



Southern Baptist

Associational/Community Preparedness

for Disaster Relief



North American Mission Board, SBC

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Associational/Community Preparedness for Disaster Relief

Overview

The goal of the Associational/Community Preparedness manual is to help families, churches, associational, and community leadership learn about disaster relief needs and resources in their area, evaluate their disaster relief possibilities, and develop plans and protocols to assist in responding to the community following a disaster.

A disaster is defined as anything that causes human suffering or creates human needs that the disaster survivors cannot alleviate themselves.

An association must plan how it will respond to disasters, large and small, through the local church and in the community. Plans need to be well developed and discussed by local church leaders and shared with the community at large. Families and individuals within congregations need to participate in training to understand their role. Local churches need to be aware of what each congregation has to offer. A community action plan also needs to be developed for the churches response within the greater community of partners.

Southern Baptist associations have a rich history and heritage of providing churches the opportunity to work together to accomplish more than they could accomplish individually. Churches within a local association also have the ability to assist one another by sharing resources and leadership. By working together they can accomplish tasks too large for any one church. The churches in an association can accomplish kingdom purposes by working together.

Because churches in an association have worked together in the past, church leaders already know one another. They are already positioned to share volunteers and resources and help one another in a variety of ways prior to, during and following a disaster. The association is the only group positioned to effectively marshal the resources and volunteers of area Baptist churches during times of disaster. They also have valuable knowledge and information about their communities that will assist the leadership and resources that are deployed into an area affected by a disaster.

The unprepared church/association will miss valuable opportunities to minister if not prepared. By planning before a disaster occurs and coordinating with Southern Baptist Disaster Relief, local government agencies, The Salvation Army, and local American Red Cross chapter, an association can be prepared to minister fully in a time of crisis.

A church must first be prepared to face its own disaster.

Association/Community Preparedness

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) defines preparedness as "a continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action in an effort to ensure effective coordination during incident response." This 'preparedness cycle' is one element of a broader National Preparedness System to prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters.

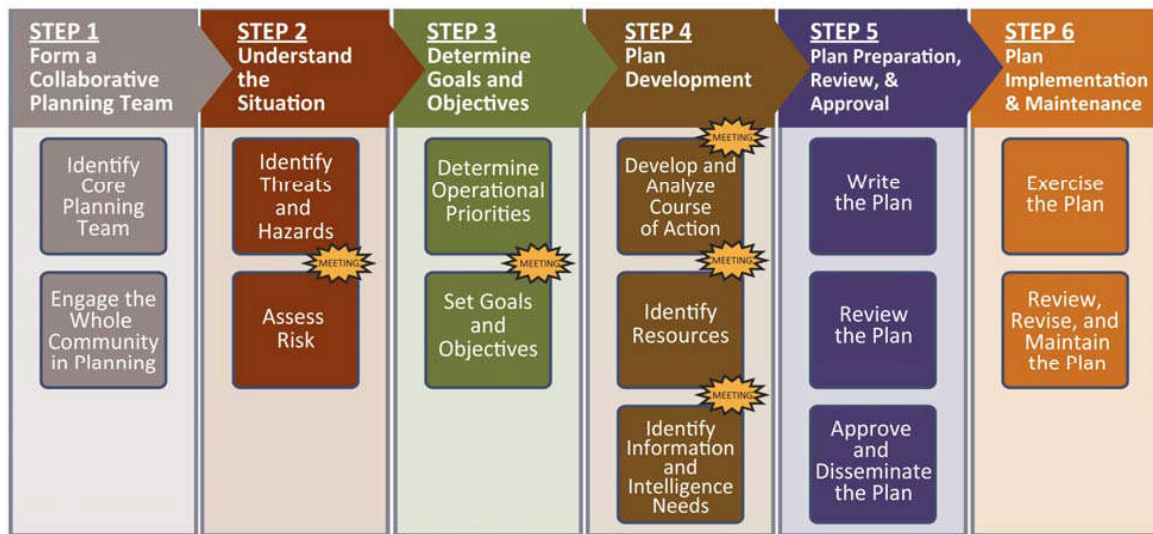


Most businesses and organizations fail to prepare for any type of disaster. Close to 60% of businesses and organizations are unprepared for any disaster. 15 to 40% of businesses and organizations fail following a natural or man-made disaster. Preparedness makes good business sense. However, preparedness cannot be done alone. It requires a lot of different sectors in the church and community helping and working together to create a plan. The planning process should be flexible and allow the local church to adapt depending on varying characteristics and situations.

A new tool which can be used to help an organization determine their preparedness level is the Ready Rating program. American Red Cross has prepared the online tool to allow churches, businesses, schools and organizations determine their readiness level. The 120 point assessment is broken up into 84 questions and will give a final score. The assessment can be found at www.readyrating.org.

Once an assessment has been completed, the planning process can begin. The planning process should be flexible and allow for organizations to adapt to a variety of characteristics and situations. While not ideal, if time is a constraint, steps can be minimized or skipped in order to accelerate the process. Smaller groups can follow just the steps that are appropriate to their size, known

risks, and available planning resources. The graph below depicts steps in the planning process.



Step 1: Form a Collaborative Planning Team

Experience and lessons learned indicate that operational planning is best performed by a team. Using a team or group approach helps organizations define the role they will play during an operation. An association always benefits from the active participation of all stakeholders.

Identify Core Planning Team

An associational disaster relief planning team should be elected from the local churches membership, headed by a church disaster relief team leader who will give general direction to mitigation, preparation, organization, and training. Other recommended members could be men’s ministry directors, Woman’s Missionary Union directors, missions committee chairmen, pastors, and other staff.

Initially, the team should be small, consisting of a few members and staff. They will form the core for all planning efforts. As the plan matures, the core team will expand to include others partners. Additional input may come from the following:

- Emergency management
- Law enforcement
- Fire services
- EMS
- Public Health
- Hospitals
- Public works

- Utility operators
- Education
- Agriculture
- Animal control
- Social services
- Childcare, child welfare, juvenile justice facilities
- National Guard
- Private sector
- Civic, social, faith-based, educational, professional, and advocacy organizations

Regardless of the core planning team structure, the involvement of partner agencies and departments is critical. They are able to speak with authority on policy, provide subject matter expertise, and provide accountability as it relates to their agency or department.

Engaging the Whole Community in Planning

Engaging in community-based planning – planning that is for the whole community and involves the whole community- is crucial to the success of any plan. Determining how to effectively engage the community in this planning process is one of the biggest challenges faced by local associations. It is important to remember that community leaders have a keen understanding about their community's needs and capabilities and are a valuable stakeholder that can support the planning process in many ways.

Communities may or may not be geographically constrained. The geographic community includes a number of communities of interest. The communities of interest are not necessarily confined to the borders of a jurisdiction and may center on physical, social, cultural, or philosophical structures. Examples include:

- Civic, social, faith-based, educational, professional and advocacy organizations
- Immigrant and limited English proficiency constituencies
- Voluntary organizations
- Private service providers
- Critical infrastructure operators
- Local and regional corporations

The private sector is a critical component in community engagement. Not only are they often the primary providers of critical services to the public, they also possess knowledge and resources to supplement and enhance preparedness, response and recovery efforts. Often, private sector and governments missions overlap- early

coordination ensures effective sharing of information and resources and facilitates the establishment of common goals and objectives.

Disasters begin and end locally. After the response is over, it is the local community that lives with the decisions made during the incident. Therefore, communities should have a say in how a disaster response occurs. They should also shoulder responsibility for building their community's resilience and enhancing its recovery before, during, and after a disaster.

The foundation for community-based planning is knowing the community.

1 Know the Community As you progress in producing a community map, there are three major areas where members of various communities can assist your effort.

<p>Hazards</p> <p>Members of the community know the natural, technological, and man-made hazards that exist in their community.</p>	<p>Population</p> <p>As a geographic community can include many social communities, it is important to engage the members of the community to get a picture of what populations are represented. Planners need to know where these populations are located and what needs they may have.</p>	<p>Capabilities</p> <p>Social communities bring a host of capabilities that can be used to respond to a disaster (e.g., volunteers to run/staff shelters, licensed healthcare practitioners), while corporations can provide material support and are a community in and of themselves.</p>
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2 Identify the Communities to Engage Working with existing groups is the most efficient way to link into a community as they have established relationships, networks and communication channels.

- Existing community-based programs are worth connecting with because trusted relationships have already been established between these offices and the community and further initiatives can capitalize on this goodwill.
- The community assessment process will identify existing programs and contacts.
- Being familiar with current events and programs in the community will help identify barriers and opportunities for engagement.

3 Partner with Community Leaders to Develop an Engagement Program Engagement is about building trusted relationships.

- Community leaders need to trust that planners will support the work of the community and not dictate solutions for their issues. If communities don't trust that this will happen, they may choose to disengage.
- Working with leaders in the community to establish the type and level of engagement is critical.
- Leaders may be people who have an official position within the community or simply the "doers" in the community that have the ability to create the momentum needed for engagement activities. The best person to establish a partnership with will only be identified after getting to know the community well.

