BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES:
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE
PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

- Gain clarity on how to help vulnerable populations prepare for disasters
- Examine the effectiveness of the Emergency Preparedness Project (EPD) Process
FEDERAL PARTNERS

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA
SITE SELECTION PROCESS: TWO FACETS

**Presidential Disaster Declarations**

1998-2008

Total number of disasters and Total variety of disasters

**Social Vulnerability Index (SoVI)**

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Social Vulnerability to Environmental Hazards
Social Science Quarterly, June 2003
PRESIDENTIALLY DECLARED DISASTERS

- Coastal storms
- Drought
- Earthquake
- Fire
- Fish loss
- Flood
- Freeze

- Hurricane
- Ice storm
- Severe storm
- Snow
- Tornado
- Volcano
- Miscellaneous*

*Misc. = dam/levee break, human cause (including terrorism), mud/landslide, toxic substances, typhoon, and other.
SOCIAL VULNERABILITY INDEX: KEY COMPONENTS

- Age
- Density of the built environment
- Ethnicity
- Housing stock and tenancy
- Infrastructure dependence
- Personal wealth
- Race
- Single-sector economic dependence
PRESIDENTIALLY DECLARED DISASTERS
SOCIAL VULNERABILITY

FEMA Project
SOVI

- Top Tier
- Second Tier
- Residual
DETERMINING POTENTIAL SITES: 
THE USE OF QUARTILES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Declared Disasters</th>
<th>Social Vulnerability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top Tier</td>
<td>Top Quartile</td>
<td>Top Quartile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Tier (either of the following combinations)</td>
<td>Top Quartile</td>
<td>Second Quartile</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Quartile</td>
<td>Top Quartile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td></td>
<td>All other combinations</td>
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COMBINED VULNERABILITY
PARTNERING STATES: ARKANSAS

Project Team:
- Deborah Tootle
- Bobby Hall

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
Cooperative Extension Service
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• Cynthia Pilcher
PARTNERING STATES: MISSOURI

Project Team:
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• Shelly Bush-Rowe
• B.J. Eavy
• Eric Evans
PARTNERING STATES: OKLAHOMA

Project Team:
- Brian Whitacre
- Claude Bess
COMMUNITY PROCESS

Community Representatives

Roundtable Discussions

Traditional Emergency Management Organizations

Bridge Meeting

Community Recommendations
ROUNDTABLE OVERVIEW

1. Examining recent experiences with natural disasters

2. Assessing existing resources

3. Assessing the EPD process
BRIDGE MEETING OVERVIEW

1. Community similarities
2. Community differences
3. Responses to the EPD process
4. Final recommendations
DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

- Elderly, especially in rural areas*
- Families with small children, especially single parents
- Homebound
- Homeless
- Illegal immigrants
- Isolation*: social, cultural, and or physical/geographical Lacking transportation
- Low education / illiterate
- Low income*
- Non-English speaking
- Those that refuse to take action
- Those with physical and or mental disabilities*, including those with medical dependence (i.e. on oxygen, dialysis, etc.)

*Indicates groups most often identified as “disadvantaged”
WHAT WORKED WELL IN PAST DISASTERS

- Having a place where “trusted” people are present.
- Communications among agencies.
- Good coordination of formal Emergency Management organizations.
- Advanced warning systems.
- Mock exercises and drills.
- Increased tracking of vulnerable populations.
- BRACE example
WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

- Communicating to the public; using existing social networks
- Integrating formal (city & county) and informal organizations
- Coordination between local and national organizations (maintain local leadership)
- Coordinating donations and volunteers
- Addressing needs of pets and livestock
- Keeping an up-to-date registry of special needs populations
- Fostering more open attitudes & skills of Emergency Managers
- Streamlining assistance process and paperwork
- Increasing training and education of individuals
<table>
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<tr>
<th>RURAL</th>
<th>VS</th>
<th>URBAN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ More social capital – “neighbor helping neighbor”</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ More physical and financial resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Heavy equipment available</td>
<td>✓ Attitude of “doing for myself”</td>
<td>✓ More formal organizations to share the work</td>
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<tr>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>URBAN</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less attention given to rural areas; neglected</td>
<td></td>
<td>Individuals more socially isolated (do not know neighbors)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack financial resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>Many demands in a small area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited rural tax base</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attitude of “Who is going to do for me?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance and poorer infrastructure inhibits response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Same people play multiple roles</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plans created regionally w/o local input</td>
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EPD PROCESS: STRENGTHS

