



## Developing of social capital as an empowering tool

Supporting the development of social capital is an empowering and effective approach that builds the resilience and capacities of the community. It can be developed deliberately and purposefully, but it is also the outcome of structural positions, family and friendships. The characteristics of social capital include reciprocal links, supportive elements, inter-organisational activity, dynamism and cooperative decision-making. According to Norris et al. (for literature reference see original source document), the specific nature of social networks is important. Dense or highly connected networks such as “hubs”, for example, can decrease resilience because they can be destroyed more easily. Taking a systems perspective, they suggest “the happy medium may be loosely coupled organizations (to better respond to local needs) that are able to coordinate or collaborate (to facilitate access to their resources)”. Thus, deliberate efforts to develop effective community networks should focus on these elements. DMAs might first do well to assess the presence and nature (or strength) of community social capital and of the density of active citizenship, before promoting community participation.

Note: See source document for full reference.

### Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Density of active citizenship](#), [Social networks](#)

Disaster Phases: [Response](#)

Types of Actors Concerned: [National civil protection body](#), [Local authorities](#), [Non-active citizens](#), [Active citizens](#), [Government](#), [Red Cross](#), [NGOs](#), [Military](#), [Law enforcement agencies](#), [Healthcare and emergency services](#), [European Civil Protection Mechanism](#), [UN and other international organisations](#)

Hazards: [Natural hazards](#), [Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations](#), [Man-made intentional hazards](#)

### Recommendations:

- [Foster social connectedness and the development of a strong sense of community, as these encourage citizens to help each other in disaster situations](#)

### Source

[Deliverable D7.3 "Report on cultural factors and citizen empowerment" \(page 46\)](#)

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