Emergency Planning
For Vulnerable Populations

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TOPICS TO ADDRESS

• Vulnerable populations, defined...
• Making the case for planning...
• Determinants of vulnerability
• Impacts to preparedness
• Every disaster requires consideration for the more vulnerable
• Ferguson – a new type of disaster to be considered
VULNERABLE POPULATIONS DEFINED...

• Any individual, group, or community whose circumstances create barriers to obtaining or understanding information, or the ability to react as the general population.

• Circumstances that may create barriers include, but are not limited to age; physical, mental, emotional, or cognitive status; culture; ethnicity; religion; language; citizenship; geography; or socioeconomic status.
VULNERABLE POPULATIONS – WHO ARE THEY?

- Homeless
- Elderly
- Low Income Children
- Special Needs
- Mental Health
- Chronic Health Conditions
• One measure of the strength of a community’s response and recovery system is its attentiveness to its most vulnerable citizens—children, the frail elderly, the disabled, and the impoverished and disenfranchised.

• It is a cruel fact: disasters discriminate. To not plan for groups that can’t advocate or support themselves during disaster is not an option.

  - National Center for Disaster Preparedness
Figure 1. The Rapid Increase in the Number of People with Chronic Conditions

Source: Reference 12.
“Vulnerable populations are those most at risk, not simply because they are exposed to hazard, but as a result of marginality that makes their life a permanent emergency.”

“Rendering the world unsafe: vulnerability as a western discourse”
Vulnerability is determined by social, economic and physical characteristics.

These factors influence not only how people cope in crisis but also the resources for everyday living.

This is sometimes called their health...
DETERMINANTS OF VULNERABILITY

Are the same as determinants of health...

- Income and social status
- Social support networks
- Education
- Employment and working conditions
- Social environments
- Physical environments
- Genetic endowment
- Personal health practices
- Coping skills
- Healthy child development
- Health services
- Gender
- Culture
IMPACTS TO PREPAREDNESS

• People who are more vulnerable to a particular hazard will require more help during an impact

• Reducing vulnerability (increasing resiliency) will help to solve problems before they occur

• BUT, the factors that increase vulnerability also hinder traditional preparedness activities
IMPACTS TO PREPAREDNESS

“May you live in interesting times.”
*Chinese proverb...*

- Tornadoes
- Severe Storms
- Flooding
- Extreme Heat
- Epidemics
- Snow
- Earthquakes
- Extreme Cold
FERGUSON:
ON THE FRONTLINES AND LOOKING FORWARD
Humanitarian Response to Civil Unrest
• What Happened In Ferguson To Initiate a Response?
• How Did United Way Determine Its Involvement?
• What Did We Do?
• What Did We Learn?
• What Do We See Ahead?
PROTESTS IN FERGUSON – ANOTHER TYPE OF DISASTER...
WHAT HAPPENED

• Following the shooting death of Michael Brown on August 9, 2014, several weeks of protests and subsequent reactions prompted media attention, heightened tensions, traumatized a community, limited mobility for area residents, depleted available resources, and damaged local businesses.

• Tensions mounted over the course of nearly 4 months in anticipation of a Grand Jury decision.

• The Grand Jury made its announcement on November 24 which incited further protests and resulted in significant damage to local businesses and additional strain on residents’ daily lives.
• **August 9**: Triggering event occurs *impacting residents and the whole community* – specifically seniors, children, employees, delayed start of school year, access to supplies, food, etc.

• **August 16 - 24**: UW & COAD partners deploy to the Dellwood Community Center
  – Addressed lack of food resources, personal care, baby supplies, hygiene items, and access to health resources
  – Provision of basic needs to prevent homelessness and aid in stabilization of residents
  – Respond to calls for mental health and trauma counseling for children and adults
What's Helpful To Know About Trauma After Upheaval In Ferguson

news.stlpublicradio.org
IN THE WAKE OF INITIAL PROTESTS IN FERGUSON

Impact by the Numbers

- 25+ - COAD / UW partners
- 800 - Client intakes on site
- 30 - Crisis Counseling Sessions
- 2,150 - Hot meals served
- 597 – Households receiving emergency utility, rent and mortgage assistance valued at $227,649.11
- 269 – Children participating in respite activities
- 120 – Received legal counseling
- 100+ - Treated by medical personnel
- 5 – Semi trucks of food and household products distributed
- 174 – Volunteers / 860 hours
- 10+ - Local / national media interviews
- 1,933 – Additional intakes still requesting to be seen...
HIGHLIGHTED KEY GOVERNMENTAL & NGO PARTNERS

The American Red Cross
The Salvation Army
The Urban League
St. Louis Area FoodBank
Legal Services
Deaconess Nurses
Community Action Agency of STL County
Catholic Charities
UW 2-1-1
UW Volunteer Center
STL City/County COAD
STL Regional Coalition of COADs
In God’s Hands
Better Family Life

Boys & Girls Club
Girls, Inc
Crisis Nursery
U City Children’s Center
Children’s Service Fund
STL County Dept. of Human Services
/ Health / EMA
City of Ferguson
City of Dellwood
St. Louis County
City of St. Louis
Ferguson Florissant, Normandy, Jennings & Riverview School Districts
SEMA
State of Missouri

... AND MORE...
HOW WE DETERMINED OUR CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT

• Emergency Response for Basic Needs

• Requests for Leadership by Corporate & Community Partners
  – UW Ferguson Fund
  – $1m Emergency Relief Appropriation awarded by STL County for Basic Needs, Counseling, Needs Assessment to United Way of Greater St. Louis

• Community-Wide Uncertainty on Best Path Forward
Existing Basic Needs Were Exacerbated...the remaining 1,900 + continued emerging needs...

- Multi Agency Resource Centers
  - 10/18 & 10/19
    - 375 households served
  - 3/7/15 – Impacted employees only
    - 35 served; 3 recommended for job placement
  - Food, utility assistance, counseling (additional $230k approximately)

- Food for Ferguson-Area Residents
  - 1000 boxes of dry goods & $10 gift cards to assist with perishables
  - Replenishment of depleted food pantries

- Coordinated with partners for counseling for students returning to schools after periods of closure; deployed on site
Staffed County EOC during activation / on standby for STL City EOC

Coats for Area School Districts
  - 447 Coats Distributed with support from YMCAs, Corporate Partners and Key Donors

Mental Health Counseling
  - Continues through 9/2015

Employment Support for Displaced Workers from Damaged Businesses

Continued Agency Coordination
  - 81 COAD / UW / Partner agencies were convened and coordinated for various levels of response
• Humanitarian crises are another disaster

• Impact of Tragedy on a Community .... In a Region

• Timing Matters

• Reaching the Impacted Population Quickly with Limited Data
  – Respecting the Process of Input Discovery, But Needing to Act Now

• Additional opportunities for Government Relationships and Non Profit Sectors
Thanks for the opportunity to share...

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