

Building Community Resilience for Times of Emergency

Report on PPNs Meeting in Portlaoise
17th July 2025



Lónraí Rannpháirtíochta Pobail Éireann
Public Participation Networks Ireland

The Genesis

Working on behalf of all PPNs, an Organising Committee of Tipperary, Leitrim and Laois PPNs initiated a nationwide engagement to look at how PPNs can assist in ensuring best possible readiness within communities for future emergency situations.



Methodolgy



An initial survey of all PPNs across the country was conducted in June/July 2025.



This was followed with a day-long national workshop event in Portlaoise, Co. Laois involving representatives and staff from across all PPNs on the 17th July 2025.



PPNs nationally wish to acknowledge the work of Dr. Harriet Emerson as facilitator at the national workshop event in Portlaoise and for her support in compiling this report.



The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) provided financial support for the national workshop event.

6 Themes

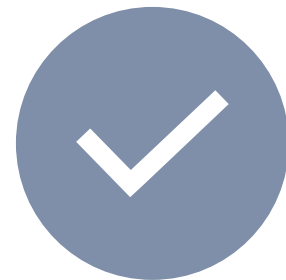
Both the survey and workshop used the following 6 themes to prompt discussion around the issue of emergency responses:



Communications



Mapping of
Community Resource
and Supports



Best practices used
by PPNs



Challenges faced by
PPNs



Best practice
collaborations



Future planning
suggestions



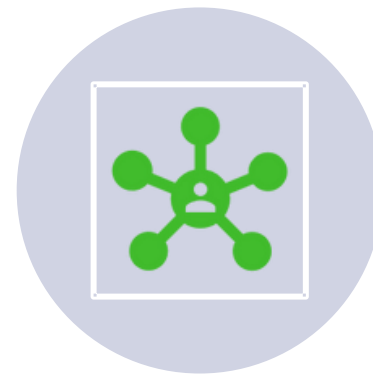
This Report

The survey submissions and workshop outputs were combined and analysed to generate a summary of experience of emergency responses to date and recommendations for improved future readiness.

Potential to enhance response & resilience



The PPNs have the largest data base of community groups and leaders in the Country.



These groups often provide the first response on the ground and critical supports to individuals and families.



PPNs and their member groups are ideally placed to support communications during times of emergency.



There is a clear appetite amongst community organisations to work with state agencies and service providers to ensure that future responses are as effective as possible.

What can PPNs do?



Co-ordinate logistics



Deliver training to enhance community resilience through community groups



Gather community feedback for evaluation of emergency responses to improve future preparedness and planning.



Facilitate partnerships between local authorities, emergency services and community organisations

What can PPNs do?



There is a strong desire amongst communities for support to enable them to become more resilient, and to achieve optimal readiness to cope under times of severe stress whatever the cause.



PPNs don't delivery emergency response services directly but they are ideally positioned to play a crucial co-ordination, support and communication role.

What can PPNs do?



Awareness-raising on emergency preparedness through campaigns, workshops, development of Emergency kits and neighbourhood watch systems.



Map community resources and supports available.



Conduct community audits to identify areas of vulnerability.



Input vital community feedback to emergency response plan development



Provide clear, timely, accurate and trusted communications during times of emergency



Co-ordinate of on-the-ground activities by community organisations and volunteers during emergencies

Summary of Recommendations



Government to direct the development of national policy governing the collaborative production of multi-stakeholder emergency response plans that incorporate community representation by the PPNs.



Government to provide resources and support for PPNs to engage fully in community-related elements of emergency response



Government to provide resources for an awareness-raising campaign for PPNs, highlighting their role in emergency planning and community support.

Meanwhile PPNs Should



Raise emergency planning and building community resilience for discussion at forthcoming plenaries, to include identifying what they can contribute to emergency planning and developing community resilience



Look for ways to reach out and establish communications with people who fall outside PPN groups, and to encourage all community groups to join the PPN



Identify and develop training to enhance and support community resilience



Ensure robustness of re-registration processes and that all data is fully up-to-date

Asks of DCRDG

01

Ensure that
Government
Departments & Local
Authorities include
PPNs in Emergency
Planning

02

Fund another
gathering with other
stakeholders to
understand and
strengthen PPN input
into Emergency
Planning

03

Understand that PPNs
are stretched and need
more resources