Finally, it is critical to include civic leaders, members of the public, and representatives of community-based organizations in the planning process. They may serve as an important resource for validating assumptions about public needs, capabilities, and reactions. Because many planning assumptions and response activities will directly impact the public at large, involving the whole community during the planning phase is essential.

Step 2: Understand the Situation

Effective risk management depends on a consistent comparison of the hazards a community faces. This is typically performed through a threat/hazard identification and risk assessment process that collects information about threats and hazards and assigns values to risk for the purposes of determining priorities, developing or comparing courses of action, and informing decision making.

Identify Threats and Hazards

The planning team should start the problem-solving process by conducting research and analysis on the communities' threats and hazards. Considering the potential risks an area may face brings specificity to the planning process.

The first step of research focuses on gathering information about the areas framework, potential risks, resource base, demographics, and geographic characteristics that could affect emergency operations. Understanding past storm history and response activity is necessary and valuable information to collect. Local authorities and partnering agencies will be able to assist with these details.

One resource the association can use to determine available resources is the checklist located in [Appendix One](#). This will allow the planning team to determine what assets are available or needed for the local churches. Individual church members should complete the interest and skills survey located in [Appendix Two](#).

[Appendix Three](#) is an inventory of key people and agencies in the community, county, and state. These individuals are great resources to assist the association in planning and training their leadership and responders. Do not expect favoritism from these leaders. However, a good working relationship will be helpful during a crisis.

The next step of the threat identification process is to organize the information collected into a format that is usable by the planning team.

Assess Risk

The assessment helps a planning team decide what hazards or threats merit special attention, what actions must be planned for and what resources are likely to be needed.

Hazard and threat analysis requires that the planning team knows risks that have occurred or could occur in the community. The process should begin with a list of the risks that concern planners, developed from research conducted earlier in the planning process. A list of concerns might be:

Natural Hazards	Technological Hazards	Human-Caused Hazards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avalanche • Disease outbreak • Drought • Earthquake • Epidemic • Flood • Hurricane • Landslide • Tomado • Tsunami • Volcanic eruption • Wildfire • Winter storm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airplane crash • Dam/levee failure • HAZMAT release • Power failure • Radiological release • Train derailment • Urban conflagration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil disturbance • Cyber events • Terrorist acts • Sabotage • School violence

The outcomes of the analysis process help planners determine goals and objectives (Step 3) and select the supporting planning concept they will use when developing the plan (Step4).

Step 3: Determine Goals and Objectives

Determine Operational Priorities

Operational priorities specify what the responding church/association is to accomplish to achieve a desired end-state for the operation. The pastor or associational leader may communicate desired end-states for the operations addressed in the plans. By using information from the risk profile developed as part of the analysis process, the planning team engages the association to establish how the threat would evolve in the association/community and what defines a successful outcome for responders, disaster survivors and the community.

The planning team should start with a possible threat and imagine the incident’s development from prevention and protections efforts, through initial warning to its impact on the local churches/community and its generation of specific consequences, (e.g., collapsed buildings, loss of critical services or infrastructure, death, injury, displacement). These scenarios should be realistic and created on the basis of the churches risk data. During this process of building an incident scenario, the planning team identifies the requirements that determine actions and resources.

Once the requirements are identified, the planning team restates them as priorities and affirms those priorities with the local church leaders.

Set Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives must be carefully crafted to ensure they support accomplishing the plan mission and operational priorities. They must also clearly indicate the desired result or end-state they are designed to yield. This approach enables unity of effort and consistency of purpose among the multiple groups and activities involved in executing the plan. As goals and objectives are set, planners may identify more requirements that will feed into the development of courses of action as well as the capability estimate.

Step 4: Plan Development

Develop and Analyze Courses of Action

This step is a process of generating, comparing, and selecting possible solutions for achieving the goals and objectives identified in Step 3. The planning team should consider the requirements, goals, and objectives to develop several response alternatives. At least two options should always be considered.

This process will help the planning team identify tasks that occur immediately at the incident initiation, tasks that are more mid-incident focused, and tasks that affect long-term operations.

- Course of action development follows these steps:
- Establish the timeline
- Depict the scenario
- Identify and depict decision points
- Identify and depict operations tasks
- Select courses of action

Identify Resources

Once courses of action are selected, the planning team identifies resources needed to accomplish tasks without regard to resource availability. The object is to identify the resources needed to make the operation work. Once the planning team identifies all the requirements, they begin matching available resources to requirements. Whenever possible, the planning team should match resources with other needs so that multiple demands for the same or similar resource can be identified and conflicts resolved. This step provides the planning team an opportunity to identify resource shortfalls. The association should account for unsolvable resource shortfalls so they are not just “assumed away.” The capability estimate process is critical to this effort.

A capability estimate is the planning team’s assessment of local churches ability to take a course of action. Capability estimates help the planning team decide if pursuing a particular course of action is realistic and supportable. They help planners better project and understand what might take place during an operation. Simply stated, the capability estimate represents the capabilities and resource types needed to complete a set of courses of action. The resulting capability estimate will feed into the resource section of the plan.

The information provided in a capability estimate should be able to answer most questions about an associations ability to support a given course of action. Capability estimates should be prepared for personnel, administration and finance, operations, logistics, communications, equipment and facilities. Each capability estimate compares the courses of action being considered for a particular operation. They make recommendations as to which course of action best supports the operation. They should also identify the criteria used to evaluate each area; and the issues, differences and risks associated with a course of action.

Identify Information and Intelligence Needs

Another outcome from course of action development is a “list” of the information and intelligence needs for each of the response participants. The planning team should identify the information and intelligence they will need and their deadline(s) for receiving it to drive decisions and trigger critical actions.

When developing courses of action, the process should be periodically “frozen” so the planning team can:

- Identify progress made toward the end-state, including goals and objectives met and new needs or demands
- Identify “single point failures” (i.e., tasks that, if not completed, would cause the operation to fall apart)
- Check for omissions or gaps
- Check for inconsistencies in organizational relationships
- Check for mismatches between the churches plan and plans for other organizations with which they are interacting.

Step 5: Plan Preparation, Review and Approval

Write the Plan

This step turns the results of course of action development into an Emergency Operation Plan. The planning team develops a rough draft of the basic plan. The recorded results from Step 4 provide an outline for the rough draft with necessary tables, charts and other graphics being added as needed. The planning team prepares and circulates a final draft to obtain the comments of the church staff and members that have responsibilities for implementing the plan.

Following these simple rules for writing plans and procedures will help ensure that readers and users understand their content:

- Keep the language simple and clear
- Avoid using jargon and minimize the use of acronyms
- Use short sentences and the active voice
- Provide enough detail to convey an easily understood plan that is actionable
- Format the plan and present its contents so that its readers can quickly find solutions and options
- Ensure accessibility by developing tools and documents so they can be easily converted to alternate formats

Review the Plan

Planners should check the written plan for its conformity to applicable regulatory requirements and the standards of Federal or state agencies, as appropriate, and for its usefulness in practice.

Commonly used criteria can help decision makers determine the effectiveness and efficiency of plans. These measures include:

- Adequacy
- Feasibility
- Acceptability

- Completeness
- Compliance

When using these five criteria, planners should ask the following questions:

- Did an action, a process, a decision or the operational timing identified in the plan make the situation worse or better?
- Were new alternate courses of action identified?
- What aspects of the action, process, decision, or operational timing make it something to avoid or remove from the plan?
- What specific changes to plans and procedures, personnel, organizational structures, leadership or management processes, facilities or equipment can improve operational performance?

Additionally, when reviewing the plan, an association does not have to provide all of the resources needed to meet a capability requirement established during the planning effort. However, the plan should explain where the association will obtain the resources to support those required capabilities.

Approve and Disseminate the Plan

Once the plan has been validated, the planning team should present the plan to the appropriate officials and obtain approval for the plan. It is also important to establish the authority required for changes and modifications to the plan. Once approved, the planning team should arrange to distribute the plan.

Step 6: Plan Implementation and Maintenance

Training

After developing a plan, it must be shared and training should take place for all personnel involved so they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the tasks identified in the plan.

Exercise the Plan

Evaluating the effectiveness of plans involves a combination of training events, exercises and real-world incidents to determine whether the goals, objectives, decisions, actions and timing outlined in the plan led to a successful response. The association needs to be aware of lessons and practices from other communities.

A remedial action process can help a planning team identify, illuminate, and correct problems with the Emergency Operation Plan. This process captures information from exercises, post-disaster critiques, self-assessments, audits, or lessons-learned processes that may indicate that deficiencies exist. Members of the planning team should reconvene to discuss the problem and to consider and assign responsibility for generating remedies. Remedial actions may also involve providing refresher training for a church's personnel.

As appropriate, significant issues and problems identified through a remedial action process and/or the annual review should provide the information needed to allow the planning team to make the necessary revisions to the plan.

Review, Revise, and Maintain the Plan

This step closes the loop in the planning process. It focuses on adding the information gained by exercising the plan to the research collected in Step 2 and starting the planning cycle over again. Remember, planning is a continuous process that does not stop when the plan is published. Plans should evolve as lessons are learned, new information and insights are obtained, and priorities are updated.

Planning teams should establish a process for reviewing and revising the plan. Many accomplish their reviews on an annual basis. Teams should also consider reviewing and updating the plan after the following events:

- A major incident
- A change in operational resources
- A formal update of standards
- Each activation
- Major exercises
- A change in the churches demographics
- A change in the acceptability of various risks
- The enactment of new or amended laws or ordinances

Appendix One

Church Potential for Disaster Response

The following may be used in a disaster response in or near our community.

A. **Church Facilities**

- classrooms
- clothes bank
- dining room
- dumpster
- fellowship hall
- food bank
- gymnasium
- kitchen
- nursery
- outside electric hookup
- outside swage
- outside water hookup
- rest rooms
- showers
- storage building
- vacant building
- other _____

B. **Equipment**

- air compressor
- chainsaws, etc.
- generator
- high volume pump
- oxygen tank
- portable stoves
- sanitation equipment and supplies
- submersible pump
- other _____

C. **Vehicles**

- 4x4's
- aircraft
- ATV
- boats
- buses
- campers
- tractor-trailer
- trailers
- trucks
- van
- other _____

D. **Tools and Supplies**

- wheelchair
- brooms
- cots
- crutches
- electric cords
- first-aid kit
- garden hose
- hand tools
- mops
- power tools
- shop vacuum
- shovels
- other _____

Appendix Two

Church Member Disaster Relief Interest and Skills Survey

Name _____
Street Address _____ Home Phone _____
City/State/Zip _____ Work Phone _____

E-mail _____ Cell Phone _____
Church _____ Phone _____
Address _____

Would you be interested in assisting with a disaster relief project by our church:
____ In this community ____ In this county ____ In this state
____ In the USA ____ Internationally

How much lead-time would you need to get ready to participate in a project?

Interest/Experience/Training

Check the types of disaster ministries that interest you. Place two checks by areas where you are experienced.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Advisory/advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Interpreter:
Language _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Bulk distribution | <input type="checkbox"/> 16. Legal aid |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Casework | <input type="checkbox"/> 17. Literacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Chainsaw crew/tree removal | <input type="checkbox"/> 18. Medical emergency team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Child care | <input type="checkbox"/> 19. Mud-outs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Cleanup crew | <input type="checkbox"/> 20. Reconstruction team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Communications (Ham
Radios) | <input type="checkbox"/> 21. Repair (emergency) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> 22. Salvage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Crisis closet | <input type="checkbox"/> 23. Sanitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Damage assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> 24. Security |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11. Elder care (or handicapped) | <input type="checkbox"/> 25. Shelter management or care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12. Employment assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> 26. Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Evacuation of persons | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Feeding | |

Check if you have training in the following:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Involving Southern Baptists in
Disaster Relief | <input type="checkbox"/> American Red Cross |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State disaster relief manual | <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to Disaster
Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hands-on training with unit | <input type="checkbox"/> Mass Feeding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary emergency child
care | <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced first aid and CPR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other disaster relief training |

Appendix Three

Inventory of Key People in the State, County, City, and Community

After listing the officials, list any church members or friends who may work in a particular office or agency. Sometimes, the personal contact is helpful.

	Name	Contact Information
State Baptist Convention		
State Disaster Relief Director		
Disaster Relief Region/Area Coordinator		
Disaster Relief Unit Director		
• Feeding		
• Recovery		
• Childcare		
• Communication		
• Other Type of Unit		
State Government		
Governor		
Lt. Governor		
State Representative and/or Senator		
State Office of Public Safety or Emergency Management		
Area Coordinator for Public Safety		
Who else do we know that is involved in state government?		
County Officials		
Emergency Management Director		
County Commission Chairman or County Mayor		
County Sheriff		
County Fire Marshal		
County Commissioners		
Who else do we know that is involved in county government?		
City Officials		
Emergency Management Director		
Mayor		
Police Chief		
Fire Chief		
Fire Marshal		
City Council Chairman		
City Council Members		
Who else do we know that is		

	Name	Contact Information
involved in city government?		
Local or Area Disaster Relief Agencies		
American Red Cross Chapter		
The Salvation Army		
VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters)		
Other Churches in the Community		