Homeless-Specific Disaster Planning

INCLUDING THE HOMELESS IN DISASTER PLANS

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Outline

• Social Vulnerability and why it matters
• History of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD)
• The Local VOAD
• Are you prepared?
  – “Disaster and Pandemic Planning for Nonprofits”
  – CARD (Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters)
Social vulnerability

• Set of characteristics of a group or individual in terms of their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a natural hazard.

• It involves a combination of factors that determine the degree to which someone's life and livelihood is at risk by a discrete and identifiable event in nature or society.


Adapted from the National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) 2010 presentation (with permission).
Why is it important that we understand social vulnerability?

- We can minimize the impact of disasters for people who are homeless by identifying and addressing factors that make people vulnerable to environmental hazards.

Adapted from NHCHC 2010 presentation
Major factors that influence social vulnerability

• lack of access to resources (including information, knowledge, and technology)
• limited access to political power and representation
• social capital, including social networks and connections
• beliefs and customs
• age, gender, race
• health and physical ability


Adapted from the NHCHC 2010 presentation
Lack of access to resources

• Limited capacity to take risk reduction measures
  – Sheltering in place
  – Avoiding congregate settings (during pandemic flu)
  – Stockpiling food, water, and supplies

Adapted from NHCHC 2010 presentation
Lack of access to resources

• Disaster communication must:
  – Address limited access to technology
  – Adapt instructions that are targeted to people who are housed with resources to take risk reduction measures
  – Consider that those living outside have high rates of pre-disaster trauma (to prevent panic/fear)

• Transportation disadvantaged
  – No transportation to evacuate

Adapted from the NHCHC 2010 presentation
Social capital, including social networks and connections

• During and following a disaster, most people who are homeless will depend on homeless service providers for support and assistance.

Adapted from the NHCHC 2010 presentation
Frail and Physically Limited Individuals

- High rates of physical disability
- People who are homeless are sicker than people who are housed (unmanaged chronic disease, exposure to the elements)
- ~1/3 of adults who are homeless have a serious mental disorder (U.S. Conference of Mayors, 2009; NAMI, 2007)
- ~1/2 - 2/3 have a substance use disorder (U.S. Conference of Mayors, 2007; Burt, 1999)
- ~3/4 of those who have a substance use disorder have a co-morbid non-substance related mental illness (Kertesz, 2006)

Adapted from the NHCHC 2010 presentation
Action Steps

- Understand social vulnerabilities so that you might address them early on to decrease disaster risk.
- Learn how to better coordinate with other service providers and your local government (local voluntary organization active in disaster and homeless coalitions?)
- Make sure your organization’s emergency management plan aligns with your local government’s emergency management plan. Know your role.

Adapted from the NHCHC 2010 presentation
Homelessness in LA County

L.A. County “Service Planning Areas” (SPAs)
## Homeless Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City/County</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA County</td>
<td>82,291</td>
<td>68,608</td>
<td>45,572</td>
<td>45,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Cities (includes: LB/Glendale/Pasadena)</td>
<td>88,345</td>
<td>73,702</td>
<td>52,931</td>
<td>51,340</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPAs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antelope Valley (1)</td>
<td>3,544</td>
<td>1,815</td>
<td>2,869</td>
<td>1,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Fernando Val (2)</td>
<td>11,275</td>
<td>6,411</td>
<td>3,753</td>
<td>4,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Gabriel Valley (3)</td>
<td>9,254</td>
<td>9,942</td>
<td>3,269</td>
<td>3,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro L.A. (4)</td>
<td>20,023</td>
<td>22,030</td>
<td>11,381</td>
<td>11,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West L.A. (5)</td>
<td>6,860</td>
<td>6,703</td>
<td>5,700</td>
<td>3,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South L.A. (6)</td>
<td>16,787</td>
<td>11,670</td>
<td>10,587</td>
<td>8,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East L.A. (7)</td>
<td>7,178</td>
<td>5,580</td>
<td>4,949</td>
<td>4,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bay/Harbor (8)</td>
<td>7,369</td>
<td>4,457</td>
<td>4,497</td>
<td>6,788</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homeless Data (Cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected pops.</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Totals)</td>
<td>(82,291)</td>
<td>(68,608)</td>
<td>(52,931)</td>
<td>(51,340)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Individuals</td>
<td>61,015</td>
<td>50,677</td>
<td>37,171</td>
<td>35,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Families</td>
<td>19,882</td>
<td>16,643</td>
<td>9,763</td>
<td>9,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronically Homeless</td>
<td>34,512 (49%)</td>
<td>22,376 (33%)</td>
<td>10,245 (24%)</td>
<td>10,901 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccompanied Youth</td>
<td>1,394</td>
<td>1,888</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Male</td>
<td>26,767</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Female</td>
<td>12,589</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Children (Under 18)</td>
<td>3,057</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Children (Under 18)</td>
<td>3,009</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>45,422</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Ethnic/Racial Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>19,868</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>12,573</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>11,287</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1,058</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>45,422</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homeless/Shelter Bed Ratio

Shelter Partnership, LAHSA 2007: "Unsheltered"
Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)

Mission:

- To enhance preparedness for and coordinate response to disasters by facilitating linkages among L.A. County CBO’s, government and the private sector
- To improve coordination and reduce duplication
Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

