

# The Hurricane Relief and Recovery Network

Community  
Collaboration and  
Coordination Efforts in  
the Wake of Disaster



# History

- The Katrina Relief Network
- Organized quickly in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina
- Effort to manage chaos

## **Mission of the Katrina Relief Network**

To develop a coalition of non-profits and social service organizations to provide assistance to victims of Hurricane Katrina while minimizing duplication of benefits and maximizing access for the client

# Original Goals

- Provide a social service hub
- Share information
  - Needs
  - Who was doing what where
- Prevent duplication of efforts
- Assist clients in accessing services

# Who Participated

- Countless non-profits, faith based entities, government agencies, businesses, and individuals.
- Anyone interested in providing relief and recovery assistance
- An average of 50 in attendance at the weekly meetings

# Outcomes of Early Coordination

- Weekly connection for service providers
- Information shared about available assistance was compiled and distributed to those working with hurricane survivors
- Service provider registration and commitment forms
- Service calendars for FEMA parks

# Evolution of the Katrina Relief Network

- Hurricane Rita
- Transition of recovery work
- Decline in weekly meeting participation

# Long Term Recovery Coordination

- Hurricane Relief and Recovery Network
- Expanded methods of information sharing and collaboration to meet changing community needs
- Expanded goals of the network

# Methods of Coordination

- Listserv
- Monthly meetings
- Observation and participation with providers
- Networking and individual outreach
- Technical assistance for case managers
- Point of contact for process and questions

# Continuing Original Goals

- Provide a social service hub
- Share information
  - Needs
  - Who was doing what where
- Prevent duplication of efforts
- Assist clients in accessing services

# New Strategy and Goals

- Educate the community on ever changing recovery resources and programs
- Encourage partnerships
- Strategically connect resources with those working with clients
- Fill-in when there was a need and shortage of human resources
- Develop collective thoughts and strategies for addressing ongoing needs
- Serve as a connection between policy makers, funders, and those working on the ground

# Shift in Network Meetings

- Monthly meetings
- Alternate meeting agendas
  - Educational
  - Open discussion
  - Strategy and planning

## Participation in Other Collaborative Efforts

- East Baton Rouge Parish Long Term Recovery Committee
- YK Collaborative
- Essential Services Network
- Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless
- Louisiana Capital Area Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

## Challenges in an Indirectly but Significantly Impacted Community

- Disaster survivors often have needs that can not be met by traditional community social service programs
- Recipient community needs often overlooked
- Larger community back to business as usual
- New residents are not familiar with their new community

# Lessons Learned

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- Coordination in the wake of disaster is a full time job
- Authority and resources are a must
- Details, details, details
- Clarity sets expectations

## Lessons Learned (continued)

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- Care for the caregivers
- Focus on orienting new residents to community
- Flexibility is a must
- Plan for managing HIPPA/The Privacy Act
- Expect the unexpected

# Importance of Coordination

- Without coordination, chaos remains chaotic
- People work more effectively when they know what is going on
- Prevent duplication of efforts
- Dispel rumors
- Expedite getting resources to those in need

# Hurricane Relief and Recovery Network

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