

National Philanthropy Summit
Convened by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University and
McCormick Foundation Conference Series

Planning Disaster: The Role of Philanthropy in Anticipating and Responding
October 12-14, 2009
Cantigny, Illinois

Summary of sessions

Panel 1. First aid: Is emergency disaster relief a philanthropic strategy?

Catherine Brown, Senior Director, Communities Program, McCormick Foundation

Valerie Keller, CEO, Outreach Center

Walter Sweet, Director, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors

Moderator: Patrick Rooney, Executive Director, The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University.

Questions

- a.) How does a nonprofit organization decide whether or not to fund emergency disaster relief?
- b.) Should philanthropy be directed more toward strategic giving in anticipation of a disaster?
- c.) What do we know (what should we know) about the differences between strategic philanthropy in anticipating disaster and in heart-felt charitable responses to disaster as it is occurring?
- d.) What motivates individuals, foundations, or corporations to give or not give to disaster relief and build civic health of a community so that it is prepared before a disaster occurs?

Discussion

While first noting the value of the participants' diverse backgrounds, the emergency disaster relief discussion focused on five major areas of importance: communication; coordination; strategic versus heart-felt charitable giving; opportunities and roles for funders (e.g., capacity building); and the potential challenges and roles of nonprofits and other constituencies.

Communication

Good communications were identified as key for any level of success in disaster relief efforts. It was noted that we can't assume anything about how local service providers will get the information they need and that a lack of a good communication process underlies all successful relief efforts.

Coordination

One panelist stated that the U.S. has enough resources, but what we lack is coordination and how and when resources are deployed. The panelists noted the importance of how and when we

connect resources and that a lack of coordination causes more suffering with or without an emergency.

Strategic giving and heart-felt charitable responses

The group noted that volunteers will always respond to disasters and that these volunteers are most often motivated by heart-felt emotions rather than strategic giving impulses. It was stated that volunteers think of themselves as the first responders. A key learning for the group included the importance for organizations to clearly explain a reason and timeframe for giving that will harness this generosity and turn it into thoughtful giving. It was noted that some funders responded more effectively to disasters by allocating funds after the initial short-term disasters to invest in communities for longer-term, capacity building efforts. This also allowed for the opportunity to leverage matching funds.

Opportunities and roles for funders

Several roles were identified for funders to fill before, during, and after disasters. This included the opportunity to find a new role for philanthropists to rethink how society reallocates resources. Using the Katrina disaster as an example, it was noted that resources were not always allocated effectively or efficiently. This resulted in limited resources for recovery and rebuilding. It was noted that there was a disconnect between the allocation of resources and those on the ground that needed support. This was seen as a missed opportunity to enhance capacity at organizations. Instead of building capacity, funders were viewed as providing —cash|| which lead to —credit and control|| by whoever received the cash. Philanthropy can revamp its role to avoid giving locals the —cash, credit, and control.||

To build capacity, philanthropy needs to invest in the social services that are on the ground and help them scale back up and become sustainable. Other ideas included providing a technology platform, providing funding for workers on the ground, and coordinating volunteers. The importance of funders speaking with local community leaders was noted as funders could be tempted to step in for nonprofits and could end up duplicating services. It was noted that to accomplish great things you need a plan and a sense of urgency.

Challenges and roles for nonprofit organizations and other constituencies

It was stated that the work involved is complex and requires clear leadership and expectations. The issue of who decides what recovery looks like was discussed. While it was noted that public opinion often determines what recovery efforts should be undertaken, it was also stated that the public cannot fill the role of experts on what needs to be done and what and how it happens.

The need for effective case management systems and technology platforms at nonprofits was identified as nonprofits need to track outcome and performance measurements. It was noted that this is a network issue that involves systemic and operational tracks. The requirement that we put a lot of energy into making sure the wrong people don't get help and that disasters magnify communities' already existing challenges were noted.

Panel 2. Breaking news: How media shape the philanthropic response to disaster

Ted Canova, Partner, JTM Vision

Liza McFadden, Volunteer, USA Foundation

Jacqui Salmon, Reporter, The Washington Post

Anzio Williams, News Director, KCRA Sacramento

Moderator: James Bright, Winslow Visiting Professor, School of Journalism, Indiana University

Questions

- a.) How do the media shape the philanthropic and public response to disaster and what is their collective moral responsibility?
- b.) What makes a disaster important?
- c.) Who declares a —natural disaster|| and what does this designation mean?
- d.) What role do media play in assessing and characterizing the response to disaster?
- e.) What is the emerging role of citizen reporting and junk journalism|| in shaping public response?
- f.) And what impact do media have on the —completion|| of a disaster?

Discussion

The discussion highlighted five major areas including: the importance of pre-planning for media relations; the accelerated news cycle and increased level of information needed; the ‘usual’ story requirements; disconnects in expectations that can occur; and attracting and retaining media attention during a disaster.

Pre-planning requirements

The need for developing good media relations before a disaster strikes was noted as vital. It was stated that pre-planning is required as —a disaster is not the day you should exchange phone numbers with the media.|| This idea was reinforced by noting that the —answer is to manage communications today|| and that —it is important to have a relationship on the front-end.||

Accelerated news cycle and level of information needed

The ever accelerating news cycle was identified as a critical issue. It was stated that, —you need everything yesterday.|| This was further clarified by noting that —a ‘no comment’ response to a request for information doesn’t make the problem go away.|| It was emphasized that your initial response is critical; you must —seize the moment.|| Also, during a crisis, the amount of communication required can be enormous. Media outlets are looking for everything —they can get their hands on|| immediately. The lack of understanding of —what nonprofits do|| from the onset was also identified as a major issue. It was agreed that —most reporters don't understand what nonprofits do.||

Story requirements

It was stated that disasters occur all the time and that we have the experience to be able —to know what the storylines will be.|| We, therefore, should be prepared to respond accordingly. Advice was given to —always focus on what's new, what's now, what's next.|| The media and the public want to know —who to blame|| and who are the —heroes.|| They also want to know —how can I help|| and where is the money going. It was noted that it is important to —find ways to tell stories that address these points.|| It is also important to —tell the 52-week story even if you only get to

tell the story 8 times.|| A —creative visual story|| is best. It was noted that sometimes there is a conflict between what makes —good press|| versus what is —good policy.||

The common disaster storyline/news cycle includes an initial need to define and describe the disaster followed by a description of the beginning efforts to provide relief. Eventually, this is often followed by stories about —people's disappointment in the relief provided|| and later on with —criticism about organizations that didn't provide the expected relief services.||

It was advised that nonprofits should realize that they —don't need to have the same authority over the message that you did five years ago.|| This is an age of "citizen journalism" wherein you can —let volunteers ramp up the message if you're frustrated with mainstream journalism.|| Plus, —social media provides an outlet to help your volunteers to shape the message.|| You can —link the media back to your story.|| Some participants noted the importance to —write your message for your own audience; write for _your people' and see where that message goes.||

Disconnect in expectations

It was noted that sometimes the information that is reported —makes it harder for organizations to do their work.|| There can be a —disconnect in expectations|| between the public and the disaster responders. While service providers may be aware of the existing disaster systems with defined processes and procedures that include a required a time lag in getting things done, the public may not have these same expectations and understandings. When people are desperate for services during a disaster, their expectations are increased and their need for a response is accelerated. During such times, it is not enough and not advantageous for the media to say —things are working.|| The media is often —criticized for an over-emphasis on philanthropy.||

Attracting and retaining media

It was noted that it is expensive to keep media on site —because as soon as the hype ends, the media is pulled out.|| —Communities move on because they are exhausted by disaster.|| Participants stated that continued coverage is —all being driven by traffic, such as traffic on web sites.|| For media to stay with a story, they must be able to keep the public interested so that funding is available. One comment made to illustrate this point was that —the days of Walter Cronkite are over; we are fighting for ratings and our lives.||

It is important to figure out how to attract the public and thus the media. This was illustrated with the comment that —we need to determine how you motivate the public to eat their vegetables?|| One panelist noted that, —I don't have problem getting radio or research any day of the year all over the country. We're always pitching. It's not the day-to-day issues we have trouble with. Disasters are different. If it's not bigger than Katrina, then the media is not interested.|| Some voiced concerns with the —ratings wars to see which weather man can put himself in the most dangerous storm as a major pitfall|| to securing media. It was also noted that television stations —won't run NPO Web site addresses on the crawl because it detracts from the station and affects media advertising.|| The notion that it is becoming more and more difficult to keep media attention on disasters was discussed.

