

Resilience Rainbow: What Role Can Community Foundations Play in Increasing Community Resilience?

Joanna Bevan, Emerging Leaders, International Fellows Program ~ 2013

What makes a community resilient?

Understanding the dynamics of a community can help it to best adapt and grow in the face of sudden or sustained challenges, be it a natural disaster or an economic crisis. Interest in community resilience is emerging in civil society, the social sciences, and within government. This paper examines the nature of what makes a strong community, and how community foundations can help increase resiliency in their local areas.

Joanna Bevan forms the initial hypothesis that community foundations which undertake 'community needs mapping' are expanding their roles in civil society beyond that of traditional grant maker. She uses selected case studies as a lens to examine community resilience and to look at the role the respective foundations play in these contexts. The author builds a resilience framework with seven elements, which comprise what she calls the 'Resilience Rainbow', in order to explore the topic of community resilience. Her paper focuses on case studies – from Canada, the U.S., Brazil, Mexico and Slovakia – of seven community foundations which have recently undertaken 'community needs mapping'.

In her findings, Ms. Bevan maps the themes of the 'Resilience Rainbow' against those emerging from the case studies. The author goes on to analyse the differences in the foundations' roles and the potential reasons for these. She concludes the paper with a look at why and how certain community foundations' roles are evolving, with a focus on the ways their work has an impact on the resilience of their local communities.

To request the full version of the paper, please click [here](#)

