

Two Years after Superstorm Sandy: Resilience in Twelve Neighborhoods

- The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research reveals uneven patterns of recovery in 12 neighborhoods two years after Superstorm Sandy.
- Social factors such as trust and community bonds prove important in predicting resilience.

Chicago, October 27, 2014—[The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#) today released the results of a major new study and related reports on the recovery from Superstorm Sandy in 12 New York and New Jersey neighborhoods hard hit by the 2012 storm.

It is the second AP-NORC study that has focused on the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, with findings that emphasize the important role social factors play in a neighborhood’s resilience: the ability of people and their social systems to survive, adapt and continue moving forward after a disaster. Funding for both studies was provided by the [Rockefeller Foundation](#).

“The study had two central objectives,” said Trevor Tompson, director of the AP-NORC Center. “First was to take a systematic and in-depth look at recovery in 12 very different neighborhoods two years after the storm. The second was to provide data and insight on the interplay of social factors, resilience, and long-term recovery to understand why some neighborhood areas are more resilient than others.”

The central component of the study is a survey done by phone, on the web, and in-person completed with 1,009 residents of 12 neighborhoods in New York and New Jersey. The report includes analysis of the survey numbers and what the interviews, focus groups, and observations revealed in the form of stories about each of the 12 neighborhoods.

The Study Neighborhoods

Neighborhood	County	State
Babylon	Suffolk	NY
Breezy Point-Belle Harbor- Rockaway Park	Queens	NY
Gravesend	Kings	NY
Hoboken	Hudson	NJ
Islip	Suffolk	NY
Jersey City	Hudson	NJ

Long Beach	Nassau	NY
Long Branch	Monmouth	NJ
Lower East Side	New York	NY
Monmouth Beach	Monmouth	NJ
New Dorp- Midland Beach	Richmond	NY
Point Pleasant-Point Pleasant Beach	Ocean	NJ

The results show that while economic development and infrastructure of a community contribute to recovery in the wake of a disaster, resilience often differs in neighborhoods with similar economic and structural resources. Critical factors shaping a neighborhood’s resilience are social resources and connections such as trust, community bonds, and other elements that give a neighborhood its human qualities.

Key findings of the study include:

- While most neighborhoods are recovering, nearly 30 percent of residents report their neighborhood has recovered only halfway or less.
- Less than half of residents say that most people have gotten most or all of the help they need to recover and restore their lives after the storm.
- Neighbors are cited most often as helpful for the recovery, with 69 percent saying neighbors helped compared with 57 percent for local government and 55 percent for the federal government and FEMA.
- People living in neighborhoods with more social connections and resources are more likely to say their neighborhood is well prepared to handle a disaster and more confident their neighborhood would recover quickly after a disaster.
- Social resources can help overcome economic barriers to resilience. The positive effects of social resources on resilience are relatively similar across socioeconomic groups.

“Building resilience during normal times means that when disaster strikes, everyone is better able to manage,” said Dr. Judith Rodin, President of The Rockefeller Foundation and author of the forthcoming book, *The Resilience Dividend*. “AP-NORC’s latest research is clear: when cities make plans for building resilience, social resilience matters. The strength of neighborhood ties matters. And most of all, trust matters.”

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About The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

[The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#) taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

- The Associated Press is the essential global news network, delivering fast, unbiased news from every corner of the world to all media platforms and formats. Founded in 1846, AP today is the most trusted source of independent news and information. On any given day, more than half the world's population sees news from AP. On the Web: www.ap.org.
- [NORC at the University of Chicago](#) is one of the oldest and most respected, independent research institutions in the world.

The two organizations have established the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals.

About the Rockefeller Foundation

For more than 100 years, [The Rockefeller Foundation's](#) mission has been to promote the well-being of humanity throughout the world. Today, The Rockefeller Foundation pursues this mission through dual goals: advancing inclusive economies that expand opportunities for more broadly shared prosperity, and building resilience by helping people, communities and institutions prepare for, withstand, and emerge stronger from acute shocks and chronic stresses. To achieve these goals, The Rockefeller Foundation works at the intersection of four focus areas – advance health, revalue ecosystems, secure livelihoods, and transform cities – to address the root causes of emerging challenges and create systemic change. Together with partners and grantees, The Rockefeller Foundation strives to catalyze and scale transformative innovations, create unlikely partnerships that span sectors, and take risks others cannot – or will not. To learn more, please visit www.rockefellerfoundation.org.

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