



## Hazard Reduction & Recovery Center

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### #HRRRC30for30

#### “Inequities in Long-Term Housing Recovery after Disasters”

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Post-disaster decisions can worsen or correct existing social inequalities. The distribution of housing within a community shows the unequal amounts and quality of services and resources available to an area. Natural disasters enlarge and speed up processes already happening in communities. As a result, the conditions of a community that are already in place can help predict what the conditions will be like after a disaster. The nature of resilience is first reducing the damage: if we lessen damage, there are less issues of restoration and recovery.

#### Findings

This study reports observed work from 1992's Hurricane Andrew in Miami-Dade (FL) and 2008's Hurricane Ike in Galveston (TX) to assess patterns in housing recovery over a long period of time. Communities who include hazard planning in their comprehensive planning efforts have better outcomes than those who keep those functions separate. Housing unit and neighborhood data allows for analysis of how fast recovery happens in different neighborhoods, populations, and housing types. The study finds that housing recovery is very uneven for different population groups and that social vulnerability factors operate differently in separate settings. Overcoming these inequalities requires a three-part approach: incorporate hazard reduction and disaster recovery into complete planning, increase housing choice and direct recovery assistance to those who need it most.

#### Implications

This study reports observed work from 1992's Hurricane Andrew in Miami-Dade (FL) and 2008's Hurricane Ike in Galveston (TX) to assess patterns in housing recovery over a long period of time. Communities who include hazard planning in their comprehensive planning efforts have better outcomes than those who keep those functions separate. Housing unit and neighborhood data allows for analysis of how fast recovery happens in different neighborhoods, populations, and housing types. The study finds that housing recovery is very uneven for different population groups and that social vulnerability factors operate differently in separate settings. Overcoming these inequalities requires a three-part approach: incorporate hazard reduction and disaster recovery into complete planning, increase housing choice and direct recovery assistance to those who need it most.

#### Takeaway for practice

“Effective land use policy and building codes can reduce physical vulnerability and ultimately damage, thus enhancing resilience for all. Differentials in impact and recovery trajectories suggest that assessment and the monitoring of recovery is critical to target resources to areas that are lagging. Perhaps most important is having an effective plan in place that addresses housing recovery issues to help reduce long-term consequences. Pre-event planning for housing and social change can help support community vision and overcome inequities.”