

**COMMUNITY-BASED
PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION FOR
EMERGENCY MANAGERS

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE**

THESE MATERIALS WERE PREPARED THROUGH A CONTRACT FROM THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA), THE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE DIRECTORATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS). THE MATERIALS ARE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCE AND COUNSEL OF COMMUNITIES, FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS, AND EMERGENCY MANAGERS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY.

Instructor's Guide

Introduction to Partnerships in Pre-Disaster Mitigation

When it comes to disaster, emergency managers and community-based and faith-based organizations (CBOs and FBOs) have long operated within certain traditional roles. Emergency managers are typically focused on emergency operations and technical solutions. They are burdened with too much to do and too few resources. In many cases, emergency managers have their hands full maintaining a decent state of preparedness and responding when disaster occurs. They generally work with volunteers in well-defined circumstances during and after disasters.

CBOs and FBOs are accustomed to deploying volunteers and services in disaster relief and recovery. Food, shelter, blankets, the organization of volunteer resources, and the provision of human warmth and comfort are their areas of expertise.

There is a growing trend around the country for emergency managers to cooperate with CBOs and FBOs in a different kind of partnership. Community-based mitigation programs concentrate on ongoing efforts that can lessen the impact disasters have on people and property. These programs capitalize on the distinct and separate strengths that emergency managers and CBOs/FBOs offer.

Emergency managers provide access to:

- Funding available through government mitigation grant programs
- Government-based expertise and technical know-how
- Deep understanding of local risks and mitigation needs
- Current status of mitigation within the community
- Access to government expertise and resources at the local, state, regional and federal level

CBOs and FBOs offer:

- Immense volunteer capacity
- Understanding of community needs and awareness of the most vulnerable populations
- Built-in credibility with the community
- Access to social and population groups that may avoid interaction with government officials
- The power of persuasion and community influence
- The ability to make decisions outside of government processes

The benefits of emergency management and CBO/FBO partnerships are enormous. They include the following:

- Emergency management and CBO/FBO partnerships support the reduction of disaster risk, even in highly resource-constrained situations.
- Mitigation activities can keep experienced volunteers active and enthusiastic even in times when their special disaster response and recovery skills are not needed.
- Opportunities exist to bring a whole new group of volunteers into play.

- Program activities maintain community interest and increase awareness regarding disaster risk reduction and preparedness.
- Community members acquire a sense of empowerment through reducing their disaster risk. They buy in at the grassroots level.
- The partnerships and relationships built through such programs further strengthen community bonds.
- When disaster does strike, response and recovery efforts are likely to proceed more smoothly because people know each other, damage and loss are reduced due to mitigation activities, and citizens are apt to be more prepared as a result of their increased disaster consciousness.

Both emergency managers and CBOs/FBOs will be challenged by cultural and organizational differences when they step beyond traditional roles to form these new partnerships. Leadership and operational styles may vary widely. The mission of each group will vary distinctly, both within the CBO and FBO community, and between emergency managers and CBOs/FBOs. For example, emergency managers generally operate within a command-and-control, fairly hierarchical decision-making and leadership framework. On the other hand, CBOs and FBOs are likely to have decision processes that are less structured and potentially more consensus-based. For any partnership to succeed, it is important for each group to understand the cultural values and viewpoints of their partners, and to honor and respect them.

A Caveat on Community-Based Mitigation Programs

If your community chooses to either establish a community-based mitigation program – or to enhance an existing partnership between emergency managers and CBOs/FBOs – it's critical that CBOs/FBOs understand the importance of ongoing coordination and consistent communication with emergency managers.

Because emergency managers are charged formally with the task of community disaster preparedness, response, and mitigation, volunteer efforts must dovetail with the official plans either in place or underway. Volunteer support should be viewed as the asset it is. Emergency managers need to stay in the loop to forestall misunderstandings or even a situation in which volunteer activities impede progress. CBO and FBO volunteers can achieve optimum results when working in partnership with emergency managers and in accordance with official Community Mitigation Plans.

Workshop Purpose

The Community-based Pre-Disaster Mitigation for Emergency Managers training materials are designed to help Emergency Management personnel reduce their mitigation workload by engaging CBOs and FBOs in pre-disaster mitigation activities and projects. The curricula are designed to help emergency managers learn ways to engage CBOs and FBOs in creating and sustaining community-based mitigation programs.

Workshop Objectives

As a result of participating in the workshop, participants should be able to:

- Describe the roles that CBOs/FBOs are capable of playing in pre-disaster mitigation activities.
- Determine mitigation projects/activities in which CBOs/FBOs can participate.

- Understand ways that emergency managers and CBOs/FBOs can work together to make their communities safer and more disaster-resistant.

Ultimately, if participants are interested in establishing a community-based pre-disaster mitigation program, they should be encouraged to develop a brief list of group objectives and a plan of action. A timeframe of about 90 days is reasonable for organizing the group and initiating planning activities. Basic issues should be determined, such as meeting dates, times, and locations, as well as the initial objectives to be accomplished.

Modular Workshop Curriculum and Delivery Methods

The curriculum is modular and is intended to be used either in whole or in part. No real changes or modifications are needed for communities of varying size. In a very large city, however, it makes sense to organize programs such as these by neighborhood or community regions of reasonable size.

Introductory Workshop

The Introductory Workshop can be used several ways:

- By itself as an introduction to community-based mitigation; presented to general audiences, emergency managers, CBOs, or FBOs. (It is suitable as a luncheon or breakfast presentation or brief presentation at a group meeting.)
- As an introduction to any single module of the curriculum
- As an introduction to the entire workshop series

Section 1

If all modules are offered in a series, Section 1 can be offered as the initial workshop instead of the Introductory Workshop. Some discussion items are duplicated between Section 1 and the Introductory Workshop.

Sections 1 – 8

Each of the modules can be offered individually, in combination with any other, or in a partial or complete series. If a group needs to target a particular topic, such as resources, that module can be offered separately.

Delivery Methods

The entire series can be accomplished in a concentrated three-day workshop. Alternatively, the modules can be spread over a period of weeks, with one or more modules delivered per week.

Each module can generally be delivered in two hours or less, depending on the number of participants and the degree of interaction involved in the exercises. Thus, if structured as a night or evening course, one workshop module can be delivered in an evening.

Three to four modules can be delivered in the course of a full day, or a 1/2-day session could incorporate one to two modules.

Individual modules can be offered within a two-hour luncheon program or brown bag setting.

Workshop Planning

Community needs should be considered when organizing and planning the delivery of a single module or the entire series. Factors to address include the following:

- Sufficient advance notice to promote good attendance – invitations can be issued via mail, email, posting in locations where members of target audiences gather, in local newsletters or newspapers, or on web sites. Follow-up phone calls can help ensure commitment and attendance.
- Times of day and days of the week that suit the schedules of the target audiences (the same courses can be offered at two separate times to accommodate day workers and night workers, for example).
- Convenient location, accessible by public transportation if possible
- Security, particularly if programs are offered at night
- Research on the full range of groups and individuals you want to invite – strive for inclusiveness

Workshop Materials

All workshops can be conducted with limited resources. A blackboard, dry erase board, or flip chart prepared ahead of time with key points of the curriculum can serve as a visual aid. As an alternative, the PowerPoint slides can be used in simple overhead projection format or can be displayed electronically using an LCD projector. As a minimum, the instructor will need a writing surface such as a blackboard, dry erase board, or flip chart, and appropriate writing instruments for the surface.

Group Brainstorming Activities

Most of the sessions involve group brainstorming activities. Cardstorming is a simple and inexpensive group brainstorming technique. Participants record information on index cards, which are posted on a wall or other surface within the training room. Drafting or masking tape can be used to post the cards. If the room has a tackable wall (fabric, etc.), thumb tacks or push pins can be used. Sheets of paper cut in half can be substituted for the index cards. The cardstorming technique is an excellent addition to the workshops.

PowerPoint Slides

PowerPoint slides are provided to accompany the training modules. The slides can be used as a guide for the workshops. They follow the sequence of the workshop activities and instructional material provided in the Instructor's Guide and Student Manual. Many of the slides include notes that the instructor can use to structure group and individual activities included with the instructional materials.

The only additional materials needed are the Instructor's Guide and Student Manual. The information provided here supplements the Student Manual, and offers instructional techniques and tips for the individual workshops.

Curriculum Icons

The Instructor's Guide and the Student Manual contain various icons to help guide users through the curriculum:



This icon appears next to brainstorming activities.



This icon appears with special notes to the instructor.



This icon appears when additional material is available in the Resource Guide.

Natural vs. Human-Caused Hazards and Disasters



Resource Guide: Given recent world events, many of us are more concerned than ever with human-caused hazards and disasters. This course is designed to empower groups and communities to proactively address hazards of all types. However, the curriculum case studies and tools focus on addressing natural hazards and disasters. Should your group wish to focus more on human-caused hazards, work closely with your local emergency manager and other local organizations such as Citizen Corps. Information on Citizen Corps is available in the Resource Guide.