



Resilience FOR ALL

A Colorado collaborative project assessing a vulnerable population in Boulder County after the 2013 floods



LONGMONT
Boulder
LA FAYETTE
NIWOT

Glossary of Terms

Barrier- a fence or other obstacle that prevents movement or access. A circumstance or obstacle that keeps people or things apart or prevents communication or progress.

BoCo Strong- After a flood in 2013 that devastated communities across Colorado's Front Range, a group of local government, community, and non-profit representatives began meeting to document lessons learned in Boulder County with the goal to build, share, and cooperate around a culture of resilience throughout Boulder County.¹

Cultural Brokering- the act of bridging, linking or mediating between groups of persons of differing cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change.²

Cultural Competence- have a defined set of values and principles and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally.³

Institutional Change- defined as change in an entire class or organizations; at its deepest level, refers to changes in the ideas that govern institutions. As these ideas change, rules and practices shift as well.

Institutional Racism- The collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their color, culture or ethnic origin which can be seen or detected in processes; attitudes and behavior which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people.

Racial equity- develops goals and outcomes that will result in improvements for all groups, but the strategies are targeted based on the needs of a particular group.

Resilience- the capability to anticipate risk, limit impact, and bounce forward rapidly by adapting and learning in the face of disruptive shocks and stressors.

Social Capital- describes all of the relationships within a community. Individuals that are more connected, share trust and reciprocity with one another, and can ask each other for help.

Stressors- activities or events that causes stress.

Vulnerable population- include the economically disadvantaged, racial and ethnic minorities, the uninsured, low-income children, the elderly, the homeless, those with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and those with other chronic health conditions, including severe mental illness. It may also include rural residents, who often encounter barriers to accessing healthcare services. The vulnerability of these individuals is enhanced by race, ethnicity, age, sex, and factors such as income, insurance coverage (or lack thereof), and absence of a usual source of care. Their health and healthcare problems intersect with social factors, including housing, poverty, and inadequate education.⁴

¹ Boulder County Resiliency Plan DRAFT (2015)

² National Center for Cultural Competence Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development Georgetown University Medical Center (yr) Bridging the Cultural Divide in Health Care Settings: The Essential Role of Cultural Broker Programs

³ Boulder County Latino Task Force (2013) Latino Task Force Report: 2013 Boulder county Community Assessment

⁴ Vulnerable Populations: Who Are They? (November 2006). The American Journal of Managed Care)



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For more information, a digital copy of this report and videos,
please visit our websites:
LongmontColorado.gov
<http://bit.ly/resilience-longmont>





Executive Summary

At the end of 2016, the City of Longmont, Colorado received a grant from the Division of Local Affairs in the State of Colorado. Resiliency for All (RFA) identified barriers and created a bridge between a vulnerable sector of our Latino population, community resources and local governments in the City of Longmont and Boulder County. The Project brought the community together to identify barriers, develop recommendations that would be more inclusive of this segment of the community and create space for representation from this underserved portion of the community.

During the initial phase October through December 2016, forty-four interviews occurred with professionals in Boulder County who work in current positions of recovery or were involved in response, recovery efforts after the Colorado 2013 Flood. Practitioners, first responders, shelter volunteers, Long Term Flood Recovery Group members, City and County employees, faith groups and many others shared what they saw, felt and recommend to create a more inclusive and resilient community. Each interviewee had direct or indirect experience with Colorado's tragic natural disaster.

Between January and June 2017, the Coordinator hosted twenty-one focus groups around Boulder County with the help of many local agencies, non-profits and government agencies. Those groups focused on Bilingual youth, Spanish speaking community members and Bilingual cultural brokers. 229 assessments were compiled from the over 260 participants that took part in the Resiliency for All Process.

The barriers identified by focus group participants were:

- Social network gaps: lack of connection to resources for both family and community needs
- Media communication: lack of dissemination of information in multimedia channels
- Language: lack of Spanish language in all forms of communication
- Basic needs: lack of access for job opportunities, health issues, insurance, education, financial transactions and general institutions
- Fear and insecurity: lack of safety and trust
- Relationships: lack of connections between community members and institutions

Data was reviewed and compiled by a community based Recommendation Committee in July and August 2017. They solidified recommendations for any industry, organization or agency to incorporate.

The recommendations created included:

- Provide the connection, guidance, attempt to alleviate and or remove the barriers that clients face when accessing services/resources.
- Embrace word of mouth as a trusted source of referral and connection to resources.
- Determine collaboration between department resource agencies. Professionals must work together and streamline the lines of communication that will allow clients to access resources.
- Provide existing bi-lingual emergency resources to all community partners currently working with the multi-cultural organizations.
- Exchange resources with local community organizations that would provide services/resources

that general Emergency Services may not provide i.e. legal resources for transgender folks.

- Create a safe [local] neutral point of resource for consumers to formalize complaints.
- Finance non-profits that focus on outreach teaching English.
- Financially recruit, reward, and retain cultural brokers in local agencies and community.
- Implement programming such as Bi-literacy seal or bilingual pay scales.

Several references and resources are listed in this work. The concept of inclusion and outreach is included in strategy in multiple community plans and yet, based in community assessment; our systems are still inaccessible in many areas of our community.⁵ In Boulder County, this focus was on Spanish speakers. Utilizing steps from the Resiliency for All Process is a replicable technique for vulnerable populations anywhere. All members of communities want to participate, they want to partake fully and be included in practices that will create resiliency.⁶

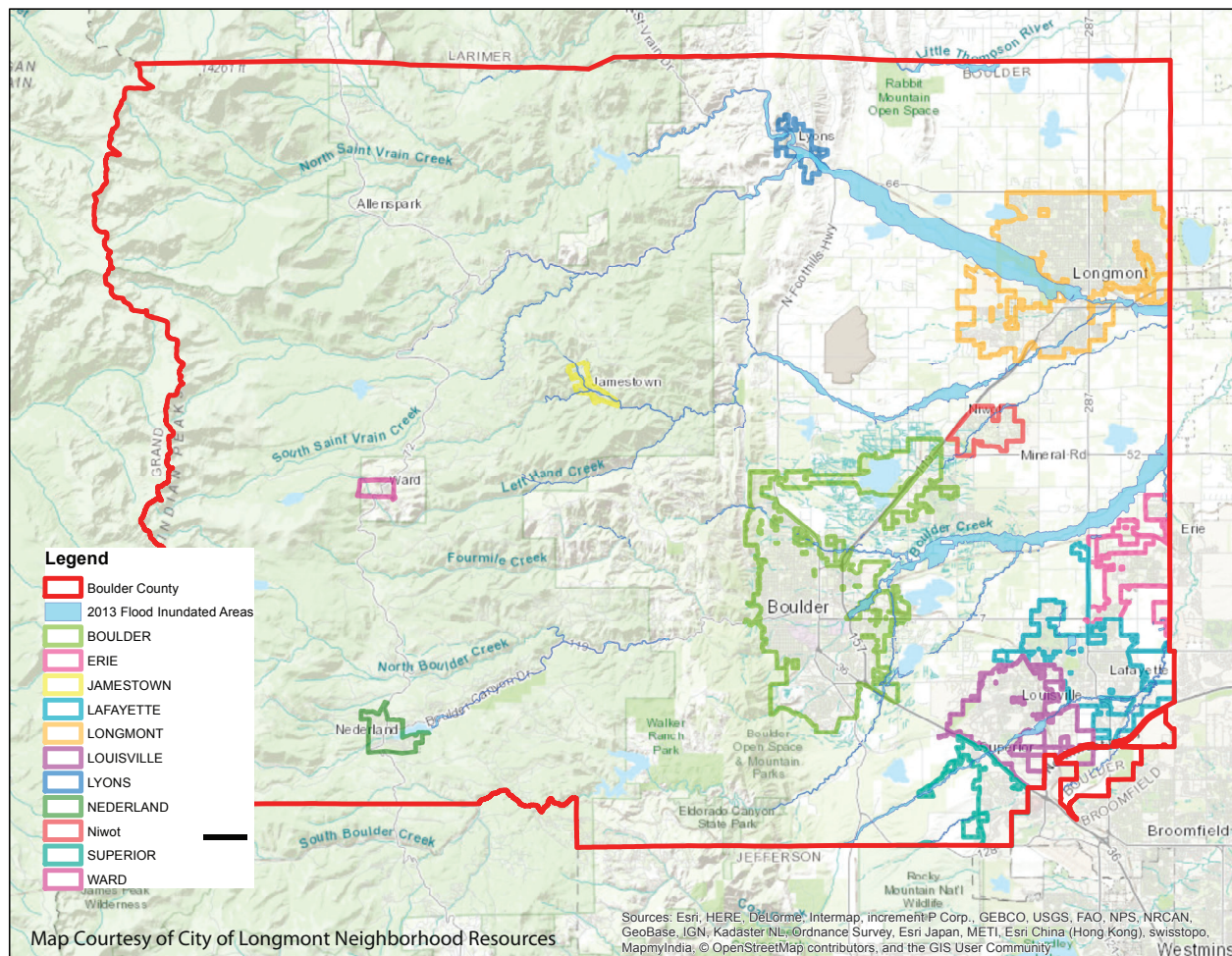


⁵ Avalanche Consulting (2013). Advance Longmont Economic Development Strategy; City of Longmont (2011) Focus on Longmont: Report Card to the Community Five Years Later 2005-2010; City of Longmont (2016) Sustainability Plan Overview; City of Longmont (2016)Envision Longmont, Multimodal & Comprehensive Plan

⁶ Flesher,PhD. Elise (2011) Survey and Focus Group Findings, Latino Advisory Council, Longmont Police Department; The ALMAR Development Group (2002). City of Longmont, Colorado: Latino Community Strategic Plan 2003-2007

Overview

Resiliency for All (RFA) was designed to identify barriers and create a bridge between a vulnerable sector of our Latino population, community resources and local governments in the City of Longmont and Boulder County. Resiliency for All (RFA) is a City of Longmont led collaboration with area municipalities and BoCo Strong . This project and funding from Division of Local Affairs (DOLA) comes in the aftermath of 2013 flooding across Colorado's Front Range.⁷



After the flood devastated communities across Boulder County, a group of local government, community, and non-profit representatives began meeting to document lessons learned in Boulder County. Recognizing how crucial their relationships and shared knowledge were to helping flood affected people recover, they decided that committing to continuing and strengthening these relationships would be vital for future disaster recovery. Beginning as a sub-committee of the long-term flood recovery group (LTFRG), BoCo Strong was born. Their goal was to build, share, and cooperate around a culture of resilience throughout Boulder County. The BoCo Strong Steering Committee has representatives from local governments of Boulder, Longmont and Boulder County as well as I-S-E-T, Boulder Office of Emergency Management (OEM), National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), and Foothills United Way.

After careful review of a variety of Colorado community assessments, frameworks designed in flood affected communities in Colorado and a set of community conversations including practitioners and folks that were

⁷ Videos of 2013 Colorado flood can be found at:
 City of Longmont <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYYCiyQsSPY>,
 City of Boulder https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwbdAJGvj_o,
 Town of Jamestown <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWXtedBb8-Q>

involved in initial flood response and recovery work, the gaps in active outreach indicated Spanish speakers in Boulder County appeared to not have the same access and level of support as the greater community. RFA responds to a defined “Cross-Sector Recommendation” in the Putting on a Resilience Lens 2016 assessment:⁸

“Commit to meaningful, quantitative targets for bilingual Services. Set up and resource broader community education, outreach and marketing in Spanish. This includes all government and judicial interactions, home-buyer and renter support and resources, financial literacy education, public transportation access and use, and navigating and working with the education and health systems.

Having systems that enable us to communicate in two languages will support the transition to multiple languages, a challenge we will likely face in the near future as our communities continue to grow in diversity.”

The RFA objective was to capture personal stories explaining the gaps and possible barriers this sector of our Latino community faces in accessing resources and information. We heard directly from community members by hosting focus groups in Boulder County. Our focus was bilingual youth, cultural brokers and community members. The outreach included Spanish-speaking members of the community that historically are overlooked. Beginning with one vulnerable population stimulates best practices that will drive racial equity for the entire County.

The ultimate goal was to engage our local community and support them to create recommendations that will allow Boulder County to become a resilient community for all.

Latino Population in Colorado

The State of Colorado has over 5 million residents. According to Latino Leadership Institute, Nearly 80 % of Latinos in Colorado are native born. Only 5 % of the entire state Latino population is comprised of Latino immigrants. Less than 10% of all Latinos in Colorado speak Spanish only. This is critical to understand that Resiliencia para todos is truly a microstudy, based on need, focusing on ONE sector of our Latino community- monolingual Spanish speakers.⁹

Boulder County is a region approximately 30 miles North of Denver, Colorado. The 309,000 person community make up according to TRENDS Report 2016 is 13% Latino and estimated 17% to be dominant in another language other than English. Our County is broken down into several cities and a couple that host higher percentages of Latino populations: Lafayette at 19% and Longmont 24%. This means that there is a higher level of comfort, comprehension and engagement for this sector of our community when Spanish language is presented or used for high level conversations.¹⁰

The Latino community in the United States is a diverse group of families and individuals from many countries and areas of the World. In Colorado, the larger percentage of our community is of Mexican descent compared to other regions of the country who host Latinos from primarily other countries or territories.

8 MacClune, Karen (2016). Putting on a Resilience Lens BoCo Strong resilience assessment for Boulder County

9 Latino Decisions and Latino Data Project (2015) Latino Colorado

10 Community Foundation of Boulder County (2016). TRENDS Report

"My mom came here when she was 18 and didn't know any English. My mom wanted a better life opportunity. She dreamed of becoming a nurse, but she had to start small. She needed help with big words not even 7 year old me could understand. She had to go to school and learn every bit she could. If it wasn't for her motivation, my Mom wouldn't be saving lives, and we would still be living in our small trailer."
 Lafayette Youth Advisory Committee Participant, 2017



The Case for Resiliency

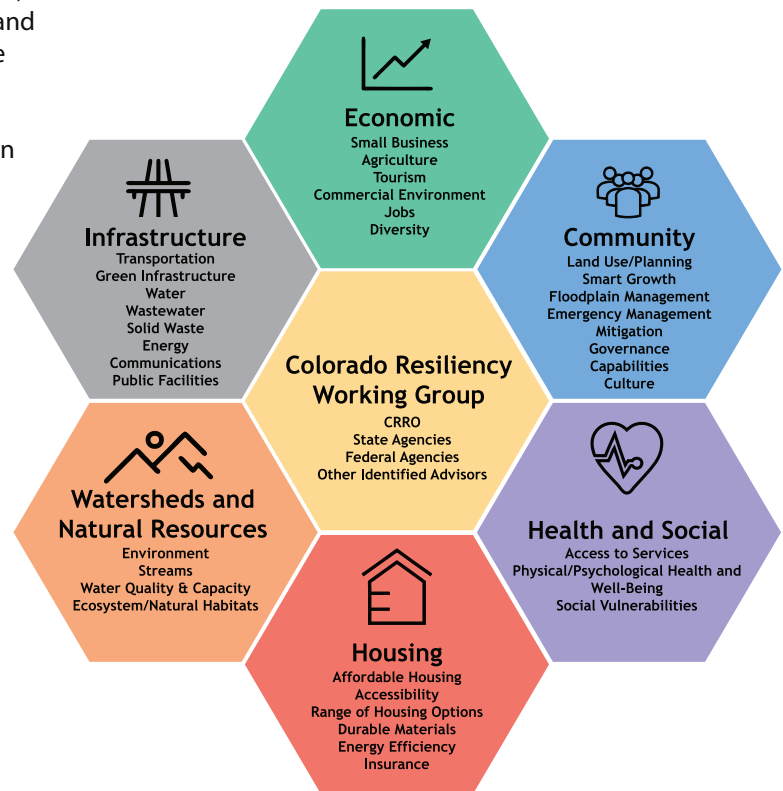
Resiliency for many Spanish speakers is not a term used daily. The concept of who is resilient and how each person has been or seen others be resilient is much easier to define when one takes the simple fact that immigrants are amazingly adaptable, tenacious and committed to a better life and consistent opportunity. Once we were able to share stories of resiliency and overcoming obstacles, it became abundantly clear that this sector of our community is resilient. The challenge now is to help people move away from basic needs to consider long-term preparation.

Participants in focus groups suggested getting youth more involved and at the same time students suggested hosting English language computer classes for Spanish speaking adults to help with basic need services like Everbridge opt in (emergency calling in times of disaster). They requested buses to provide transportation, access to a computer lab from local school or tech company and offered to provide the class and translation. Participants are interested in connecting our Spanish speaking families and community members. Our agencies and institutions are next to see the benefit and take on the funding and education to commit to institutionalize change.

The Colorado Resiliency Framework includes Economic, Community, Health and Social, Housing, Watersheds and Natural Resources and Infrastructure partners in these dialogues. Upon assessment and discussions with practitioners, it became increasingly evident that this sector of the community has not been fully included in the conversations around most of this diagram.

Deeping relationships, including vulnerable populations and building collaborations will allow more involvement in the process of building a resilient community.

The commitment must come from decision makers around Boulder County and the State of Colorado to institutionalize and implement programming and policies to include all voices. Adding one more language will allow us to familiarize and develop for other sectors of the community as we build best practices and tolerance levels for change and additions. Incorporating multiple language speakers sets a foundation for our municipalities to create multilingual practices.



The Colorado Resiliency Framework Sectors

BEST PRACTICES

Intercambio de Comunidades is a Boulder County based nonprofit whose mission is to improve immigrant lives through English education, and unite communities across cultures. Their leadership shared ESL class curriculum and agreed that basic disaster preparation would be a good way to incorporate the strong desire of immigrants to learn English with the necessary language needed in times of disaster. Colorado has ranked wildfires, winter storms, flooding and tornadoes as the most common natural disasters. This was an excellent connection made during the RFA process as a way to create long-term change in our communities. ESL programs around Boulder County could include emergency preparedness materials referenced in this report for conversation and learning exercises.

During the 2013 flood, our local Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints (LDS) members were significantly involved with disaster relief. Locally, their congregations recorded approximately 15,000 volunteer hours in the tri-city area in the first week of response. LDS members supplied close to 95% of the food and staffing at the Community Resource Center in 2013. 20% of their membership is Spanish speaking and they advocate a Self Reliance Program that highlights amazing practices leading to resiliency. Part of their ongoing course work involves planning for income goals, career and skill paths. Encompassing planning and preparation into our daily conversation could be incorporated into other faith groups and memberships around our region.

"The bridge is critical to create a pathway of community dialogue, participation and inclusive action to ensure that relationships exist, prior to emergency situations."

Andrew Notbohm,
Boulder Office of Emergency Management



Why Create a Bridge?

This study intended to focus on one segment of the Boulder County Latino community by inviting Spanish language dominant participants to give us insight that we had not seen included in previous investigation around resiliency in Boulder County. The premise of the grant was to connect this vulnerable population to resources and local governments. Repeatedly throughout the projects funded by 100 Resilient Cities, Colorado Resiliency Framework and counties around the state, the solutions find that a connected community makes the difference.

An example locally was Resilient Boulder's Better Together classes in Boulder where participants were taught to go door to door and share their neighborhood assets. This project includes mapping out area resources, community centers that could be parks, grocery stores, religious centers or other agencies in an effort to visualize what is easily accessible for each participant and their neighbor. One video showed a neighbor introducing herself and talking about experiences from the 2013 flood. It showed pinpointing safe locations for preparedness in future events. Resiliency for All conversations repeated similar themes but we found distinct reasons why a sector of our community feels disconnected in accessing resources and communications as the County wide effort to be more resilient has begun.

The political climate at the beginning of 2017 had created a significant amount of fear in our community after past immigration raids and recent pressures publicly around the removal of Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and a national immigration ban.¹¹ Several community groups have reinvigorated the community outreach around Know your Rights that details the rights every person holds to open the door when your door is knocked on. This is particularly sensitive for Spanish speakers or immigrant families who may be in fear of deportation or a continuation of removal proceedings.¹²

During one of our focus groups at a local elementary school, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) hosted a group of staff and both Spanish and English speaking parents. One of the Spanish speaking parents leaned over and asked if it was okay to talk about fear of police when we were brainstorming a full group list of “common stressors.” She shared that she didn’t want “to offend anyone.” Almost simultaneously, a white parent shared out “Ice.” Half of the group heard “Immigration Custom Enforcement (ICE)” and the other heard “ice.” Our facilitator asked for clarification and it became a teaching moment for both parties that the term has significant meaning for one sector of the community and yet both created stress for parents trying to get their kids to school, drop them off, rush to work, and manage their daily duties. One set of families is inconvenienced by the time delay caused by weather, winter storming and danger of icy roads. Another group of families are afraid they will lose their family members, their communication will be cut off and worse, separated into different countries without adults to take care of their school age children. Additionally there is fear of icy roads, fear of retribution at work if they miss a day of work and the general commute when weather is precarious in Colorado.