Most unfortunately, when disaster relief services work well (when they have been properly funded and organized), participants noted that —no one cares.|| As such, the —media isn't concerned|| and limited coverage often follows. The media and public are only interested —when

the disaster response breaks down.|| For example, non-governmental relief efforts could not —get mentioned during the California fires|| because the media was busy waiting to see if government messed up. —The cameras followed the government around|| while the government tried to show —how great we are and how much we've improved."

Panel 3. Pass the plate: Influencing ethical fundraising for disaster relief

Diana Aviv, President and CEO, Independent Sector

Major George Hood, National Community Relations & Development Secretary, The Salvation Army

Jeffrey Towers, Chief Development Officer, American Red Cross

Moderator: Una Osili, Interim Director of Research, The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University

Questions

- a.) What influences fundraising for disasters?
- b.) Is it trust in the responding organizations, donor fatigue, donor betrayal, or media attention?
- c.) Do we know enough about disaster philanthropy to ensure accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency?
- d.) What capacity do donors have for assessing, in turn, the capacity and capability of responders to act effectively, immediately, and responsibly?

Discussion

Panel three focused on the importance of nonprofits establishing and maintaining public trust, the impact of donors increasingly choosing to designate their gifts, the conflict between strategic and mission driven responses, and the use of collaboration during disaster relief efforts.

Public Trust

Public trust and the need for confidence in nonprofits by donors were identified as the most important assets nonprofits need. This trust and confidence is especially important during a disaster to secure support. One participant commented that, —Reputations should be preserved based on a trust factor.|| It was mentioned that there is exists a reluctance by donors to give internationally because of a mistrust of international organizations, especially those with —too many intermediaries.||

Gift Designation

Nonprofit representatives noted the new dilemmas presented by the use of donor gift designation. It was stated that gift designation was —especially challenging in disaster response.|| One representative stated that his organization had —struggled with overstating the agency's involvement|| and with the —language|| used to raise funds. This resulted in a —struggle between honoring the respect of the donor and the needs of the community.|| The participants acknowledged that —donor interests have changed|| and that this was —evidenced by UWA|| with the changes in the increased number of —donor designated versus undesigned|| gifts. From a related perspective, how big does a disaster have to be for a funder to support it? Can there be a signaling mechanism to help educate funders?

Strategic and mission driven responses

One participant noted that —sometimes disaster response isn't strategic|| and that —disaster work is not a part of our strategic direction to produce revenue|| but rather —it's part of our DNA|| and —mission-fulfillment.|| He commented that, —We don't want to be known as a disaster organization; that's the Red Cross's job.|| His organization's efforts included determining —what the next —donut|| is; what provides —the comfort and gesture of appreciation for support?|| He

questioned, —Is it disaster services?|| and noted that —you cannot segment humanity.|| He also noted the on-going question of how to —measure success.|| He stated that critics would define success as —the day that we raised more money than Red Cross,|| but that success is really —when we cared for people the way they needed to be cared for.||

Collaboration

The conversation began with the acknowledgment that there was —a criticism of nonprofit organizations during Katrina|| because of a —duplication of services rather than collaboration.|| It was noted that, —collaboration is more than just dividing a budget||; it is —working on a common goal|| which —is very hard because there is competition among nonprofit organizations.|| —Collaboration doesn't necessarily mean you have to give up something; but rather includes —negotiation and bargaining.|| It was stated that —if there is some mission or project that is common, it need not be a win-lose, it can be a win-win.|| However, participants were reminded that —not all collaboration works.|| If pushed, could a business model be sustained to be as effective as we want to be? Currently, it often appears that we are totally decentralized.

Panel 4. Lead, follow, or get out of the way: Determining roles and responsibilities before disaster strikes

Angela Blanchard, President and CEO, Neighborhood Centers, Inc.

Linda Daily, Director 2-1-1, United Way of America

Susan Jensen, Voluntary Agency Coordinator, FEMA Region V

John Lyter, CEO, American Red Cross of Greater Indianapolis

Moderator: Michael McGuire, Associate Professor, The School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University

Questions

- a.) What and who facilitates collaboration?
- b.) How should leadership be distributed across levels of government and between organizations for disaster planning, response, and recovery?
- c.) What capacities must leaders have to prepare for collaborative activity?

Discussion

The discussion focused on four areas of concern: leadership, the on-the-ground environment during a disaster, collaboration and partnerships, and plans for the future.

Leadership

—Leadership is the most important resource in a disaster. You can't predict when it will show up, but you can predict leadership will show up. We can draw lots of contracts and funding, but we can't discount the power of personalities.|| —There will always be something you don't expect during disaster.|| At those moments, leadership is what matters, but also grace. In our efforts to —avoid pain, do things right, better, faster,|| —we forget what grace is necessarily.||

On-the-ground environment

After Katrina, everyone was completely confused. For the average family in the disaster prone area, they didn't know who to count on for what. The families didn't know how long they would have to be on their own. During a disaster the —public wants facts|| and —information about well-being

Collaboration/partnerships

An effective response requires a recovery plan and long-term recovery partners. We need to understand —everyone has competing agendas|| and that —nonprofits are undercapitalized.|| One key question is —what can we all afford to take care of?|| An important resource is a —coordinated assistance network|| with a —long-standing recovery committee|| that —defines roles and responsibilities and jointly seeks resources.||

It was noted that the —government is not known for its ability to collaborate.|| Rather their response is —that's not what we do.|| Or, it's —this is your job.|| Government assigns —other agencies to do specific work. They —don't partner with agencies for bang for your buck or key partnerships.|| They partner because they need a service. There is a —big difference between leadership and responsibility; government is responsible legally and money flows top-down through FEMA.|| It was noted as important to remember that —when state and local government resources are exhausted, that's when FEMA gets involved.|| One participant stated the

importance of —the idea of public private partnership.|| —We love to see that|| and how that works and happens.

Plans for the future

It was suggested that the —philanthropic community should look at Project Impact 2 and look at updating the original Project Impact, especially in light of the changing administrations.|| —This would create a network effect to promote disaster preparedness and sustainability.|| One participant commented that —the best disaster responses are the ones you don't notice.|| It was stated that —what we originally created wasn't sustainable,|| but —it's just exciting to hear making it more of a partnership.||

It was also noted that participants would —love to learn how the Congressional Charter got set-up and how that might play out now|| given how the —the transition from Clinton to Bush had an impact on how the technical FEMA staff looked at how to do some stuff.||

Another idea suggested included —VISA as a partner|| that would provide —proceeds to a local community.|| —As a small business, if you qualify for the FEMA small business model, you would qualify for a tax credit or supplemental loan after a disaster without having to do the paperwork.|| The money normally received as checks, would go to the local community and guarantee an extra line of credit.

Other issues/comments

—Sometimes we aren't stupid but we are blind when starting with a clean slate each time.|| What has made preparedness successful is idea of building a covenant w/ a community. Those covenants are what made preparedness work in areas like Seattle: community ownership.

Panel 5. Prepared for the Future

John Davies, President, Baton Rouge Area Foundation

Diana Rothe-Smith, National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

Margaret Wheatley, Consultant, Margaret Wheatley Inc.

Leslie Wright, Director of Community Impact, United Way of East Central Iowa

Moderator: William Schneider, The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University

Questions

a.) How do we achieve civic health in preparing for disasters?

b.) How ready are we and what should we be doing to get ready for disaster in our own community?

Discussion

Multiple topics were discussed including the different organizational models for disaster response; the importance of pre-planning, permanent funds, and addressing the psychological needs of disaster victims; mass relocation; the use of academic learning and related studies; the need for identifying and funding local leaders; and the potential for creating a disaster response playbook.

Organizational models: Cedar Rapids floods

In one example, the Cedar Rapids, Iowa floods of 2008, there was an effective disaster response where no 501(c) (3) organization was created. Instead, the key organizing body included eight core organizations that worked closely with affiliate organizations to provide relief services. The following items were mentioned in relation to this example.

1. Structure – It was critical that there was no executive director hired or 501(c) (3) status created. Time was spent assessing capacity of organizations and knowing who fit in where in each area.
2. Funders expected that the bulk of funds would be completely spent shortly after the disaster. FEMA was on site within hours because of a nearby smaller disaster. The McCormick Foundation provided funding that allowed key partnerships to form. There was fabulous support from the Red Cross. There was early money and then a mid-term slowdown as people waited for a —jumpstart.|| The people mentoring relief organizers warned about dispersing money to families too early as that might disqualify them for later support. It was hard to balance —spend your money|| versus —make it right.||
3. Opportunities: The jumpstart team allowed for the opportunity to help the most vulnerable families to get assistance first.
4. Leadership requires showing up and understanding the implications of not saying —yes.|| Immediately post-disaster, many organizations exist/are created. The geography, sense of boundaries and service area define communications, relationships and issues. The Cedar Rapids floods were very different from what happened in the Gulf Coast. There were smaller entities and different relationships.

