

Community Resilience Laboratory Overview

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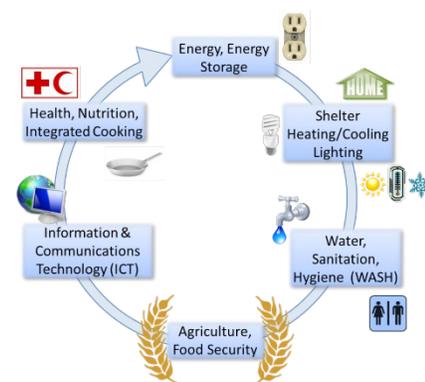
Background: Across the world accelerating rates of technological and social change are putting businesses, governments, security structures, and social compacts under siege. Interconnected stresses and shocks challenge assumptions and best practices. Stand alone risk mitigation and incident management approaches will not be enough. Organizations, indeed societies, will need Integrated approaches that build resilience--the capacity to absorb disruptions and emerge stronger. In sum, "Be prepared to bounce forward better."

Community Resilience Lab: George Mason University (GMU) has established a [Community Resilience Lab](#) ("Lab") with a transformational vision--to help build sustainable resilience in



under-served communities to reduce pressures for migration and marginalization. This is a critical, real-world problem—a million refugees nearly overwhelmed the European political system in 2015, and there may be many more migrants in the future. Underserved communities throughout the world also are losing people and jobs. The Lab integrates public-private, whole-of-government, and transnational approaches with multiple technologies and feedback from practitioners with experience "on the ground."

The Lab coordinates activities that normally would be stovepiped through a five-part approach: (1) a focus on communities—the nation often is too large and the family too small, (2) global knowledge sharing, (3) innovative economics if traditional jobs aren't available, (4) integration across several inter-dependent infrastructures (or "platforms"), as shown at right, and (5) learning and teaching. It also supports real world events as appropriate. Although the Lab has a broad overall focus, each Lab project has a specific name, such as "Appalachia Advancing," and emphasizes the interests of the community in question. In Raymond Wilson's words, the goal is to "[Make hope possible, rather than despair convincing](#)"



Collaborative Opportunities: The Lab is located in Mason's Volgenau School of Engineering. This lets resilience questions be addressed in technical detail, e.g. the resilience of networks and systems as part of cybersecurity. It also offers exceptional chances for collaboration, such as with: business & economics, public policy and governance, conflict analysis & resolution, sociology (what does resilience mean in different communities?), narrative & storytelling, systems engineering, critical infrastructure protection, and specific technologies. Partners may include: Diverse businesses; state, federal and international governments; multiple GMU entities; other academic institutions, domestic and international; philanthropic institutions, such as the Rockefeller Foundation's "100 Resilient Cities'"; think tanks like RAND's work on Community Resilience; international organizations, e.g. the World Bank and the UN; organizations focused on the specific technologies and infrastructures ("platforms") as noted above; and health care providers. The Lab excels at bringing diverse talent to bear. It also sponsors events, such as the annual [STAR-TIDES](#) tech demo which will be at GMU Oct 1-3, 2018.

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