This example and many others clarified that a cultural broker who can relate to the cultural realities, norms and experiences of our Latino community will connect community members. The questions regarding resources and if our Spanish speaking community members knew where and how to access them, were repeatedly responded to as “No sé, I don’t know.” During our review of data, this issue of NOT knowing applicable services was highlighted by the recommendation committee as problematic for the larger community. When we have sectors of our community that are not connected, not intertwined with resources we risk losing contact with them during shocks and stressful times. The comments detailed feelings of not being “able to speak up or communicate.” As an example, a new resident to Longmont may visually see the warning sirens and expect to be alerted in an emergency. Since they haven’t been living in Longmont over the last year they may not have seen the notice in the paper or the now posted sign on the sirens that state they are no longer in use. We heard stories of Spanish speakers who had not heard the details of flooding and were completely unaware of what was happening in September 2013 until the water hit them and they were stuck.

Members of flood recovery that were dealing with Royal Park and St Vrain Mobile Park struggled to get

BEST PRACTICES

PrepareAthon Longmont is a local event stemmed from Resiliency Leadership Programs under BoCo Strong. Each local community chose a project that they felt could develop resiliency. Longmont residents decided in 2016 to work alongside Longmont’s Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Members and host a preparedness fair. The community volunteers were adamant that all resources featured would have materials in Spanish as well as bilingual and bicultural people at the event to interact and invite participation. This is now an annual event in Boulder County that could be replicated or grown in collaboration with other communities.

¹¹ Miller, Blair (April 6, 2017) ICE Agents arrest 21 in four-day raid sweep in Colorado, thedenverchannel.com; Matthews, Mark (September 5, 2017) Colorado lawmakers and activists vow to fight DACA decision, The Denver Post; CBS4 DENVER, Colorado Lawmakers React To Trump’s Travel Ban Executive Order, Denver.cbslocal.com

¹² Aguilar, John (2017) Feds grant Jeanette Vizguerra, Arturo Hernandez Garcia stays of deportation, The Denver Post

communication to the large percent of Spanish speaking residents of those neighborhoods. Various interviewees mentioned there was no plan during the recovery, City of Longmont relied on internal cultural brokers to help make contact, navigate systems and problem solve. This reactionary method removed people from their job duties. The comments during interviews included the need for a Spanish speaking full time person; realizing just speaking Spanish was not enough since the residents did not trust the person calling, and frustration that the intent to meet all needs did not occur. During this assessment and presentation of *Resiliencia para todos* a Spanish speaking resident became aware of flood recovery services, with the help of a cultural broker, to begin the process of eligible reimbursement and financial aid that had been available to him since the flooding in 2013. As we learn to connect Spanish speakers to resources and information, we create a stronger community. Ultimately, we use fewer resources in the long term and we pave the way to include other languages and take best practices to share for others to use around Boulder County.



What is the Resiliency for All Process?

City of Longmont Community and Neighborhood Resources applied for a State of Colorado planning grant that targeted flood recovery areas to address vulnerable populations. The objective was to evaluate, assess and identify needs that affect the sector defined above [see Latino Population page 5].

A timeline produced baseline outreach efforts to encourage participation from a diverse group of community members while inviting local non-profits, school programs, City collaborators and others to include their members in the dialogue around resiliency. The need to have a local, well connected and trusted coordinator who looks and speaks to the questions raised around the theme, in this case, resiliency, was found to be critical. In several conversations interviewees reiterated the necessity to have local people involved in engagement. An example of school district staff acknowledging the benefits of cultural brokers being involved in community work as well as having an advantage towards building trust and being able to integrate community, was noted. This proved critical in the RFA process as focus groups specifically outreached to bilingual youth, Spanish speaking community members and cultural brokers.



This study used a four-step process for engagement:

- 1) **Identify barriers for Spanish speakers in Boulder County.**
- 2) **Identify best practices that include vulnerable populations.**
- 3) **Define recommendations to create inclusive and diverse policies.**
- 4) **Challenge community members and decision makers to institutionalize change.**

The steps below detail the engagement process.

Step One - Identify barriers for Spanish speakers in Boulder County: initial investigation about the studies and assessments done around Boulder County and other flood affected areas showed a lack of involvement with Spanish speakers around creation of plans and strategy to make communities more resilient. RFA created a timeline and sought out specific sectors of the community who tend to be marginalized or forgotten in programming and planning meetings. The checklist to include invites included LGBTQ, Seniors, Youth, Families, Faith groups, Underserved, Educators among others. The first goal was to hear from community members and document if they had experienced barriers that hinder community relationships. RFA hosted 21 focus groups with the hosting support of many non-profits and other organizations including local municipalities around Boulder County. 229 written assessments were completed and more than 260 people participated in the discussions and focus groups.

The three target voices chosen

Bilingual youth: have stories and experiences that can help shape our community and include them in the process.

Spanish speaking community members: know the impediments to accessing resources in our local community and know their own needs.¹³

Bilingual cultural brokers: are connected to multiple resources and serve as bridges around our community to share past and current barriers.

Step Two - Identify best practices that include vulnerable populations: During the assessment step, several best practices were identified in organizations and community groups that had found successful ways to do business and incorporate multilingual or multicultural clientele or needs. We found resources around the

¹³ Young, Mary Dolores (2016). Beyond Title VI: Intentional Outreach, Boulder Mobility for All

community that had already been translated but not disbursed and our hope is that after going through the RFA process, the groups who haven't taken responsibility to disburse their information, will accept the challenge to create systems that will ingrain ways to communicate and integrate Spanish speakers with the goal of building our community resilience.

Step Three - Create recommendations for diverse and inclusive policy: many of the initial conversations during the investigation stage of RFA repeated the need for community members to be connected, know each other and have access to assistance in a time of need. The difference for the Spanish speaking community included barriers to entry of language, trust, fear and lack of knowledge. A variety of industries including transportation agencies repeated the theme of providing language applicable resources. Interviewees shared the need for system navigation (someone to guide the user through the process) in a culturally and linguistically appropriate way.

Two smaller groups of 10-12 different community members met in July and August 2017 to review the written assessments and create recommendations that will begin to breakdown those barriers as the County works towards being more resilient. The recommendation committee reviewed and compiled the data to show recommendations in several key themes. Once community members feel more connected, the sectors of the Colorado Resiliency Framework [page 6] can begin to include Spanish speakers. With genuine introductions, dialogue and long-term commitment; pathways to resiliency will be built using the RFA Process.

Step Four - Challenge community members and decision makers to institutionalize change: the goals of RFA incorporate a desire to institutionalize changes around Boulder County that will create a more connected and thus resilient community. Discussions and studies around the theme of resilience indicate that neighbors and groups of people who are socially connected are able to resource more quickly in times of need or disaster. RFA will present data, describe the process of assessment and engagement within the sector of Boulder County's Latino Community, highlight collaborative work already created outside of initial partnerships and challenge area municipalities and organizations to include Spanish speakers in our region, into their daily thought patterns and programming. Community inclusion is conceptual right now around the State including Boulder County. Community members voiced the trust that has to be built, the "going to them" versus organizations and agencies expecting "them to go to you" until capacity and relationships are developed. Institutions and organizations can use the training tool included in this project to implement their own results using this data.

In this study alone, we located **41 new community voices** who asked to be included in more events, offered to participate in discussions and volunteered to connect in the future around resiliency work in the Spanish speaking community. Our bilingual community wants to be part of bridging the gap when the requests are genuine and have a focus for the good of all.



