2016

A Demonstration Project of the Action-Oriented Stakeholder Engagement for a Resilient Tomorrow (ASERT) Framework: Effectiveness

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Repository Citation

Yusuf, Juita-Elena (Wie); Covi, Michelle; Considine, Carol; St. John, Burton III; Nicula, Gail; Rawat, Pragati; and Giles, Kaitlin, "A Demonstration Project of the Action-Oriented Stakeholder Engagement for a Resilient Tomorrow (ASERT) Framework: Effectiveness" (2016). ODU Presentations, Lectures, Posters. 11.
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A Demonstration Project of the Action-Oriented Stakeholder Engagement for a Resilient Tomorrow (ASERT) Framework

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Action-Oriented Stakeholder Engagement for a Resilient Tomorrow (ASERT) Framework

Incorporates key principles from the community resiliency literature:
- inclusive process that engages stakeholders across multiple social dimensions and across the whole-of-community;
- strong emphasis on surfacing local context and knowledge;
- integrated engagement where social and cultural factors are part of the process of engagement;
- explicit consideration of change mechanisms, such as structured conversations, deliberative dialogue, and participatory mechanisms.

**Purpose?**
Apply ASERT framework in neighborhood spanning multiple city and government boundaries.

**Approach?**
Focus group that (1) engages stakeholders in two-way dialogue; (2) acknowledges and addresses their concerns and resistance; (3) informs and educates stakeholders about adaptation strategies; (4) generates action-relevant knowledge for building community resilience.

**Benefits?**
Deliberative and participative techniques help inclusive mix of stakeholders understand the problem and identify actions/solutions, while being sensitive to social, cultural, and community factors.
- Participatory mapping synergizes information and education with action-oriented dialogue and deliberation;
- Introduces varied perspectives, creates usable information, promotes active learning, and surfaces unexamined assumptions;
- Allows co-production of practice- and policy-relevant knowledge grounded in stakeholder values and the local context.

**End product?**
Demonstration of a field-tested and application-ready stakeholder engagement framework that can be incorporated into planning and policy making processes.

**ASERT Effectiveness**

**Process Quality or Procedural Justice**
- 90% of participants were satisfied with the overall participatory and engagement process

**Inclusion or Access to Justice**
- 43 participants from Virginia Beach and Norfolk, including those with military affiliation
- Diverse group of participants in terms of race, gender, age, level of engagement in the community
- 87% of participants rated the participatory mapping exercise as moderately or extremely easy to use
- 82% rated the discussion as moderately or extremely useful for facilitating community-wide discussion

**Quality of Information Generated**
- 82% of participants rated the quality of the information generated during discussion as very good or excellent
- 89% rated the discussion as moderately or extremely useful for generating knowledge about adaptation

**Efficiency**
- 83% of participants rated the focus group as moderately or extremely valuable relative to the time committed

**Enabling Action**
- 81% of participants were moderately or extremely likely to take adaptation action
- 71% were moderately or extremely likely to support their community's adaptation efforts

**Application of ASERT**

- Participatory mapping (weTable) to identify assets/challenges, and visualize risks/vulnerability
- Facilitated discussion of adaptation actions, barriers, support needs
- Prioritization of adaptation actions (using Audience Response System)

- 90-minute stakeholder focus groups
- 4 sessions in March-May 2016

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Map of demonstration project area that includes multiple watersheds in two cities (Norfolk and Virginia Beach), and a federal military facility (Little Creek Naval Amphibious Base).