



# INVESTIGATING THE VALUE OF QUALITATIVE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS (QCA) IN RELATION TO THE DEFRA FLOOD RESILIENCE COMMUNITY PATHFINDER (FRCP) EVALUATION



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# OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

- 1. To apply **Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)** to an existing evaluation to assess its applicability and benefit in relation to the evaluation of interventions in nexus issues, specifically **flooding**.
- 2. To increase the ability to attribute causality in the context of **community resilience to flooding** by providing evidence on longer term impacts of the **Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder** scheme to Defra policy leads
- 3. To provide **greater insight** into which interventions to improve **community resilience to flooding** work under what **configuration of resilience/community/engagement factors**.
- 4. To provide a **practical example** of QCA in use on a **nexus issue** to enable learning and capacity building within **CECAN** and its **stakeholders**

# FLOOD RESILIENCE COMMUNITY PATHFINDERS

- Between April 2013 - March 2015 the UK Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs provided funding to test innovative community flood resilience interventions carried out by 13 local authorities across England.
- The interventions were intended to:
  - Quantifiably improve the community's overall resilience to flooding
  - Demonstrably improve financial resilience in relation to flooding
  - Deliver sustained improvements which could be applied elsewhere



# CHARACTERISTICS

13 Pathfinders  
Across England  
Range of scales  
All at risk  
Not all had  
seen flooding  
All LA led  
8 with NFF



# SO WHAT?

- Pathfinders carried out capacity building activities between 2013-2015 and were successful across resilience capacities within that timeframe (see Defra report Twigger-Ross et al, 2015)
- BUT what about the longer term? Did the pathfinder catalyse longer term processes of resilience building?
- AND if so is it possible to look at what happened during the pathfinder and show what factors lead to that longer term resilience building?



# RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

- From previous research in the area of flooding and climate change we have developed framework outlining the factors needed to enable **sustained community involvement in resilience building activities** where community resilience to shocks and stresses is broadly defined as:
  - *A set of capacities or resources that can be drawn upon by communities to address shocks and stresses so as to be able to sustain an acceptable level of community functioning*
  - Resilience building activities mean....
    - Communities working with local resources and local expertise
    - Capacities are developed to prepare and respond to, and to recover from emergencies
    - Resilience is the product of building capacity over domains: institutional, community capital, social, economic and infrastructure (after Cutter et al, 2010)

# RESEARCH QUESTION

- In addition to the definition of community resilience and resilience capacities previous research suggest four key areas relating to increased community engagement in resilience building activities:
  - Institutional embedding
  - Community capital
  - Catalyst for change
  - Consistent leadership
- QCA to test *“In what ways do these factors combine to “predict” sustained community involvement in flood risk management at 2017?”*



# RESEARCH APPROACH: DEVELOPING THE QCA

- Developed outcomes which include **sustained flood groups or wardens 2017** (community involvement in FRM) – indicated by
  - whether or not the community involvement activity i.e. flood group or flood wardens developed between 2013 – 2015 was still active in 2017
- Developed conditions – need to be clear about each and to be able to indicate presence or absence:
  - Institutional embedding = stable project management through the pathfinder between 2013-2015
  - Community capital = Presence of existing flood groups in area pre-2013
  - Catalyst for change = Community engagement specialist during pathfinder 2013 - 2015
  - Consistent leadership = Presence of project champion during the pathfinder 2013-2015
- Carried out QCA





# FINDINGS

- **OUTCOME:** Sustained community involvement in FRM at 2017 that was started by the pathfinder
- **Conditions:**
  - Presence of project champion during the pathfinder (PCHAMP, pchamp)
  - Community engagement specialist during pathfinder (COMSPEC, comspec)
  - Presence of existing flood groups in area pre-2013 (PREVFGRP, prevfgrp)
  - Project management stability through pathfinder (STABLEPM, stablepm)
- With QCA we can look at which combination of conditions are associated with presence and absence of the outcome and look at the different pathways to achieving those outcomes



# PROFILES OF PATHFINDER PROJECTS

Combination of factors	Number of cases	Outcome?	Name of pathfinder(s)
PCHAMP*COMSPEC*prevflodgrp*stablepm	2	Yes	Devon, Chesham
PCHAMP*comspec*PREVFLODGRP*STABLEPM	1	Yes	Cornwall
<del>pchamp*COMSPEC*PREVFLODGRP*stablepm</del>	<del>1</del>	<del>Yes</del>	<del>Calderdale</del>
PCHAMP*COMSPEC*PREVFLODGRP*STABLEPM	2	Yes	West Sussex and Warwickshire
PCHAMP*COMSPEC*prevflodgrp*STABLEPM	4	Yes	Southampton, Northampton, Rochdale, Liverpool
pchamp*COMSPEC*prevflodgroup*stablepm	2	Yes	Slough, Swindon
pchamp*comspec*prevflodgrp*STABLEPM	1	No	Blackburn

- Any combination of 2 or more of the conditions is linked to success
- For 6 of the projects three conditions together are linked with sustained community involvement in FRM: PCHAMP, COMSPEC, STABLEPM



# QCA FINDINGS

- But...outliers –in the 2 cases which only had the community engagement specialist key aspects:
  - Very local continuity – i.e one flood group
  - One area had existing community capital in the area plus ongoing contact with NFF (community capital)
  - The other area the Flood Action Group had been embedded into Parish Council once set up and ongoing contact with NFF (institutional embedding)
- Lack of sustained community involvement in FRM at 2017 linked to not having a Project Champion, a Community Engagement Specialist during the pathfinder or a pre-existing flood group.
- Shows role of key conditions and links back to framework



# NEXT STEPS...

- Further QCA work to get best fit for a range of outcomes
- Consider implications
- Write up and disseminate – Defra seminar
- THANK YOU!
- If you want more information then do contact Clare Twigger-Ross at [c.twigger-ross@cep.co.uk](mailto:c.twigger-ross@cep.co.uk)