“Emergency management by nature is holistic. Our central mission is to take care of people in the community, all people. If we are missing a community group of residents, we need to address it. It doesn’t matter what the reason is. If it’s language, if it’s a political issue, if it’s a cultural barrier; we need to look at that and we need to address it.”
 Andrew Notbohm, Boulder OEM



2017 Parent Teacher Organization Focus Group, Northridge Elementary, Longmont CO

Focus Groups

Spanish speaking Community Members

The makeup of Boulder County requires calculated engagement tactics and strategies. Based on the data transcribed in our sessions there is a level of fear and instances of perceived discrimination that create significant barriers for community to ask for help. For example, one of our students shared the fear of asking for help and being interrogated on their family’s immigration status instead of receiving help. This fact deters family from asking for medical and safety assistance.

During the course of our assessment the 2017 Sunshine Canyon Fire in Boulder occurred and families were not answering the police knocking on their door at 2:00 a.m. shouting “POLICE.” This was precisely the discussion that our emergency responders needed to hear to realize that fear truly exists in our community. The cultural differences and language barriers have caused a breakdown in connection that can affect lives in the time of evacuation.¹⁴

Cultural brokers were the bridge to create awareness that moved OEM into action.

Our local Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has responded, after working with cultural brokers in the County, and created several initial steps of acknowledgement to support their Spanish speaking community:

- 1) Created a door hanger that will be posted on a door in time of emergency.
- 2) Modified their website for translation to Spanish.
- 3) Listened and agreed that knocking on a door and saying “Emergencia/Emergency” would create a quicker, safer response for residents.

EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY

Evacuation Notification
 An emergency notification has been issued for your area.

For your safety, you are hereby notified to:

EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY

Once you are in a safe location, visit the Boulder Office of Emergency Management’s website, at www.BoulderOEM.com

In case of flood, climb to safety or go to the highest point of your home.

Otro lado en español →

EVACUAR INMEDIATAMENTE

Notificación de Evacuación
 Se ha emitido una notificación de emergencia para su zona.

Para su seguridad, se le informa que debe:

EVACUAR INMEDIATAMENTE

Una vez se encuentre en un lugar seguro, revise el sitio web de la Oficina de Manejo de Emergencias de Boulder para más instrucciones www.BoulderOEM.com

Busque este botón y seleccione “Spanish”

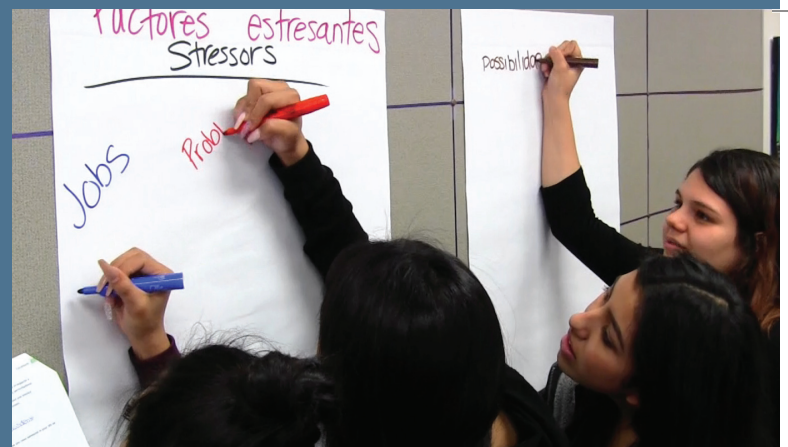
Select Language ▼

En caso de inundación, suba al punto más alto de su casa o su alrededor

¹⁴ Pyzyk, Katie (2017) What are the Immigration Implications on Emergency Managers? Preparedness & Recovery, govtech.com

"Have counselors at [input any school] to reach out to all families with help of translation to make sure that everyone has access to education. (This should occur) beginning of freshman year."

Jessica Valle,
Lafayette Youth Advisory Committee Member
New Vista High School, Boulder Colorado



Bilingual Youth

We believe that when assessing barriers, it is critical to hear from family translators who have first hand experience accessing resources and confronting barriers. During the assessment we completed 72 assessments with bilingual youth. The themes of student experience encompassed experiences that indicate needs for basic communication around Boulder County in workplace, medical offices, schools, housing, retail outlets, financial institutions, legal processes, utility billing offices and religious services. Students shared recollections of serving as bridges to all of these processes and locations as free labor and stressful interactions that are required of them from as early as 6 years old.

Students felt compelled to provide translation service once they had a higher command of English than their family members or community members and were needed to assist our local municipalities.

The daily responsibility in Boulder County for many young people carries what may be considered the "burden and blessing" of being bilingual or multilingual. We chose to assess young people in our community about their role as family translators to highlight a few important facts. Young people who speak more than one language in their homes are talented and provide an important value to Boulder County. Spanish speaking youth are cultural brokers for many agencies and companies who create financial growth into many businesses throughout our community. Boulder County has an incredible asset that is not currently being developed or supported as an answer to community resiliency.

The stories young people shared are relevant and display inequities throughout sectors of the Colorado Resiliency Framework. Students from area high schools and colleges participated in an activity entitled: "Share your Story." Each student had the opportunity to recollect their first or most recent time they had translated for a family member of neighbor, friend etc. We asked for them to give insight of age, where they were, what type of service they were supporting and how they felt. Many stories were given that included all agencies as early as 6 years old and as recent as a parent teacher conference that month where a local high school student shared that he had to translate for his own behavior issues for counselors, staff and teachers while he was in trouble. While talking with many agencies around the County, employees discuss examples in financial transactions, application processes, school registrations and more in which young people are being asked and expected to handle paperwork and responsibilities that hold liability and in some cases, confidentiality. While many students felt a sense of pride there were others who felt like it was too much of a responsibility to translate the purchase of an auto or mobile home in their personal examples.

"Since I was a small child I have been a translator for my family. Even though my parents arrived in the United States more than 20 years ago, the language has not been one of the requirements they could complete due to low resources. Most of the time I spend the day translating letters that arrive in the mail. They are letters from the bank, hospital, insurance and promotions, etc. Even though my Spanish isn't perfect."

~ Latina Achievement Support
Boulder High School Student, 2017

"My earliest memory of translating for my parents & uncle. My uncle had just gotten a visa to work in the US for a few months in landscaping. My older sister was in school so I had to go to the bank, as my uncle needed to open a bank account for his new job. I was 8 years old, I didn't know anything about banking, much less translations into Spanish. I was really scared, but quickly realized that I was able to translate general ideas back & forth which boosted my confidence and helped my fear of translating for my parents & family."

~ Latina Achievement Support
Boulder High School Student, 2017

"We as an organization, have really embraced the community input aspect of this in trying to be very focused on utilizing our cultural brokers to bring information in that we may not normally consider."

Harold Dominguez,
Manager of City of Longmont



Feb 6, 2017 Cultural Broker Focus Group: OUR Center, Longmont, CO

Bilingual Cultural Brokers

The work that was completed in **Resiliency for All** is a compilation of individual conversations, focus group conversations, small group review and individual input. One of the other community groups that was surveyed was cultural brokers. Cultural brokers do not only translate or interpret from their group to the larger community, they are the bridge that connect one sector to another and help navigate the many systems of finance, housing, education, health, safety and others mentioned by participants. For many of these cultural brokers gave their personal time and energy to bring forth compelling stories and truths around an extremely resilient community who is many times not welcomed, not invited and not sought after for input and suggestions. In Colorado 53% of Latinos speak a varying level of Spanish [Latino Colorado]. For these cultural brokers, language is an element of Latino culture that connects and creates familiarity and trust.

Cultural brokers around Boulder County shared stories of being overworked, under resourced, underpaid and expected to cross job lines to do other work. For example, one of our local school counselors shared a story of abrupt removal from case management work to translate for a family that needed assistance in another area. Students wrote about having to translate for their school registration on both primary and secondary campuses when there were no bilingual staff to assist their parents through the process. One of our CERT participants recalled a situation when his wife was suffering from cancer and her family was unable to get into the hospital doors for lack of anyone at the front to explain the process and where she was in the building. A variety of agency employees shared their desire of connectedness with local programming in order to share pertinent information with clients. They understand that their clients will request to link them to other services and recommended employee pay to participate in activities, community forums and events that would allow them to share information with others in the workplace and clients who walk into their offices or places of work.

Building connections in Boulder County will be occur by including more of our community. There was a sense of desperation by cultural brokers about bringing more young people into the professions and showing them the value of their language, culture and stories to support them into greater career planning.

BEST PRACTICES

La Cumbre de Mujeres is a local event in Boulder that has been developed over the last decade to bring Spanish speaking women together and connect them. The program allows women to learn in their own language, interact with industry and agency experts to work along themes of community growth, self, support and resiliency.

One of the key elements has been programming from within the community itself and it has grown to 250 attendees who celebrate their culture in many ways together. **Cumbre** 2017 celebrated their 11th year of growth and have added youth and men's programs. Attendees from around the State could help grow this event or replicate in other regions.

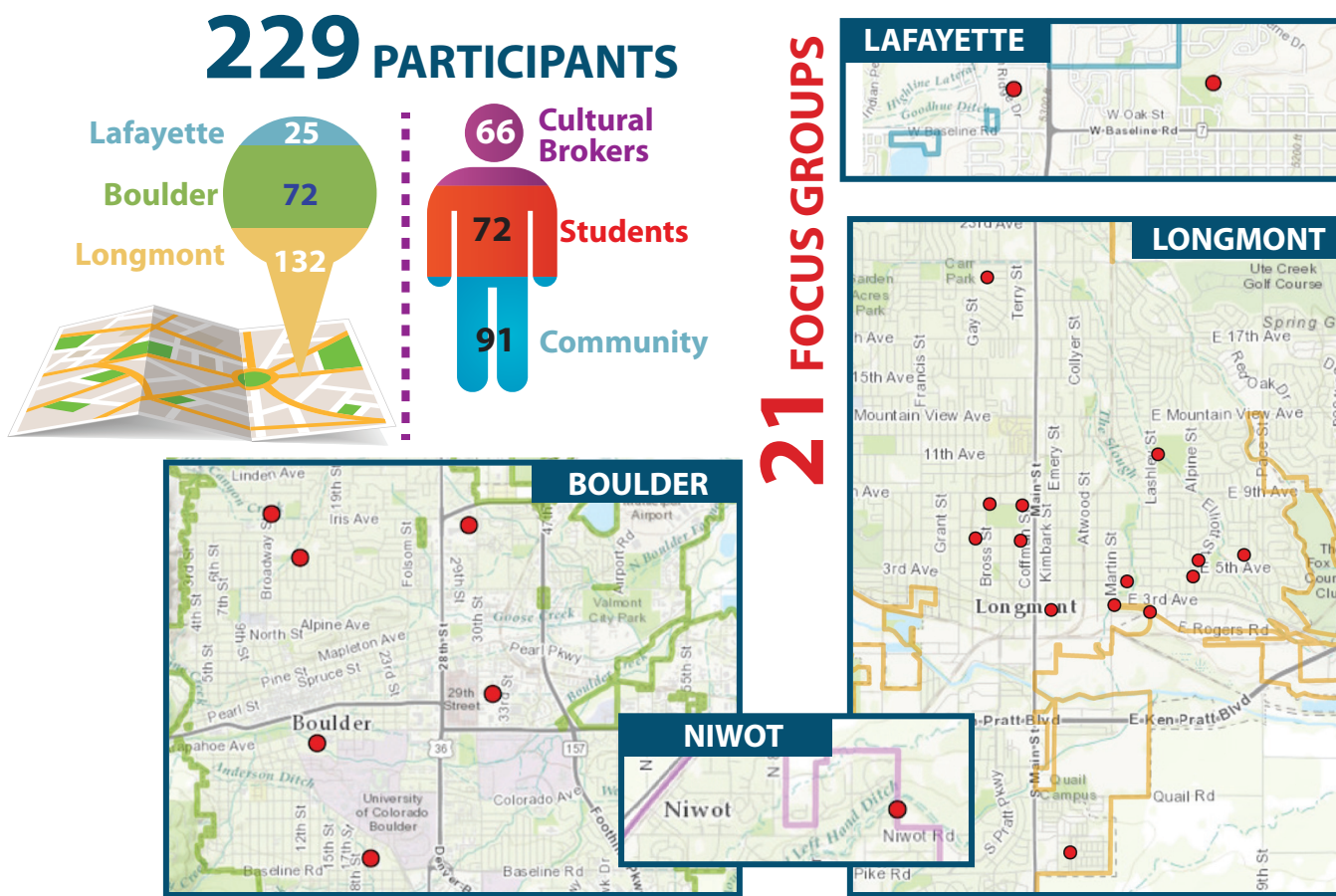
Community Defined Barriers

If resilience lies within connectedness, in the viewpoint of local Boulder County residents, what barriers do we need to address to build our resilience? One of our participants shared a personal story in which he believes the work of resiliency is that of both agencies and individuals. The responsibility is shared and with that premise the barriers would be critical to both sides. The bridge goes both ways and so the responsibilities would do the same.

Our assessment included a written section regarding identifying barriers to move us toward recommendation development. All of the groups shared barriers, some very specific that included challenges of cultural competency in classrooms that students in Boulder, Lafayette, Longmont and Niwot attend. Families discussed the inability to save money due to lack of English skills and feeling stuck in low paying jobs with little security. Young people talked about fear of costs of housing and student loans as they consider college careers. We made lists of common stressors that our participants, their families or clients had dealt with and shared.

The themes of barriers indicated by participants included:

- Social network gaps: lack of connection to resources for both family and community needs
- Media communication: lack of dissemination of information in multimedia channels
- Language: lack of Spanish language in all forms of communication
- Basic needs: lack of access for job opportunities, health issues, insurance, education, financial transactions and general institutions
- Fear and insecurity: lack of safety and trust
- Relationships: lack of connections between community members and institutions.



It became apparent that the interest of being part of the discussion of social resiliency is important to this sector of our community. The impediments to access resources and have a sense of connectedness with the larger community and public service folks were many and spanned the county and industries. The desire to be connected exists amongst the 260 participants and yet the blockages to feeling welcome, receiving an invitation, knowing who to request information from is inadequate. The scarcity of knowledge amongst community members of options regarding health care options, higher education options, funding opportunities for all forms of loans were notated. The language barrier crossed into all of the themes. One of the parent/teacher groups talked about their stressors and then turned the question towards their group. They asked “why [more of their own] families, parents, aren’t involved in the group that is providing information on resources?” One of the county employee focus groups talked about not having heard of a resource that another employee discussed and feeling like internally there is a disconnect they need to fix.

The recommendation committee looked at each of the barriers to see which were repetitive, voiced by a variety of community members spread over all of the participating groups. The barriers compiled indicated consistent issues of access. Those were then put into subthemes so that the recommendations could be focused versus targeted toward a specific organization. An example would be, in order to overcome II. Discrimination and fear, we recommend that local police and fire programming host annual cultural competency training. Instead, the recommendation committee determined that all recommendations could be cross-referenced in any organization, agency and industry to create best practices that would begin the process of resiliency building by including the Spanish speaking sector of Boulder County.

To address the barriers they decided to review themes and then create recommendations that could cross over into any industry, agency or organization. For example, community members consistently exposed gaps in being able to access information due to not knowing who the resources are that may assist for certain services. That was inserted under the general theme of “Resource Information.”

I. Resource Information

“Be aware of our family’s necessities and provide information regarding resources.” Based on the conversations and interviews, a cultural broker can alert agencies and institution to family needs.

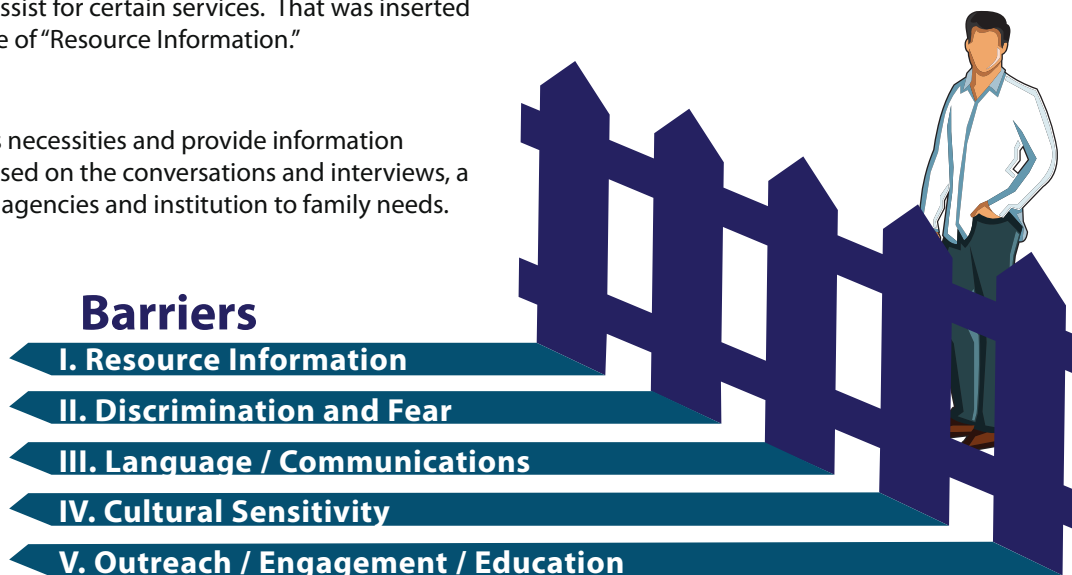
II. Discrimination and Fear

Before we can work too far into the microcosms of the Colorado Resiliency Framework and incorporate this sector of the Latino community, it was apparent that all of the groups had

experienced fear, mistrust and discrimination in many forms. The comments included: “We need to overcome our fears, talk with the right people. We need to get involved more with all the mentioined factors to be aware of solutions that can help our people.”

III. Language/Communications

In every one of the 21 focus groups, language barrier was identified in some form. One participant recommended “Hire more professional staff who are bilingual and bicultural. Create a hiring practice to identify best bilingual and bicultural candidate.”



IV. Cultural Sensitivity

As an example students expressed concerns based on experiences around Boulder County campuses in treatment by teachers. One recommendation included “Have a requirement for all teachers to pass a test or some type of requirement for them that [would] help them understand their rude racial unthoughtful comments about students [based on] cultures and stereotypes are not okay and shouldn’t be said.”

V. Outreach/Engagement/Education

This theme came up from a few different lenses spanning participants- community members who repeated needing information about resources and not knowing where to go for basic need information. On the other spectrum, non-profits and agencies shared the sentiment of “[we need] effective outreach opportunities to reach the Latino community. How can we be the most useful? We have the materials, Spanish speakers of resources. We don’t know the outlets.” We have Spanish speakers needing information. We have agencies offering programs who need clientele. This is a perfect indicator of why a bridge must be welcome, built and sustained to make Boulder County more resilient.



“By 2025 Boulder County communities will have access to the resources and connections needed to allow all residents to adapt and thrive in the face of community stressors.”

BoCo Strong Vision of Resiliency



Recommendations for Action

Natural disasters in Colorado and chronic stressors around our community will continue to occur. Our county's agencies and organizations will remain poorly prepared to meet the Spanish speaking community's needs unless we take action now to start building inclusive policies and best practices. In July and August 2017, RFA Recommendation Committee reviewed the 229 completed written assessments along with emergency preparedness experts and community members from Boulder County. The recommendation committee, comprised of a smaller group of community volunteers, created recommendations in form of a potential checklist to meet the needs of our Spanish speaking community and in turn creating a more resilient community:



Provide the connection, guidance, attempt to alleviate and or remove the barriers that clients face when accessing services/resources.

The barriers indicate a lack of trust and fear based on previous experiences, not being able to communicate or not knowing if agencies are safe places. Participants shared that agencies want consumer to "just ask for help" or "just let us know if there is an issue." Trust needs to be built with the community and participants repeated ideas of agencies going to the community versus expecting the community to automatically go there.



Embrace word of mouth as a trusted source of referral and connection to resources.

Systems tend to expect response and integration in a set way. Barriers that were brought up included online surveys or meetings held at locations where people would not feel comfortable attending. Focus group participants shared that the time needs to be given to allow organic conversations, trust and confidence to be developed in order to break down barriers. Many times the expectation is a shorter time period than a word of mouth referral will take to support community.



Determine collaboration between department resource agencies. Professionals must work together and streamline the lines of communication that will allow clients to access resources.

Specifically during the cultural broker focus groups, several examples were given where employees were not aware of opportunities their own institution was offering. The lack of communication between departments and agencies concerned participants and they felt like they need better communication within their own system. One group suggested their agency begin a monthly meeting for their cultural brokers to share bilingual/bicultural appropriate resources and programs internally and externally to support clients.



Provide existing bilingual emergency resources to all community partners currently working with the multicultural organizations.

Participants asked about resources, trainings, classes and materials that could be handed out to families who dominate Spanish language. A discussion about teaching parents the basic terminology (since kids are taught some at school) could be a way to interact and introduce families to first responders. During the RFA discussions, Boulder OEM took on the translation of their community emergency guide. The community needs this tangible item and others located by PrepareAthon volunteers and in our focus groups.



Exchange resources with local community organizations that would provide services/resources that general Emergency Services may not provide i.e. legal resources for transgender folks.

The concept of being well versed in available resources was repeated during the 21 focus groups. Because the groups invited LGBTQ, Seniors, Youth and others it was apparent that social issues need to be included in resource databases, resource fairs and general community points. An example while talking about homeless needs was creating a safe space for individuals who are neglected by their own families based on gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation. This work shows that although we are focusing on one sector

of our population, all statuses are encompassed in this demographic and we need to be inclusive.



Create a safe [local] neutral point of resource for consumers to formalize complaints.

Many of the focus groups touched on themes of accountability. Families talked about being victims of different predatory behavior, students talked about not knowing if their families got the best health plan or services. The theme of fear and not knowing where to go to determine if someone had been wronged by an institution or agency was brought up. People felt like there are a couple “spots” in the county to get help but not a defined location that could be trusted and relied on.



Finance non-profits that focus on outreach teaching English.

Although participants discussed the need for individuals to take on their own learning of second languages, the topic of need for support arose. For seniors, there was an interest in learning more language and technology to communicate and know more resources and yet they need a central location to access it easily. In certain areas of the county, for example the North Boulder Center was discussed but not easily accessible for Lafayette and Louisville residents due to lack of transportation options.



Financially recruit, reward, and retain cultural brokers in local agencies and community.

Participants shared ideas of how their agencies could support them as cultural brokers. They shared the difficulties of being the “one voice” in meetings or offices or wanting to attend resource meetings without pay and “being expected” to take information back to their sites. We saw an amazing example during our work with the Boulder OEM who decided to invest in one of their employees and create language training opportunities and expand their programming to do more emergency preparedness work with Spanish speakers.



Implement programming such as Bi-literacy seal or bilingual pay scales.

We heard examples of more than 60% of our participants had been required, asked, invited or simply expected to translate or interpret for a family member, community member or colleague at work that was not part of their own work. One talked about being in the emergency room and having to leave their family member and go into the room next door to help another family on behalf of the hospital staff. A few examples of systematic forms of valuing and increasing the appreciation for the complexity of dominating a second language were discussed and desired for Boulder County residents.

When we consider the Colorado Framework around resiliency, it is critical that all the sectors intertwine with social issues. The term resiliency was new to the majority of participants of focus groups. The training around resiliency that started after 2013 flooding around Colorado included professionals and folks that are already familiar with disaster relief or specific community service work. Truly engaging community members and specifically the sector of our County who does not dominate English as a first language, requires an underlying and systematic change to intentionally include cultural brokers at all levels of agencies. These talented employees and volunteers must be resourced and allowed to create bridges throughout Boulder County to promote resiliency in alignment with those who know the industry and framework goals.



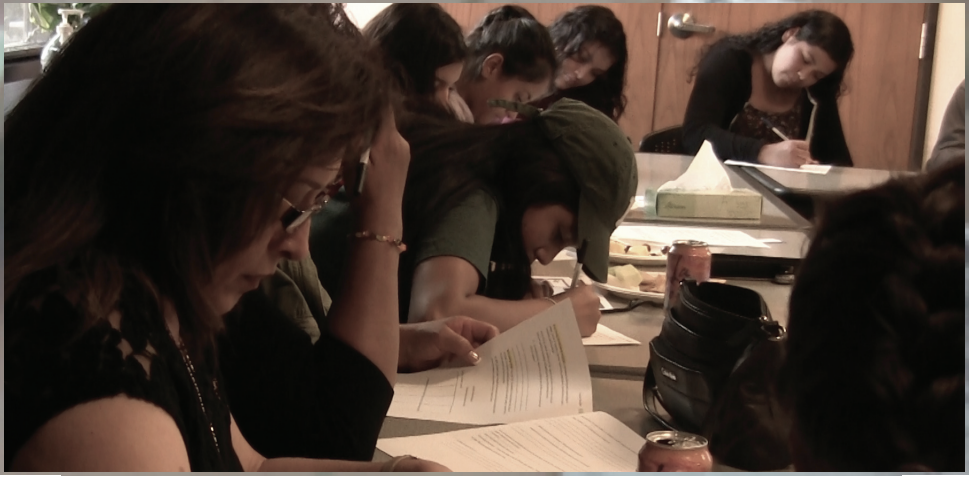
G - GAMBEL'S OAK ROOM
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Latino
Resiliency
Focus
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1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

THE
GROWING



Resilience

FOR ALL



How do We Include Community?

An underlying goal of Resiliencia para todos was to challenge community members to evaluate their own vulnerable populations and create similar processes that would move action and implementation to include more diverse policies and procedures.

During 2017, 21 focus groups met in Boulder County. More than 260 participants met and shared their experiences and stories that identified barriers for this sector of our Latino community to access resources and services. A few recommendations were created for overall agencies and institutions.

Now it's your turn to look in your own community.

For Discussion

- Who are the vulnerable populations in your community?
- Who are the cultural brokers in your agency? (or) Who are the cultural brokers you are connected to or doing business with?
- Where will institutions implement changes to engage the Spanish speaking population around resiliency themes and work?
- How will the Latino community be able to see elimination of the barriers shared in this report?
- How will you make the recommendations into actionable items?
- Whom will you invest and support as cultural brokers to participate in disaster preparedness work?
- How will you maintain the newly developed relationships with your vulnerable population(s)?

Enhance your *Resiliencia para Todos* Experience

- Find your local non-profits and agencies that can host focus groups
- Identify and call your local decision makers to schedule time this month to share this report
- Create your **NEXT STEPS**

	Advocacy Agencies	City Council	State Representatives
Non-Profits			
Large Employers	Other decision makers	NEXT STEPS	
		A	
		B	
		C	

Endnotes

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Where Do I Find more Information?

Community input was critical to this project and the timing seemed appropriate as Boulder County is recently implementing a VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster) Chapter. The opportunities for sharing and cross connecting our service agencies to build a stronger community are critical and full of potential. We encourage you to do more research and do the work to build trust and engage your vulnerable populations while you work towards community inclusion.

Further resources are located at:

America's PrepareAthon	Community.FEMA.gov
BoCo (Boulder County) Strong	BoCoStrong.org
Boulder Office of Emergency Management	BoulderOEM.com
Colorado Immigrants Right Coalition	ColoradoImmigrant.org
Colorado Office of Recovery and Resiliency	ColoradoUnited.com
Foothills United Way	UnitedWayFoothills.org
Institute for Social and Environmental Transition	iset.org
Intercambio de Comunidades	Intercambio.org
Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity	RacialEquityAlliance.org
National Center for Atmospheric Research	ncar.ucar.edu
Ready	Ready.gov
Resilient Together	ResilientTogether.org
Self Reliance Services, LDS	lds.org
National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster	nvoad.org

For more information about



and a digital copy of this report and videos
please visit our websites
LongmontColorado.gov
<http://bit.ly/resilience-longmont>



Acknowledgements

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The cultural divides outside of simply language were present in focus groups and other discussions and yet community continued to return to the question of “what can I do, what can we do?”

which is an indication of the interest and desire to become more ingrained in our local community. We hope you join the conversation around including multilingual members of your community on all levels. We know that communities thrive when all of are invited to participate. The costs of reacting versus deliberately connecting with all members of our local communities is too high. We sincerely hope that you take this study into action and motion in your own community, to become more resilient, before the next stressor arrives.

