

A Guide for Integrating Needs and Capabilities of Disadvantaged People Into Local Disaster Plans

September 2008

This guide serves as a self-assessment tool to ensure that local government disaster plans address the needs, goals, aspirations, and capabilities of disadvantaged people who are especially vulnerable to disasters. The tool is designed to support the disaster plan making process in preparing new plans or updating existing plans. It aids local officials to identify potential gaps, and assess the strengths and weaknesses of how well disaster plans account for disadvantaged groups.

The guidelines included here are based on design options and principles of plan quality for disadvantaged populations. They are suggestive and not comprehensive, and apply to several types of disaster plans -- mitigation, evacuation, shelter, and recovery. Although every local disaster plan brings together a series of choices designed to fit the unique needs of a particular community, the principles can serve as criteria for determining what makes a good plan in addressing the needs and capabilities of disadvantaged groups. The principles can be used to evaluate different types of plans that focus on one or a combination of stages of the disaster management cycle: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

These principles are not conclusive. They are intended to provide guidance with user discretion required in their application in particular local circumstances. They offer a starting point, to help local disaster planners to systematically think about how the needs, concerns and capabilities of disadvantaged people should be included in a disaster plan. Given differences in local purposes and circumstances, there may be differences in the applicability of different criteria. Local planners and their communities should modify the criteria to fit their own needs.

The self-assessment tool consists of five parts that identify: 1) design options for coverage of the plan; 2) how plan defines and identifies disadvantaged people; 3) the strength of the fact base in the plan; and 4) how well operational features of the plan addresses needs and capabilities of disadvantaged groups.

Design Options for Coverage of the Plan

1. How does the plan focus on disadvantaged people (*check appropriate type of focus*)

Only disadvantaged people _____

Multiple population groups, including disadvantaged people _____

No mention of disadvantaged people _____

Note: If plan does not mention disadvantaged people, then application of this guide should not be conducted.

2. Which of the phases of a disaster are covered by this plan? (*check all that apply*):

Mitigation ___

Response ___

Preparedness ___

Recovery ___

Comments:

3. Hazards covered. (*circle all that apply*)

floods

hurricanes

winter storms

dam safety

fires

tornadoes

drought

toxic release

earthquakes

unstable slopes

other (specify)

4. Spatial coverage (*check item that applies*)

Plan covers a specific location within the community _____

Plan covers entire community _____

Principle 1. Definition and Identification of Disadvantaged People Threatened by Disaster.

1.1 Are disadvantaged people defined? Y N

If yes, write down the definition(s), and identify plans and page nos. where the definition(s) is found.

1.2 Types of disadvantaged people identified in plans. (*circle all that are identified*)

- elderly
- special needs
- race/ethnic groups (specify)
- other (specify)
- physically/mentally disabled
- low-income
- homeless
- single parent household

Principle 2. Fact Base of Plans

Following is a list of key items that can potentially comprise the fact base of a disaster plan. A fact base should describe the physical and social factors of the vulnerability of populations at risk, and use techniques that help to clarify, explain, and visually illustrate the facts.

Coding varies 0 to 2:

- Code “0” if the item is not mentioned.
- Code “1” if item is mentioned, but is vague;
- Code “2” if the item is mentioned, and is specific and detailed.

	<u>Code</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Identify plan & page nos.</u>
<i>Vulnerability assessment</i>			
2.1 Delineation of type, magnitude, and frequency of occurrence of hazards.	0 1 2		
2.2 Current and projected future number of disadvantaged people exposed to hazards.	0 1 2		
2.3 Current and projected capacity and demands for facilities and services that support the disadvantaged (shelters, transportation, medical).	0 1 2		

	<u>Code</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Identify plan & page nos.</u>
<i>Techniques that clarify, explain, and illustrate facts</i>			
2.4 Maps that visually portray location of disadvantaged pops, housing and facilities that serve disadvantaged.	0 1 2		
2.5 Tables that aggregate data on disadvantaged populations	0 1 2		
2.6 Facts used to support reasoning and explanation of issues and action strategies.	0 1 2		
2.7 Identification of data sources.	0 1 2		

Principles 3-6. Operational Items of Plans

Following is a list of four key operational items that can potentially addresses the needs and capabilities of disadvantaged groups of disaster plans: interdependent actions of organizations; participation of disadvantaged groups; strategies (and tactics); and implementation and monitoring. The purpose is to assess whether and how well a plan supports these features in ways that address disadvantaged people who are especially vulnerable to disasters.

Coding varies 0 to 2:

Code “0” if the item is not mentioned.

Code “1” if item is mentioned, but association of disadvantaged with a given item is vague; and, if relevant, the rational for the procedures associated with the item are barely mentioned or not provided.

Code “2” if the item is mentioned, association with disadvantaged is clear and specific; and, if relevant, the rational for the procedures is specific and detailed.

	<u>Code</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Identify plan & page nos.</u>
Principle 3. Inter-dependent actions of organizations			
<i>Explanation of internal connections</i>			
3.1 Specify procedures to coord. with local agencies that serve disadvantaged groups.	0 1 2		
3.2 Arrangements made to organize disadvantaged residents into bottom-up response and/or recovery teams.	0 1 2		

	<u>Code</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Identify plan & page nos.</u>
3.3 Set up center (emergency response, mitigation assistance, recovery assistance) with procedures on roles/responsibilities of local organizations to serve disadvantaged	0 1 2		
<i>Explanation of external connections</i>			
3.4 Arrangements made to organize outside volunteers (e.g., converge after a disaster, assist in mitigation, community development work).	0 1 2		
3.5 Specify coordination (e.g., aid agreements, stormwater management) with other communities.	0 1 2		
3.6 Procedures that explain resources offered by federal and state agencies	0 1 2		
Principle 4. Participation of disadvantaged groups			
<i>Explanation of involvement of disadvantaged groups.</i>			
4.1 Identifies participants representative of disadvantaged groups.	0 1 2		
4.2 Explanation of why the representatives of disadvantaged groups were involved.	0 1 2		
4.3 Explanation of the support and involvement of individuals with formal authority and power to make changes that support disadvantage groups (e.g., elected officials, staff from social service agencies, small-business owners, ministers, and grassroots activists)	0 1 2		
<i>Explanation of techniques to inform disadvantaged groups.</i>			
4.4 Establish contact registry for people with special needs (e.g., handicapped, medical care)	0 1 2		
4.5 Disseminate information to disadvantaged groups	0 1 2		
4.6 Identify translators (languages of ethnic groups and deaf)	0 1 2		

	<u>Code</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Identify plan & page nos.</u>
4.7 Set up call-in phone line that offers different languages.	0 1 2		
4.8 Arrangements made to contact ethnic radio/TV stations, and other outlets for disadvantaged.	0 1 2		

Principle 5. Strategies (and Tactics)

5.1 Strategies/tactics included in the plan are clearly stated and specifically tied to disadvantaged.	0 1 2		
5.2 Strategies/tactics are internally consistent with issues/goals/objs. raised in the plan associated with disadvantaged population groups.	0 1 2		

Principle 6. Implementation and Monitoring

Implementation

6.1 Identify administrative actions for implementing the plan (e.g., conduct study, seek funding, amend the plan).	0 1 2		
6.2 A timeline for implementation.	0 1 2		
6.3 Assignment of organizational responsibility.	0 1 2		

Monitoring

6.4 Indicators to monitor progress (e.g., # agencies working with disadvantaged that have disaster plans, % of disadvantaged aware of evacuation routes, rate of reoccupation of homes after a disaster, # homes occupied by low income in hazard areas).	0 1 2		
6.5 Identify organizations charged with monitoring indicators.	0 1 2		
6.6 Identify timetable for updating plan based on monitoring results.	0 1 2		

Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses

In a few sentences, characterize the description and assessment of how the needs and capabilities of disadvantage groups are addressed in the disaster plan – the approach used, strengths and weaknesses, and the overall quality of the disaster plans aimed at disadvantaged people.

Mitigation:

Preparedness:

Response:

Recovery: