During preparedness planning, government agencies can distribute relevant resources on disaster preparedness and grant programs available to organizations and community members.[m]

Governments can support the creation of a network between first responders (i.e. firefighters) and mental health professionals to create more holistic mental health support for community members during and after wildfires.[k]

Public sector agencies can work with CBOs and philanthropic partners to establish a statewide convener to coordinate climate disaster action on behalf of the whole state.[q]

INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

"Why are there so many places to sign up for different [disaster] alert systems? Like if it's an earthquake, you have to sign up for that? You can sign up for an alert on the Red Cross, but that's not widely distributed. Not everybody knows that you can do that."

"Like maybe they [governments] do better on their part at… having the adequate translation for our community. It shouldn't have to be a community member or a person that works for an organization to help them translate documents…Especially because of the amount of money that they have. They should be able to pay someone that does this professionally to be able to get documents translated"

"Families were still struggling [with] where to go [post wildfire], some were sleeping in their cars, parking lots, FEMA responded but in a very systematic way, and a majority of those families that lost everything were Latinos. And not having people that spoke the language and understood the system of how these institutions work was also very difficult. Navigating the systems for families was more complicated when you have a status or mixed status or no status."

"I think the lack of communication of knowing when to evacuate, knowing when to leave [was a challenge]. For example, a lot of people didn't have the resources to know not to bring in your propane tank and heat up your house that way... it put people at risk as they were trying to recover post wildfire".

Recommendations for the DRLN

The recommendations included in this table are directly from the Interviewees (members of the DRLN) and are specifically intended for the DRLN.

| SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION	QUOTE FROM THE INTERVIEWS
Provide access to more resources around forms of crises beyond wildfires and other "natural" disasters.	"I think it would be helpful if there were just more resources around any type of crisis... Some of the work that we do out in the community heavily deals with amounts of trauma that comes from just living within this community due to industrial pollution and other things that have been out there. And there have been staff members who have been heavily impacted by it. And just acknowledgement recognizing those impacts from the toll it may take over time."
Clarify avenues to receive support and types of support available within the network.	"I know that [the DRLN] offers space for communities of color, specifically organizers who have worked in the space of disaster resilience. But what does that support actually look like? When can you reach out? [How much can you reach out?] I feel like I'm burdening someone by [reaching out]."
Convene smaller groups for in-depth engagement.	"[I would like] if [the DRLN] had the ability to bring more people together in smaller groups, because once it's too big, you don't end up really engaging or really going in depth with folks."
Provide a list of specific people with experience in disaster relief with which organizations can connect.	"[A list of] resources of people that you can reach out to [would be helpful]? [People] who have that expertise in helping support people who are part of communities of color and staff of color, who have gone through some of those experiences and can maybe help them think through that."
Connect individuals to financial resources to help pay their rent or cover other expenses (or support organizations in distributing these resources).	"I think the big thing was definitely financial resources… A lot of people couldn't work, so that was like a big thing. Especially during the summer when there's a lot of people coming from out of town to work. A lot of those spaces aren't available and I don't have money to help people pay relocation fees. I would love to have that money to be able to do that."

Looking Forward
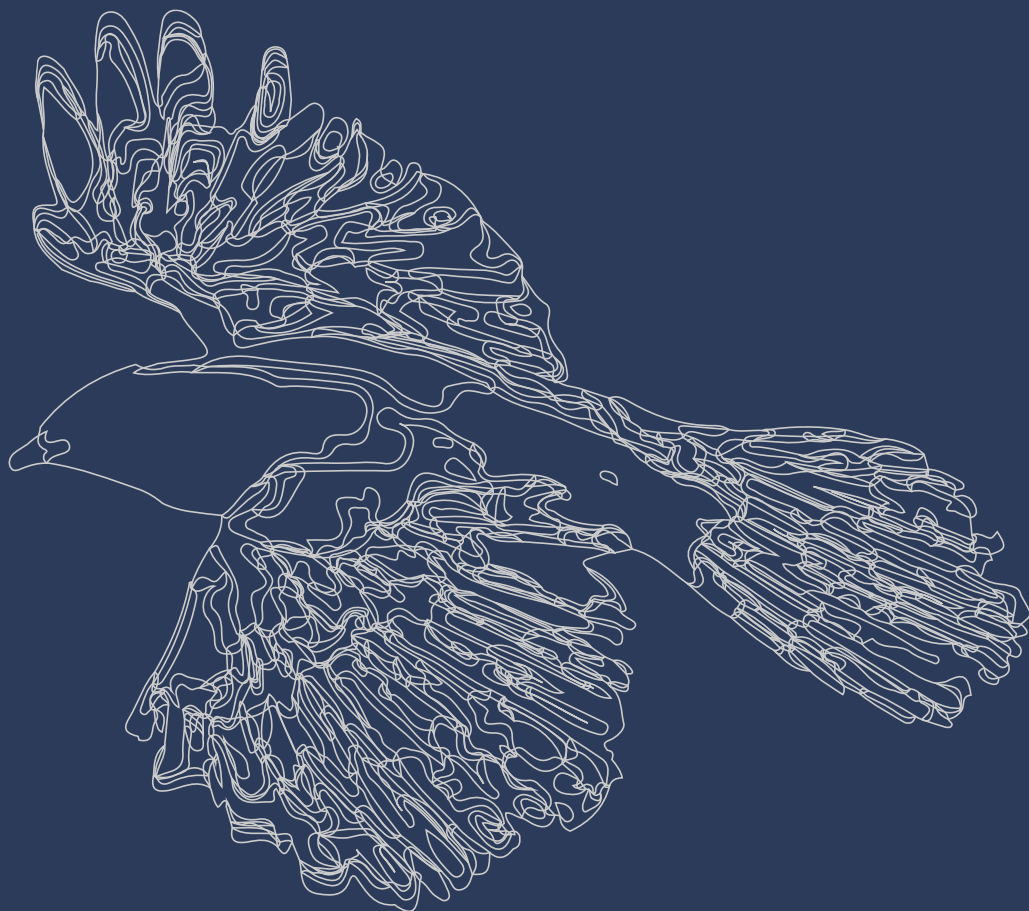
Conclusion

We, graduate students at the University of Michigan, created this report in partnership with the Disaster Resilience Learning Network (DRLN). It is a resource guide that draws on insights and expertise of individuals doing disaster response work and recommendations from disaster response literature. The intended audience is the DRLN organizations, disaster response workers, and their communities; however, the contents are relevant to anyone at the organization, network, or broader level navigating community level disaster resilience challenges.

Throughout this project, we identified pervasive questions we could not resolve. Many recommendations need specificity on who can take on a task and how they can obtain the necessary resources to execute those tasks (i.e., capacity and funding). Furthermore, Indigenous knowledge is only represented in the policy and government section of this report. In practice, including Indigenous perspectives across organizations, networks, and policies/governments engaged in disaster work is foundational to true disaster resilience.

Deficit language* is prevalent throughout our recommendations. Recommendations highlight areas where work is missing and where incorporating changes would improve disaster resilience. However, the current work in these spaces has many existing assets; the CBOs within the DRLN bring their own unique strengths and abilities to support their local communities. Asset-based framing24 and language can highlight the strengths of organizations, networks, and policies working towards disaster resilience when envisioning disaster resilient communities.

The recommendations in this report are written from the literature as best practices and ideas for actions to improve or strengthen disaster resilience. These recommendations were selected intentionally based on needs identified in the interviews with DRLN members. We encourage this report to be used to take the next step of better aligning those recommendations with the current capacities, experiences and interests of the organizations' needs. Moving forward, we call for other researchers and stakeholders in this area to identify and build off of organizations existing strengths and capacities to tailor these recommendations where they can best support those goals.

While working with the DRLN, we have come to understand some of the organizational complexities present in disaster response efforts and the essentialness of trauma-informed approaches in the social resilience framework. The DRLN continues to advance "equitable disaster resilience, for people of color, through healing-centered, culturally grounded collaborations and sustainable practices" (DRLN website). Beyond the affirmations from the interviewed organizations and communities in the DRLN, the recommendations from the literature also support the critical and ongoing need for the work of the DRLN. By listening to their network's needs, the DRLN has created powerful and fruitful connections that provide critical support to communities across Oregon.

* Comparison Between Asset and Deficit Based Approaches - Engaged Scholar - The University of Memphis

Next Steps

TURNING RECOMMENDATIONS INTO ACTION: FOR POLICY MAKERS AND FUNDERS

We cannot overstate the importance of policy in responding to the needs in the disaster response space. Such policy changes should reflect the recommendations noted here, as well as the insights and lived experiences of those in the network. We would like to emphasize the importance of policy on the execution of recommendations such as those in this report. Community level decision-making is critical to ensure inclusive and effective disaster preparedness, response, and resilience. The scope of this research did not begin with policy in mind, but recommendations for policy emerged due to the entanglement of policy and disaster issues. Although future research can help make policy recommendations more specific for decision makers, there are existing actions policymakers can take, such as:

- Meaningful inclusion of wildfire survivor and responder experiences in decision making and appropriate compensation for their time
- Pushing for resilience building policies that value mental wellbeing and social infrastructure
- Meaningful inclusion of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color leadership in decision making through elected BIPOC officials and monetary compensation for their expertise.

Similarly, we would like to further elaborate on the vital role of funding in the execution of our recommendations. The majority of the recommendations provided in this report would require consistent funding streams. These funding streams must support a holistic picture of the resources needed to sustain initiatives, including but not limited to: staffing, events, conferences, and community disaster resilience building events without material goods (e.g., funding storytelling events instead of only prioritizing emergency kit making events). Due to quickly changing priorities of CBOs regularly, and during disasters, funding should be provided to CBOs with as few requirements as possible.

What can funders do?

- Provide flexible funding that allows organizations to adapt to the ongoing needs of their staff and community members
- Provide sustainable and ongoing funding streams
- Streamline and report out grant proposal procedures and application processes to increase accessibility and comprehension

Table of Resources

	Title	Author	Publisher	Year
a	Building resilient Oregon coastal communities: Reimagining critical facilities through Latinx sense of place	Stanton & Hilt	Journal of Disaster Risk reduction	2023
b	The relationships between social capital and concerns for climate change with increasing wildfire risks in rural communities in Central Oregon	Jacobs & Cramer	Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences	2020
c	Health and social impacts of California wildfires and the deficiencies in current recovery resources: An exploratory qualitative study of systems-level issues	Rosenthal, Stover & Haar	PLoS ONE	2021
d	Community recovery and assistance following large wildfires: The case of the Carlton Complex Fire	Edgeley & Paveglio	International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction	2017
e	Training Community Health Workers to Enhance Disaster Resilience	Nicholls, Picou & McCord	Journal of Public Health Management and Practice	2017
f	After the Fire: A qualitative study of the role of long-term recovery organizations in addressing rural communities' post-wildfire needs	Moloney, Vickery, Hess & Errett	Environmental Research: Health	2023
g	Wildfire Response and Recovery: The Importance of Coordinated Care and Social Support	Williams	NEJM Catal Innov Care Deliv	2022
h	A Community Health Impact Assessment of the Santiam Canyon: One Year After the 2020 Labor Day Wildfires	Braverman, Phibbs, Rau & Penner	Oregon State University	2021
i	Cultivating Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Socioecological Perspective	Ning Zhang, Shujuan Yang & Peng Jia	Annual Review of Psychology	2021
j	The keys to successful wellness programs - Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA)	McMahon	Massachusetts Municipal Association	2022
k	Mental health during wildfires in South-central Alaska: An assessment of community-derived mental health categories, interventions, and implementation considerations	Hahn, Michlig , Hansen, Manning & Augustinavicius	PLOS Climate	2023

Table of Resources Continued

	Title	Author	Publisher	Year
l	Capacity to adapt to environmental change: evidence from a network of organizations concerned with increasing wildfire risk	Fischer & Jasny	Ecology and Society	2017
m	Preparing for Disaster: Social Media Use for Household, Organizational, and Community Preparedness	Wukich	Risks, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy	2019
n	Building Community Capacity and Fostering Disaster Resilience	Gil-Rivas & Kilmer	Journal of Clinical Psychology	2016
o	Patterns of preference and practice: bridging actors in wildfire response networks in the American Northwest	Faas, Velez, FitzGerald, Nowell & Steelman	Disasters	2016
p	"Driving Down a Road and Not Knowing Where You're At": Navigating the Loss of Physical and Social Infrastructure After the Camp Fire.	Brown	Rural Sociology	2022
q	Preparing Oregon's Communities of Color for Disasters	Tahan	United Way of the Columbia-Willamette	2022
r	Organizational Assessment to Implement Trauma-Informed Care for First Responders, Child Welfare Providers, and Healthcare Professionals	Kim, Aggarwal, Maloney & Tibbits	American Psychological Association	2021
s	Indigenous perspectives for strengthening social responses to global environmental changes: A response to the social work grand challenge on environmental change	Billiot, Beltran, Brown, Mitchell & Fernandez	Journal of Community Practice	2019
t	Roles and experiences of non-governmental organizations in wildfire response and recovery	Miller & Mach	Journal of the International Association of Wildland Fire	2021

Appendix I: Recruitment Flyer

INTERVIEW REQUEST: STRENGTHENING DISASTER RESILIENCE AND JUSTICE FOR COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Trauma Informed Oregon and United Way have identified a need to understand how Community Based Organizations are navigating their own wellness in the midst of significant crises such as wildfires. To do this we are asking workers and volunteers within disaster response fields to participate in a research study about their experience working with these organizations and the communities they help.

These responses will help inform Community Based Organizations about different resources and response strategies that can be implemented to help BIPOC communities and the employees and volunteers that work with them following a crisis.

SHARE YOUR STORY

- Summer 2023 - Participate in a one on one interview
- Fall 2023 - participate in a focus group discussion
- Compensation of $50 for participating

Project timeline
Spring 2023-Spring 2024

CONTACTS

Please contact any of the following people to set up an interview

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BAILEY NOCK

Interviewer and Research Intern

A second year graduate student at the University of Michigan studying Ecosystem Science and Management

About this Project
This project is in partnership with the University of Michigan, United Way of Columbia-Willamette, and Trauma Informed Oregon

Appendix II: Interview Questions

Disaster Response

Definition: disaster response can be defined as helping communities prepare for and respond to disasters as they happen.

Examples of disaster responses include; raising funds, providing resources like food, water and shelter; mobilizing volunteers; and engaging local partners to ensure community stability.

1. Could you please share what your organization's role has been in responding to disasters? What has your role been in that?
2. Has/how has your organization's disaster response work impacted your organization's other community programs?

Other questions if time permits:

1. (If talking about a specific experience) how did your staff feel about this?
2. What could have helped support you or your organization in navigating these challenges in disaster response work?

Cultural Practices

We are also interested in understanding cultural practices (like mutual aid, community events, allocation of resources to food gatherings) that your organization might engage in in your disaster preparedness and recovery work.

1. Can you share within your own individual wellness, what you do to support yourself, when it comes to your own disaster recovery work? As in, the steps you take in order to keep stress levels down and be able to be there for your community while also dealing with the disaster yourself? What about organizational wellness?

Other questions if time permits:

1. What are some cultural practices you use to support the communities you serve?
2. Has your understanding and use of cultural practices evolved over time (or after disaster response?) If so, how?

Burnout

Have you experienced burnout in your line of work? Can you recall any time when you have felt burned out?

1. What led up to this?
2. What do you do to address burnout?
3. What resources or strategies does your organization have in place to support wellness? To what extent do these resources or strategies address burnout?
4. Have you evolved or changed your ways of dealing with burnout since then/that time?

Other questions if time permits:

1. Are there any resources you felt would have helped you in this situation that you didn't have?
2. Is there anything else we didn't ask about that you would like to share?
3. Can you think of any key places where the network has helped your org or where you could use help from the network?
4. Were there any other orgs outside of the network that helped you?