Organizational models: Louisiana and Katrina

One outcome of Katrina was creation of the Louisiana Recovery Authority. It is a support federation; a separate 501(c) (9) used to raise money and do planning on several levels. It hired

the best town planners available, the Center for Planning Excellence, to create a master plan for Lake Charles, including St. Bernard Parish. They discovered that there was no major, long-term plan Louisiana. An —LA Speaks Program|| was developed that included a master plan for southern Louisiana. Over 35,000 voted on town plans and issues such as who has the right to determine if government can take command for the safety of individuals. The overwhelming response was yes. LA Speaks has developed principles for growth in various regions.

Members of the LRA hoped to institutionalize LA Speaks and start planning with the Louisiana Governor's office so that the Baton Rouge Community Foundation could pull pack and have the Louisiana government implement the plan. It was mentioned that Louisiana has unique issues, especially related to property ownership and what to do with property ownership of flooded land.

It was noted that in the wake of a disaster, especially once the adrenaline subsided, the program helped change the dialogue to _visioning the community.' The result was that lots of disappointments gave way to the opportunity to talk about the vision by program. New energy developed around recovery that was important in creating a public dialogue about visioning something new.

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD)

The work of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) was discussed. NVOAD is a membership agency for organizations with a focus on disaster. It is a domestic organization that considers itself —the United Nations of disaster recovery.|| It was stated that the agency does not coordinate its members, but rather creates a space for them to work. The Yukon River flooding disaster in Alaska was given as an example. The river floods every spring, but in 2009 the flood was bigger than usual with some towns being destroyed in hours. Volunteers were sent to assist, but no one knew who was in charge or what was going on. Emergent leaders came forward to lead the rebuilding efforts. These leaders did not possess formal leadership roles, but they had personal experiences and the abilities to gather people and groups together and encourage collaboration. They identified what the state and FEMA would support and anticipated the need for volunteers to address issues that the governmental entities would not address. It is important to honor emergent leadership and community engagement. We need to learn from this model. It comes down to having some knowledge, writing it down, and pushing it forward. We need to determine how we can sustain such momentum after the disaster.

Pre-disaster planning

The importance of having a response plan in place to accomplish an accelerated recovery was emphasized. These plans should involve building connections across state and sectors. The amount of time it takes time to form the relationships necessary to accomplish the preplanning was noted. Another participant stated that it doesn't require waiting for someone else, but rather just stepping up and focusing on the community. It was also stated that the planning should include addressing problems that existed (e.g., poverty) prior to the disaster to ensure we don't have —the same community we had before|| the event. The crisis is also an opportunity to ask the tough question, such as —what needed to be fixed before the disaster?|| Longer term planning was noted as absent —because we don't know how to plan for a chaotic world.||

Permanent fund

It was noted that it would be helpful to establish a permanent fund that could respond to disasters. Making the case for such a fund should be easy if you're open and candid about what

you're doing and the guidelines of fund use are general and flexible. Many people understand the need for this type of fund. Others could be encouraged to donate to such a fund through disaster education programs.

Psychological needs

It was noted that mental health needs must be talked about, but that the obstacles to talk about it are enormous. Mental health counseling, especially multi-generational treatment, was mentioned as necessary for disaster victims. Trauma affects families so —we need to do more than make resources available, we need to put information in people's faces and say —you need to do this.|| Otherwise, the —damage is so long-lasting that it will ruin us. Part of the issue is that people's culture has been taken away during a disaster. What do you say to people whose culture is falling into the ocean? It is important that we focus on the well being of those affected by disasters. We do not focus enough on talking about grief or loss of culture. It was emphasized that that it was a myth that —you will only address disaster-caused human needs|| in disaster response. —There's no line to draw that delineates that —this is all I do.||

The American Red Cross created a psychological first aid approach that empowers people to do some very basic things. This approach is gaining traction, but it needs to be a more foundational approach from the beginning. This needs to be put in the hands of anyone who is able and willing. Another effort to address the psychological first aid of clients was created through a Human Services program at in Illinois. Clients receive internal and external training, family disaster planning. psychological first aid is imbedded which builds empathy and community.

Mass relocation

As an extreme example of future planning, an institute on mass relocation of people was suggested. It was noted that we are kidding ourselves if we don't study mass relation in a non-emotional way (e.g., New Orleans will be under water again in 100 years.) NGOs in the Philippines have done this. If we don't study psycho-social, economic, immigration and legal aspects of disaster relocation, we will be unprepared for the most serious consequences.