- National VOAD
- California (Northern/Southern)
- Local VOAD
  - Emergency Network Los Angeles (ENLA)
History of National VOAD

- Founded in 1970 following Hurricane Camille
- 7 founding organizations
- Lack of **coordination** of services to disaster victims resulting in duplication of efforts while other needs went unmet.
- People wanted to volunteer unsure how/where
- Lack of training for volunteers
- **Communication** among agencies limited or non-existent

nvoad.org/AboutUs/History/tabid/71/Default.aspx
Emergency Network L.A. (ENLA)  
L.A. County VOAD

- Northern Cal VOAD
  - www.calvoad.org/cc_voad_norcal.html
- Southern Cal and National VOAD
  - www.calvoad.org/cc_voad_socal.html
- ENLA, Los Angeles County’s local VOAD – “enla.org”
  - 501(c)3

enla.org - www.nvoad.org - www.calvoad.org/cc_voad.html
History of Local VOAD: ENLA

1994 Northridge earthquake
  – Mayor convened meeting of responding CBO’s
  – Significantly aided earthquake recovery efforts
  – LA County VOAD merged with L.A. Access Network
  – 1997 ENLA was designated primary point of contact with CBO’s for disaster preparedness and recovery efforts.

http://enla.org
Sample of ENLA Members

Tzu Chi
ENLA Activities

• Foster more effective service through the 4-C’s:
  – Communication, Coordination, Cooperation and Collaboration

  • Contact, maintain liaison with members
  • Facilitate improved CBO preparedness: trainings/forums
  • Convene info sharing/planning/networking meetings
  • Gather, coordinate & distribute pertinent information
  • Link providers of disaster resources to CBO’s with needs
  • Link member CBO’s to government EM organizations
  • Provide reports on disaster impact to member CBO’s, government, media and other interested parties
  • Transmit to member CBO’s information about potential funding opportunities related to disaster activities

http://enla.org
Disaster Planning Issues

- Lack disaster planning expertise;
- Homeless service agencies tend to operate in silos in regard to disaster plans;
- Lack transportation plans in the event their building is uninhabitable;
- No plan in place to address the needs of their local street homeless;
- Few homeless providers (residential or services) represented at ENLA;
- Lack of cohesive plan to connect all homeless service agencies.
“Planting The Seeds for Recovery”

LA County, Department of Public Health’s guide for non-profits/Community-Based and Faith-Based Organizations (CFBO’s):

“Disaster and Pandemic Planning for Nonprofits”
(see handout or link below)

www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eprp/plans.htm
Example from CARD's Online Guide for AGENCY EMERGENCY PLANNING
*(Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters)*

**Step 1**
A. Develop a Disaster Mission Statement:

Make sure you know what role you are planning to play in a disaster

“cardcanhelp.org/resource/emergency-agency-planning/”
Mission Statement Planning from “CARD” Guide

Questions to ask to develop your agency Mission Statement:

• Who are you going to be for your clients and community when disaster strikes?
• Does your current mission statement encompass how you see your agency functioning in a disaster?
• Think about your commitments and your resource limitations and create a disaster mission statement.
• Follow link below for more help:
  [cardcanhelp.org/resource/emergency-agency-planning/](http://cardcanhelp.org/resource/emergency-agency-planning/)
One Approach to Disaster Planning

• Utilize the “Disaster and Pandemic Planning for Nonprofits” and/or CARD’s online guide to prepare your agency
• Join the local VOAD: Emergency Network L.A. (ENLA);
• Work in collaboration with ENLA and/or HSP (homeless service providers) to develop cohesive plan utilizing the four C’s
Some Closing Questions

• Have the homeless (sheltered/unsheltered) been included in your disaster plans?
• Does your agency have Continuity of Operations Plans?
• Residential facilities: If not habitable, how will clients be transported to a safe shelter? How will you know where to go?
• Residential facilities: How will you respond to the needs of the street homeless?
• Are you able to be self sustaining for a minimum of 72 hours?
• Who will you contact for assistance/resources?
• Do you have disaster plans and do you drill for all contingencies?
• Are you connected with other services providers in your locale?
Questions???
Additional Information

• About LAHSA
• More about “CARD”
• For shelter health, see presentation on “Preventing CD’s in Shelters”
The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) is a joint powers authority of the City and County of Los Angeles created in 1993 to address the problems of homelessness in Los Angeles County. LAHSA plans, funds and administers programs that assist homeless individuals and families in their transition to permanent housing. LAHSA is the lead agency in the HUD-funded Los Angeles Continuum of Care and coordinates and manages over $70 million dollars annually in federal, state, county and city funds for programs providing shelter, housing and services to homeless persons. Additionally, LAHSA partners with the city and the county to integrate services and housing opportunities to ensure wide distribution of service and housing options. LAHSA funds agencies that address many underserved homeless populations including battered women and their children, persons struggling with chronic homelessness, veterans, youth transitioning from foster care, and individuals with mental health needs. The agency located at 811 Wilshire Blvd., 6th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90017.
Outline of CARD Agency Emergency Plan

1. Disaster Mission Statement
2. Preparing Staff for Emergencies
3. Personnel
4. Volunteers
5. Meeting the Needs of the People You Serve
6. On-Site Supplies Cache
7. Agency Go-Kit
8. Facility Preparation
9. Signage
10. Financial Resources
11. Communication
12. Financial Resources
13. Ensuring Service Continuation