
VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT REPORT OUTLINE

This report will build on information in your previous two reports (the Climate Trends and Community Primers). In order to keep it short, just use the most relevant and vital information from those reports, and refer the reader back to them for more information.

Report Outline

A. Executive Summary/Handout

Create a short summary (1-2 pages) that provides the most important details from the report. Many individuals will only read the Executive Summary, so be sure it is engaging, comprehensive, and succinct. Graphics can be especially valuable for a short, engaging handout that can stand alone. Write this section last, once you have finished the following sections.

B. Introduction

1. Introduce your community, what makes it unique and what defines it
2. Introduce the concept of long-term change. Gauge your language on climate change appropriately, depending on local attitudes. Communities are undergoing many types of change, some more closely linked to climate change than others.
3. Introduce the concept of resilience. How can communities adapt to and thrive with change? What features make a community more resilient? (Answer: increased knowledge, collaboration, and cross-sector preparedness)

C. Purpose

1. Describe why this project is important to the community
2. Describe what you intend to do with the results
3. Describe how communities around the nation are vulnerable to climate impacts
4. Describe the potential opportunities associated with having a Climate Resilience Plan in place, not just for government, but also for the wider community

D. Community Values

Present the results of the community values exercise that you conducted during the first workshop. You can do this using a Wordle, using pictures and quotes from participants, using icons on a map of the area, or just in a short paragraph. Be creative.

E. Key Climate Trends (short overview)

You can pull most of this information from the Executive Summary of the Climate Trends Primer and the Community primer (for trends in natural resources). Using bullets, you can quickly list the climate trends (historical and future) that people would have the most interest in and/or connection to. A list of potential topics to cover includes:

1. Information on loss of snowpack, increasing frequency of heat waves, increasing wildfire and smoke, loss of important tree species, and many other historical and projected future trends will help to engage folks in thinking about how the community is most vulnerable.
2. Provide the range of potential future conditions, not just the mean. The range would include the 10th percentile, mean, and 90th percentile of a group (ensemble) of climate model output.
3. Be sure and address the issue of uncertainty. The reader needs to understand that there is an assumption of stable and historic climate conditions in all plans, codes, and systems currently in place, and it is necessary to replace this assumption with the extensive knowledge that we have about the trajectory and magnitude of change that is expected.

F. Sector-specific Vulnerabilities

1. Sector overview

- a. Provide a short description of the different sectors that you covered, based on the information in the Socioeconomic primer that you previously put together, as well as information that you gathered during the workshop.
- b. You can arrange the sectors by the 5 systems (built, natural, economic, social, and cultural) if this makes sense for your community. Other organizational structures are also fine for this step.

2. Sector vulnerabilities

- a. Include a table or prioritized list of the risks that were identified and specific details of each, from the workshop. You may need to gather additional information on some of the risks to do this. You can contact the folks from the breakout group, or gather additional information to supplement what you have in the notes.
- b. Write a short paragraph on each, along with information on exposure, sensitivity, adaptive capacity, timeframe, certainty, focal populations, other stressors, and secondary vulnerabilities. Color code them by where they land on the Risk Matrix, and keep them in order from highest vulnerability (red in the matrix) to lowest (yellow in the matrix). You can also label them with the color.

G. Risk Matrix

Include the Risk Matrix, as well as a detailed figure legend that describes the information that is included in the figure. The Risk Matrix shows the overall level of vulnerability associated with each identified risk.

1. The Vulnerability Matrix should have been self-populated when you entered the risks into the Vulnerability Assessment spreadsheet. You can export that figure directly for the report, or re-work it in your preferred word processing, drawing, or layout software.
2. Tip: You may wish to re-word some of the risks to keep them succinct and fit them in the matrix. If you need to, create a copy of the spreadsheet and use it to enter shorter risk descriptions that fit in the figure.
3. Vulnerabilities range from “lower vulnerability” to “higher vulnerability” the level of vulnerability is relative, and none of the risks are considered to be “low vulnerability.”

H. Developing Resilience Strategies (or “Solutions”)

For many communities, the risks that are identified are quite serious, and jeopardize major economic drivers, human health, and important natural resources. The risks associated with climate change are not trivial. Because of this, it is important to move the reader from risks to solutions. Make sure and paint a positive vision of the future, and encourage people to stay involved in identifying specific steps for achieving that vision.

1. Provide an overview of what resilience means, how strategies are developed, what no-regrets strategies are, and how the community can come together and work across sectors and populations to increase resilience.
2. Show how resilience strategies benefit multiple sectors, populations, or resources. Show how they address existing community stressors as well as those related to climate change.
3. If possible, provide some case studies of other similar communities and actions they have taken, as well as the community benefits.

I. Conclusions and Next Steps

1. Provide a summary of the findings and which sectors seem to be most vulnerable, as well as which vulnerabilities are of highest priority.
2. Provide any local context on ongoing or new positive actions that might help to address these vulnerabilities, and how resilience could be improved.
3. Describe what the next steps are and how folks will have an opportunity to provide input.

J. References

Be sure and list all references so that the reader can go back to original sources for additional information.