- Good sequence of events/process
- Liked mapping process
- Good if connected to the whole plan
- Community input helpful
- Mobilizes more people; it is inclusive.
- Increases awareness of both vulnerabilities and resources
- Addresses some of the weaknesses of the current plans
- Alleviates conflicts ahead of time
- Coordination saves time and increases efficiency
- Increases horizontal linkages, especially at the county level.
EPD PROCESS: WEAKNESSES

- Step-by-step guide and training needed
- Communities need technical assistance for mapping.
- Funding is an issue
- Keeping maps updated may be a challenge
- Challenge in getting community involvement
- Concern for how local leadership will accept the process
- Challenge of ensuring the right people are involved
- Potential turf issues
- Distribution/communication of plans may still be challenging
- Time consuming
- May disrupt state plans intended to work together
- Must be part of a total plan to work
COACHING: STRENGTHS

✔ Liked having a guide to keep the process on track
✔ Facilitator/Mediator is good
✔ Appropriate education and experience is a strength
✔ Compassion to understand community concerns
✔ Neutral – the lack of political “baggage”
✔ Ideal: team approach w/ outside coach and inside facilitator
✔ Trust is essential to success
✔ Urban: more receptive to coach as an outsider, but expressed concern that there was already a plan in place
✔ Rural: Helpful because of limited resources and the ability to draw people together
COACHING: WEAKNESSES

- Need clear definition of the role and qualifications.
- Concern for selecting a local coach vs. an outsider.
- Funding – bigger concern in rural settings.
- May be a need to provide coach training
- Some Emergency Managers may be hesitant
- Concern for political agendas.
- Must be able to establish trust within the community.
- Can’t be expected to do it all.
RECOMMENDATIONS: EPD PROCESS

EPD Process is valuable and should be pursued:

- Develop comprehensive training curricula.
- Clearly define the role and core competencies of the coach.
- Implement a competitive grants process to encourage community “buy-in” upfront.
- Invest in an outside evaluation of the original pilot sites from EPD.
- Catalogue available resources to assist with GIS mapping and coaching needs. (i.e. universities, community colleges, etc.)
- Refine vulnerability assessments; explore low tech options.
- Address ways to involve and encourage local buy-in and participation.
RECOMMENDATIONS: FEMA

- Provide feedback to participating states and communities.
- Explore partnerships with other like-minded entities.
  - Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Centers with RRDC & EDEN
  - Philanthropies
  - Formal and informal organizations
- Expand current SRDC process to raises awareness of the needs of disadvantaged populations
- Focus on the significant needs of rural areas
- Emphasize collaborative planning at all levels.
- Address the skills, commitment, and competency of the Emergency Managers.
RECOMMENDATIONS: EXTENSION

- Has the knowledge and trust of the community; available in every county/parish.
- Should become more actively involved in disaster management. What would it take?
  - Is it a priority for CES? In counties? Nationally?
  - Administrative approval and support
  - Programmatic alignment (CD, ANR, FCS, 4H?)
- Can serve on boards and advisory committees.
- Can assist in response.
- Can assist in education and information dissemination.
- Promotes state and county level involvement.
RECOMMENDATIONS: EXTENSION, CONT.

- Can network with EDEN.
- Provides training/facilitation/coaching.
- Provides technical assistance or access to (i.e. GIS, recovery).
- Builds capacity in communities and has a history of facilitating community change, bringing all stakeholders to the table; can provide coordination.
- Can provide links to networks and connections to stakeholders; has diverse audiences.
- Is an unbiased, non-political organization that has a reputation of bringing groups together.
- Has the ability to help communities identify assets and improve decision-making.
RECOMMENDATIONS: OTHER AVENUES

- NACDEP
- Journal of Extension
- Emergency Management
- EDEN – (Smith-Lever)
- Summary Report Similar to “Voices of the People”
OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Planning needs to involve the community.
- Plans need to be clearly communicated to the community.
- Personal education and responsibility are vital.
- Formal and informal organizations need to co-plan.
- Rural areas are especially in need of planning resources.
- Formal leaders need skills to facilitate community involvement.
SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES:
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE