



Organizing the Organization - Disaster Planning, Response, and Recovery

This planning chart is designed to assist your organization in setting goals, timelines, and direction as you move toward a pivotal role in building your capacity to help others in disaster planning, response, and recovery.

PLANNING			
The organization has:		Completion Date	Organization Lead
	Been trained as First Responders by the Red Cross.		
	Completed a vulnerability assessment.		
	Identified a Disaster Management Team.		
	Developed a disaster plan.		
	Met with area Emergency Management and Red Cross.		
	Met with insurance experts to ensure complete coverage.		
	Taken pictures of office and equipment and received pre-estimate on replacement.		
	Developed practices and protocol to protect confidentiality under HIPAA during a disaster.		
	Identified where to get disaster supplies, such as sand bags.		
	A plan for continuous back up of data.		
	A designated means of providing communications, such as cell phones.		
	Posted schedule of the work location of all staff at all times.		
	Moved equipment and resources away from vulnerable areas.		
	Selected and posted two places to meet should a disaster occur.		
	Established and shared the "out of state" partner.		
	Established and practiced at least TWO evacuation routes away from the office.		
	Posted emergency numbers.		
	Instructed staff how to turn off utilities such as gas, electricity, water, and sewage.		
	Scanned all non-electronic papers of importance and stored with other data off site.		
	Developed and disseminated a staff and partner phone and contact list.		
	Arranged for programmable call forwarding on the main phone lines.		

	Established one line that is dedicated to record messages just for employees.		
	Installed emergency lights.		
	Put into place UL-listed surge protectors and battery backup systems.		
	Purchased a NOAA Weather Radio and assigned staff to operate and monitor.		
	Developed an office “stay in place” disaster kit.		
	Developed small, disaster kit grab bags for each staff.		
	Ensured that all staff have disaster plans for their own families.		
	Developed a targeted plan on how to assist target population to be better prepared.		

Planning Needs		
Area of Need	Process to Meet Need	Responsible Person

RESPONSE

The Organization has:		Completion Date	Organization Lead
	Activated a response plan.		
	Adjusted communication to continue serving population.		
	Assessed program needs and reported to appropriate persons.		
	Located resources for organization and their target population.		
	Implement communication with funders and partners to acknowledge capacity status.		
	Established clearinghouse of updated resources and information for target population and those serving them.		

Response Needs

Area of Need	Process to Meet Need	Responsible Person

RECOVERY

The Organization has:		Completion Date	Organization Lead
	Ensured that the office building is secure or relocated the main administration of the organization.		
	Dedicated phone lines and means of communication with impacted population and service providers.		
	Continued to communicate with TA Centers, funders, and other partners on a regular basis regarding the needs of organization, target population, and community.		
	Developed a temporary operational plan and shared with partners so that they clearly understand the role of the organization in the recovery process.		
	Developed material to share regarding what the organization can do (see attached) to assist those serving in the disaster areas.		
	Registered or touched base with minimally the following when attempting to assist persons in a disaster area:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Cross; • Emergency Management; and • Health Department. 		
	Assisted the target population in developing long term plans for recovery that integrates their needs with that of the changing environment.		

Recovery Needs

Area of Need	Process to Meet Need	Responsible Person

GUIDE

PLANNING	
Activity	Discussion
Been trained as First Responders by the Red Cross	Most areas depend upon the Red Cross for assistance and coordination of recovery efforts. You should become trained as First Responders and Red Cross Emergency Volunteers to ensure you can access and serve in the most helpful capacity possible.
Completed a vulnerability assessment	All offices and locations are vulnerable during a disaster. By assessing what may make you more likely to sustain damage and injuries, you may be able to prevent harm, injury, and damage by making some changes. Ask your area Emergency Management to visit your office and do a full assessment with your staff to better understand how you can protect yourselves.
Identified a Disaster Management Team	Each organization should have a Disaster Management Team made up of key staff. This will be the team that assists in developing the disaster plan and serves as a guide as you prepare for and support others in the disaster planning process.
Developed a disaster plan	Every organization should have a disaster plan that captures the needs and directs them during the response and recovery phases. The disaster plan helps organize information, contacts, and details in one place, making them more accessible in the event of a disaster.
Met with area Emergency Management and Red Cross	You should meet with your area Red Cross and Emergency Management to better understand the services they offer and to establish a partnership for the future. If you are a statewide organization, you will need to make that connection at the state level.
Met with insurance experts to ensure complete coverage	All owners and renters should ensure that they have adequate coverage for their property. This requires an annual review of the policies and environment. Keep in mind that many policies do not cover earthquakes or floods. Insurance and protection is your responsibility. DO NOT COUNT ON FEMA OR THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION TO COVER EXPENSES IN THE EVENT OF A DISASTER.
Taken pictures of office and equipment and received pre-estimate on replacement	Pictures are the best way to prove and document the condition of the office and equipment. When used with an inventory, this can assist greatly in remembering makes, models, and numbers for replacement or insurance purposes. It also helps to

	get estimates on replacement before a disaster and keep these with the pictures and inventory. This will help speed up replacement should it become necessary.
Developed practices and protocol to protect confidentiality under HIPAA during a disaster	It is critical that HIPAA protected information and information that should be confidential be protected during a disaster. You should preplan how they will secure records and electronic data.
Identified where to get disaster supplies, such as sand bags	The Red Cross should know where resources and disaster supplies such as sand bags are located. As soon as it is announced that preparation should begin, ensure you know where to go and have the capacity to gather the necessary items.
A plan for continuous back up of data	You should already have in place a data back up system. But, often the back up data is left in the same location as the source. If a disaster were to strike, all data would be lost. It is important to not only back up data on a regular basis, but to store it in another location.
A designated means of providing communications, such as cell phones	If most of the work your organization does is by phone or e-mail, then you should consider how you will meet the needs of those you serve without them. Cell phones sometimes work after major disaster but are generally considered more reliable than phones or internet service, especially when electricity has been disrupted.
Posted schedule of the work location of all staff at all times	If staff work out of the office in the field or are attending meetings, it is critical that their schedules be posted. In the event that there is a disaster, someone should take the schedule with them to assist in locating staff should they turn up missing.
Moved equipment and resources away from vulnerable areas	Equipment and important files should be stored away from windows and water pipes. This minimizes the chance that a leak or broken window will allow damage.
Selected and posted two places to meet should a disaster occur	Selecting and posting two places to meet in the event of a disaster will ensure that all staff are found. This saves time and protects others from having to look for staff to ensure their safety.
Established and shared the “out of state” partner	Some disasters impact a large area. Having an “out of state” partner to serve as the check in point for the organization, staff, and partners can be helpful. This partner can receive the “check in” calls from staff and allow others to make sure everyone is safe. Each staff member, as soon as possible, calls the number to let them know they are ok, what they need, where they are, and how they can be reached. This allows organizational leadership the ability to triage needs and make assignments as practical and possible.

Established and practiced at least TWO evacuation routes away from the office	All staff should know two ways to leave the office area. This ensures that if one route is inaccessible, there will be another familiar way to leave for safety or go home.
Posted emergency numbers	All emergency numbers, including the electric and gas companies, Red Cross, and area hospitals should be clearly posted for all staff.
Instructed staff how to turn off utilities such as gas, electricity, water, and sewage	Should a disaster be imminent or occur, staff should understand how and when to turn off the utilities. This will prevent leakage, explosions, fires, and possible electrocution after the disaster passes. The local utility company can assist in identifying the time and manner in which to accomplish this.
Scanned all non-electronic papers of importance and stored with other data off site	Papers such as IRS non profit status, by laws, corporation papers, and other non electronic items can be scanned and saved electronically. These should be kept off site with other important data.
Developed and disseminated a staff and partner phone and contact list	All staff should have the phone, cell number, address, directions to one another's homes. This will ensure access and tracking in the aftermath of the disaster.
Arranged for programmable call forwarding on the main phone lines	Many phones can only be programmed for call forwarding from the base. Check with your phone company on how this feature can be turned on from remote locations or cell phones.
Established one line that is dedicated to record messages just for employees	A line or phone number that is only known by staff and their families will allow you to record messages for staff regarding what to do, where to go, and how to operate until the environment stabilizes after a disaster. This can also be helpful for other partners as they attempt to check in and determine next steps.
Installed emergency lights	Battery powered emergency lights that are activated when the electricity goes out are an inexpensive way to provide security and safety for staff should a disaster occur in the workplace.
Put into place UL-listed surge protectors and battery backup systems	Battery powered UL-listed power strips can protect equipment and provide power sources. Check with technical experts or electronic stores to discuss your equipment and to purchase units that are tailored to your needs.
Purchased a NOAA Weather Radio and assigned staff to operate and monitor	NOAA Radios can be set so they are silent except during an emergency. Having one on location in the office will allow monitoring of the weather and other hazards. Delegate a staff person to monitor the progress of the weather, such as a thunderstorm, and keep the entire office updated so they can react in a timely and

	appropriate manner.
Developed an office “stay in place” disaster kit	Each office should be equipped with a disaster supply kit. These kits can ensure that necessary supplies are accessible to staff should they become “office bound”.
Developed small, disaster kit grab bags for each staff	Small grab and go kits for staff should be located in a central place. The kits should include the disaster plan for the office, first aid supplies, and other items of use should they have to run for safety.
Ensured that all staff have disaster plans for their own families	The best way to protect staff is to ensure they have protected and planned for their families. If they do not have a plan and must leave under dangerous circumstances, their lives will be in jeopardy. Each staff person should have a family disaster plan that is kept in the office in their personnel file. If, for some reason, the staff person is not able to reach their family; administration can access the file and know where and how to contact the family.
Developed a targeted plan on how to assist target population to be better prepared	It is critical to your mission to become as disaster resilient as possible. You should develop a strategic plan on how to assist the people you serve they serve in becoming better prepared for disaster response and recovery.
RESPONSE	
Activity	Discussion
Activated a response plan	You should know when and how to implement your disaster response plan.
Adjusted communication to continue serving population	Depending upon the disaster type and impact, your communication plan may need to be adjusted. It is difficult to know exactly how communication will work until it is clear what means of communication have been effected. A fast assessment of communication will allow you to tailor the approach to staying in touch with communicating with those you serve, partners, and rescue personnel.
Assessed program needs and reported to appropriate persons	One of the first activities in responding to a disaster is assessing the safety and needs of your program and organization. The status of the organization and your capacity at this point will dictate your role in the response and recovery process. As the hours go by, your needs and capacity of your organization will change. It will be necessary for you to clearly communicate your needs and capacity so that you can access and assist as practical and possible. This information should be regularly shared with funders, partners, their Board of Directors, area disaster response

	teams, and others involved in the daily operation of your organization.
Located resources for organization and their target population	During and after a disaster, you will need to quickly assess what is available to assist you and those you serve. At first glance, it will appear as though there are multitudes of resources. As time passes, it becomes apparent that there are tight limitations, eligibility, criteria, and capped assistance. Your organization needs to become familiar with what can and will help so that you and those you serve will not spend time attempting to get resources that are not available or accessible.
Implement communication with funders and partners to acknowledge capacity status	Funders and major stakeholders such as the Board of Directors will need predictable and consistent updates on the status of the organization. This not only assists in garnering additional assistance, but will ensure their understanding when the disaster interferes with your ability to meet pre-disaster deadlines.
Established clearinghouse of updated resources and information for target population and those serving them	The population you serve will need to have access to individuals that clearly understand their issues and are sensitive to the difficulties they face. You can serve in this role if you are well integrated in the overall response system and have built your capacity to serve in this manner.
RECOVERY	
Activity	Discussion
Ensured that the office building is secure or relocated the main administration of the organization	You will need a place of operation or central administrative point. This will be where your work is assured and directed, accountability to the funders and those served is maintained, and the every day functioning of the office continues. This will also ensure that staff continues to be paid for their work, necessary paperwork is done, and the organization infrastructure is protected.
Dedicated phone lines and means of communication with impacted population and service providers	If the phone lines are not working after a few days and there is concern of a long term communication problem, other plans must be made. It is sometimes possible to set up toll free numbers out of the area. You may also dedicate a new line for recovery purposes so that you can continue your other work while simultaneously addressing disaster issues.
Continued to communicate with TA Centers, funders, and other partners on a regular basis regarding the needs of	Your organization will need all of the assistance you can get. Your partners before the disaster can serve you well in supporting your work, gathering donations, funneling resources and information into the organization, and helping with case

organization, target population, and community	loads adopting some of the work. But, keep in mind that they may also be impacted by the disaster and you may have to turn to “out of area” partners or peers for assistance.
Developed a temporary operational plan and shared with partners so that they clearly understand the role of the organization in the recovery process	The operational plan of your organization will shift as you move through recovery. You will need to ensure you are meeting the requirements of your funders as well as meeting the rising needs of those (including your organization and staff) impacted by the disaster.
Developed material to share regarding what the organization can do (see attached) to assist those serving in the disaster areas	New materials will help reach out to those you serve to let them know that the organization is still in operation and that you can assist as they go through the recovery process. These should be in multiple languages as applicable.
Registered or touched base with minimally the following when attempting to assist persons in a disaster area	You should register with the Red Cross, Emergency Management, and the Health Department in the areas where you will be working. This ensures that they understand the role of your organization and how they can facilitate your recovery efforts with the population you serve. Of course, this would NOT be the first time you have contacted them. During the planning phase you should have already established a relationship with these entities.
Assisted the target population in developing long term plans for recovery that integrates their needs with that of the changing environment	People in the communities you serve will begin to question where they go next. As they attempt to put their lives back together, it may be helpful for them to actually develop a step by step plan on where to go and how to get assistance and support. You should be in a position to serve as a facilitator of this long term planning.