Academic learning and studies

It was suggested that we institutionalize learning through academic centers. Examples given were: the Stephenson Disaster Management Institute at LSU; the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University School of Public Health; and Paul Simon and Irwin Redlener's Children's Health Fund which developed disaster planning protocols.

One participant stated that there is more than enough knowledge about disaster, about immediate relief and recovery and what is required, but that the real question is —what are we going to do about it?|| It is not sufficient to exchange ideas and resources. We need to shift the paradigm of how we think about leadership. We all come from formal institutions that run counter to many of the lessons for future needs. We do not live in a society that favors collaboration. The serious set of questions concern how to redesign how funding gets done, what work the community agencies do, and how do coalitions form. How are we going to move from here? How do we make —counter-cultural changes if we are going to be prepared for the coming years?

Identifying and funding leaders

In Louisiana following Katrina there was a heightened sense of awareness that what we had wasn't working; the Baton Rouge Community Foundation took a leadership role without waiting for the government. They led a planning process.

It was noted that the neighborhoods that recovered most quickly were those that had networks and connections and the ability to take back control of their lives. It is important to focus on building the resilience of communities. An important question is, —How do you go into communities and encourage people’s sense of themselves as powerful actors as agents of change?|| It was noted that we are often actors acting upon the people we serve. Another question asked was, —How do we mentor people so it is not just about money, but rather helping people to identify what their own leadership looks like?|| We have helped create a community where people believe someone else will arrive with a solution – academic element is —studying, determining, and delivering a response|| – how do I go out to neighborhoods? But community leaders see themselves as actors in a solution – all the best intentions

Some philanthropists put money into a block-by-block recovery strategy because we have to start where people are. Can we just go in and tell people they are leaders? If I wear a funder and volunteer agency hat – how do I decide to invest in people? It was noted that success is when a volunteer has lived through a disaster and knows how to respond to it by experience. One obstacle noted to this approach was that in some geographic areas, such as Iowa, repetitive learning does not occur. The challenge was that people had to come in to tell us how to respond to disaster. Nonetheless, we need to identify who holds local knowledge. In some cases, this is the elders of an area. You know who to call and honor them by naming them as experts. They hold important knowledge and experience. Identifying them is easy to do if you go looking for them. One participant emphasized that we need to build the local resources so we don’t get mired in the tasks of recovery.

The —Beacon of Hope|| program in Galveston followed a —neighbor to neighbor|| approach and was a source of information and knowledge in the aftermath of the 2008 hurricane. This brought up the question about migration and how migration of people works against retaining knowledge learned within a community. A —Neighbors Helping Neighbors|| program also helped identify leaders in Galveston. It is important that we recognize local leadership, culture, and identity.

Playbook

It was noted that when the next —Cedar Rapids|| is struck by an event, we will act like we’ve never done recovery before. It was stated that we all know we need a playbook. Congress has been all over FEMA to create a national recovery framework. The ARC hasn’t been involved in this. Everyone hoped it would be a playbook and instead it was a framework. Participants wondered if they could create this playbook. It was noted that there was enough experience in the room to create a framework to take it to the next level down and be a key player in creating a playbook. One participant commented that we don’t need FEMA to do a framework; we all know with our work with recovering families that FEMA isn’t where recovery happens. It is happening with nonprofits and other social service organizations.

It was mentioned that case studies are being conducted on case management to try to identify the best models. Houston is a part of this. The challenge is to create a case model that starts with a storm. It needs to raise the level of data.

It was suggested that we engage nonfederal partners with a kickoff meeting in the last month and have a draft of a framework circulated for review. The framework ought to include the doctrine of where FEMA is coming from and what FEMA can bring to the table with an emphasis on summaries and details about various models.

Concluding Plenary. Planning Disaster: Next Steps

Walter Sweet, Director, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors

Margaret Wheatley, President Emerita, The Berkana Institute

Moderator: Patrick M. Rooney, Executive Director, The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University

Questions

- a.) What have we learned?
- b.) What do we need to do now?
- c.) Is there a research agenda that should be defined?
- d.) Should there be a donor —bill of rights?||
- e.) Should there be directives for the responsibility of local communities to prepare for disaster by having a plan for coordination, for donations, for volunteers, and communication?
- f.) Who should issue such directives?

Discussion

In a broad ranging discussion, the questions served as a way of eliciting and developing many issues raised in earlier sessions. The following topics were subjects of broad comment if not agreement.

Points of contention

Lack of cooperation causes long delays and lines. The inability to collaborate and cooperate can inflict greater harm than the original disaster.

There are fundraising tensions between the needs for immediate disaster relief and long-term recovery.

There is often tension between local charities and national philanthropic organizations.

How do we define a success? Who defines it? Do locals define success or do national experts? How is that resolved?

How can the public best be educated about the difference between program expenses and overhead?

The news is the news. How can reporting serve both the needs of the media, their audience and the subject of the stories?

The risk and fear of scandal is real. The acts of the fraudulent few can sink the rest of us.

Collaboration is difficult and costly. There is no immediate or obvious reward for collaboration when not in crisis. There are glaring penalties for lack of collaboration during crisis.

There is a need to study relocation in unemotional way, but there is natural resistance because it elicits a set of emotional issues.

Resource book

There is a need for a resource book. Publish that book so that it is available at the front end for national and local contacts. Having that in place before disaster takes place is critical for local contacts, especially with little or no experience in disaster response. Even if there is leadership in advance (in fact, especially when that occurs), guidance based on past experiences can provide help to people on the ground, indicating what they need to remember, how to seize the moment to increase capacity, take advantage of the upset status quo to do necessary, even exciting things.

A playbook should map out roles and responsibilities – lessons learned and myths. It should identify common methodologies, taking into account differences based on geographical location. It needs to be scalable so that the communities can scale things up or down depending on needs.

Sources for the playbook, in addition to case studies, would be the literal warehouses of information that have accumulated. We have mass amounts of information that researchers could turn into good data to be sorted, analyzed, and put into useful form. The playbook is within our reach even with the expertise in this room.

The idea is to create something that people can use. There's no shortage of folks that could create a playbook that any community could use, even if no two communities will use it exactly the same way.

The playbook could mirror what NVOAD is currently working on: a long-term recovery manual. It draws on what already exists but requires ways to fund it and bring groups like this together to make tools as robust and comprehensive as it can be. It is common to hear the need for these things – but it does not matter how well intended we are to create a playbook. The process is long and arduous one because it requires buy-in. You can come up with the tools, but the reality is a long process. Every person that does this work is very passionate, and if they are not included the way they want to be, then the tool will not be effective.

In addition to who writes it, the other crucial feature is that it's been tested in some way. It is not necessary (or effective) to collect all knowledge on a web site. Local communities need to know how to connect the dots within their community – how to assess everyone's capacity and what their role is. When people understand their roles and expectations, then they know how to do the work. The goal is to avoid time wasted on unclear roles. Communication and relationships must be clear.

Success

NGOs need to define success. What does it look like? What is a win? Part of this is to be the voice of reason or concern when need be. NGOs are the ones that show up at disaster, and local media will always cover disaster in their particular area. National media won't always show up, but NGOs can help define success for local media, by taking charge of the situation. How you measure the actual impact that you made can be done in different ways. One is by really looking at how quickly we responded. Another is the duration of issues. There will be different types of measures.

Other

Other issues and conclusions are contained in the following set of research questions coming out of the Summit.

Additional Research Questions

1. Bottom-up vs. top-down managerial strategies:

What is the effective balance between the two? Both are needed, but to what degree? How do volunteers on the street coordinate with government officials during planning and response? What is the appropriate relationship between governmental and non-governmental organizations?

2. Public information:

What is the most effective way to inform and market the importance of preparedness to the public? What is the role of nonprofit organizations for this activity?

3. Organizational learning:

How is social capital transferred across communities and across time? That is, what can be learned about disasters that can be shared from one location to the next?

4. Recovery handbook:

Can there be a —National Recovery Framework|| to aid communities in their recovery phase of a disaster (modeled after the National Response Framework)? What would/should be included in such a document?

5. Planning and response playbook:

What information can be included in a guidance document—a —playbook||—that can be circulated to communities and citizens?

6. Social media tools:

What is the role of Web 2.0 applications, including web-based communities, hosted services, social-networking sites, video-sharing sites, wikis, and blogs, in coordinating response activities? Can such tools be incorporated into disaster planning?

7. Information technology:

What role can information technology play in communications, logistics, and supply chain management during the response and recovery phases of disaster?

8. Joint fundraising:

How can organizations coordinate fundraising activities?